

LETTER XLIX

LONDON.

MY DEAR:--

Our last letters from home changed all our plans. We concluded to hurry away by the next steamer, if at that late hour we could get passage. We were all in a bustle. The last shoppings for aunts, cousins, and little folks were to be done by us all. The Palais Royal was to be rummaged; bronzes, vases, statuettes, bonbons, playthings--all that the endless fertility of France could show--was to be looked over for the "folks at home."

You ought to have seen our rooms at night, the last evening we spent in Paris. When the whole gleanings of a continental tour were brought forth for packing, and compared with the dimensions of original trunks--ah, what an hour was that! Who should reconcile these incongruous elements--bronzes, bonnets, ribbons and flowers, plaster casts, books, muslins and laces--elements as irreconcilable as fate and freedom; who should harmonize them? And I so tired!

"Ah," said Jladame B., "it is all quite easy; you must have a packer."

"A packer?"

"Yes. He will come, look at your things, provide whatever may be necessary, and pack them all."

So said, so done. The man came, saw, conquered; he brought a trunk, twine, tacks, wrapping paper, and I stood by in admiration while he folded dresses, arranged bonnets, caressingly enveloped flowers in silk paper, fastened refractory bronzes, and muffled my plaster animals with reference to the critical points of ears and noses,--in short, reduced the whole heterogeneous assortment to place and proportion, shut, locked, corded, labelled, handed me the keys, and it was done. The charge for all this was quite moderate.

How we sped across the channel C. relates. We are spending a few very pleasant days with our kind friends, the L.'s, in London.

ON BOARD THE ARCTIC, Wednesday, September 7.

On Thursday, September 1, we reached York, and visited the beautiful ruins of St. Mary's Abbey, and the magnificent cathedral. How individual is every cathedral! York is not like Westminster, nor like Strasbourg, nor Cologne, any more than Shakspeare is like Milton, or Milton like Homer. In London I attended morning service in Westminster, and explored its labyrinths of historic memories. The reading of the Scriptures in the English tongue, and the sound of the chant, affected me deeply, in contrast with the pictorial and dramatic

effects of Romanism in continental churches.

As a simple matter of taste, Protestantism has made these buildings more impressive by reducing them to a stricter unity. The multitude of shrines, candlesticks, pictures, statues, and votive offerings, which make the continental churches resemble museums, are constantly at variance with the majestic grandeur of the general impression. Therein they typify the church to which they belong, which has indeed the grand historic basis and framework of Christianity, though overlaid with extraneous and irrelevant additions.

This Cathedral of York has a severe grandeur peculiar to itself. I saw it with a deep undertone of feeling; for it was the last I should behold.

No one who has appreciated the wonders of a new world of art and association can see, without emotion, the door closing upon it, perhaps forever. I lingered long here, and often turned to gaze again; and after going out, went back, once more, to fill my soul with a last, long look, in which I bade adieu to all the historic memories of the old world. I thought of the words, "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

These glorious arches, this sublime mystery of human power and skill, is only a shadow of some eternal substance, which, in the ages to come, God will yet reveal to us.

It rained with inflexible pertinacity during all the time we were at York; and the next day it rained still, when we took the cars for Castle Howard station.

In riding through the park from the station, we admired an avenue composed of groups of magnificent beeches, sixteen or eighteen in a group, disposed at intervals on either hand.

The castle, a building in the Italian style, rose majestically on a slight eminence in the centre of a green lawn. We alighted in the crisis of one of the most driving gusts of wind and rain, so that we really seemed to be fleeing for shelter. But within all was bright and warm.

Lady Carlisle welcomed us most affectionately, and we learned that, had we not been so reserved at the York station, in concealing our names, we should have received a note from her. However, as we were safely arrived, it was of no consequence.

Several of the family were there, among the rest Lady Dover and Mr. and Mrs. E. Howard. They urged us to remain over night; but as we had written to Leeds that we should be there in the evening train, we were obliged to decline. We were shown over the castle, which is rich in works of art. There was a gallery of antiques, and a collection of paintings from old masters. In one room I saw tapestry exactly like

that which so much interested us in Windsor, representing scenes from the Book of Esther. It seemed to be of a much more ancient date. I was also interested in a portrait of an ancestor of the family, the identical "Belted Will" who figures in Scott's Lay.

"Belted Will Howard shall come with speed,
And William of Deloraine, good at need."

In one of the long corridors we were traversing, we heard the voice of merriment, and found a gay party of young people and children amusing themselves at games. I thought what a grand hide-and-go-seek place the castle must be--whole companies might lose themselves among the rooms. The central hall of the building goes up to the roof, and is surmounted by a dome. The architecture is in the Italian style, which I think much more suited to the purposes of ordinary life than for strictly religious uses. I never saw a church in that style that produced a very deep impression on me. This hall was gorgeously frescoed by Italian masters. The door commands the view of a magnificent sweep of green lawn, embellished by an artificial lake. It is singular in how fine and subtle a way different nationalities express themselves in landscape gardening, while employing the same materials. I have seen no grounds on the continent that express the particular shade of ideas which characterize the English. There is an air of grave majesty about the wide sweep of their outlines--a quality suggestive of ideas of strength and endurance which is appropriate to their nationality.

In Lord Carlisle's own room we saw pictures of Sumner, Prescott, and others of his American friends. This custom of showing houses, which prevails over Europe, is, I think, a thing which must conduce greatly to national improvement. A plea for the beautiful is constantly put in by them--a model held up before the community, whose influence cannot be too highly estimated. Before one of the choicest paintings stood the easel of some neighboring artist, who was making a copy. He was quite unknown to the family, but comes and goes at his pleasure, the picture being as freely at his service as if it were an outside landscape.

