



A PAGE FOR JUNIORS



The Travels of Sam.

BY ESTELLE M. KERR.

Chapter VIII.—Palermo.

AT last we were in Sicily, the land of brigands and earthquakes, the end of our voyage, for here we were to spend a month or two. Our only regret was that we had to say good-bye to the good friends we had made on ship-board and might never see again. We wouldn't stop to think of that, but made the conventional remark of travellers, "Oh, we are sure to meet again some day; the world is so small!" Sam nearly wept at the thought of leaving the Captain and the other officers of whom he had grown so fond, but when we told him that we might return home on the same ship, he was all smiles again.

We landed at Palermo, the Capital of Sicily, which is built on a fertile plane between two promontories that form an excellent harbour. The mountains that overhang the city are almost bare of vegetation, for the forests of Sicily were all hewn down long ago, and the flocks of goats on Mount Pellegrino must work overtime to keep the grass from growing. At any rate, the mountain is bare and pink, and the sea is the bluest blue—so blue that it makes a summer sky look pale and faded. That is the way Palermo is coloured, too; You must paint it with the brightest colours in your box.

The scarcity of trees has some advantages for the people cannot afford telegraph poles, nor wooden fences and sidewalks. The houses are all of stone and the nearest fields are divided by pretty stone walls, with a hollow top filled with earth, where the pink geraniums or cactus plants flourish.

Behind the city are vast groves of orange and lemon trees, while thousands of olive and almond trees grow on the slope that leads to the vine-clad fields beyond. In Sicily the almond tree flourishes abundantly, and in February, when it blossoms, the hills seem veiled in delicate pink.

The numerous churches seemed to be all liberally supplied with bells that changed and banged incessantly. Street vendors were trying to drown the noise by calling their wares of flowers, fruit, seaweed or fish, and I even saw a woman with a dozen live chickens tied by the legs, and suspended about her neck, calling them for sale.

The poverty is extreme here, as it is in Naples and the majority of the people have never tasted meat. Goat's meat is the cheapest and most commonly eaten, but fish and macaroni are the principal articles of food. The macaroni hangs suspended in long strings about the shops where it is sold, exposed to the dust and weather.

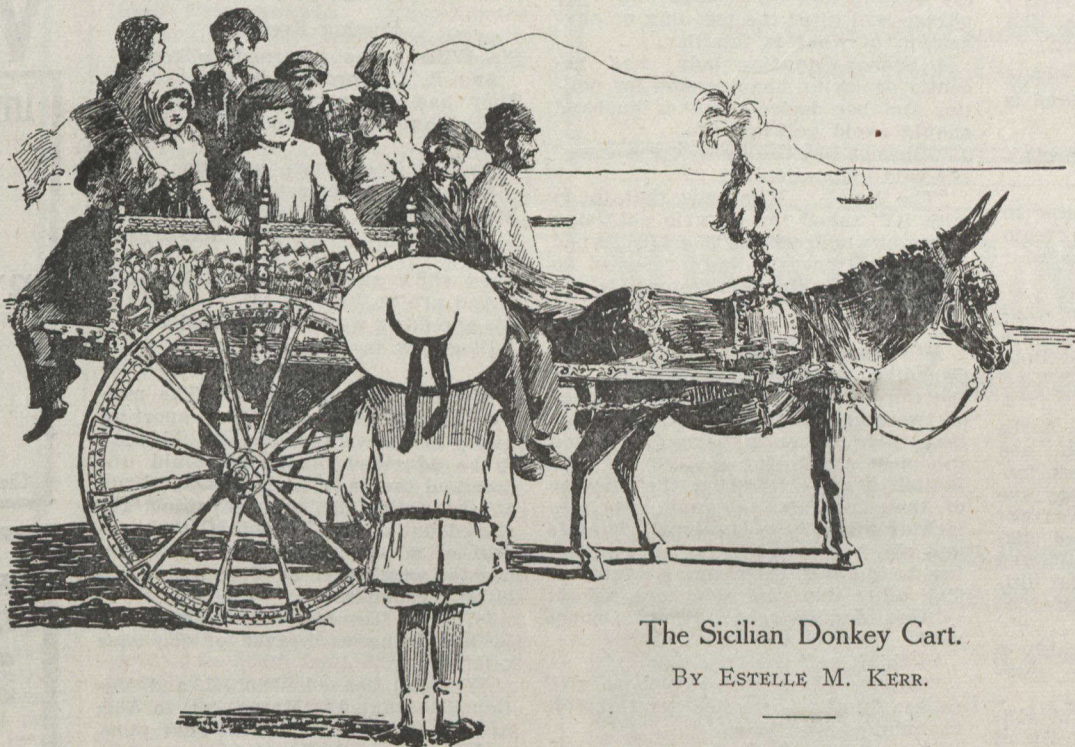
It was wash-day in Palermo, and the women, hooded in coloured shawls, were boiling clothes before their houses in copper kettles above little charcoal furnaces, while the sky was obscured by ragged clothing hung across the street to dry. At a corner a professional letter-writer was carrying on a busy trade, as four-fifths of the population cannot read or write. Five cents is his modest charge for writing a letter.

