

LETTER XL.

HEIDELBERG.

MY DEAR:--

To-day we made our first essay on the Rhine. Switzerland is a poor preparation for admiring any common scenery; but the Rhine from Strasbourg to Manheim seemed only a muddy strip of water, with low banks, poplars, and willows. If there was any thing better, we passed it while I was asleep; for I did sleep, even on the classic Rhine.

Day before yesterday, at Basle, I went into the museum, and there saw some original fragments of the Dance of Death, and many other pictures by Holbein, with two miniature likenesses of Luther and his wife, by Lucas Cranach; they are in water colors. Catharine was no beauty at that time, if Lucas is to be trusted, and Luther looks rather savage. But I saw a book of autographs, and several original letters of Luther's. I saw the word "Jesus" at the top of one of them, thus, "J. U. S." The handwriting was fair, even, and delicate. I laid my hand on it, and thought his hand also had passed over the paper which he has made living with his thoughts. Melanchthon, of whom a far more delicate penmanship might have been expected, wrote a coarse, rugged hand, quite like Dr. Bishop's. It somehow touched my heart to see this writing of Luther's, so fair, and clean, and flowing; and to think of his vive and ever-surging spirits, his conflicts and his

victories.

We were awakened, about eight o'clock this morning, by the cathedral bell, which is near by, and by the chanting of the service. It was a beautiful, sunny morning, and I could hear them sing all the time I was dressing. I think, by the style of the singing, it was Protestant service: it brought to mind the elms of Andover--the dewy, exquisite beauty of the Sabbath mornings there; and I felt, more than ever, why am I seeking any thing more beautiful than home? But today the sweet shadow of God's presence is still over me, and the sense of his love and protection falls silently into my soul like dew.

At breakfast time Professor M. and his daughter called, as he said, to place themselves at our disposal for the castle, or whatever we might wish to see. I intimated that we would prefer spending the day in our New England manner of retirement--a suggestion which he took at once.

After breakfast the servant asked us if we should like to have a room commanding a view of the castle. "To be sure," said I. So he ushered us into a large, elegantly-furnished apartment, looking out immediately upon it. There it sat, upon its green throne, a regal, beautiful, poetic thing, fair and sad.

We had singing and prayers, and a sermon from C. We did not go to the table d'hôte, for we abominate its long-drawn, endless formalities. But one part of the arrangements we enjoyed without

going: I mean the music. To me all music is sacred. Is it not so? All real music, in its passionate earnest, its blendings, its wild, heart-searching tones, is the language of aspiration. So it may not be meant, yet, when we know God, so we translate it.

In the evening we took tea with Professor M., in a sociable way, much like the salon of Paris. Mrs. M. sat at a table, and poured out tea, which a servant passed about on a waiter. Gradually quite a circle of people dropped in--among them Professor Mitemeyer, who, I was told, is the profoundest lawyer in Germany; also there was Heinrich von Gagen, who was head of the convention of the empire in 1848, and prime minister. He is tall, has a strongly-marked face, very dark hair and eyebrows. There was also a very young man, with quite light hair, named Fisher, who, they told me, was one of the greatest philosophers of the time; but government had taken away his license to lecture, on account of his pantheistic principles. I understand that this has occasioned much feeling, and that some of the professors side with, and some against him. A lady told me that the theological professors were against him. I wonder people do not see that this kind of suppression of opinion is a sword with two edges, which may cut orthodoxy equally with pantheism. "Let both grow together," says Christ, "the wheat and the tares." In America we do this, and a nodding crop of all sorts we have. The more the better; the earth must exhaust herself before the end can come.

Mr. M. spoke English, as did his very pretty daughter, Ida; his wife

only French and German. Now, if you had only been there, we might have had quite a brilliant time; but my ignorance of German kept me from talking with any but those who could speak English. Professor Mittemeyer summoned English enough to make a long compliment, to which I responded as usual, by looking very foolish. There was a well informed gentleman there, who was formerly private secretary to Prince Albert, and who speaks English well. He has a bright, ingenious mind, and knows every thing, and seemed particularly willing to give me the benefit of his knowledge, for which I was suitably grateful. On the whole, I spent a very pleasant evening, and we parted about nine o'clock, Miss Ida promising to be our guide to the castle in the morning.

