

Carries. April 23^d 1866

My dear Mamma

Yours of 19th arrived yesterday afternoon. Uncle Willie's account of Hotel St James sounds well and according to Bradshaw it seems nice, so perhaps I shall try it. Is Lord Charles C. now in Paris, and if so what is his address? What sort of a man is O'Connell? You don't say where the Villa Bianca is? Did you or Papa ever think of India Railway Bonds as investments, they are 5 per. cents, Indian Government Security which ought to be as good as English Funds and they vary from 98 to 102? Great Indian Peninsula Co is said to be the most flourishing here, but I do not know that that much concerns the bonds. Some Canadians at Florence were much amused at the idea of English people thinking 5 p.c. a good investment; they thought 7 p.c. poor! I think Carries would set up Uncle James if ~~it~~ anything would, but ~~it~~ it would not do to come out here now.

I never heard from J. F. - perhaps he is out of town. Mrs Nivens husband arrives at Marseilles from Bombay in about a fortnight, when she and Miss Copland intend going to meet him and go on to Switzerland at once, so Elise will be amongst strangers without any relative or English person. Madame Fatio expects a Swiss family from Mentone here, soon; they come for the bathing, there being none at Mentone. Papa had a pair of gray-brown trousers at Oxford last year which he did not seem inclined to wear; if they are still lying by he might bring them over for me.

It rather amuses me in France to see "Chocolat Anglaise" advertised and many other things similarly, in which we think the French surpass us.

I am writing with some ink I got from Elise, it writes rather violet coloured but very likely it turns black before you see it.

Yesterday and to day some thunder
showers have been circling about in
the neighbourhood but they have left
this place untouched. Some bathing
is going on, but the natives who come
down here to bathe do not begin to
~~bathe~~ before the end of next month.

Mr Whately leaves the end of this week
to meet the Ps in Paris and return
with them. Good Words for March

never arrived, so I shall have to get
it when I come back. The Coxes

leave tomorrow and Mr Whately
said that on Tuesday there
would not be any of the young men
who were here in the winter, left.

I have just 18 sheets of this paper left
and about envelopes to match, so my
stock chanced to be pretty well gauged.

Please forward enclosed.

Having written on Saturday I have not
much to say and write chiefly on
account of enclosed which I forgot then.

I wish you would stir up Charley
to write. His scraps are the only
definite news I ever get of him.

When is uncle Jeffry to be at Combe
Down again? I went to look for
some watercolour sketches of this place
in the town this morning and found
some very nice ones, both large and
small, but the prices were so high I
did not get any, the largest were
30 francs, the smallest 12 francs.

Nothing but paintings can convey an
idea of this place so much depends
on its colours and bright clear air;
this morning I was thinking it was
the most lovely spot I had ever seen.

Your affectionate son
Francis E. Prendergast.

April 26.

yesterday I dined en famille with Mr A. Taylor; the only people were his wife (a French woman) their two children and his wife's mother, who is a German. He showed me some lovely photographs of buildings and landscapes ^{of his own doing}, and gave me a letter of introduction to the works to a Mr Drury the only Englishman on the staff. I went there this morning and Mr D. was very kind in showing me over the place, but except a huge ~~druff~~ dredging machine for the Suez Canal there was little of interest to me in the works but the drawings were more in my line. Mr Taylor also gave me a letter to the foreman at some more works they have at the other side of the town. But I spent so much time watching the building and hoisting of materials in the Rue Impériale that I had not time to go to these works, but they are only ditto of the others.

I have a most uncomfortable place for writing - the top of a chest of drawers and can scarcely get at the paper.

To day the sun has come out and the dust and glare are tiresome.

I had intended being on the road northwards to day but in consequence of Mr Taylors invitation to dinner do not start till tomorrow. I expect to be in Paris probably some time on Thursday Saturday. I am writing in a hurry as it is nearly time to start for Sainte Marguerite.

Your affectionate son
Francis E. Prendergast.