

~~The~~ Villa Tessere Aix. les Bains

My dear Papa

August 17.
1859

I have not discovered anything more in Aix as yet, except that everything is very dear, and my present intention is to devote tomorrow to Chambery and next day - Friday - to leave for Annecy. If I cannot find a suitable Pension there I shall try St. Gervais, and if unsuccessful proceed with my journey to Chamonix and Zermatt. I shall now give you a fuller description of my journey from Montreux. I left at 6 a.m. and after

a hot journey reached Geneva
at 10.50 a.m. from the
rail I had some splendid
views of Mont Blanc & the
Lake of Geneva which I
was very sorry to leave.

I got a man to carry ~~to~~
my traps to Mrs Downton
who I should certainly
never have found alone.

The Downtons have 7
children and a young gent.
who is staying there for
education and health.

Their house is nicely sit-
uated, with grounds running
down to the junction of the

Phone and the crew.
I then proceeded by 2nd
train at 5.30 to Aix.

At Belgarde the first
French station station
we were all turned out
to have passports and
baggage examined.

By the merest chance
my knapsack was not
examined, though many
smaller articles were opened.

The visas too were
very necessary as at least
a dozen people were sent
sent back to Geneva for
want of the necessary

visas. So much for the French frontier. I then turned into the carriages again, and went to sleep for a couple of ~~hours~~ hours, till I was roused up at the Gardinian frontier, however as I had heard of this being a mere farce I thought I might as well stay in the carriage but the gendarme came again so I had to get out; well I went into the office, where after I had stood for some time

time an official came up
to me and asked me what
I wanted, I said I was
only waiting to have my
baggage and passport ex-
-amined; He said he that's
all a humbug, you may
go back to the carriages
at once, we have not got
French regulations here !!!
So much for Victor Em-
-manuel's frontier.

Soon after I reached Aix
and slept at the hotel.

Next morning I shouldered
my traps, and went out for
a round before looking for a

settlement, and walked off
to the lake; on my return
I fell in with a countryman
who was going to ~~St~~
and with whom I had
some conversation (By
the way I find that some-
times I can speak French
quite easily) concerning the
country, he had been a
"navvy" when the railroad
was making; he was also
very indignant against the
Priests, who he said did
all they could against
the construction of rail-
roads - education &c.

He said that he had
two brothers in America
who were well off, but
that for his part he
was contented with his
own country.

I am quite tired of this
already; it seems as if there
was no chance of getting
acquainted with anyone - no
table d'hôtes, no pensions
nothing in short of what
I want, and I wish I
was back in Switzerland
or Germany again it is so
dismal being quite alone.

The lake is pretty and
large enough, but my
eye has been spoiled with
by the Swiss Lakes, with
which it cannot compare.

I have been poking a good
deal about the environs
to day, but I do not find
much variety except in
the beggars who are a
regular nuisance here.

There signs of autumn
here, lots of fallen leaves
&c. I can easily imagine
that a French family would
find the place pleasant
enough, as there a fine
Casino, with reading rooms
salons

salons &c, but also dear
enough viz. 3 Fr. a day.
From what I see in Bedecker
it seems that Italian travelling
is very dear, while in eastern
Switzerland and the Tyrol one
can travel very cheaply.

I have given up all hopes
of learning French this
time, and if I find a
letter from the Leckendorfs
at Chamonny ~~saying~~ saying
that they have a vacant
room, I should be inclined
to make my way slowly back.

The shoes that I have got
at present are Emmersons
but I doubt if he would
recognise them as they have

been once soled, twice heeled
once patched and will soon
want another patch, but
I shall stick to them as
long as possible.

Kellerer is from Basle
or thereabouts - I should
not be sorry if I was back
in his pension again fishing
rowing and admiring the
Lake of Geneva which to
my taste surpasses all the
others, its colour and size
are so ~~my~~ magnificent.
In short I am almost
tempted and half inclined
to spend another week

there to say nothing of
the pleasure of meeting
the Apthorpes again.

Perhaps I may return there
after being at Chamouny.

August 18. This morning
I walked down to Chambery
which is about 8 miles
to the south, the road
passing through a rich
country covered with wal-
-nuts and poplars, but
there is nothing interesting.
Chambery from the
distance looks somewhat
like Fribourg, and is
situated ~~at~~ in a sort of

basin formed by arid, stony-
-looking hills and seems
to abound in heat and dust
to a great extent as well
as in cafés and fine shops
which is to me unaccountable
for it looks a dead-alive
sort of place as far as
the people are concerned.

I did not see anything like
a Pension or decent Hotel
but there is no doubt about
its being quite unsuited
to my purpose; it has
one finely arcaded street
and one other good street
but all the rest seem poor.

In looking at the map I
have made up my mind that
if I don't find a Pension
or companion before leaving
Chamouney, I shall go
~~at~~ straight back into
Switzerland; I did not
know until now what
a hold that country
had got on me and I
am wishing to be again
in that land of lakes,
rivers and eternal snows
I have a great wish to see
two things again viz. the
lake of Geneva and the
Rhone glacier.

Saturday Aug. 20.

I am starting this morning
on foot for Chaney
en route for Chamouney,
supposing I find nothing
on the way. I don't know
what to say about directing
letters - perhaps Martigny
(Valais) the best chance.
At all events I shall
write soon again

Francis E. Prendergast.