

Hotel Peverada. Pisa. Feb. 17. 1866.

On Friday morning we left Lestri and as we went out of it had the most splendid views back towards Genoa; it certainly is one of the finest places on the coast; it is known as Lestri di Levante to distinguish it from Lestri on the other side of Genoa. About here for the first time I saw the vines trailed over trees, in summer ~~they~~ it must look very well. The pass we had to cross was 2100 feet high and as we got towards the top primroses began to appear and the maiden-hair fern to show wherever there was any moisture. Some long mule trains passed us and very picturesque they and the muleteers looked. They oval wine and oil kegs I never saw in any other country. These mountains were formerly well wooded with sweet chestnut, but now all was bare and leafless except a few evergreen oaks. Cultivation is pushed a long way up the hill sides - till the olives get so stunted and poor as to be no longer of any value. The rocks were dark green per-

-fentine, here and there was dark pink lead
and bright yellow furze, so there was a
good foreground for the view of the
chief range of the Apennines which we
got from the top of the pass. We were
crossing one of the ranges which shoot
off towards the sea and far away stood
the main range with snow-clad tops
looking like the back bone of Italy,
and towering away over the sea of Cron
village & hills which lay between
us and them. Once before I had seen
these same Apennines, but it was
only from the Monte Moro pass in Tur
-keyland when they looked like a blue
cloud on the horizon. Near the top
of the pass we lunched off bread, figs
and wine in a post-house, where one
large room served the purposes of
a Café, the living room of the family,
the Bureau of the Messageries Impériales
and general store. We came in about
12.30 and the proprietor and his family
and two labourers were dining off

soup, bread, boiled beans and sour wine,
two beggars or tramps came in and got
their share too. How much of a
country and its people one sees in travel-
-ling on foot feeding and often sleeping
at places where carriage folk never
stop much less see any thing of the
ways of life of the natives. The Italians
may be rogues but they are a hearty
pleasant lot nevertheless. Just as we
started on the way down we passed a
villainous looking organ grinder who
wished us good evening in very fair
English! After a 24 miles walk we
reached Borghetto and thence got a trap
to take us the 14 miles into Spezia, and
such a trap! I believe it is called a
calessa; ~~and~~ it consists of two long
shafts, two cross pieces to keep them to-
-gether, a hurdle is placed across it
for the feet and over all is hung by
leathern strings a ~~the~~ seat which will
just hold three people. We had a very

small boy for driver and the latter half of a twisting hilly road to be driven in the dark, but the old horse took us all right.

It was dark when we got into Spiez and we left in heavy rain by rail this morning, so did not see much of it.

We reached Pisa at 12.40 and found all bright, dry and clear down here.

Pisa is on a plain, the muddy Arno bisecting the city, which by the way, though small and dull, is one of the cleanest and best paved towns I ever came into. The Leaning Tower, Duomo, Baptistery and Campo Santo seem to be the chief sights, all very fine, and all close to each other. The inside of the Duomo is magnificent and the colour-red marbles add greatly to its beauty.

The air ~~here~~ feels particularly fresh and inland here, perhaps because I have been so long used to the salt atmosphere.

I expect to be in Florence on Monday but shall post this tomorrow (Sunday) without waiting for letters. Yours affect. son
Francis & Prendergast.