

## GLIMPSES OF ITALIAN COURT LIFE

railroad, is but little changed from the days when Vittoria Colonna was the first lady of the land, and where she would find herself to-day probably quite as much at home as ever.

In the first exposition of the Women's Work in Rome, the exhibit from Pescocostanzo attracted much interest and admiration and was awarded a diploma of the first-class. The Marchesa is also much interested in a school she has started in Casamassella, which is proving very successful. I have written you before about the charming and talented Marchesa herself, of her lovely palace, of her many kindnesses to me and of her generous admiration of my voice.

The Marchesa Romegne Ranieri di Sorbello, née Romaine Roberts, has also a school at Passignano, near Perugia, where most curious embroideries on linen are done. Here are three of the most energetic workers in this Society (the Countess Brazzà, the Marchesa di Viti de Marco, the Marchesa di Sorbello), all bearing long and noble Italian names; but we are proud to claim them as American women, who have gone into the Old World, and are not only a credit to the titles that they bear, but an honor to the name of womanhood, for the energy and ability they have shown in advancing the condition of

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woman in the country which they have adopted as their own.

You can see from what I have written what a splendid work is being carried on by the noble women of Italy. Perhaps you will read this letter to some of your friends, for I hope to interest the people at home, and I am sure I shall be able to do so. The ladies this afternoon were kind enough to make me one of the members of the Society, so that I feel now a right as well as an interest in doing all that I can for the *Industrie Femminili Italiane*.

XXXVIII.

To T. C. B.

ROME, ITALY, April 1, 1905

*My dear P.:*

**Y**ESTERDAY morning I had a most satisfactory sing with Sgambati. After lunch we left a few cards, and then went to call on the Countess Sanminiatielli, who introduced me to the Countess della Salla, another charming New Orleans woman married in Italy.

Last Sunday afternoon we went again to call on the Countess Bruschi, who receives every Sunday, before five, in her lovely big apartment in the Piazza delle Terme. Just as we were going out, we met her two pretty little daughters. The Countess is so very young looking that it seemed impossible that these young girls could be her children.

On our way home we stopped for a call on Mrs. Morris, but did not find her, so we went down the Spanish steps to the Piazza for tea. On the steps, going either up or down, we always meet some of the scholars of the various Roman Catholic semi-

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naries, who frequently walk up to the Pincio in the afternoon. The English and French seminaries wear black gowns; the Scotch, violet soutanes, red girdles and black cloaks, but the Germans and Hungarians wear gowns and cloaks of the brightest scarlet, so F. B. and I always call them the "red devils." Our American students wear black gowns with blue linings and red girdles, so when we see any of our own students in or about St. Peter's, or the Vatican, we ask them for various explanations and invariably find them most polite.

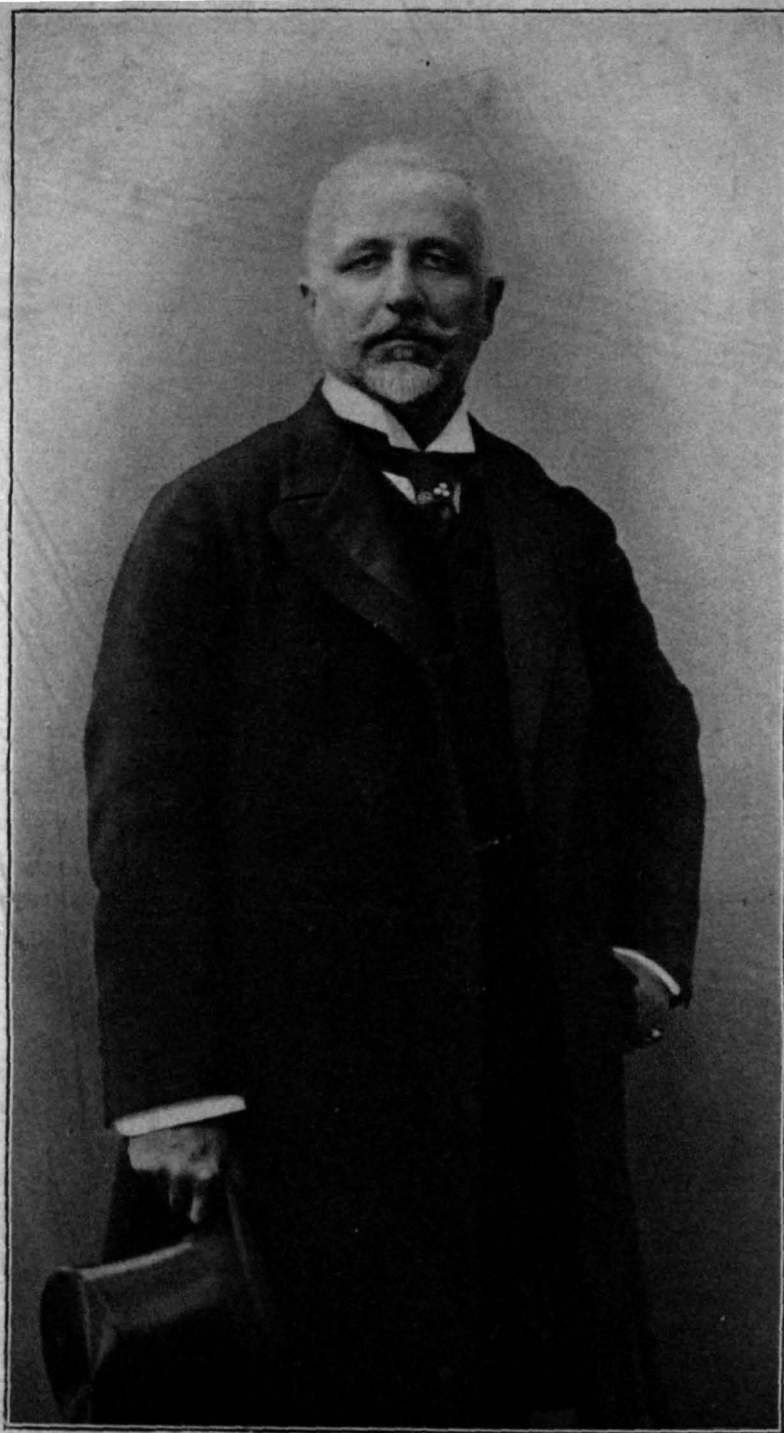
Just before going in to dress for dinner, we ran across the street to the church of the Cappucini; the real name is Santa Maria della Concezione, but nobody ever calls it that. We were glad to refresh our memories with a good look at the famous St. Michael by Guido Reni, of which we see a copy whenever we go to St. Peter's. F. B. insisted on my going down for a hurried look at the ghastly burial vaults, where the bones of four thousand departed Capuchins are arranged as a wall decoration. It was so dreadfully cold there, that we did not dare to stay longer than a very few moments.

