

Villa Marie-Thérèse

My dear Mamma, Cannes Dec 26/65

Yours of 18. 19<sup>th</sup> which should have been delivered two days ago at least only came last evening, also one from uncle Joe.

The Times came to hand all right and another came from J.F.'s office also, announcing that Mr J.F. has had a daughter. Friday evening Dawson Greene arrived, having come right through from London, 46 hours en route, as he missed a train at Marseilles and lost 5 hours thereby.

On Saturday the Clement Unthinks arrived at the Grand Hotel and I met them after church on Sunday afternoon. Yesterday they moved up to the Bellevue and are on the same floor with the Ps, but they do not intend to stay long here: they are en route for Nice and Rome. Mr Unthank is not quite well. On Sunday night Dawson and I went to Midnight Mass at the chapel (cathedral they call it); we went at 11.30 and sat there for more than two hours. There was little of interest and the music, except a little

chanting, very poor. On Christmas day  
our church was very nicely decorated, and  
crammed even to standing, 15 minutes be-  
fore the service began; almost the whole  
congregation remained for the Communion.  
They say they have had more strangers in  
Cannes previous seasons, but never so  
many English. I heard the English put  
down at a thousand, and I dare say  
rightly. Yesterday we had 12 at dinner,  
our own party makes 8 now and Madam  
Fatio invited Dr and Mrs Whitely  
(I am not sure about the h), their daughter  
a very nice and pleasant semi-French  
young lady and a young man who is  
at their house. Dr W. is the senior  
Dr here and I liked his looks. Then  
in the evening Dora, Alice and Mrs  
Whately, (née Levinge of W. meath.) came  
in, and we had a very pleasant evening.  
It amuses me to hear the French and  
English talked indiscriminately though  
English was chief last night. Alice  
and Miss Muthant wanted to go to the  
midnight Mass, but unfortunately we did

not know it in time. Mr Whately is  
a very nice and very young widow, though  
one of her sons is 12; she looks about 30.  
She has two sons and two dear little girls,  
they are so pretty and nice that everyone  
turns round to look at them. She is  
very thick with the P's and I tell you  
so much about her as you will probably  
often hear her name. Alice is getting  
very fat and all seem thriving on Cam-  
ar air. Fancy on Christmas day ladies  
coming to church in light summer  
dresses, and gentlemen, not invalids  
either, under white umbrellas to keep  
the sun off! This morning I went out  
after breakfast and it was warmer  
than it often is in England in a hot  
summer. There is slight frost here  
in the neighbourhood every night, but  
within a few miles of this I saw ice  
half an inch thick the other morning.  
It is very chilly just at sundown  
but gets warmer again afterwards.  
I have made the acquaintance of a Mr  
(and Mrs) Kearney here. He is very anxious

to <sup>read</sup> see the Cromwellian Settlement, but has only seen the Times' review of it.

In going to call on him one day I got into a wrong place and found it was Mr Richardsons Villa, to my mind the nicest small place here. I have heard so much of the charms of Miss R. and the pleasantness of Mrs R. that I should like to make their acquaintance. Introduction *via* uncle Charles query? If he would mention my name I would go and call there, which is the correct way of doing things here.

Madame Fatio knows them too.

People seem to pull together pretty well here and some seasons there is a good deal of gaiety. The hills behind this place are quite close; in fact we are on their slopes; at the Grand Hotel they are some 2 miles back. I took Dawson up the hill behind this house and yesterday and showed him the snowy Alps; he guessed their distance at 12 to 15 miles; they are more than 40 miles away! Some that we see are over  
10,000

10,000 feet in height. All distances are very deceptive here; everything looks close. I never saw such a house as this is for chairs and tables, I cannot find a single comfortable place to write at. Having nothing to do here, and doing it, I find it ~~very~~ very hard to get time to write. Since I came I have absolutely done nothing indoors but write three letters and read half of two French books! I will give you a specimen day; breakfast at 8 alone with Madame Fatio and talk French with her till near nine, then out <sup>alone</sup> till 10.30 or 11, then come in read, write or otherwise pass time till 12 or so, then go out and talk and sit with some of the ladies in the garden or go up to see C.M.P. sitting in Bellvue Garden. Lunch at 12.30, this is a meal of three courses and generally lasts nearly an hour. Then out either for a long 3 hour walk, or with Elise on a donkey (to day I am going somewhere with Mrs Wally and Dora) till 5,

dinner at 5.30 and read or talk till  
10. We, i.e. Mrs Greene, Dawson and I  
use Elsie's bedroom <sup>a good deal</sup> as our salon, which  
I dare say would surprise English ideas  
but is usual enough here. The Neres  
and Squires are still here: I was wal-  
-king with the former on Sunday after-  
-noon. Dr Lee is also still here and  
is much disgusted with this season,  
he says there are so few invalids, al-  
-most all people come here to enjoy  
themselves! I believe I get more French  
talking in this house than I should  
any where else, so that is a great  
point as well as being with ones relatives.  
Mrs Greene says I am always to call  
her aunt. It is just lunch time so I  
must stop. As at all new places  
I have lots more to say.

Your affectionate son

Francis E. Prendergast.

Still bright cloudless weather.

Love to all at Portravor.