

ionable life tended to perplex him still more.

His accent was very bad, and on the whole I think that Paris is about the last place where I should go to perfect my French.

But whatever disappointments I met with in France were fully compensated for by the lovely scenes of Switzerland. Oh, girls, you ought to see those charming lakes imbedded in green, like looking-glasses framed in velvet, and the cunning little cottages, and the darling peaked hats that the peasant girls wore, just like those that were in fashion here two years ago. I was so sorry when they went out of style!

Mont Blanc is just the cunningest mountain that ever was. You've no idea, and you never will have until you see it. I send you a poem that I wrote on the occasion, and perhaps that will show what an impression it made on me. You'll see it is written in blank verse; that expresses great thoughts best.

ODE TO MONT BLANC.

Sublimest mount! thy grand and snowy head,
White as the muslin of my polonaise,
Rises afar. The gentle summer breeze,
As soft and soothing as a powder-puff,
Makes no impression on thy rugged brow.
O mount sublime! thy dense and sombre pines
Wave like green plumes on a white velvet hat;
And over all the lovely azure sky,
Mottled and veiled with thin and fleecy clouds,
Bends round thee like a blue silk parasol
Lined with white lace. Delightful mount, farewell.

Pa and ma couldn't believe that I wrote that, but I told them I certainly did, for, if I didn't, who did? therefore I did.

I don't know, on the whole, but that the poems I wrote on the places we visited may give you a better idea of them than anything else. They were written on the inspiration of the moment, when the scenes were before me, and—well, I don't want to be vain, but—

Here are some on "Moonlight in Venice." I can remember just as well as could be how everything looked that evening. I sat on the balcony till midnight, and it was so romantic!

Moonlight on the vasty deep,
And moonlight on the ocean;
Moonlight where the billows sleep,
And where they are in motion;

Moonlight on the waters clear,
And moonlight on the boat;
Moonlight on the gondolier
Who keeps the thing afloat;

Moonlight on the mountains high,
And moonlight on the flats;
Moonlight on the passers-by,
And moonlight on their hats.

Everything described there is strictly true, for I never take advantage of poetical license to meddle with the facts.

I always was a martyr to principle.

But, girls, I don't know how I shall describe to you my impressions of Italy. It is perfectly splendid! When I was a little girl I always wanted to go to Italy, because oranges grew there; and the fond dream of my childhood has been more than realized.

The climate is so delicious! And the fruits—oh, who can describe them! If one only had a good sofa and plenty of novels, Italy would be a paradise!

It was with the strongest emotions that we approached Rome.

Oh, girls, you don't know what sublime thoughts came over me! I expressed them, as well as I could, in the following lines:

In dreary, lonely grandeur standing,
Towers Rome's Eternal City;
Ruined, but stately and commanding,
And (isn't it a pity)

Along the dead and barren reaches
Of Italy's once fertile garden
The desolate Campagna stretches
Its vaporous marsh, Dolly Varden.

I know the last words of it don't seem to chime in with the general idea, but I couldn't find anything else to rhyme, and I wasn't going to spoil the whole verse by leaving off the last line, merely because it required a change of subject.

We finished Rome in about a week, and since we came home have said a thousand times that no one could exaggerate in praising its works of art, especially the figs.

Now I know you'll want to go to Europe right off, and I would advise you to, if I supposed you would have half of our peculiar advantages for mingling with earls, dukes, and other crowned heads. Such company imparts an indescribable elevation and refinement.

Still, don't go there unless you are sure that you know enough to appreciate the beauties of Europe.

It lends such a charm to Italy to remember that among those groves of olive the immortal Beethoven sculptured the Medicean Venus, and Shakespeare composed the sublime poem of "Paradise Lost."

But, above all, don't talk much French in Paris, for if you do, you'll spoil your pronunciation entirely.

It needs a good education and thorough knowledge of society to enable one to appear creditably in European circles, but still it may be best for you to go. Association with the best society adds so much to one's elegance. I never would have supposed that Europe improved one so