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Travels in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany

in the years 1818, 1819, and 1820

Vol. 3^d

[31. July, 1819]

Sierra Nevada

This morning we left Granada at 4 in a coach and six mules to go to Alicante by Murcia. It is a trajet of nearly 8 days. Leaving the city, we enjoyed the view (in mounting a tremendous hill) of La Vega de Granada -- the hills around most steep and grand, and the range of the Sierra Nevada to the south, with the whole of the city, gardens, walls, forts, castles, and spires spread around, partly on the hills, partly on the plain. Altogether Granada is a most striking place, and the scenery around is at once Alpine and beautiful. We ascended very rapidly and were environed in a sea of mountains: so thickly and varied were the different ridges, they seemed like waves.

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... The road continued thro' the rocky defile of the mountains, which rose above us nobly -- but the pass soon became so rocky and narrow that the road mounted the sides of the hills, leaving the bottom of the defile, and opened at once on a view of an immense plain, apparently, far below us, but in reality a Chaos of broken ground in shapes of camps, castles, towns, walls, &c., while to the southwest we had the other most astonishing side of the Sierra Nevada, which is much more craggy and snowy than the northwest side. Below its highest point in a deep recess, but near the top of the mountain, is a grand glacier, of which I could see the depth at the broken edge of the snow -- it looked at the distance we saw it (4 or 5 leagues) to be 18 or 20 feet high -- besides this were many other patches of snow-- and the countour of the hills with 2 fine summits

like the Eldon hills, much of which has its base far above the tops of the intervening mountains, is far finer than on the Granada side. A very steep descent led us to the congregation of confusion by fire and water, which the earth presents and which we had viewed from above,

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and winding amidst horrid precipices of sandy gravel, we had views of the whole district, which is tortured into every possible variety of form and shape, entirely barren -- and seemingly left by some deluge, which has washed off the softer parts and left these towers, towns, fortifications, pyramids, &c. Here and there amongst them, on a flat where soil has collected, are beautiful spots of verdure, vegetation and trees, like oases in a desert. We descended to a stream, where there were many gardens and Indian corn and poplar trees, and thence came to the village of Paliana, of which the greater part is composed of these natural pyramids, castles, and towers, cut out into houses -- the effect is most curious, as all the different parts are isolated and look like artificial piles of earth with doors and windows. Beyond, on all sides, are magnificent rocky mountains.

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[12. August. 1819] Valencia

... The Theatre is clean and neat and has a good orchestra. We had the comedy of El Hijo Reconocido, which was amusing, tho' not interesting, and tolerably acted. A beautiful terzetto in Italian was then sung by a Lady and two Gentlemen, tolerably well, the music delightful and of the first order. A male and female performed the Bolero well, and then we had a Sainete, or laughable farce, which as usual was dull enough.

[15. August. 1819]

... we went to the play, as I had a curiosity to see a tragedy in Spain (Michell, the great tragic actor, being ill when we were in Madrid). We got good places and saw the tragedy of El Tetrarca de Jerusalem -- it is taken from Voltaire's Mariamne, The piece is interesting, but I could not have conceived it possible for acting to be so totally grave, cold, stiff, and absent from nature -- they killed and fought and ravished with just as much coolness as if eating their supper. It was a complete tragedy burlesque: their stupid quietness was so inalterable. Altogether, I was amused with the absurdity

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of it. The extravagance of the Italian theatre, the declamation and over animation of the French, the real passion contrasted with occasional excessive sleepiness of the English, all are perfect indeed compared with this, which was far below any thing I could have conceived -- yet the people thought it fine. We had a duetto, dance, and a fine recit. & duet by a Lady and an Italian -- by Mayer -- it was well sung and most exquisite music. To this succeeded one of their Sainetes, or silly laughable farces, at which no person who has seen the comicality of Paris or the humour of London can possibly laugh -- it is coarse, vulgar, overcharged, and dull. The Spanish stage is at a low ebb, and they never act any thing but French, German, Italian, or English translations.

[22. August. 1819]

Barcelona

Mallie: ~~1819~~.

