

LETTER XLIV.

BERLIN, August 10.

MY DEAR:--

Here we are in Berlin--a beautiful city. These places that kings build, have of course, more general uniformity and consistency of style than those that grow up by chance. The prevalence of the Greek style of architecture, the regularity and breadth of the streets, the fine trees, especially in the Unter den Linden, on which are our rooms, struck me more than any thing I have seen since Paris. Why Paris charms me so much more than other cities of similar recommendations, I cannot say, any more than a man can tell why he is fascinated by a lady love no fairer to his reason than a thousand others. Perhaps it is the reflected charm of the people I knew there, that makes it seem so sunny.

This afternoon we took a guide, and went first through the royal palace. The new chapel, which is being built by the present prince, is circular in form, with a dome one hundred and thirty feet high. The space between the doors is occupied by three circular recesses, with figures of prophets and apostles in fresco. Over one door is the Nativity,--over the other, the Resurrection,--also in fresco. On the walls around were pictures somewhat miscellaneous, I thought; for example, John Huss, St. Cecilia, Melanchthon, Luther, several women,

saints, apostles, and evangelists. These paintings are all by the first German artists. The floor is a splendid mosaic, and the top of the dome is richly adorned with frescoes.

Still, though beautiful, the chapel seemed to me deficient in unity of effect. One admires the details too much to appreciate it as a whole. We passed through the palace rooms. Its paintings are far inferior to those of Windsor. The finest royal paintings have gone to adorn the walls of the Museum. There was one magnificent Vandyke, into which he has introduced a large dog--some relief from his eternal horses. There was David's picture of Bonaparte crossing the Alps, of which Mrs. P. has the engraving, and you can tell her that it is much more impressive than the painting. Opposite to this picture hangs Blucher, looking about as amiable as one might suppose a captain of a regiment of mastiffs. Our guide, pointing to the portrait of Napoleon, with evident pride, said, "Blucher brought that from Paris. He said Napoleon had carried so many pictures from other countries to Paris, that now he should be carried away himself."

There were portraits of Queen Louisa, very beautiful; of Queen Victoria, a present; one of the Empress of Russia; also a statue of the latter. The ball room contained a statue of Victory, by Ranch, a beautiful female figure, the model of which, we were told, is his own daughter. He had the grace to allow her some clothing, which was fatherly, for an artist. The palace rooms were very magnificent. The walls were covered with a damask of silk and gold, into which was

inwrought the Prussian eagle. In the crowning room was an immense quantity of plate, in solid gold and silver. The guide seemed not a little proud of our king, princes, and palace. Men will attach themselves to power and splendor as naturally as moss will grow on a rock. There is, perhaps, a foundation for this in human nature--witness the Israelites of old, who could not rest till they obtained a king. The Guide told us there were nine hundred rooms in the palace, but that he should only take us through the best. We were duly sensible of the mercy.

Then we drove to Charlottenburg to see the Mausoleum. I know not when I have been more deeply affected than there; and yet, not so much by the sweet, lifelike statue of the queen as by that of the king, her husband, executed by the same hand. Such an expression of long-desired rest, after suffering and toil, is shed over the face!--so sweet, so heavenly! There, where he has prayed year after year,--hoping, yearning, longing,--there, at last, he rests, life's long anguish over! My heart melted as I looked at these two, so long divided,--he so long a mourner, she so long mourned,--now calmly resting side by side in a sleep so tranquil.

We went through the palace. We saw the present king's writing desk and table in his study, just as he left them. His writing establishment is about as plain as yours. Men who really mean to do any thing do not use fancy tools. His bed room, also, is in a style of severe simplicity. There were several engravings fastened against the wall;

and in the anteroom a bust and medallion of the Empress Eugenie--a thing which I should not exactly have expected in a born king's palace; but beauty is sacred, and kings cannot call it parvenu.

Then we went into the queen's bed room, finished in green, and then through the rooms of Queen Louisa. Those marks of her presence, which you saw during the old king's lifetime, are now removed: we saw no traces of her dresses, gloves, or books. In one room, draped in white muslin over pink, we were informed the Empress of Russia was born.

