

Ayères.

Nov. 24. 1865

My dear Mamma,

Yours of 20.21 I received to day. Company have made great changes in the house. The lady, gentlemen and (qu?) daughters are named Squire, he seems to have been in India and they have travelled in almost every possible country you can think of and have consequently much to tell. The young lady is the finest and best looking I have seen since leaving England - not thereby implying anything very remarkable. They live near Clermont 16 miles from London.

The other two are Sir Vere de Vere and Lady Vere, both very nice people - Irish, where do they come from? They have also been great travellers. We now sit in the drawing room (adjoining the Salle à manger) after dinner till nine o'clock or so

round a wood fire, more for the name
of it than anything else, for it is not
at all cold, and have very pleasant
evenings. The talk is of course mostly
of travelling and the various countries each
~~all~~ ~~has~~ seen, which ~~seem~~ to comprise
most of Europe, Asia and the Cape,
Egypt indeed too. I do not ever re-
member meeting a lady who had travelled
so much as Mrs Squire. They are going
on to Mentone soon, where I think they
have taken a house for the winter.

The moths in the red book are almost
all badly - very badly - coloured.

Yesterday I went to Carqueirannes (Rade
de Giers); it was very pleasant there,
I went across the hills and at one place found
some bay trees quite 20 feet high and covered
with black berries. Near Carqueirannes I found
a nice pine wood right on the shore and fur-

- then on a little cove, half natural, half artificial, with one little boat in it. It look^{ed} so pleasant on that rocky coast. I also found a grand walk along the cliffs (they scarcely deserve the name - only about twenty feet high) really a most romantic one. To day I went down to the Pinière de la Tour and walked along the eastern isthmus of the Presqu'île de Gyens, but except a fine pine wood, did not find anything. It was blowing in fresh from the east and was very pleasant. The frogs were croaking vigorously in some of the ponds on the road to the shore. I have ^{not} heard any frogs croaking till to day for a long time. 25th No letters to day.

I went up the rocky hill Fenouillet at ^{Woulon} end of the chain of the Maurettes this afternoon, it was a fine blowy day very pleasant but not very clear. On the north side of Fenouillet is a chapel near the top

and a man lives in an adjoining cottage to take care of it. He was on the rocks at the top to day sunning himself and watching his goat browsing; I lay down on the rocks and talked to him for about 20 minutes and he told me how the Queen of Spain had been there last winter. Then when I was coming away he offered to show me the chapel (which is kept locked) so I went in but there is little to see. I gave him half a franc and then he wanted me to come in and take some wine in his little cottage but I declined, then he said perhaps I would like liqueur better and as he seemed to have taken my first refusal to heart I went in, and he gave ^{me} a little glass of some sweet liqueur flavoured with aromatic herbs. He lives there all alone with nothing for company but a goat. He is only a common peasant, not a friar. Please forward the enclosed. Let me hear about the new L.L. and Chief Secretary.

Your affectionate son

Francis E. Prendergast.