... the Theatre, which has a handsome facade, was just emptying, as there is always a Spanish comedy on Sundays at 5, and at 8 an Italian opera -- the other days the two Companies play alternately. ... At 8 we went to the Theatre, but got very distant places in the Lunetas, as here every good place is subscribed for. The Theatre is large, very circular and well shaped for seeing and hearing. It is ill painted and shabby. It was very full. The opera was La Cotilda, a new Italian opera, the music by Coccia. The Company is very good indeed, perfect and numerous. The Orchestra good, and the music very lively and in some parts very fine -- the story was that of a wicked brother and sister attempting to murder their sister to marry the other to a Prince -- the poor damsel is saved by the murderer and, disguised as a peasant, is protected by the chief buffo, and capital actor, meets her lover and at last the Prince finds out how he has been cheated, and the others are punished -- La Cotilda marries the Prince. It is a semi-seria, and of most delicious music -- some choruses are enchanting, especially the finale of the 1st act, several good duets and 3 grand airs, 2 by Clotilde and one by the Prince. Monelli, the tenor (Prince) is a fine singer but cold -- he is said to be engaged for London, and has great execution and a good voice,

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but wants animation. Galli, the Buffo, is one of the most lively and animated actors I ever saw, full of life and a very excellent singer. ... The first Lady, La Sala (Clotilde) is powerful and has great execution and sings in good tune, but she has no feeling and is vulgar in appearance, still she sings her grand airs with great effect -- the second is good also: Indeed I have not seen so good an opera for long -- tho' singly

Lorenza Correa at Madrid is a much finer singer than La Sala here. The music is constantly pleasant and the opera lively and amusing.

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[23. August. 1819]

... The Theatre was not very full. The Spanish comedy of 3 acts by Calderon of a man pretending to be dead and his friend getting money of the father for the funeral, called El Combrar. After that the Sainete of El Franfarron, a silly Military Coward, whose comicality was poor indeed. I am more and more persuaded the Spaniards have not talent for acting and most of their pieces are mere buffoonery & pantomime.

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[24. August. 1819]

... The play was La Estrella de Sevilla, an old tragedy by Lope de Vega, in which the interest turns on the passion of five lovers, the lover having killed the brother of his mistress and the Prince of Seville being also in love with the Lady -- however it ends in the Prince giving up the Lady and the marriage of the lovers -- it is true that the lover was not to blame in the affair of killing the brother, but yet for the sister to marry him after, it does not suit our Ideas in England of just dramatic resolution. It was more interesting and better acted than the one I saw at Valencia, but nothing can exceed the dullness of it except the noise and confusion of the Sainete of La Avaricia Castigada, which followed -- before which we had a beautiful Bolero by the Senora _____ and her husband. She is a very pretty dancer, but rather too far advanced in the breeding way for the exercise.

[28. August. 1819]

... We saw *La Cabeza de Brouce* -- not a bad melodrame, I dare say French -- but acted in their usual style of flatness and absurdity. After it a duet bolero -- and then a Sainete taken from Molière's *Précieuses Ridicules* cut down to nothing.

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[29. August. 1819]

... The opera was *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, a Polish story -- merely a Lady carried off by an amorous Baron from her Husband to his Castle and the disguise, detection, imprisonment, and release of the

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Husband in search of his faithful Wife, and the punishment of the Baron by an order from the King. A stupid Servant assisting the Husband is the only comic part -- it is dull as a drama, and not so good as *La Clotilde*, but the music is on the whole much superior. It contains the magnificent air sung by La Sala very finely, which I heard sung by Madame Orfida at the *Princesse de Vandamont's* at Paris and which is only inferior to that of *Elisabetta* by the same author, Rossini. Also La Sala has a very good air in the first act, and a charming duo with the Baron (Galli), whose bass voice is exquisite. Monelli sung one of the richest & finest songs I ever heard with great taste, but he wants power. The trio between him, Galli, and Bauani, the Servant, was most original and finely sung. The finale of the first act was most brilliant with all the wind instruments -- the overture good, and the effect of the order coming from the King, the bells, military music, and band accompaniments near the end was exquisite. The music is exceptionally difficult -- original and delightful -- yet in some parts too many different sorts of passages follow

each other abruptly -- throughout the whole the accompaniments are most delicious and full -- and La Sala and Galli were both admirable -- the former is so young, she will much improve and lose her

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vulgarisms and become more elegant in carriage -- her powers are very great and she sings well in tune. Altogether I was most highly delighted, and I regret extremely leaving Barcelona -- for except at London, Paris, Naples, and Milan, there is nowhere an Italian Opera so good -- indeed as to ensemble it is better than I have seen in London for many years.