Well, my dinner last night for Lady X, went off very nicely; the table was pretty with hot-house roses and lilacs sent from Nice, and every one seemed



**HIS EXCELLENCY SIGNOR TITTONI,**

**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND ITALY'S FOREMOST STATESMAN**



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A Mrs. Batcheller  
Thomas Pitton  $\frac{3}{4}$  905

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to have a good time. His Excellency Signor Tittoni was on my right, and I enjoyed so much hearing him explain why there are so many interprovincial tariffs. Of course, Italy is perfectly united, nevertheless the influence of past centuries is not to be done away with in a moment, and the large cities of provinces, which were once kingdoms, feel that they must protect their own specialties; still it is all much better than it used to be, and you now see Neapolitan coral in Milan and the Genoese silver in Rome, though you have to pay somewhat dearer for it than in the city where it is made. Signor Tittoni speaks English extremely well, for he received part of his education at Oxford, England. He is a brilliant man, a great diplomat, and recently when the Cabinet all resigned, the King looked to him for a solution of the difficulties, and while His Majesty did not wish to give him up as Minister of Foreign Affairs, for the time being he begged him to take the Prime Minister's folio.

Donna Bice was as animated and fascinating as usual last night, and wore a *très réussie* Parisian gown of pink velvet. How much prettier these soft velvets are than the stiff ones people used to wear! Lady X. was in half mourning, but black is very becoming to her. The Countess Taverna, who sat next to F. B., looked as lovely as she always does—

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and what do you think ! Prof. Helbig actually came to the dinner ; he dislikes going out so much that I feared he would not come, but I begged his mother to intercede for me, with the result that he not only came, but made himself perfectly delightful to everyone. Why is it that men who know so well how to be agreeable are generally those who do not care a bit about society ?

The dining-room was quite gay last night. Next to our big table (there were fourteen of us) Donna Franca Florio was giving a dinner for H. E. the Marchesa L. di Rudini, and I especially noticed the Duchess of Terranova, who is a real Spanish beauty. At another table Mme. Patti (Baronne Cederström) and her husband were dining with the Baronne von Bildt, and at a small table near by were Mr. and Mrs. Lehr of New York. After dinner, all those giving parties had little alcoves arranged in the Palm Garden for their special guests, and with the liqueurs nearly all the women smoked—it is quite the usual thing here, but, of course, I always decline the cigarettes, on account of my throat.

At about eleven o'clock, when our guests had left, we followed the Countess Taverna, who had gone on before to the Princess Venosa's reception. One after another of the friends who had

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been dining with us, came in, and we had a very pleasant evening.

I had a charming letter to-day from Mr. Henry White, Secretary of the American Embassy at London, who, as you know, has been recently appointed Ambassador to Rome—fortunate Rome and unlucky London! Two or three English people said to me, only yesterday, “I am sure I do not know what we shall do in London without Mr. and Mrs. White. No one in American diplomatic service has ever had more friends or greater diplomatic success than he. The King and Queen thought a great deal of the Whites, dined at their house, and showed them many unusual attentions.” I agree with all this, but every one knows Mr. White will make an ideal Ambassador. Mrs. White, too, is just the sort of a person to be admired and appreciated in Rome, and, of course, Muriel’s friends will be legion wherever she goes. One young Italian nobleman asked me if the daughter of the new Ambassador knew how to flirt. I told him I could not answer as to that, but that everyone thought her beautiful and charming.

*Flirter* has been adopted into the Italian and French languages, so somebody must have done some flirting somewhere, which, I suppose, accounts for the question.

## XXXIX

TO E. F. D. B.

ROME, ITALY, April 2, 1905

*My dear M.:*

**W**E have had such an interesting afternoon. The day was so fine, we thought we would take a drive in Margherita Park, *Passeggiata Margherita*, as it is called here, and come home by way of Mme. Helbig's villa. She is at home every afternoon but Tuesday, when she goes to her hospital for sick children.

Spring is surely here; the air is soft and balmy, and flowers are beginning to be *everywhere* in the parks. One can quite understand why the poets write about beautiful spring in Europe, especially in Italy. Most of our American poets have wisely turned to our beautiful New England autumn, for our springs do not inspire poetic feelings, especially windy days in Boston.

When we reached the Villa Lante, the door stood open, and we heard sounds of music. F. B. and I tiptoed into the big music-room, and there sat

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Madame at one grand piano, an Italian gentleman at another, and a lovely Tschaikovsky duet was going on. What beautiful music that wonderful man has written! I was quite lost in the enjoyment of the music, when Madame, suddenly spying me, called: "Come on, dear Paragon, I want you to sing your 'Magic Flute' for all these people." There were several ambassadors, attachés and a number of distinguished ladies present, who had met partly by chance and partly because "Dame Rumor" had been busy, and given an inkling that on this afternoon one might hear Madame Helbig play. Before I knew it Mme. Helbig had Mozart's "Magic Flute" score before her on the piano, and was playing the opening bars of the aria. One of the musicians present rushed to the piano and said, "Surely you are not going to sing it in the original key;" but dear Madame waved him aside, laughingly saying, "Oh yes, we are!" and I began. She plays with splendid fire and enthusiasm; the whole atmosphere was music, everybody there was musical or intensely interested in music, and I was anxious that my voice should be up to the mark for dear Madame's sake. I had not thought of singing for her to-day, but, fortunately, as it happened, I had eaten a light lunch, and the song went off very nicely. When I finished, everyone rushed around the piano



and Mme. H. said, "There! You say there are no miracles now-a-days; there is a miracle; that little woman's throat does not look different from any one else's, yet she takes that high F. with as much ease as you or I say good morning. Don't talk to me about fairy tales, there is more truth in many of them, than in most of the story books." Then she went on to tell us of some wonderful scientific experiments that have been made in the production of sound waves; when the vibrations have become impossible for the human ear to hear, a cat's hair is seen to stand up straight, and the animal prances about with fury or delight, impossible to say which. You see, Mme. H. is a great scientist as well as a great musician; indeed she is a very remarkable woman in every way, and I have greatly enjoyed and appreciated her friendship for me.

The wife of Mon. Kroupenski, who is at present the Conseiller d'Etat and Chamberlain of His Majesty the Czar of Russia, was very charming, and I enjoyed a nice little talk with her. Mme. H. introduced me to several other people about whom I will try to write you later, but these days are very busy.

On our way home we stopped at the old church of Sant' Onofrio, where the poet Torquato Tasso is



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buried. We went into the church to see his monument that was erected in 1857, by Pius IX, and then on into the adjoining monastery of the Order of St. Jerome. It was built in 1430, in honor of the Egyptian hermit, Honuphrius. There are only a few of the monks left, as the order has been suppressed, though those already here are allowed to remain, but no new friars can be added to the order. One of these old monks showed us the room where Tasso lived, and where, when about to receive his crown of laurels on the capitol from Pope Clement VIII, he died on the 25th of April, 1595. Poor Tasso! What a sad life was his! You remember his early life was passed in the service of the Cardinal d'Este, whom he accompanied on various diplomatic missions, and who brought him into relations with his brother, the then reigning Duke of Ferrara. Here he lived happily for several years, and enjoyed the intimate friendship of the Duke and his two beautiful sisters, Lucrezia and Eleonora. In 1575 his great epic poem, "*Gerusalemme Liberata*," was completed; but a strange melancholy took possession of him, it is generally believed on account of his deep love for the Princess Eleonora, whom, of course, he could not hope to marry. He grew suspicious, saw a secret enemy in everyone, and finally fled from the court.