At every corner we saw boys with most amusing little lemonade stands made of carved wood, and painted all the colours of the rainbow. Of a similar character are the donkey-carts, which afforded us endless entertainment. The donkeys wear elaborate harness, richly embroidered in tinsel and red, and ornamented with shining bits of looking-glass and many tassels, while bells and feathers stand on their backs. The cart and its wheels are painted bright yellow, with stripes and rings of red, blue and

green. That alone is enough to make one stare, but they are also moving picture galleries, for around the cart are painted panels representing historical events, scenes from Grecian mythology, from the Bible, or from the Italian operas. I even noticed one from the life of Abraham Lincoln. This surprised me greatly until I remembered that he had been associated at one time with Garibaldi, the popular hero of Sicily.

Sam became so absorbed in the pictures on the carts that we could not get him to look at anything else. The paintings that interested him most were of a sensational order. The first represented a man driving a cart, the second had the addition of an approaching railway train, the third showed the accident, and in the fourth the unfortunate was received into heaven by shining angels. I did wish I could speak the Sicilian dialect well enough to ask the owner why he chose such a subject.

Palermo has been occupied successfully by Greeks, Arabs, Spaniards and French, and each country has left its marks on the architecture of the city. The big cathedral was erected on the foundations of a pagan temple, the Arabs converted



The Sicilian Donkey Cart.

BY ESTELLE M. KERR.

"Your donkey-cart is picturesque,
But it would look more fitting
If some of you were in the shafts
And 'Ned' within it sitting.
I know you're very proud of him—
It's lots of fun for you,

But think how different it must seem
From Neddy's point of view!
If I were Ned, I'd rear and balk,
And give you all a fright,
And if I did upset the cart
Why, it would serve you right!"

it into a mosque for the worship of Mahomet, and since then it has become a Christian church. Beautiful mosaics of inlaid marble, glass and gold decorate the walls of some of the churches, with a richness unsurpassed in any part of the world.

Everywhere we saw the coat of arms of Sicily, a winged head from which three legs issued like the spokes of a wheel. It decorated souvenir spoons and purses, it was carved and hewn in all manner of places, and even formed a design for flower beds in some of the beautiful gardens.

We did not remain long in Palermo, but journeyed about the country for two months, staying in each place as long as the spirit moved us, and we grew to love the beautiful country and the people who live there very dearly, and Sam made a great many verses and Daddy Dick drew pictures for them. So, though the story of our voyage is ended, some of these pictures and verses will appear occasionally in these pages, and will tell you more about that beautiful land.

THE END.

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My Garden To-Be.

By RUTH LAWSON (Aged 13.)

MY flower garden to be will be very beautiful. It will not be all flowers—oh, no—and will comprise about one-half an acre. In the centre

will be a ring of grand old trees, with violets peeping out from their mossy roots, and vines climbing up them. There shall be, also, garden seats—very numerous—beneath them, where I shall "sew a fine seam, and feast upon strawberries, peaches, and cream." A fountain will be gushing up in the centre of this ring. Numberless birds, also, shall sing in the trees.

The entrance, and front and side fences of my garden will be of low stone, covered with red and yellow rambler roses.

There are two divisions in my garden to be. One is devoted to roses and the other to flowers of all kinds.

The rose-garden, as I call it—and as it will be called by all who wish to receive my good graces—will be composed of pink, white, red and yellow roses. In the centre of it is a summer house, where I will have my tea-parties when the mosquitoes, etc., are too bad in my ring of trees. It will be covered with pink and white ramblers, and is indeed a miniature cottage, for I have in front of it a small, circular lawn, walled in by moss-roses—beautiful ones with their tiny faces just peeping out from their wealth of greenery. In a corner remote from my cottage I have oceans of yellow roses. I love them, partly for themselves and partly because they look so pretty against the blue paper in my "really" house. The rest of the place is devoted to red and white roses.

The other half is divided into ten beds of different shapes and sizes, the back of which is the same stone fence as is at the front and sides, only covered with canary-bird vine.

The first two beds are heart-shaped and are filled with bleeding-hearts bordered with forget-me-nots. The next two have great, beautiful mauve and white in one, and pink and white in the other, sweet peas bordered with mignonette, and are of a circular shape. The next one is my pride—in this half. It is star-shaped and filled with pink and white asters. It has a border of white sweet-alyssum. The next three are filled with large yellow 'mums. They are just plain, but, nevertheless, look very pretty. The rest of the beds are of an oblong shape, filled with nasturtiums. The place intervening between the fence and beds, and in which the ground is not very rich, is filled with crimson poppies.

So there is my garden-to-be, if I can procure a gardener.

—Certified by
Ada E. Lawson.

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Tommy had never fished before and was very proud of his beautiful new pole the first morning he took it to the stream. His brother

baited the hook, and Tommy felt his line jerk. "Oh, Jim," he cried, "I've caught a fish, what shall I do?"

"Reel him in," was the reply.

So Tommy reeled till the fish was dangling from the end of the pole.

"What shall I do now?" he asked.

"Climb the pole," said Jim.

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The Violet.

By IRENE MARTIN (Aged 9.)

Pretty little violet,
With dainty bonnet blue,
Why do you so bend and nod?
I wish to look at you,
Do you hear a whisper faint
From fairies' voices near,
Hidden safe in leafy homes
All around you, dear?
Perhaps some little elfin
Is playing rock-a-by,
Swaying on your slender stem
Is that the reason why?
If you are talking to me
In the way that flowers do,
I know this much, sweet violet,
Whate'er you say, is true.

—Certified by "Mother."