[7. September. 1819] Montpellier

... We went to the Theatre at 7 and got good places in the parquet. I much prefer the French fashion of not having any fixed places except loges louées -- by this means strangers have an equal chance with others of seeing the play. In Spain strangers pay more and see and hear less than the abonnés. The Theatre is large and handsome, tho' not new -- but well contrived for seeing and hearing -- a capital orchestra. I was well pleased with the first piece, Le Médecin Turc, beautiful music by Nicolo. A young French Slave pretends to be mad to get his wife out of the hands of a Turkish Physician, whom the Grand Seignor orders either to find a cure for the madness or to be bastinadoed -- so he is cured by the appearance and conversation of the lovely female Slave, who is his wife. It was very well acted, especially by the old Physician's wife, and the young lady, M^{lle} Modinier was most fascinating. I could

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not help remarking what a contrast her grace and talent and nature were to all the actresses I have seen in Spain, for La Correa at Madrid, tho' an admirable singer, is no great actress, and La Sala at Barcelona is an Italian. The tenor who acted the Frenchman was pretty good, and the bass as the Physician very good. Charming opera.

Next came the most entertaining piece of Le Savetier et le Financier, ou Contentement passe richesse. This was done for Bosquier Gavandan from the Variétés to make his début in -- and his acting was most rich, free, full, comic, and diverting -- such a portrait of real French hilarity as was really most striking and admirably done. His inamorata, the

fair Modinier was also pleasing, but I like her better in the elegant French Slave than in the daughter of the Menuisier.

We had last the piece of Douvres à Calais, in which B. Gavandan played the English Lord as at Paris, and M^{lle} Modinier the young Lady very well -- the French lover was ill done by a stiff dull man, so the difference between the French and English was not so marked as at the Variétés, where Vernet was so lively and elegant in the Frenchman. I do not think the stupid burlesque Englishman suits Bosquier -- the gay, downright, happy hilarity of the Savetier is his true style.

[9. October. 1819]

Turin

Waldie: tXLIV, 241

... We went to the Teatro Carignano just opposite the Palazzo Carignano and close by our lodgings. We got good places in the pit. There are no abonné seats. It was full, but the house, tho' large and of very fine architecture, is dirty and dark, being only lighted from the stage. ... The opera was *La gazza Ladra* (*La Pie Voleuse*), music by Rossini, and on the whole is in my opinion, tho' very popular, the worst I have heard of his. Some passages are fine and expressive, yet there is a want of continuity and melody in it. It was delightfully acted by a very good Company. Sbigoli, the tenor, a young man of awkward tall figure, sings with great spirit and power. I recollect him some 2 years since at Florence. He is much improved -- but the Judge by Ambrogio was capital, and the

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Father by Vegraci very good. The other characters were tolerably done, and the chorus capital. The lover was done by the *seconda donna*, very clumsy with a tolerable voice -- but the great attraction was Madame Morandi in *Annette*. I well recollect her at Paris at the Odeon -- in *Susanna*, *Penelope*, &c. She is older, very much both in face and figure, but her voice is as charming as ever -- sweet, clear, just, and expressive, of great power and facility, and a most delightful tone -- her acting is graceful, lively, pathetic, and natural, her eyes and teeth are as fine as ever. I never saw a performer that was more interesting; and she is an excellent musician. Altogether I was highly pleased with the opera -- and between the acts we had the ballet of *Peronse*, in which *Peronse* and *Umba* were admirably acted, and it was altogether very well done, tho' perhaps

with a little too much of the Italian extravagance of gesticulation, which however for pantomime I rather like. Too much feeling is better than too little -- and the Italians always feel. A little animation is pleasant after Spanish tameness and dullness.