After finishing our survey, I went with Lady Carlisle into her own boudoir. There I saw a cabinet full-length picture of her mother, the Duchess of Devonshire. She is represented with light hair, and seemed to have been one whose beauty was less that of regular classic model, than the fascination of a brilliant and buoyant spirit inspiring a graceful form. Lady Carlisle showed me an album, containing a kind of poetical record made by her during a passage through the Alps, which she crossed on horseback, in days when such an exploit was more difficult and dangerous than at present. I particularly appreciated some lines in closing, addressed to her children, expressing the eagerness with which she turned from all that nature and art could offer, in prospect of meeting them once more.

Lord Carlisle is still in Turkey, and will, probably, spend the winter

in Greece. His mother had just received a letter from him, and he thinks that war is inevitable.

In one of the rooms that we traversed I saw an immense vase of bog oak and gold, which was presented to Lord Carlisle by those who favored his election on the occasion of his defeat on the corn-law question. The sentiment expressed by the givers was, that a defeat in a noble undertaking was worthy of more honor than a victory in an ignoble one.

After lunch, having waited in vain for the rain to cease, and give us a sunny interval in which to visit the grounds, we sallied out hooded and cloaked, to get at some of the most accessible points of view. The wind was unkindly and discourteous enough, and seemed bent on baffling the hospitable intentions of our friends. If the beauties of an English landscape were set off by our clear sky and sun, then patriotism, I fancy, would run into extravagance. I could see that even one gracious sunset smile might produce in these lawns and groves an effect of enchantment.

I was pleased with what is called the "kitchen garden," which I expected to find a mere collection of vegetables, but found to be a genuine old-fashioned garden, which, like Eden, brought forth all that was pleasant to the eye and good for food.

There were wide walks bordered with flowers, enclosing portions devoted to fruit and vegetables, and, best of all this windy day, the

whole enclosed by a high, solid stone wall, which bade defiance to the storm, and made this the most agreeable portion of our walk.

Our friends spoke much of Sumner and Prescott, who had visited there; also of Mr. Lawrence, our former ambassador, who had visited them just before his return.

After a very pleasant day we left, with regret, the warmth of this hospitable circle, thus breaking one more of the links that bind us to the English shore.

Nine o'clock in the evening found us sitting by a cheerful fire in the parlor of Mr. E. Baines, at Leeds. The father of our host was one of the most energetic parliamentary advocates of the repeal of the corn laws. Mr. B. spoke warmly of Lord Carlisle, and gave me the whole interesting history of the campaign which the vase at Castle Howard commemorated, and read me the speech of Lord C. on that occasion.

It has occurred to me, that the superior stability of the English aristocracy, as compared with that of other countries, might be traced, in part, to their relations with the representative branch of the government. The eldest son and heir is generally returned to the House of Commons by the vote of the people, before he is called to take his seat in the House of Peers. Thus the same ties bind them to the people which bind our own representatives--a peculiarity which, I believe, never existed permanently with the nobles in any other

country. By this means the nobility, when they enter the House of Lords, are better adapted to legislate wisely for the interests, not of a class, but of the whole people.

The next day the house was filled with company, and the Leeds offering was presented, the account of which you will see in the papers. Every thing was arranged with the greatest consideration. I saw many interesting people, and was delighted with the strong, religious interest in the cause of liberty, pervading all hearts. Truly it may be said, that Wilberforce and Clarkson lighted a candle which will never go out in England.

Monday we spent in a delightful visit to Fountains Abbey; less rich in carvings than Melrose, but wider in extent, and of a peculiar architectural beauty. We lunched in what was the side gallery of the refectory, where some drowsy old brother used to read the lives of saints to the monks eating below. We walked over the graves of abbots, and through the scriptorium, which reminded me of the exquisite scene in the Golden Legend, of the old monk in the scriptorium busily illuminating a manuscript.

In the course of the afternoon a telegraph came from the mayor of Liverpool, to inquire if our party would accept a public breakfast at the town hall before sailing, as a demonstration of sympathy with the cause of freedom. Remembering the time when Clarkson began his career, amid such opposition in Liverpool, we could not but regard such an

evidence of its present public sentiment as full of encouragement, although the state of my health and engagements rendered it necessary for me to decline.

Tuesday we parted from our excellent friends in Leeds, and soon found ourselves once more in the beautiful Dingle; our first and our last resting-place on English shores.

Sad letters from home met us there; yet not sad, since they only told us of friends admitted before us to that mystery of glory for which we are longing--of which all that we have seen in art or nature are but dim suggestions and images.

A deputation from Ireland here met me, presenting a beautiful bog oak casket, lined with gold, and carved with appropriate national symbols, containing an offering for the cause of the oppressed. They read a beautiful address, and touched upon the importance of inspiring with the principles of emancipation the Irish nation, whose influence in our land is becoming so great. Had time and strength permitted, it had been my purpose to visit Ireland, to revisit Scotland, and to see more of England. But it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

And now came parting, leave taking, last letters, notes, and messages.

The mayor of Liverpool and the Rev. Dr. Raffles breakfasted with us, and after breakfast Dr. R. commended us in prayer to God. Could we

feel in this parting that we were leaving those whom we had known for so brief a space? Never have I so truly felt the unity of the Christian church, that oneness of the great family in heaven and on earth, as in the experience of this journey. A large party accompanied us to the wharf, and went with us on board the tender. The shores were lined with sympathizing friends, who waved their adieus to us as we parted. And thus, almost sadly as a child might leave its home, I left the shores of kind, strong Old England--the mother of us all.

THE END.