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With rest and quiet, his mind became clear once more. Twice he returned to the Court of Ferrara, and twice the disease seized his mind. At last his manners and general actions became so strange that the Duke confined him in a lunatic asylum, where he remained seven years. During this time all Europe read his great work, and his name became one of the greatest of his age. He wrote a number of beautiful lyrical poems, a pastorale, some essays, letters, etc. In 1586, after his release from Ferrara, he settled at Naples, but he was homesick and suffering, and when Pope Clement VIII invited him to come to Rome to be crowned on the capitol, he died before the solemnity took place.

Shelley's song for the poet came to us as we drove past the shattered oak tree, under which Tasso used to sit, and which is marked by a tablet to his memory.

"I loved — alas ! our life is love ;  
But, when we cease to breathe and move,  
I do suppose love ceases too.  
I thought (but not as now I do)  
Keen thoughts and bright of linked lore, —  
Of all that men had thought before,  
And all that Nature shows, and more.  
And still I love, and still I think  
But strangely, for my heart can drink  
The dregs of such despair, and live,  
And love.

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And, if I think, my thoughts come fast;  
I mix the present with the past,  
And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee  
A silver spirit's form, like thee,  
O Leonora! and I sit  
. . . still watching it,  
Till by the grated casement's ledge  
It fades, with such a sigh as sedge  
Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge."

## XL

TO T. C. B.

ROME, ITALY, April 4, 1905

*My dear P.:*

**Y**ESTERDAY morning we received an invitation from Lady Egerton to a small reception she was giving for Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, their daughter, Princess Margaret, and her fiancé, Prince Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, and their other daughter, Princess Victoria Patricia. The Duke and Duchess, who are staying but a few days in Rome, have received a great deal of attention from Their Majesties, the King and Queen, and Her Majesty Queen Margherita gave a dinner for them at her palace.

Lady Egerton sent word that she would be pleased if I would sing, and naturally I was very glad to do so. The British Embassy is one of the finest in Rome, and Lady Egerton has made the great ball-room look delightfully home-like. She is exceedingly clever in her arrangement of furniture and bric-a-brac, for, as you know, it is very difficult to make an immensely large room an attractive liv-

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ing-room. There were not many people at the reception, and directly after we arrived Lady Egerton kindly presented me to Her Royal Highness the Duchess. Some one had told me that we should be expected to stand all the evening, but that was entirely wrong, for everything was informal; while no one was presented to the Duke, everyone was made to feel quite comfortable, and the Duchess was graciousness itself. After I had exchanged greetings with a few of the ladies, Donna Bice Tittoni, Mrs. Lamb and others, Lady Egerton asked if I would sing, kindly offering to play my accompaniments. I began with a Mozart aria, and then sang some modern French songs; afterwards Prof. Sgambati played two of his own compositions most delightfully; a lady with a fine "mezzo" voice sang some German songs and then Lady Egerton asked me to sing an aria from the "Magic Flute." When I finished, H. R. H. the Duke left his chair and was kind enough to say that he would like to meet me. He said some extremely kind things about my singing, and was interested to learn that I knew President and Mrs. Roosevelt.

So we had a mutual admiration talk about President Roosevelt, whom the Duke admires extremely—in fact, everyone here seems to have the most intense

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admiration for Mr. Roosevelt. His Royal Highness asked about Mrs. Roosevelt, and of course I had only pleasant things to tell him, and added that she has been very kind to me. He asked if I would sing again, and knowing that the Duchess is German, I sang two modern German songs, the last one a very brilliant Canzonetta from an opera by Meyer-Hel-mund, ending with a trill "a mile long," as the girl said. I am sure you will remember the song I mean. When I had finished, the Duchess came to me in the most charming way and said, "You must have spent many years in study to acquire such perfect technique, and you sing with so much feeling as well." I said I was very happy if I had been able to please her, and we had a nice little talk about music generally, for the Duchess is said to be one of the most musical of the Royalties of Europe.

Their Royal Highnesses withdrew early, as their days are very much occupied, and, soon after their withdrawal, everyone else left.

Lady Egerton is assuredly a charming hostess, knows just what to do and how to do it in the nicest way possible. She looked very handsome last night in a black satin gown heavily embroidered in jet, and wore some beautiful pearls. The Duchess wore a soft gray dress which was very becoming to her blonde coloring. She looks almost as young

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as her pretty daughters, whom we also met, and has such simple gracious manners. I have heard Blanche Marchesi enthuse so much about Her Highness, who has been very kind to her, that I was especially interested and pleased to have the honor of meeting her. The Royal party will soon go to England, as the marriage of Princess Margaret and Prince Gustavus Adolphus is set for a day early in June, I am told.

Princess Margaret will make a beautiful bride, she is such a sweet-looking girl, as indeed is her sister, and they both have their mother's charm of manner. The Duchess is much beloved in England, and I do not wonder. She was the daughter of Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia.

To-morrow is a very busy day, so I must not write more to-night.

## XLI

TO E. F. D. B.

ROME, ITALY, April 6, 1905

*My dear M.:*

THE last three days we have lived in a whirl; Tuesday we drove up to the Gianicolo to say good-bye to Mme. Helbig; in the afternoon we made a lot of calls, and in the evening we went to the second of the Princess d'Antuni's brilliant receptions. Everybody was there, and the Princess took special care of me, and made my evening thoroughly enjoyable.

While I was singing with Bustini and Settaccioli yesterday morning, a message came from the British Embassy, asking me to send my album back by the messenger. Naturally I was pleased, and I am sure you will be gratified to learn that Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Princesses Margaret and Victoria Patricia and Prince Gustavus Adolphus, have all written their names in my album, which was returned last evening.

In the afternoon we went to call on the Marchesa de Viti de Marco; who should we meet there but



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Mrs. Beerbohm Tree and her daughter, who are on a four weeks' jaunt from the fogs of London. Mrs. Tree is very attractive, listened with interest to my account of the sale that was going on at the Hotel Splendide of the laces of the Industrie; and later, when I went in to see how the sale was progressing, Mrs. T. was going out with an armful of purchases. I had tea with the Countess Taverna and Donna Bice, and ran into the Marchesa Cappelli's for a last Wednesday. I am quite sad that these are my last days with these dear women, who I begin to feel are becoming real friends.