[16. October. 1819] Milan

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... We dined and went after to the Teatro della Scala, where, tho' I have been before, I never before saw an Opera, as it was not open except with a dull comedy when we were here in July, 1817. We got good places in the pit -- it was quite full. It is a magnificent Theatre, but too dark -- the architecture is even finer than San Carlo at Naples, but it is not so light, airy, and splendid. We saw La Rappresaglia, an opera

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taken from the French one of Les Deux Stanislas -- the music by Stuntz and some of it very pretty, but on the whole dull enough. The Orchestra is the largest and most perfect I ever heard -- like one instrument. Crivelli has a fine voice but is cold and dull -- he was the King. The Duke by Remorini, a basso cantante, a singer and actor of much spirit, was very good. The Buffo Pacini in the Father was very comical, an excellent actor -- and the Lady by Camporese was charming. I never heard her before, as she was in England when I was last in Italy. She is a capital musician, with a powerful & sweet voice from the breast of a full and rich tone -- with no great powers of force, but admirably neat execution. I own I prefer the clear sweet voice and lovely expression of Morandi, tho' Camporese is younger and has more power, and is also very elegant and a charming actress -- her figure is pleasing but rather petite for so large a theatre.... The duet with her and Crivelli,

the quartett of the 4 chief, the grand air of Elisa, and the finale of the 1st act were the best -- also the air of the basso was good. We had between the 1st and 2^d acts the ballet of I Titani. It is more a spectacle than a ballet --

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there is only some dancing at the end and the scenery is magnificent.

[17. October. 1819]

... We dined and went to the Teatro Ré, where we got good places in a box, the pit being full. I was much pleased and amused with the play, which began at 8 and ended at 1/2 past 10, in 5 acts -- La Macchina

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Degli Scacchi -- the droll contrivances of a young man to give the Lady, whom he is intended to marry by his Uncle and her Father, to his friend, whom she loves -- in doing which, he falls in love with her friend, whom his Uncle intended for himself and who encourages the Uncle by saying she will become one of his family and by taking the Nephew keeps her word. It is a lively piece, I think translated from the French, tho' I do not know the piece. I heard and understood very well -- the acting was lively and spirited as usual, and there was much character.

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[18. October. 1819]

... I went to the Teatro Re, which was not so full as last night -- and where I was joined by Canovese, who is abboné there for about 5 Shillings for six weeks. The play was Il Duello, which was very silly in the German style and so well acted as that of last night -- but it was a lesson of Italian to hear it.

[19. October. 1819]

... Carcassola called and took us to the opera, where we paid 3 visits with him, 1st to the Contessa Busti, whose box is on the stage and the view of all the figurante so close to one is highly amusing. I was delighted with the young Signora Zapucci, who acts the chief part in the ballet. She is most elegant and touching and graceful. I was highly pleased, too, with the Contessa Busti, a most charming clever woman of beaucoup d'esprit. Several pleasant men came into the box, Lord Kinnaird among the number.... Each Lady in her box receives her male friends, but it is seldom that two Ladies are together -- the men go from one box to another all evening. We went next to the box of the Contessa Persega, sister to Carcassola, which is situated in the front of the house and where the view of the ballet and scenery is superb. The painting of the scenery, in point of perspective and finish is far finer than any I ever saw -- it is a pity the machinery is so very

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inferior to France and England.

