

Finale.
Hôtel de la Chine. Feb. 8. 1866.

My dear Mamma (1)

Yesterday morning we left San Remo, both carrying away the idea that it is one of the nicest places on the coast and the Hôtel de Londres a most comfortable house.

The number of people at the hotel, the host said was about 25 and it could hold about 45. Pension terms 8, 9 and 10 francs according to story and aspect of room.

We went winding along the coast round bays and headlands to a large town called Porto Maurizio where we lunched. It is a handsome town well situated on a hill, jutting out into the sea and abounding in churches and colonnades. A few miles further we reached our sleeping place called Oneglia, a draggled, ruined looking town (it was bombarded and ruined by the French in the last century) and with an hotel to match the town. We had at the table a lot of two parties of the most genuine "Shoddy" Yankees I ever met and two Germans; it was quite refreshing to hear their regular nasal twanging and ^{the} high pitched voices of the ladies.

In the evening Dawson and I went out to a
café and got into one where no French was
understood or spoken so we had to make them
understand as best we could and when it came
to paying, the man brought me pen and paper
to write what I'd we had had; ~~xx~~ I managed
to get it down in Italian sufficiently well
for him to understand. It is so much
pleasanter in Italy (and especially in the
cafés) than in France finding the people
quiet and noiseless, not perpetually talking
at the top of their voices and bawling out over
cards or fiercely rattling dominoes ~~etc~~ as
is always the case in French cafés. The
Italians, in this part at least, are to my
mind much pleasanter than any Frenchmen
I ever came across. To day we walked
on from Orleglia to Alasio and Albenza
(18 miles) at the latter place we got a carriage
and drove on the 12 miles to this place
as the guide describes these twelve miles as "very
level and better driven than walked".

This is a curious house, that has once been
some grand old private house; this room

(the table d'hôte room, only there is no table d'hôte) is of really gigantic proportions and must be at least 25 feet high the ceiling domed and the walls covered with curious old paintings. One end of the room is screened off to form a passage and the kitchen and our bedroom are at opposite ends of the passage thus formed. There is only one other person staying here to night, an Italian from Savona who can talk a little French but he is not conversable, the host is the only other person who can talk anything but Italian. Where we lunched in a small café to day they could talk no French so it is absolutely necessary to be able to understand and talk a little Italian. The carriages here are the most rattletap concerns possible to imagine; it is hard to understand how they hold together; sometimes they put me in mind of the pictures on the old screens of posting in Ireland in the last century. The vetturini carriages however are good enough.

I see all the carts here have a small third wheel placed underneath the body of the cart, thus I suppose is to keep the shafts off the ground when the horse is not in them. Lots of carts loaded with rags pass us every day; I suppose they are taking them from Italy to France. Italy always reminds me of Ireland, with its rags, its beggars, its tumble down houses and broken windows, its bare footed children and ragged idlers with yet a certain amount of comfort and luxurious enjoyment amid all the dirt and rags. It certainly is not so thriving looking a country as France. The dried brush hangs often over the doors here as a sign of the sale of wine, I wonder on what principle it is supposed to indicate the whereabouts of wine.

Along the road purple single anemones were very plentiful to day also a blue star shaped flower growing low like a thistle. Almond trees are in blossom everywhere.

The Orange trees on here are much larger and pine and palms seem to get larger and more tree-like as we go east.