The Countess Prezezdziecka, a charming Polish woman to whom I was introduced the other evening at the Antuni's, sent over and asked us to come to her reception this evening. The Marchesa Lucifero-Speyer also had a reception, but as I am singing to-morrow, I feel that I must give up these alluring invitations.

Friday we are going out to Tivoli if the weather is fine.

## XLII

### TIVOLI

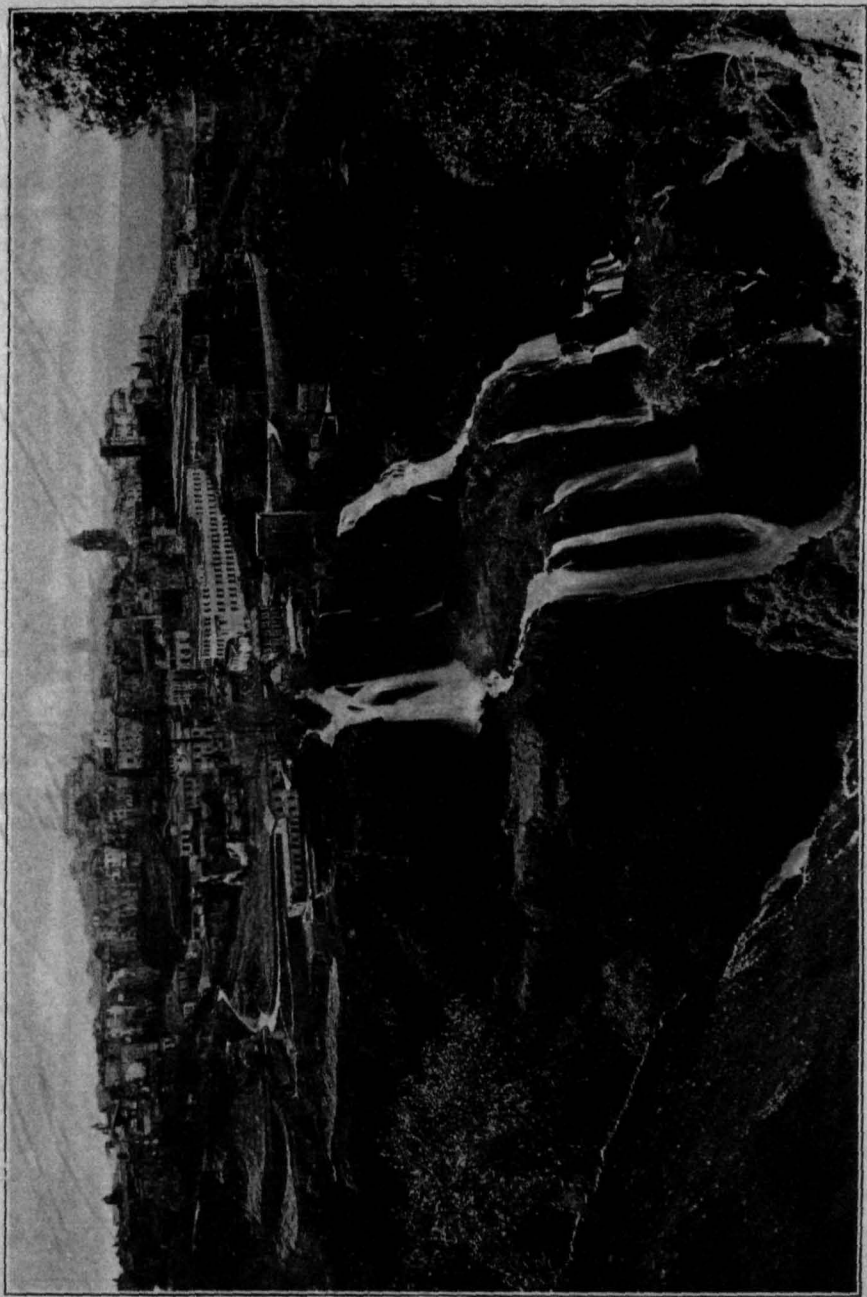
ROME, ITALY, April 7, 1905.

*My dear C. :*

**T**O-DAY has been filled to overflowing. Early in the morning we took the train for Tivoli. It was a bright, sunny day, and the Campagna was as ever most attractive. Arriving at the station, we took a cab to the little restaurant, driving the longest way round to get a better view of the world-famed water-falls of Tivoli. We ate our lunch on a terrace, from which we had lovely views of the mountains, ravines and numberless gushing water-falls, that were everywhere, beside and beneath us, while just above us was the beautiful little temple of Vesta.

When one goes to Tivoli, it is not difficult to understand why there are so many fountains in Rome. The accumulated waters of the Sabine mountains seem to rush literally under the town. Two immense tunnels, one built centuries ago by

# THE CASCADES AND WATERFALLS AT TIVOLI



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the Romans, and the other by one of the more recent Popes, prevent the disasters which formerly happened to the town from time to time, when the water swept away the foundations of the houses ; but there are, besides, numerous water-falls which rush out madly into the ravine below.

After lunch we drove over to the western part of the town, to see the beautiful Villa d'Este, which, as you know, is one of the finest of the Renaissance period. It was begun for Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, but now belongs to the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Este.

In some of the rooms are a few damaged frescoes by Zuccherò, odd designs of men or women, represented as coming through a door-way ; but the keynote of the whole place is water, water—arranged in cascades from one terrace to another, and in the most ingenious and fascinating way, fountains spring up at every turn in the beautiful pathways, while fern-grown grottoes, often shielding dainty statuettes, are on every side.

We sat a long time near the wonderful group of old cypress trees that have been so often painted, and enjoyed first the view of the villa and fountains on the one side, then the broad Campagna stretching out toward Rome on the other.