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[20. October. 1819]

... Christie and I went to the Teatro Re to see the tragedy of Merope by Alfieri. A Gentleman near me let me read his copy of Merope, but it was by Maffei. As one has always to

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wait for an hour and a quarter, I had time to read it. It is not unlike Voltaire's, but not so good, tho' there are some fine passages in it. That of Alfieri, which we saw, is very simple, & like the first Greek tragedies the scene is in one place and there are no secondary characters -- however there is no chorus -- all is done by the 4 chief parts -- Polifonte the Tyrant,

Merope the Queen, Egitte her lost son, and Polidor his old supposed father. It is in some parts most interesting, and the language grand, noble, simple, and pathetic. The Scene where Merope first sees Egitte and thinks it possible he may be innocent, from her affection for him, which he feels at once, is described with astonishing nature. In the 4th act she is sure he has murdered her Son and her rage and eagerness to destroy him are only prevented by Polidoro, who is obliged to declare who he is even before Polifonte -- but the agony of Merope, who is either to marry the tyrant or lose her son, is not made so much of as by Voltaire, & the manner in which at last Egitte in presence of all Polifonte's Officers snatches the axe from the Priest and assassinates Polifonte is disgusting. It would have been better to have contrived that Merope should

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do it. The last act is truly lame and undramatic in situation and void of interest -- the 4 first acts are beautifully written and interesting in situation. Egitte was acted with much feeling and too much extravagance. Polidoro was very well done. Polifonte very bad as tyrants usually are on all stages. Merope was commonplace and tho' not offensive, vulgar, inelegant, cold, yet violent and without any grace. After M^{lle} George, it was lamentable.

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[21. October. 1819]

... the Overture [La Rappresaglia] ... is not worth much, but Camporese's first air and her duet with Crivelli and the quartett are all fine, and in the last act her part in the finale is very rich and she executes it admirably. She is a

singer the more one hears the more one admires -- so sure, so rich, so well in tune, so perfect in execution, and so pleasing and unaffected in manners. ... La Sappucci is charming in the ballet, and La Greforini very pretty -- but there are no striking dancers, male or female.

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[24. October. 1819]

... I went with Christie at 8 to Mrs. Goldsmid as we had promised. ... Mr. Lewis Goldsmid and his friend M. Chabert, who is here from Paris and in whom I recognised a Paris acquaintance of last Winter, came into the room disguised as Turks in two splendid dresses Lewis Goldsmid brought from the Holy Land, to which and to Egypt he lately made a tour. Madame Grassini I also recognised with surprise. She has been acting at Brescia and has been quite idolized there in Cleopatra and Orazia. She looks well -- and was very glad to see me again. M. Chabert is her lover and attendant.

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[26. October. 1819]

... Christie and I went to the Teatro di Girolamo (Marionettes) near the Piazza di Fontanna close by the Tribunale. The neatest little theatre of the kind I ever saw, most elegantly and tastefully painted -- and a great many people. The scenery beautifully done, and the marionettes large and well managed, especially their various metamorphoses. Un vero Esemplio di Fedeltà was the piece -- and enchanter metamorphoses a faithful couple -- the man into a monster, the lady into a boy -- and they go thro' all sorts of horrors -- the lady kills a dragon and nearly kills her husband in his guise as the monster, then the Queen falls in love with her in her man's dress -- the King and Court pursue her to kill her. Constant changes of scenes

and action -- very diverting, as it was interlarded with the tricks of Girolamo and Colombina, a Valet and Chambermaid, who are indispensable in the marionette pieces. Altogether it was very good, and the scenery constantly varied was most beautiful. A short ballet after the 2^d act was a scene of Montagues, Rasses, and Chars with people, and much good dancing, quite in time -- but the best

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ballet was after the 4th act of a peasant and his wife turned into a Lady and Gentleman and put in a fine house and amused with dancing and feasting -- they are very miserable and the enchanter sends a devil and torch to frighten them, after which they are restored to their garden and cottage and quite happy. After the 5th act of the play was a comic ballet of Girolamo and Colombine dancing with old women and young children turned out of the flowers and flower pots in the garden -- it terminated the medley of performances, which on the whole were very amusing. The action of the marionettes was well adapted to the dialogue, and the speakers had a great variety of tones of voice for the different characters.

