

Villa Marie-Thérèse, Cannes. Dec. 27/65.

My dear Mamma,

Since I last wrote to you I have got such a shoal of letters, about ten in all I think.

The one you forwarded from Miss von S. was a most formidable epistle, $4\frac{1}{2}$ closely written sheets in smallest German writing; she is still at Weymouth. She had sad news from Dresden, the Baroness's dress had somehow caught fire and she was badly burned, her children Bertha and Oscar who came to her assistance were also severely burned. All were better by last accounts. On Tuesday afternoon I went off with Dora and Mrs Whately, the latter on a donkey, to pay some visits and afterwards we went scrambling up a hill to look for the Muthanks, it got so steep at last that Mrs W. had to hold on by the mane and finally to proceed on foot; we found the two Misses by a happy chance and all came home together. After dinner I went up (as I often do) to the Bellevue where the Pd room was well filled by the Muthanks and others. Wednesday morning I went off at 7.30 to Nice, spent two hours there and was back to

lunch. Nice is a gay bright city, something like Geneva or Brussels, with fine streets and handsome shops; you know it is very large, 50,000 inhabitants and the visitors average 6000 every year. It is right on the sea bay like Brighton and there are fine rocks and a snug little harbour on its eastern side. It seemed much colder and more windy than Cannes. The railway station is very nice but it is a long mile from the town proper. I did not care to spend much time at Nice as I only went in to get a pair of boots (they seem good and cheap) and to change some circular notes. Bye and bye I intend to spend a week there to see the place and country, besides Dora and Mr W. want me to escort them there some day.

The views from the Ry. which coasts along the ^{shore} ~~sea~~ are very fine, A blue sea for a foreground, then the white houses of white backed hills wooded at the base but bare and rocky at the top, with the snowy Alps in the rear towering over all. Yesterday afternoon Dawson Greene and I went off to Napolé, a little village on the W.

side of this bay about 6 miles off; there is a ruined castle there and the coast scenery, being rocky, is very fine. Pic-nic parties are going on here now - fancy in Christmas week people driving about in open carriages, spending all day out of doors and pic-nicing on the grass! It sounds Australian like. I have been here a fortnight to day and there has been nothing but blue sky and hot sun ever since, except the last day or two when in the morning and evening there are a few small ~~low~~ clouds on the horizon; thus they say indicates coming rain. As I sit writing this I can see in the next garden some orange trees ~~both~~ literally bending under their golden crop. Those that they cultivate for the flowers are Seville Oranges. They feed the cows here largely on half-ripe oranges; I wonder how the cows can like them! There are some letters by a Miss Brewster from Cannes which give a pretty good ladies view of the place. If you come across them read them. This place is one of those that is yearly

changing so rapidly that any but recent accounts are little use. Many fortunes have been made here by land. One Russian bought some waste sandy land at on the shore three years ago for 17,000 francs; six months later he sold the fifth part of it for 18,000 francs, and the remainder of it in still smaller lots soon after, each for a still larger sum! This is only one instance out of many I have heard. I wish J. F. or some such speculative man would come out here and lay out a few new roads and building lots, and by so doing would benefit himself and the place. I don't think the French, though good road makers and engineers, understand laying out land and roads for building purposes.

There is still room for an upper terraced road here but they do not seem inclined to make it. The approach road to this house and the Bellevue would scarcely be considered drivable in England.

The mosquitoes are still here and Mr Green suffers much from them; they have given up biting the rest of us. Love to all at Rostveor
your affectionate son F. E. P.