

Travelling Notes.

Christmas, and New Year's, too, will both have come and gone before my notes can reach our readers, but in imagination we shall have "foregathered" without the aid of Atlantic cable or Marconi's wireless telegraphy, for we shall in spirit have wafted our good wishes across the waters, and we shall have received in return, yours for us, just as certainly as if we had heard the words with our mortal ears.

I think I have already described somewhat in detail visits I paid some eighteen months ago to some of the places upon our present list; therefore, to these I must make but brief allusion now. Should a little repetition occur here and there it will be caused by my not having with me my old notes, and on that plea I hope to be excused. Our plan on leaving home was to see what we could of Antwerp, Brussels, Cologne, the Rhine, Heidelberg, Munich, Vienna, Venice, Milan, Florence, Rome, Nice, Geneva, Berne, Lucerne, and Paris, "and then," said one of us, "probably the poorhouse for the rest of our lives."

We are now, on 21st December, at Heidelberg, on the point of starting for Munich, where we hope to spend Christmas. We had a delightful stay of a week at Brussels, a most lovely place, and well worthy of more visits than one, for not only are second impressions often more lasting than the first, but one cannot always take in at one view all there is to see anywhere. Brussels abounds in places of interest, and in treasures of immense artistic value. It has thousands of pictures in its art galleries, and many fine buildings, amongst the most striking of which was the Hotel de Ville, or Town Hall, where, for the small fee of 50 centimes, or 10c., one is shown over every department. In one of these, by the law of the land, every one, without exception, has to be married, whether or no they have gone, or intend to go, through a religious ceremony besides. We three spinners were a good deal amused at witnessing one of these functions, at which, in short order, for it did not last longer than five minutes, ten couples were married at one stroke, the magistrate dismissing them with what seemed to us a jabbered injunction, "to sort themselves," an

easy and pleasant task enough for them, but one for which he evidently did not hold himself responsible. The couples walked away, arm in arm, to their several carriages. Some were rich, some were poor, but let us hope that they all may be happy ever afterwards. We were greatly interested in the lace factory from whence comes the beautiful Brussels lace so dear (in more senses than one) to the heart of woman. We were shown the pattern of the wedding veil made for the Princess Beatrice, which took 200 women, working constantly for seven months, to bring to perfection. On asking the scale of wages paid to lace-makers, we were told that they were very small, ranging from 15c. to 30c. per day. Think of this, ye women workers in happy Canada, and thank God for casting your lot where honest toil meets its fair reward. It seems an anomaly, that with this pittance paid to the toilers, lace can be purchased for far less in old London. My cousins were amused at some of the "curious ways" of the people amongst whom we found ourselves, many of them not without their advantages; for instance, the hanging of mirrors at the outside of their windows, at such an angle that they can see what is passing in the street without rising from their chairs, and also become aware of the identity of the ringers at the door-bell before giving admittance. They were struck, as I had been, with the general use of dogs in drawing the small milk and vegetable carts, and even of cows, being put between the shafts of a vehicle large enough to carry a whole family at one time. I would not imply that there was any cruelty shown. No, indeed, on the contrary, the good moolie in cold weather had usually a warm blanket strapped across her back. Perhaps we were more unpleasantly impressed by seeing the very hard and unwomanly work which women have to do in Germany, and the exposure to which it subjects them. We saw them in the fields plowing, spreading top-dressing, and grubbing up the roots from the cold, hard ground, work which must be a great strain upon their strength, or so it seemed to us, but which appeared to be undertaken uncomplainingly enough.

Two days was all we could give to Cologne, some hours of which we

naturally devoted to its wonderful cathedral. On our way thence to Heidelberg, our train skirted the Rhine, entrancing us with its romantic scenery; each of its numberless castles having its story to tell, but none with greater romance surrounding it than that of stately Heidelberg, which is the crowning glory of this garden of Germany.