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[27. October. 1819]

... at 7 we went to the Teatro Re, where we got good places and saw the comedy of La Tavola rotonda di Londra. There never was a table d'hôte at London, so the idea is new, but that is all the novelty the piece possesses -- it is merely the separation of a Father, Son and Daughter, and the love of a Lord, not in an honorable way, for the Daughter, which he repents of. Resolved to see her no more, as he is too great to marry a person of no rank, he recommends her and her brother to their unknown Father,

his friend. This leads to the discovery of their birth, and then the Lord and young Lady are of course to

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marry. It is of the most commonplace and worn out cast of sentimental comedy, with a comical agent of the Lord's and some other droll members of the table d'hôte -- but commonplace as it was, the language is so beautiful and the Lord, Father, Son, and Daughter were all acted with so much feeling, if not much science, that one could not but be much interested in it, altho' the whole business was clear from the beginning of the second act. On the whole I was very much amused -- and at least it must be allowed that the extreme distinctness of articulation now in fashion in Italy makes it very easy for a stranger to make out all that passes on the stage. The house was very full, but I have never seen any of the English here honor it with their presence.

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[28. October. 1819]

... This evening I went to the Opera ... to the box of Count Gonfalonieri, where were he, the Countess, Count Parro, and two others. There was a long discussion in Italian about the orders received at Genoa relative to the destruction of the Barbary powers, which are not yet perfectly known. I was much amused with an argument between Gonfalonieri and Parro about the meaning of the words in a letter which conveyed the intelligence to Parro from Genoa -- it seems their piracy is again so daring, that England and France are resolved to put a stop to it if possible. The Countess talked with much esprit, and I was much amused for an hour, and then walked with Gonfalonieri to the Pit and afterwards went to Countess Persaga's box, where I sat

Persaga

some time with her, Carcassola, &c. Carcassola and I then went to the box of Contessa Busti, who is returned from the country. She was lively & intelligent as usual. I staid there till the end of the opera, as it is on the stage and one hears the music to much advantage. Camporese

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sung more divinely than ever, and Remorini was in admirable voice. One gets used to the music -- and some of it, borrowed from Rossini and Cimarosa, is very good. If the music was all like that of such composers, I should not dislike to hear it night after night, as the more one hears really good music the more one enjoys it and perceives its beauties. I had a long musical conversation with a most agreeable M. Chinachetti -- we got very intimate and I wish I had known him sooner, as he is very intimate with Rossini and full of musical taste and knowledge. Rossini is to be here in December to write an opera for the carnival, and he then returns to Naples from whence he cannot be long absent, as he is director of all the musical theatres there.

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[31. October. 1819]

...Milan is a most comfortable place -- pleasant people, intelligent and kind to strangers, capital Theatre, Casino, drives, &c., but no parties -- no society but in the close boxes of the Theatre -- and there it is but a repetition of the same music & dancing nightly -- both the opera and the society are quite spoiled by uniting both -- it is really a great pity, as they have every possibly capability for both.

[3. November. 1819] Cremona

Waldie: tXLIV, 333

... Nothing could exceed the elegant politeness and civility of Conte Pontzoni, who is one of the first noblemen here and director of the Theatre. We went with Albertoni next to a new Palace building by M. Bezzole, in which we found Diotti, a man about 35, said to be the best modern fresco painter in Italy since Appiani's death. He was busy with a large fresco on the side of a room of Vulcan and the Cyclops, Graces, rocks and fire -- it was not finished, but full of spirit, and well grouped and drawn. On the ceiling was a large finished fresco of Jupiter, the Gods and Goddesses, and Hours above,

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very well disposed -- the women were beautiful, but the men wanting force and expression. I thought the coloring rather glaring, and not near so rich, fine, and natural as that of Appiani.

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... The Theatre was only built 7 or 8 years ago by Canonica, a famous Milanese architect -- it is much on the plan of La Scala, but smaller, nearly as large and very like Covent Garden. We went with Conte Albertoni behind the scenes, where we paid a visit to Conte Pontzoni in his box and saw all the scenery and performers. It is a capital and complete Theatre. The piece was Don Cievos Mano di Sangue, very horrid and melodramtic and nonsensical, the actors the worst I have seen in Italy -- nearly as bad as in Spain, if not so dull more extravagant and unnatural and without ever knowing a single word they are to say, so the prompter is always the loudest and in full view.