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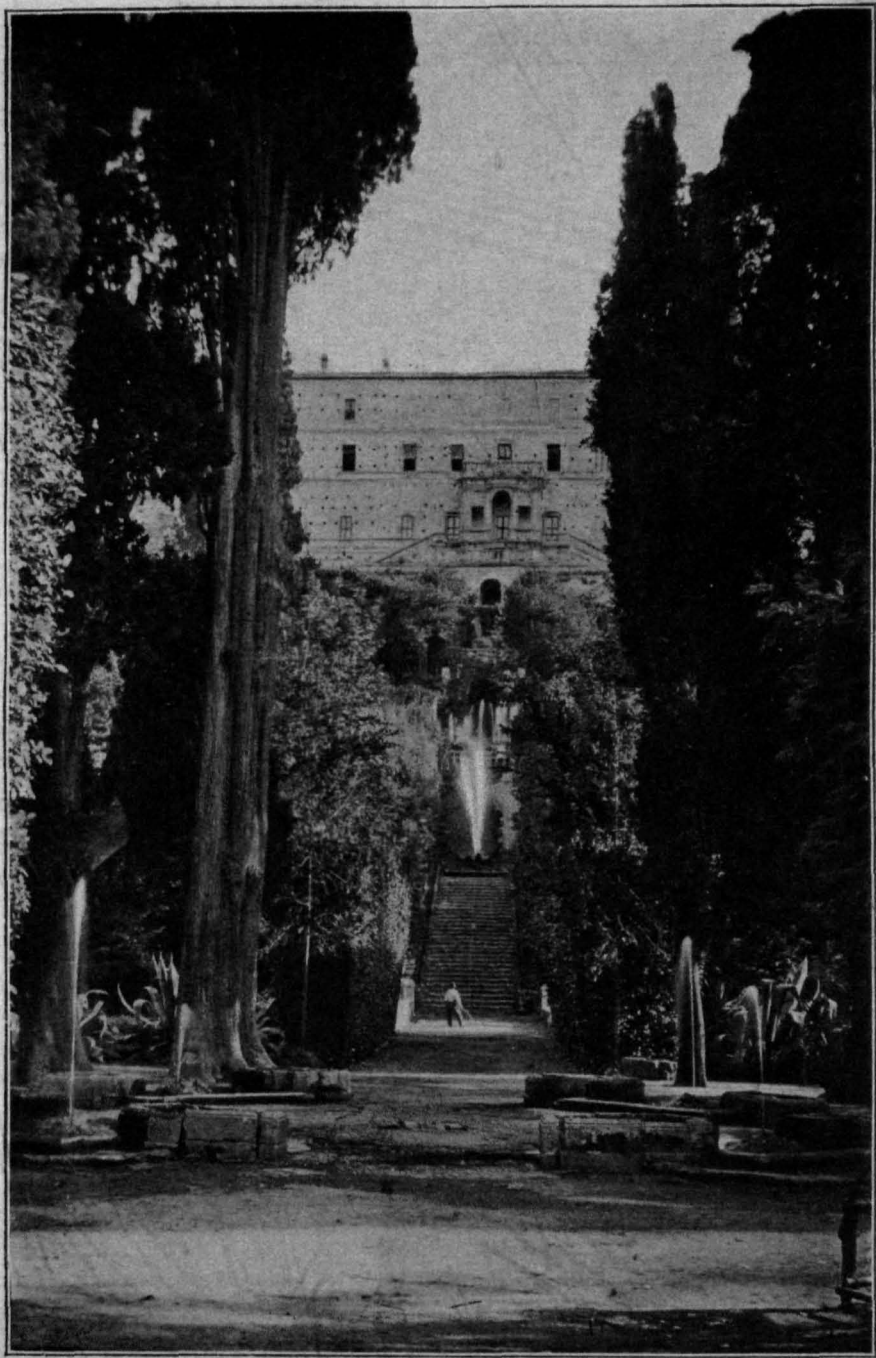
The Cardinal d'Este had gorgeous ideas and gorgeous facilities, but his dream was never completed, and the whole place is fast becoming a ruin.

Our merciless watches told us we must leave, if we were to see all the beauties of the Villa Adriana.

There is so much to be seen there, and distances are so great, that we were very glad of the sedan chairs which we found at the entrance. An immense wall over two hundred yards long runs east and west at the entrance of this villa, so that one side is always in the shade. It seems to me that this is one of the most interesting ruins in Italy, and numerous works of art have been taken from here that are now among the treasures of the Vatican and Capitoline museums. The villa is mentioned only twice in ancient history, but the archæologists have tried to fit the ruins with the description of Hadrian's biographer Spartian. There are innumerable rooms and courts, some large, others small, and to them have been assigned names more or less correct, I suppose. The mosaics in the floors are exquisite, and it was in one of these small rooms that the famous mosaic of the "doves of the fountain," that we see so often copied, was found. There are numerous subterranean halls for the passage of servants and slaves, and a ruin of an Egyptian temple, where Hadrian cele-

VIEW OF THE VILLA D'ESTE AT TIVOLI







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brated festivals in the Egyptian manner. We decided to drive back and take the train at Bagni, and, as we had plenty of time, we walked all around to see these strange sulphur waters, which are of a peculiar blue, and incrust everything they touch. We reached Rome in time for dinner, and this evening we went to the reception of the Princess Venosa. It seems that there is to be an out-of-door fête given at one of the villas near Rome for charity, and some of the younger girls are going to sell flowers and candies, dressed in Louis XVI shepherdess costumes. Countess Taverna's daughter is going in costume, as is also the daughter of the Princess d'Avella. They asked me about the shepherdess' hats, and I said that I thought the new fashions in Paris this spring were as near the old models as one could possibly find.

I met the Princess Doria, who is a delightful English woman, sister of the Duke Newcastle, and also the pretty Duchess of Terranova. After we had a nice chat all around we went over to the Princess Poggio Suasa's. It was very late, and most people were going away as we came in, but we were very glad, for we had a pleasant visit with the Princess and her sister, the Marquise, who, like ourselves, is soon going up to Paris.

I am mailing you two letters at once, but one was

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dated yesterday; I mislaid it under some papers, and could not find it at all, till I asked St. Anthony of Padua to come to my rescue, after the manner of the Italians, and, sure enough, I found it at once.

## XLIII

TO E. F. D. B.

ADELAIDE RISTORI

ROME, ITALY, April 9, 1905

*Dear M.:*

SOME time ago, I wrote you that I had met the daughter of the famous actress, Adelaide Ristori, who now lives in a fine old palace in the Via Montrone, and bears the name and title of the Marchesa Capranica del Grillo. I have seen quite a little of Donna Bianca, the daughter, who is one of the sweetest women I have met in Rome, and entirely devoted to her famous mother.

For some time we have been trying to arrange a day when I could go to meet and sing to the great Ristori. A slight indisposition on her part, during the coldest of the weather, has made it impossible for her to receive her friends until recently. A few days ago, however, the much coveted invitation came, and yesterday I had tea with the woman who has been the greatest actress of her time, and who was in her prime the most beautiful woman in Italy.

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She is now over eighty years of age, but as she came forward leaning on the arm of her daughter, she had the same majestic bearing that I have always admired so much in the photographs that we have of her at home.

I was speaking one day of music and art with Donna Bianca, and in reference to Mme. Sembrich, I said, that I did not believe it was my dear friend's voice alone that had made her fame, nor her voice and art together, but rather the sweetness of her true womanhood, that was the crowning attraction to the great audiences that love her so much. "I think that was always true of my mother," Donna Bianca said; and I feel sure this must have been so, for Adelaide Ristori is a very noble and beautiful character, as well as a great and distinguished artist. You will never make me believe, that the personal character of an artist does not have its psychical effect on an audience. I do not say, that in order to be an artist, one must be a beautiful character, but I do say that the greatest artists, those that are the most beloved by the most people, like Sembrich and Ristori, have almost invariably beautiful natures as well as great talent.