In going out to Charlottenburg, we rode through the Thiergarten, the Tuileries of Berlin. In one of the most quiet and sequestered spots is the monument erected by the people of Berlin to their old king. The pedestal is Carrara marble, sculptured with beautiful scenes called garden pleasures--children in all manner of out-door sports, and parents fondly looking on. It is graceful, and peculiarly appropriate to those grounds where parents and children are constantly congregating. The whole is surmounted by a statue of the king, in white marble--the finest representation of him I have ever seen.

Thoughtful, yet benign, the old king seems like a good father keeping a grave and affectionate watch over the pleasures of his children in their garden frolics. There was something about these moss-grown gardens that seemed so rural and pastoral, that I at once preferred them to all I had seen in Europe. Choice flowers are planted in knots, here and there, in sheltered nooks, as if they had grown by accident; and an air of sweet, natural wildness is left amid the most careful cultivation. The people seemed to be enjoying themselves less

demonstratively and with less vivacity than in France, but with a calm inwardness. Each nation has its own way of being happy, and the style of life in each bears a certain relation of appropriateness to character. The trim, gay, dressy, animated air of the Tuileries suits admirably with the mobile, sprightly vivacity of society there. Both, in their way, are beautiful; but this seems less formal, and more according to nature.

As we were riding home, our guide, who was a full feathered monarchist, told us, with some satisfaction, the number of palaces in Prussia. Suddenly, to my astonishment, "Young America" struck into the conversation in the person of little G.

"We do things more economically in America. Our president don't have sixty palaces; he has to be satisfied with one White House."

The guide entered into an animated defence of king and country. These palaces--did not the king keep them for the people? did he not bear all the expense of caring for them, that they might furnish public pleasure grounds and exhibition rooms? Had we not seen the people walking about in them, and enjoying themselves?

This was all true enough, and we assented. The guide continued, Did not the king take the public money to make beautiful museums for the people, where they could study the fine arts?--and did our government do any such thing?

I thought of our surplus revenue, and laid my hand on my mouth. But yet there is a progress of democratic principle indicated by this very understanding that the king is to hold things for the benefit of the people. Times are altered since Louis XIV. was instructed by his tutor, as he looked out on a crowd of people, "These are all yours;" and since he said, "L'élot, c'est moi"

Our guide seemed to feel bound, however, to exhaust himself in comparison of our defects with their excellences.

"Some Prussians went over to America to live," he said, "and had to come back again; they could not live there."

"Why not?" said I.

"O, they said there was nothing done there but working and going to church!"

"That's a fact," said W., with considerable earnestness.

"Yes," said our guide; "they said we have but one life to live, and we want to have some comfort in it."

It is a curious fact, that just in proportion as a country is free and self-governed it has fewer public amusements. America and Scotland

have the fewest of any, and Italy the most. Nevertheless, I am far from thinking that this is either necessary or desirable: the subject of providing innocent public amusements for the masses is one that we ought seriously to consider. In Berlin, and in all other German cities, there are gardens and public grounds in which there are daily concerts of a high order, and various attractions, to which people can gain admittance for a very trifling sum. These refine the feelings, and cultivate the taste; they would be particularly useful in America in counteracting that tendency to a sordid materialism, which is one of our great national dangers.

We went over the Berlin Museum. In general style Greek--but Greek vitalized by the infusion of the German mind. In its general arrangements one of the most gorgeous and impressive combinations of art which I have seen. Here are the great frescoes of Kaulbach, Cornelius, and other German artists, who have so grafted Grecian ideas into the German stock that the growth has the foliage and coloring of a new plant. One set of frescoes, representing the climate and scenery of Greece, had on me a peculiar and magical effect. Alas! there never has been the Greece that we conceive; we see it under the soft, purple veil of distance, like an Alpine valley embraced by cloudy mountains; but there was the same coarse dust and débris of ordinary life there as with us. The true Arcadia lies beyond the grave. The collection of pictures is rich in historic curiosities--valuable as marking the progress of art. One Claude Lorraine here was a matchless specimen--a perfect victory over all the difficulties of green

landscape painting.