[4. November. 1819] Mantua

Waldie: tXLIV, 344

... the outworks of Mantua are by far the strongest in Italy and there seems to be now a considerable garrison here. We returned to our Inn, and then went to the Theatre, which is in the Palace. It was built by Pierparini -- it is 5 tiers high but too deep for its breadth, tho' very handsomely gilded and fitted up -- however it is in too remote a situation -- and tho' it is large and handsome, and Mantua contains about 25,000 people, another on the plan of that at Cremona and by Canonica, the same architect, is now erecting in the Corso. We got good places in the orchestra at 15 sous each -- the pit is 10 sous. We saw the play of Misanthropia e Pentimento (our Stranger), very well acted by the 2 principal characters and not ill by the rest. Mrs. Haller was a very lovely woman, young and with some feeling -- but little sense. The Stranger was a

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plain man, but with much feeling and good conception. Their last scene had a great effect -- but I am sorry to say the Italians have little taste for plays beyond Melodrame and Spectacle, for they were often talking in the most interesting parts, and last night at Cremona the vilest trash of Melodrame was received with thunders of applause. On the whole I was very much pleased, especially with the Stranger -- some of his points were well imagined and new -- and to-night the Prompter was pretty quiet on the whole, at least in the best scenes -- it spoils every piece to see the Prompter with his body out of his box turning first to one and then to another and bawling out the piece as fast as the actors -- without leaving out a word.

[6. November. 1819] Bologna

... We dined at near 6, and before 8 went to the Teatro del Corso, where I recollect the last time I was here seeing Tramezzani in Mitridate. Tonight we arrived just as the Overture began ... a new opera lately produced called Biondello. It is Richard Cœur de Lion, but may be called so only the first act, as Richard is let out almost as soon as he appears. It is not near so dramatic or interesting as the French or English

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Richard, but the music by Radicati (husband to Madame Bertinotti), who lives here (he is leader of the band), is very pretty, lively, and good, if not great. A duet between the tenor and bass, one between the primadonna and bass, and a very fine quartett are all delightful. The first tenor, Crespi, is effeminate and tame, but has a sweet voice and great flexibility, taste, and execution. He was Florestan, Governor of the Castle. Lauretta by Signora Amati, a peasant of the higher order -- she is first singer, very lively and a good clear voice. The Countess by Signora Santini, a good fat woman, not a bad singer, and her Page by Signora Cerioli very good. The buffo peasant lover of Lauretta by Nardine I thought little of. Richard by Lauretti was very good -- it was a short part, but he had a good manly sonorous voice and not bad manner. The best part was Biondello by Bottari, a fine bass of great spirit and flexibility.... He is perhaps too luxuriant, as Remorini at Milan is too plain -- but both are good, tho' very different. I think Bottari not so perfect always in tune as he should be, a fault I have not heard lately, either at Milan or at Barcelona. The opera went off with great applause and spirit -- there were some beautiful pieces for the violin (Radicati) and oboe (Crespino).

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[10. November. 1819]

... We dined and after dinner went to the Teatro Contavalli, which is small but new and neat -- the architecture and painting very simple and chaste. We saw the comedy of Gelo e Fusco, a Spanish piece, but the actors are much worse and more vulgar than those of Milan. 2 little ballets, one I Tinti Ammalati, the other La Figlia mal custodita, were well acted by the 2 primi ballerini, Adelaide and Federico Gheldino, brother and sister and only 13 and 12 years old, yet very strong and graceful -- 2 very interesting creatures, and they danced extremely well some fine pas de deux.

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[13. November. 1819] Rimini

... we went to the Theatre, which is in the Casa di Citta. It is of an oblong form, very gloomy and dull. The house was full, as it was for the benefit of the principal actress, who sat at the door to collect pauls full drest for her part. She was the best of the troop, which seemed to me worse than any I have yet seen. The piece was in the Grand Spectacle or Melodramatic style and was called the Nozze di Beatrice -- it was in 5 acts, of which we had the patience to witness 3.

