

A LETTER FROM SICILY

(From The Sacred Heart Review)

We reprint by permission some extracts from an interesting letter written to a friend in this city by our good friend Miss Julia G. Robins, who is at present at Taormina in Sicily.

After describing her voyage—a stormy one—from Naples to Messina, Miss Robins writes:

"But these minor ills of life were soon forgotten when we found ourselves on 'terra firma'—on the train going to Taormina. We left our luggage at the station, and took a landau with our small traps to go the three mile drive zigzagging up the fine road to Taormina—over 600 feet above sea level. We found lovely rooms at a reasonable price. Our hotel overhangs this precipitous cliff, and blossoms out in many tiny lemon and orange gardens, and in broad tiled verandas, and iron-railed balconies. The back of the house is with a south east exposure looking right out to sea.

"My artist companions chose small rooms two steps below the entrance storey (the house has several stories more on this sea side than on the side facing the street—the Corso of the town), for these rooms had the advantage of a tiled veranda in common, where we have our afternoon tea. I, looking out for more creature comforts, preferred a much larger room, two stories higher up,—the same sea-view and ruined Greek theatre at the left. But I, by leaning over my window-railing get a glorious view of beautiful Etna. So I pay my respects to the Snow-Queen every night before I sleep, and as soon as I am up in the morning; and I wish that you could have seen this view as I have, these days, in all the witchery of moonlight, and at sunrise.

"We find the climate wonderful,—like balmy late spring or cool summer days—yet with the tonic of mountain air, and none of the dampness but all the advantage of sea air. We sit with open windows, and I often am obliged to close my shutters partially, to keep out the excessive glare of the sun. Flowers are blooming in abundance. Nature has lavished prodigies on this land; the soil after being cultivated 3,000 years still yields a crop twice yearly.

"I wish that I could give you the faintest idea of the marvelous beauty of this place. It is claimed by many that it is the most beautiful place on earth; and if not, I wonder much what can be. Certainly, it is the most picturesque that I have ever seen. We act like three daft mortals, or we certainly did the first days, rushing about and exclaiming at the beauty from one point and another. I am getting a little accustomed to it, and yet I am perpetually overwhelmed by it all.

"We have letters to a delightful English lady, Miss Hill, daughter of Lady Hill, who lives here for her health, and is doing wonders for the people—putting down beggary and setting up industrial schools. We visited them with her yesterday, and I long to buy heaps of this exquisite drawn work done by little girls. The best Italians here co-operate with her, including the clergy; and she has asked one of the priests to give catechism and other religious instruction to the boys in the wood carving school. The good priest is most pleased to do this, as the boys used to slip out of his grasp, formerly. Is not this an ideal spirit of co-operation?

"I am close to the Cathedral and it is a comfort to be so near the church,



A Fearful Case.

THORNHILL, Ont., Nov. 20, 1899.
For five years I had been suffering from falling sickness and my case was a fearful one. Doctors did not do me a particle of good, but Pastor Koenig's Nerve Tonic cured me at once of that dreadful disease. The first bottle convinced me that it would do all you claim for it. I used to have as many as seven fits a day, would fall just where I stood and sometimes cut my face so severely that my own folks would hardly know me. I had such a headache and pains in my body that I often wished I were dead. I could not get work from anyone on account of my sickness, but now I am able to do a full day's work. My comrades that used to shun me are friends again, and I am as well as I ever was, and have only Pastor Koenig's Nerve Tonic to thank for my health. I am willing to answer all enquiries or letters concerning this great remedy, and urge those similarly afflicted to try it and receive its benefits.
BERT HOFF.

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so that I hope never to miss a daily visit.

"I wish that you could look in with me at a doorway I pass daily. Fourteen little tots sitting in a circle on tiny chairs learning to knit stockings and to crochet,—the picture of contentment."

JAMAICA'S MYSTERY

There exists in Jamaica, in the West Indies, a universal superstition that a curse rests upon any town chosen to be its capital. Since 1509, when the first chief city was founded, no fewer than three capitals have been ruined in mysterious and tragic ways. Two have vanished utterly from the face of the earth. Some of the more superstitious of the colonists, brooding over the strange history of their country, fear that Kingston, the present capital, a city of 70,000 inhabitants, will share the fate of its predecessors.

The first capital was Sevilla Nueva (New Seville) otherwise called Seville Orod (the Golden Seville) on account of its marvellous wealth. It was founded by Don Juan d'Esquivel and Diego a son of Christopher Columbus. In a few years it became the greatest Spanish city in the new world. Thither flocked the blue blooded but impetuous nobles of Castile, eager to rebuild their family fortunes at the expense of poor Arawak.

Cathedrals, palaces, and monasteries, rivaling those of Spain in splendor, were erected. The marble streets were crowded with gaily clad courtiers and Indian slaves, who toiled for them and brought them tribute from mine and jungle.

Then, in a night, the city vanished, and no one can tell to-day what happened to it. No survivors and no records were left behind to tell the tale. To-day one can see, buried in tropical jungle, a mile of marble pavement and a few broken columns and arches. Nothing else remains of the Golden Seville, once so prosperous and splendid, except a few contradictory native traditions.