As I drank my cup of tea, and sat chatting with this famous woman, who made herself very interesting and

## LA MARCHESA CAPRANICA DEL GRILLO

(ADELAIDE RISTORI)



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*To Mrs. Francis Batcheller  
Ricorde d'Adelaide Biston  
Mrs. Capranica del Grillo  
Rome 12 Capdela  
1905*



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delightful to me, I wondered if I were in a dream or if it were really quite true. The great Marchesa asked me if I would sing for her, and I do not know when I ever enjoyed singing more than on that afternoon. As I finished, the dear woman took my hands in hers, saying, "You sing straight to the heart, I want to talk to you," and then she told me of some of her various experiences in her many travels around the world. "If you wish to be known everywhere, my dear, you must go everywhere, put up with many discomforts, learn to accommodate yourself to various customs, and to all sorts of people, and as you love your art and work, happiness and success will come to you. My life has been one long journey, you know."

From the day she was born, Adelaide Ristori was destined for the theatre. The child of a mother and father who belonged to one of the small traveling troupes of the Italian stage, she first saw the foot-lights at the age of three months, when the enterprising director gained an unwilling permission from her mother to introduce the little baby into a small comedy that the troupe was then giving, called "Les Etrennes." The story of the little scene was supposed to be one of reconciliation between a young girl, who had married against her parents' wishes,

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and the irate father. She had not the courage to confess her marriage or to present boldly her new baby to the family, so on this, the New Year's fête, she had conspired with an old servant of the house to place the baby in the basket, half hidden with the best fruits and flowers of the garden, which according to custom must be presented to the master of the house on this day. But little Adelaide had no intention of waiting for any cue to make her voice heard upon the stage, and not being able to devour the fruits, called lustily for her maternal consolation. All the actors were upset, and the curtain dropped amidst the general laughter of the audience.

Her second debut was made at the age of three, where in one of the scenes, a very bad man was supposed to steal the child. The scene was quite exciting, and the little girl, feeling that she was really being stolen, bit and scratched at the poor actor, who was trying to hold her, until she freed herself and ran "willy-nilly" to the arms of her mamma.

At twelve years of age she was regularly engaged for children's parts, and as she was tall, she began soon after to play the rôles of young girls and ingénues. Her father, a man of great good sense, would not allow her to accept the brilliant offers which were made her by several of the companies



travelling throughout Italy, but conscious that she must keep her health as well as continue her education, preferred that she should accept, as she did for a time, modest parts in the company known as the troupe of the King of Sardinia, which stayed for the greater part of the year at Turin. Almost immediately she began to play important rôles, and the hard work and many obstacles inevitable to the artist, only increased her enthusiasm for her art. She had the high-strung, sensitive nature of the artist—gay to-day, sad to-morrow; and she tells the amusing story, that once when she was not in the cast at the theatre, during a scene which represented a masquerade ball, she dressed herself in a domino, and pranced about the stage with the others, unmasking at the critical moment, to the great amusement of the audience, before the astounded actor who was playing the principal rôle. At other times, she became extremely sad, and used to take long walks in the cemetery, visit the insane asylums, and sometimes after the extreme nervous tension of some dramatic rôle, she would faint and become unconscious for a quarter of an hour at a time.

At the age of eighteen her manager insisted that she should play the rôle of Mary Stuart. At first, it seemed to her beyond her strength and beyond her

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possibilities, but there was nothing to do but resign herself and study. The night that preceded her first representation of the part she could not shut her eyes, but was very nervous, feverish and utterly lacking in her confidence to succeed.

She said it seemed to her as if all the eyes of the audience contained sharp points which were sticking into her body. She seemed to hear people say, "Dear child, she can never play such a part," and then a horrible silence would follow, in which no one dared to applaud. Her sweet mother guided and guarded her through these days of trial and worry, and her conscientious work brought her full success.

I was struck by this frank admission of nervousness on the part of the great artist. I remember Sarasate, the well-known Spanish violinist, saying to me once when we were waiting our turn in a concert, in which we were both taking part, "Anyone who says he feels no emotion whatever when he faces a great audience lies." Of course he did not mean that everyone is terrified with fear, but I think myself when anyone steps on to the platform, before a great audience, he must feel a certain emotion. This must be scientifically true, as the personal vibrations of everyone in the audience must, just at first,

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be directed to the person on the platform. After a few seconds have passed, the direct aim of the vibrations is dispersed, and the true artist gains his equilibrium, loses his nervousness in the pleasure of his art and in his endeavor to please others.

You will be interested to know that Ristori believes in the complete innocence and sweetness of the character of Mary Stuart. I remember your telling me how magnificent she was in the rôle of the injured and ill-used Queen of Scots. Ristori's life was not all sunshine and flowers, for it was only after repeated pleadings that Pope Pius IX gave his consent to her marriage with the young and handsome Marchese Capranica del Grillo, whose family bitterly opposed the match. There were months of waiting, anxiety and opposition, but at last all difficulties were overcome, the young lovers were married and received the blessing of the Pope.

Fully recognizing his wife's great genius, the Marchese never failed to aid and encourage her in every possible way. For a time it seemed as if her domestic happiness would lessen her enthusiasm for her public career, but she had a great desire to prove to her own country, as well as to the world, the value of Italian art, which was rather being neg-

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lected at that time, the public inclining to favor more especially pieces by French authors. In Paris she received the homage of all the great critics and dramatic writers, and, in fact, all over the world, where she carried her wonderful Italian art, she met with the same triumphs, and the same love and admiration were lavished upon her. No difficulties daunted or discouraged her, and so impressed did she become with the beauty of Shakespeare that she mastered the English language, and played the rôle of Lady Macbeth in English—a very difficult thing for an Italian to do.

I remember Mon. B. of France describing to me his impressions of the sleep-walking scene in that play. He said it was the most wonderful piece of acting that he had ever seen. The marvellous way in which Ristori was able to keep the pupils of her eyes perfectly still, and to speak in a strange, veiled voice, such as one might use when walking in one's sleep, and yet to give the audience the definite picture of a woman morally and mentally ill, must have been extraordinary. She says that the steady strain of keeping the pupils of her eyes immovable, permanently injured her eye-sight. Throughout the whole scene she gave long, painful sighs, to give the impression that she was really in a nervous sleep.

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She told us about a gala night in Naples, when she fell apparently without reason across the front of the stage into the foot-lights, and was only saved from being burned seriously by the brother of King Ferdinand of Naples, Count of Syracuse. Fortunately, the theatre was lighted with oil, and though her arm was burned badly, she persisted in continuing the performance. It was said at the time that the accident was due to the presence in the theatre of a celebrated *jettatura*, and the Count of Syracuse presented her then and there with a rabbit's foot mounted in gold, saying, "I killed the beast myself, wear this bijou against all *jettature* of the future."