Well, in the morning I was too unwell to leave the sofa. I knew the old symptoms, and remained in my room, while Professor M. and daughter, with S, W., and G, went up to the castle. I lay all day on the sofa, until, at five o'clock at night, I felt so much better that I thought we might take a carriage and drive up. C. accompanied me, and cocher took us by a beautiful drive along the valley of the Neckar, over the hills back of the castle, and finally through the old arched gateway into the grounds. I had no idea before of the extent or the architectural beauty of the place. The terrace behind the castle is a most lovely spot. It wanted only silence and solitude to make it perfect; it was full of tourists, as also was each ruined nook and arch. I sauntered about alone, for C. had a sick headache, and was forced to sit on one of the stone benches. Heidelberg Castle

is of vast extent, and various architecture; parts of it, a guide book says, were designed by Michael Angelo. Over one door was a Hebrew inscription. Marshalled in niches in the wall stood statues of electors and knights in armor--silent, lonely. The effect was quite different from the old Gothic ruins I had seen. This spoke of courts, of princes; and the pride and grandeur of the past, contrasted with the silence and desertion, reminded me of the fable of the city of enchantment, where king and court were smitten to stone as they stood. A mournful lion's head attracted my attention, it had such a strange, sad look; and there was a fountain broken and full of weeds.

I looked on the carvings, the statues, the broken arches, where bluebells and wild flowers were waving, and it seemed inexpressibly beautiful. It haunted me in my dreams, and I found myself walking up and down that terrace, in a kind of dim, beautiful twilight, with some friend: it was a strange dream of joy. But I felt myself very ill even while there, and had to take my sofa again as soon as I returned. There lying, I took my pencil, and drew just the view of the castle which I could see from my window, as a souvenir of the happiness I had felt at Heidelberg.

Now, I know you will say with me that a day of such hazy, dreamy enjoyment is worth a great deal. We cannot tell why it is, or what it is, but one feels like an Æolian breathed on and touched by soft winds.

This sketch of the castle gives only about half of it. Those tiny statues indicated in it on the points of the gables are figures in armor of large size. The two little kiosks or summer houses that you see, you will find, by turning back to the other picture, mark the extremities of the terrace. There is a singular tinge of the Moorish about this architecture which gives me great delight. That Moorish development always seemed to me strangely exciting and beautiful.

JOURNAL--(CONTINUED.)

Tuesday, August 2. We leave Heidelberg with regret. At the railway station occurred our first loss of baggage. As W. was making change in the baggage room, he missed the basket containing our books and sundries. Unfortunately the particular word for basket had just then stepped out. "Wo ist mein--pannier?" exclaimed he, giving them the French synonyme. They shook their heads. "Wo ist mein--basket?" he cried, giving them English; they shook their heads still harder. "Wo ist mein-- --" "Whew--w!" shrieked the steam whistle; "Ding a-ling-ling!" went the bell, and, leaving his question unfinished, W. ran for the cars.

In our car was an elderly couple, speaking French. The man was evidently a quiet sort of fellow, who, by long Caudling, had

subdued--whole volcanos into dumbness within him. Little did he think what eruption fate was preparing. II. sat opposite his hat, which he had placed on the empty seat. There was a tower, or something, coming; H. rose, turned round, and innocently took a seat on his chapeau. Such a voice as came out of that meekness personified!

In the twinkling of an eye--for there is a peculiar sensation which a person experiences in sitting upon, or rather into a hat; ages are condensed into moments, and between the first yielding of the brittle top and the final crush and jam, as between the top of a steeple and the bottom, there is room for a life's reflection to flash through the mind--in the twinkling of an eye H. agonizingly felt that she was sitting on a hat, that the hat was being jammed, that it was getting flat and flatter every second, that the meek man was howling in French; and she was just thinking of her husband and children when she started to her feet, and the nightmare was over. The meek man, having howled out his French sentence, sat aghast, stroking his poor hat, while his wife opposite was in convulsions, and we all agog. The gentleman then asked H. if she proposed sitting where she was, saying, very significantly, "If you do, I'll put my hat there;" suiting the action to the word. We did not recover from this all the way to Frankfort.

Arrived at Frankfort we drove to the Hotel de Russie. Then, after visiting all the lions of the place, we rode to see Dannecker's Ariadne. It is a beautiful female riding on a panther or a tiger. The

light is let in through a rosy curtain, and the flush as of life falls upon the beautiful form. Two thoughts occurred to me; why, when we gaze upon this form so perfect, so entirely revealed, does it not excite any of those emotions, either of shame or of desire, which the living reality would excite? And again; why does not the immediate contact of feminine helplessness with the most awful brute ferocity excite that horror which the sight of the same in real life must awaken? Why, but because we behold under a spell in the transfigured world of art where passion ceases, and bestial instincts are felt to be bowed to the law of mind, and of ideal truth.