These traditions variously ascribe the destruction of the city and its inhabitants to a mutiny of the oppressed Indians, an earthquake, a sudden visitation of red ants in millions, and an attack by French buccaneers. The very memory of what was once the greatest city of the new world has almost perished. Even in Jamaica, people know little about the Golden Seville.

The Spaniards made Saint Jago de la Vega, now called Spanish Town, their second capital. Time and again it was harassed by hurricane and plague, harassed by Indian revolts or ransacked by adventurous picaroons. Gradually it sank from its high estate until now it is merely a squalid village.

When the English conquered the island they made Port Royal their real capital, though Spanish Town remained for some time the official seat of government. The emporium of the Indies and the Spanish main, the market for the ill gotten gains of 10,000 buccaneers, Port Royal soon became the richest and wickedest city of the new world. At the height of its splendor and its vice it was destroyed within the space of two minutes by an earthquake.

"The ground opening in Several Places at once," wrote an eyewitness in 1692, a few days after the catastrophe, "swallowed up Multitudes of People together, whole Streets sinking under water with Men, Women and Children in them; and Houses which but just now appeared the Fairest and Loftiest in these Parts and might vie with the Finest Buildings in the World were in a moment Sunk in the Earth, and nothing to be seen of them; such Crying, such Shrieking and Mourning I never heard, nor could anything in my opinion appear more Terrible to the Eye of Man. Here a company of people Swallowed up at once; there a whole Street tumbling down, and in Another Place the Trembling Earth opening her Ravenous Jaws, let in the merciless Sea, so that this town is become a heap of Ruins. Several people were swallowed up of the Earth, when, the Sea breaking in before the Earth could Close, they were washed up again and Miraculously saved from Perishing. Others the Earth received up to their necks, and then Closed upon them and squeezed them to death, with their Heads above ground, many of which the Dogs Eat; Multitudes of People Floating up and down, having no burial. The Burying Place at the Palisades is quite destroyed, the Dead Bodies being washed out of their Graves, their Tombs bent to pieces and they floating up and down; it is sad to think how we have Suffered.

"The Earth hath still fits of shaking, with very much Thunder and Lightning, and dreadful weather; yet this had so little effect upon some People here that

LIVER COMPLAINT.

The liver is the largest gland in the body; its office is to take from the blood the properties which form bile. When the liver is torpid and inflamed it cannot furnish bile to the bowels, causing them to become bound and costive. The symptoms are a feeling of fulness or weight in the right side, and shooting pains in the same region, pains between the shoulders, yellowness of the skin and eyes, bowels irregular, coated tongue, bad taste in the morning, etc.

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the very same Night they were at their Old Trade of Drinking and Swearing; breaking up Warehouses; Pillaging and Stealing from their Neighbors, even while the Earthquake lasted, and several of them were destroyed in the very Act; and indeed this place has been one of the Lewdest in the Christian World, a sink of all filthiness and a mere Sodom".

Old Port Royal lies buried beneath the sea. The present town of Port Royal a place of no importance except as a coaling station, was built after the earthquake, a fire and landslide having destroyed the few houses left standing.

Kingston was not founded until the early part of the eighteenth century, but it has already been thrice destroyed by fire and several times ravaged by hurricanes. The inhabitants naturally wonder what catastrophe will happen next.—Home Journal and News.

"It is not the principal of the thing that bothers me," said the Shylock, "but the loss of the interest."—Ex.

Charming Femininity.

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Instructive Joke of St. Philip Neri.

It is related of St. Philip Neri that when a certain person much given to the evil habit of detraction, came to him for advice, he made use of the following as a means of correction, and also to impress the person with the extent and malice of this detestable vice.

The servant of God requested the penitent to visit the neighboring market place and purchase a fowl and then return, but while returning to pick the feathers and cast them by the wayside. When this was done St. Philip said "Now go back and pick up the feathers you have cast away." "Oh, that would be impossible!" exclaimed the astonished person, "because the wind has carried them hither and thither into unknown nooks and corners." "So also," replied the saint, "it is equally impossible for you to repair the evil done by your idle talk and unguarded tongue." Hence look to it that habits of this kind are not formed, especially in youth, when the danger is greatest. Check in time the slightest indication, crush it out, and give the poisonous element no quarter, no place in your daily conversation; shake off the first symptoms with as much force and determination as you would a loathsome serpent that would attempt to coil itself about your body.—Catholic Exchange.

Disbelieves Hatchet Story

(Providence Journal)

The Rhode Island Citizen's Historical Association met at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, William A. Mowry, of Hyde Park, Mass., formerly principal of the English and classical School of this city, then delivered an address on "The Difficulties in the Study of History." In the course of his remarks Mr. Mowry vigorously condemned the "George Washing-



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ton and the cherry tree" story as false and without foundation, and described the manner in which that, as well as other George Washington stories were originated. He said that a certain man who claimed to be a clergyman, with visions of financial results, wrote a life of George Washington, in which from his own fertile brain, and information he obtained from other sources, he interwove a series of these pretty little stories in the biography. He also stated that poetry has a tremendous power in the shaping of history, and gave illustrations where verse had made persons who would have otherwise been forgotten, famous in the minds of people of to-day.

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