It was at Madrid in the same year that Ristori says she passed the most memorable evening of her life. As she drove to the theatre one evening, she heard the solemn ringing of a bell in the street by a monk. She asked the reason of this, and was told that a young soldier, called Nicolas Chapado, in a moment of anger, had put his hand to his sabre, and started to attack a sergeant, his superior officer, and had been condemned to die. The story filled the kind-hearted Marchesa with sadness, and while she was thinking of the unhappy man, as she made her toilet for the stage, a knock came on her door. Her husband went to find out what was wanted, and discovered

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that a number of people, knowing the great fondness of the Queen for Ristori, had come to beg her to intercede for the life of the condemned man. They explained that the unhappy soldier was an excellent young man of irreproachable character, who had served eleven years in the army, and had been struck unjustly by his sergeant before his comrades. "But the Queen will think me foolish," cried Ristori, "I should never dare." She was quite upset at the idea that they looked to her to save the life of this man, but she was so tender-hearted, that she could not refuse to do her utmost. She sent out into the audience by a messenger that the Marchesa Capranica del Grillo desired to see the Marshal Narvaez Duke de Valence, President of the Council of the Ministers. Always polite, he came at once with his aide-de-camp, and though at first stern and severe, he could not but be moved by the pleadings of this wonderful woman. At last he said, "Well, if the Queen consents, I will not oppose, though only to-day I begged her to be severe, as all clemency at this time is dangerous, for our revolutions nearly always begin in the army. Listen, Madame, in the *entr'acte* ask for an audience with Her Majesty, be as eloquent with her as you have been with me; the Queen adores you, she will tell you that the President of

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the Council opposes a pardon, she will call me; I will come, you may hope." Hardly had the Marshal left, when an anxious crowd overwhelmed her with questions, but she could say nothing. After the first act, an audience of the Queen was asked and granted, and at the feet of the Royal Lady Ristori begged for the life of this poor soldier. "Oh, Your Majesty, let my supplications reach your heart, and pardon a faithful subject who is really a good soldier, and who would give his life for Your Majesty; he but committed an indiscretion in a moment of thoughtlessness!" The Queen was much moved by the tears of the noble woman at her feet. "Calm yourself, Madame," she said, "I wished myself to grant him pardon, but the Marshal" —forgetting all etiquette and without perceiving that she was interrupting her Majesty, Ristori continued, "Deign then to express your clement intentions, and I know the Marshal will consent also." True to his promise, Narvaez came at once to the box, and bowed before his Sovereign. The Queen took Ristori's hand, saying, "Well, yes, yes, we will pardon him." As the public was becoming impatient, the Queen sent then and there for pen and paper, and having signed the act of pardon, said to Ristori, "There! At least one tragedy is well ended. Keep this pen, which shall

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remain for you and yours a blessed souvenir"; and Ristori, her precious gift in her hand, with a heart bounding with joy, announced to the impatient crowd awaiting the decision, that the pardon had been granted.

A few moments afterward, when she appeared upon the scene, a tremendous demonstration of cheers and vivas resounded from all parts of the house: the name of the Queen alternating with that of Ristori. "I bowed to the Royal box," she said, "for I would not accept for myself the gratitude of the public, but I heard the Queen distinctly say in a loud voice, pointing to me, 'No—no, it is she—it is she.'"

Ristori says that she owes to this Queen the most memorable evening of her existence, and she has always carefully treasured the pen which signed the pardon of the life of an honest man.

In Holland, where she played in 1859, she met with the same enthusiasm, particularly in Utrecht, where apparently the whole city met her at the station, and made such a demonstration in the streets and in front of her hotel, that the King said, "It is too small for a revolution, but too large for a demonstration." Nevertheless the King and Queen went often to her representations and presented her with the Gold Medal of Artistic Merit of Holland.



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So it was everywhere, young and old, great and small, admired her alike, and she received decorations and medals from nearly every crowned head in the civilized world; playing now at the winter palace of the Czar and Czarina of Russia; now at the private birthday festival of Emperor William of Germany; now in Paris, where the Emperor Napoleon lavished upon her decorations and attentions; now in South America, where the Emperor, Dom Pedro, became one of her fast friends, as well as her admirer; and in our own America, the same admiration and applause greeted her, whenever she did us the honor to come to our shores.

She says that the most remarkable return from the playhouse that she ever had, was in Havana, Cuba. When she left the theatre, the enthusiastic Cubans tried to unharness her horses and drag her carriage themselves. She was at last able to prevent this, but she could not prevent the enthusiastic youths from climbing all over her carriage, at the risk of breaking their legs in the wheels. She was literally buried with bouquets, and she said, "I have often been haunted by the magic spectacle of that night in the tropics, where, under the star-lit sky, I passed in review this vast crowd, as if I had been a Queen. On each side was a living hedge of the most elegant

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people of Cuba in evening dress, throwing me kisses and flowers, while the coachmen, all negroes, were hardly able to restrain their horses, frightened by the light of the torches held all along the road I was to go. Of the thousand and one nights that I have passed in coming back from the theatre by star-light, that was certainly the most brilliant."

The last night that Ristori appeared upon the stage was in New York, when at the urgent invitation of a German company, she consented to play Mary Stuart, speaking her lines in English while the rest of the company played in German. It was a very risky thing to do, and at first she was not at all willing to undertake it, but her great art made all things possible.

Many other interesting things, her daughter, Donna Bianca, has been kind enough to tell me, and has put into my hands material which has enabled me to learn much more about the great Ristori than I have known or realized before, as, of course, I am far too young to have ever seen her act. Donna Bianca speaks with much enthusiasm of Boston and Bostonians, and referred to the many kindnesses that Mrs. John L. Gardner had shown her mother and herself, when they were last in America.

The Marchese Giorgio, Donna Bianca's brother,

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is a Gentleman-in-Waiting to Her Majesty Queen Margherita, and is a very interesting man.

On the eightieth birthday of Adelaide Ristori, a representation of some play was given in every theatre in Italy, and the proceeds sent to the great artist of whom Italy is so proud, and whom it so justly loves and honors.

But the great Marchesa would not accept pecuniary offerings. She thanked the country for its beautiful tribute, but used the money to establish a home for aged or infirm actresses. It was like her great heart to do for others of the profession that she has raised so high, who have been less fortunate and less gifted than herself.

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To C. R.

SUA ECCELLENZA LA MARCHESA DI RUDINI

ROME, ITALY, April 12, 1905

*My dear C. :*

**T**HROUGH the kindness and courtesy of the Marchesa Leone di Rudini I was able to get a very nice box for the amateur theatricals, on March 25, given for the benefit of the *Educatore Pestalozzi*, of which the Marchesa di Rudini is president. The house presented a sight long to be remembered, for all aristocratic and intellectual Rome found itself together in the Argentina theatre on that evening. The piece given was written especially for the occasion by M. Auguste Turchi, and called "*Aprile d'Amore*" ("April of Love"). I felt like a toy Chinese mandarin, for one saw everybody one knew. I think all in all it was the most beautiful audience I ever remember. The jewels were superb, toilets exquisite, and there were more beautiful women than I have ever seen together at one time. Her Majesty the Queen, attended by her Lady-of-

REV. L.