We three tramps are getting on grandly. Nell, more and more charmed with each new place, never wants to move on, and only once have I heard her say that she was "going straight back to Australia," and this was because she was cold. In England she was always returning by the next ship, notwithstanding she has a round-the-world ticket. Eleanor is an indefatigable sight-seer, poking her nose into everything, until I am beginning to be alarmed lest she may find her way into the lockup, for infringing one or more of the many rules which in Germany are very strictly enforced.

One day we had about six officials chasing us, because we had crossed a railway track and got upon the wrong platform. It was very droll, for we did not know one word they were saying, and vice versa. However, when once they had got us fairly "rounded up" and into the right place, they laughed, and we laughed, and so the episode ended, not only peaceably, but hilariously.

I expect to date my next notes from Munich. MOLLIE.

The Doctor.

This beautiful and touching picture, by the celebrated artist, Luke Fildes, is well known, and has been widely copied, and no wonder, for it tells a story which goes straight to the heart. There can be but few who do not feel a thrill of deepest sympathy with those grieving ones who, in wordless agony of suspense, await the verdict, "To live" or "to die"? The unconscious child lies hovering on the brink, and seems as though already gone over to that great and mysterious beyond, so inert is the attitude of utter weakness. But this is not death, for there sits one who, with rare skill, helped by God's mercy, is straining every nerve to bring back to strength this frail flower. The whole figure and expression of "The Doctor" is

forceful to a degree, as he watches that young face, the light thrown upon it from the raised lamp-shade. The poor mother, with head bowed on her arms, is unable to look longer upon her darling. The father seems as though compelled to look, and that quiet watcher with the kind and noble face, so full of strength and self-control, will stay at his post unflinchingly, and will make no sign until he is sure, and we hope that fair child will be saved for those who love her!

There is so much artistic merit in this picture, that one might linger long over its discussion. The wonderfully natural position of the child's hands is a study in itself, but somehow it seems almost sacrilege to analyze thus. The picture is simply a grand study in human nature, and its masterly drawing stands second to its exquisite conception.

The Twins at Culleston Manor in 1685.

It was not for a few years after their first visit to Culleston that Dolly and Betty were told the whole story, with its mingling of pathos and wasted heroism, of those other twins of the picture, Dorothea and Bettina Culleston, whom they henceforth always called "the brave little great-grandmothers." Nurse had related to them enough to arouse in their minds a very keen interest, as well as a sense of pride, in belonging to a family which had taken part in historic events of nearly a century and a half ago, and this interest was accentuated when their great-aunt, Rebecca Lemorne, sent them as pupils to the time-honored old school on Castle Green, which, in spite of many changes, had educated generation after generation of the daughters of the county families of Somersetshire, and to be educated at which conferred a kind of hall-mark of distinction upon every pupil.

As they passed through the curiously winding corridors, stepped up and down stairs placed in unexpected corners, exchanged schoolgirl confidences in the deep embrasures of small-paned windows, or sat upon the backless benches (for what girl at that time could possibly require any support but her own backbone?) of the room allotted for their hours of study, the whole place was peopled for them by the twelve little maids of Taunton, which formed the contingent contributed by their school to the long procession of girls who dressed in white, with bow-knots of blue—the Monmouth colors—bearing each a flag and following the banner their hands had wrought, with its fatal insignias of a royalty to which he had no claim, marched to welcome the rebel Duke to Taunton in 1685. Monmouth had but lately landed in England, to bring, as it was claimed for him, religious freedom and every other kind of freedom in his train. How miserably he failed, how much suffering, how many lives, including his own, were the price of that huge mistake, is a matter of history, but about which history gives only a very brief account, leaving it to the local records, old family diaries, and mouth-to-mouth tradition to tell the tale.

This is the summing up of history: "1685.—Insurrection of Monmouth and Argyle; both executed. Judge Jeffreys' Bloody Assize. In the Bloody Assize the King's revenge was wreaked for Monmouth's uprising. Jeffreys boasted that he had hanged more traitors than all his predecessors since the Conquest. Of this



The Doctor.