To C. R.

M. LA MARCHESA DI RUDINI

Rome, Italy, April 12, 1905

HER EXCELLENCY THE MARCHESA LEONE DI RUDINI



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Honor, the Countess of Trinità, entered the Royal box soon after the beginning of the opera. She looked far more lovely than anyone in the house, clad in a white gown, embroidered in silver spangles, as she bowed and smiled at the ovation of applause given her as she entered. She wore a diamond ornament in her hair, which is so abundant, so beautiful and always so becomingly *coiffed*.

The principal rôles in the operetta were taken by prominent society people, who sang extremely well. The music was not difficult, but there was no feeling of the amateur, for they had all been well drilled, and had so much natural talent. The Marchese Carlo Calabrini took the principal man's part, and was perfectly irresistible as a rich American gentleman, John Prycchenbrack, traveling in Italy, enchanted with the beauty of the Italian women, and very desirous of marrying and taking back to America a lovely Italian bride. It seems that the Marchese Calabrini—who, by the way, is one of the Gentlemen-in-Waiting to Her Majesty the Queen—has an English mother, consequently he knows all the tricks of the English and Americans in speaking his language, and he kept the audience in gales of laughter by his funny foreign-sounding Italian. Besides the rich American, there were other Italian suitors for

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the hand of the Prima Donna, as in all comic operas, and there were the usual solos, trios and quartettes, which were all extremely well done. The Marchese Giorgio Guglielmi, who is one of the favorites here in amateur theatricals, played his part of Don Palmiro, a sort of "Beau Brummel" suitor in a specially fetching manner.

At the end of the second act, the Baron Gino de Morpurgo brought down the house by driving a coach-and-four in and around and about the stage.

It was the most dexterous piece of driving I have ever seen, and round after round of applause followed, as he drove off the stage. He came back to bow his acknowledgments, but that would not satisfy the audience at all. Shrieks of "*Bis, Bis!*" rang from all parts of the house, and at last he had to drive on again, and put his stunning horses through their paces once more. He did it just as well the second time, and the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds. One of the men told me he is considered the best whip in Italy. He comes from Venice, where the only horse in the place is kept in the Zoo, so that the children may know there is such an animal. Isn't it odd? But, of course, all the principal families spend a great deal of time in Rome every year. Morpurgo looked very fine,



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dressed as a postilion, with white wig, blue coat, red waist-coat, white knee-breeches, white stockings, and big silver-buckled black slippers.

The duet between Mme. De Luca and Madame Facini was also greeted with much applause. Of course the audience all felt in good humor with themselves and the world in general, but then, the performance really was surprisingly well done.

At the end of the third act, which had a most effective stage setting, representing Spring at the Isle of San Giorgio, John Prycchenbrack was supposed to give a gorgeous fête with his American millions. Calabrini wore a "Grand-father's" hat, an "Uncle Sam" beard, long trousers and a coat with long tails; and he was too funny for words with his broken English-Italian. This fête served as an excuse for one of the prettiest ballets I have ever seen anywhere. To begin with, all the women in it, without exception, were really beautiful, and then the costumes were fresh, dainty and elegant. As F. B. said, "This is a ballet after one's own heart." The four seasons were represented each by six ladies. Spring came first, in costumes of delicate green chiffon, trimmed with roses, and wreaths of roses were worn in the hair, while each one carried a garland of roses in her hand. You see the roses come

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in the Spring here, so that the seasons were arranged quite differently from what they would have been with us. Summer was represented in yellow chiffon, trimmed with bunches of wheat and red poppies, and each summer-girl carried a scythe in her hand. Miss Patterson, of Baltimore, the niece of the Countess Gianotti, looked very pretty as one of this group, and the costume was also particularly becoming to the Princess Giovanelli. Autumn was made extremely effective with violet dresses, trimmed with cleverly arranged wreaths of grape vines and bunches of grapes. Another American girl, Miss Parish, of New York, looked very pretty in these violet shades. Winter was the prettiest and cleverest costume for the season that I remember to have seen. The gowns were of soft, white mulle, with little balls of white cotton sewed on all over the skirts, and the head dresses were an artistic arrangement of these same little balls of cotton made into a sort of a crown of tiny snow balls. Dorothy Mocatta, a handsome English girl (daughter of a handsome mother), the Princess of Camporeale, and the daughter of the Marchesa Bevilacqua Lazise di Nozarole, carried off the honors in this group. The prettiest sort of a dance was arranged, and you can imagine the effect of the interwinding of the yellow,

THE BALLET OF H. E. THE MARCHESA DI RUDINI



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## GLIMPSES OF ITALIAN COURT LIFE

purple, green and white colors. Ah ! But every one actually held their breath when a golden apparition, representing the sun, floated on in the midst of the seasons. Every glass was levelled at this exquisite vision, and every one soon recognized the beautiful Marchesa Dora di Rudini. Tremendous applause followed. She was simply *éblouissante*, and her rare dark beauty was set off to the best possible advantage by her shimmering golden skirt covered with gold spangles. On her head was arranged a head-dress to represent the rays of the sun, but her beautiful eyes seemed quite as brilliant as her dazzling head-dress. The music was particularly attractive for her dance, and I am sure any professional dancer would have been envious of the Marchesa's grace and liteness. When the curtain dropped at the last tableau of the sun amid the seasons, everybody was wild with enthusiasm. They did it all over again most amiably, and then, in spite of herself and much against her will, the clever and energetic promoter of the evening, the incomparable Marchesa Leone di Rudini was pushed by various members of her own opera company to the front of the stage, where she was greeted with three cheers.

The Queen left at the end of the second act, after having warmly congratulated H. E. the Marchesa.

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I cannot begin to tell you all the people I saw that I knew. The Princess d'Antuni looked particularly handsome, wearing her wonderful tiara of pearls. The beautiful Princess Viggiano had a box just above me, and looked distinguished and elegant, as she always does. H. E. Mme. Ohyama, the Japanese Ambassadors, wore some very fine jewels, and was in a white gown of the latest Paris fashion. The Marchesa Casati had on her wonderful pearls, as did the Duchess Visconti di Modrone—in fact, everybody seemed to be looking their best. The Countess Lutzow with her lovely white hair and beautiful figure made me think of my dear mother.

As I came out from our box on the arm of the Col. Marchese Beccaria Incisa, many people made way for us to pass, as he is a very distinguished officer and a member of a famous family, a brother of the Rudini. F. B. gave his arm to the Marchesa, of course, and with very little trouble, thanks to the prompt action of the footman of the Colonel, we found our carriage and drove away home.

It was a delightful evening, and we were so glad to have had the Marchese and Marchesa Incisa with us in our box. The people that we did not know, they did, and they told us all about everything and everybody. The Marchesa looked exceedingly well in

COMPANY OF H. E. THE MARCHESA DI RUDINI

SHOWING BARON GINO DI MORPURGO IN THE CENTRE