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[14. November. 1819] Pesaro

... Before we got to Pesaro we passed Monte Mosca, a very elegant Casino or Villa on a hill, which was occupied by the Princess of Wales when she first came to Pesaro. She then bought one nearer the town in a lower situation and built 2 wings to it -- it is called the Villa Vittoria -- and is ugly enough. We had a good view of both her houses en passant, but, tho' she is absent, they are not allowed to be shewn to any one, some of the Baron Bergami's family being left there we were told.

She had bought a large Convent in Pesaro, intending to fit it up as a Palace, but, tho' it is still hers, the design is given up. All her plate has been melted down and marked and cast afresh with the Baron Bergami's Arms, &c. She has with her at present on her travels the Baron, the Countess Oldi, a Colonel Olivieri, a German Captain, and the young boy Guglielmo, her protégé. ... It is a pity she has fallen into such hands. As long as any English were with her, the Nobility of Pesaro and the neighbourhood visited her, but since Capt. Hesse of the 10th Hussars left her, all the inhabitants have ceased to frequent her society.

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[22. November. 1819] Rome

... We took leave of Chiaveri and went to the Teatro Valle, where the opera of Il Turco in Italia was begun some time. I never heard it before -- it is by Rossini and the music is most exquisite. The orchestra rather overpowered the singers and took off the effect, but I must hear it again. It is an opera taken from the Coquette Corrigée and is very laughable and good. Zuchelli, a good bass, was the Turco, and Signora Monbelli, the Coquette, is a most charming and natural actress -- and sweet singer,

very expressive and with much taste and flexibility. Taci, the buffo, was very good, but the rest I thought médiocre, tho' all were tolerable. We had also La Clemenza di Tito, drama di Metastasio, of which every word was familiar to me from having heard it so much with the music of Mozart -- it was tolerably acted throughout and is both interesting and beautiful, and the language exquisite.

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[24. November. 1819]

... Christie and I went to the opera at the Teatro Valle. It was tonight the Farsa di Musica of Rossini in one long act called L'Inganno felice, in which are 2 duets, a trio, finale, and a song by Zucchelli, the bass, most exquisite. The music is of a more singing nature and not so much acting as the Turco in Italia. It is most delicious indeed, excellent subjects with just enough and not too much music in orchestra. The plot is lively and pleasant. Campadelli was the Duke. He is a weak, dull, old, worn out tenor, but sings with taste. Zucchelli in the bass: he has not much life but great power, flexibility, execution, and

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taste. Taci, the buffo, in the Peasant was very comic, and Monbelli is charming, but the lively Capricciosa in the Turca suits her better than the persecuted Duchess disguised as a sentimental Shepherdess -- her singing is clear, sweet, and delightful, if not powerful. Altogether L'Inganno felice is one of Rossini's happiest productions. We had next L'Impresario, a comedy in verse of a Manager engaging Singers, which was very amusing. Then came the 2^d act of the Turco in Italia -- the duet of the husband (buffo) and Turco (basso), and the quintetto of them and the lover (Campidella) and the two Ladies (Noubelli and another) are both, especially the latter piece,

[27. November. 1819]

... Christie and I went to Canova's studio, where we saw all his latest works. Miserini was there and shewed us them: the statue sitting of Washington, a recumbent Magdalen, a Nymph recumbent are the finest that were quite new to me. Canova came himself expecting to meet me, and was delighted to hear of Charlotte and on her account to see me again. We had a great deal of talk together. He is as pleasant and unaffected as ever. He gave me an invitation to come when I liked and bring whom I pleased -- and promised to write Charlotte soon. I gave him the letter from Cicognara, of whom he had heard lately, and I was sorry to hear that excellent man had been unwell -- his son is I believe rather troublesome and wild. We staid above an hour and then walked on the Pincian Hill.

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e . . . [I] went to the Tatro Valle (the last night, as the Theatres in time of Advent, which begins to-morrow, are never open) with the 2 Frenchmen who sit next us at dinner in their carriage. We had tickets before and were well placed in a palchetto close by the orchestra. The house was very full, an L'Inganno felice and a great part of Il Turco in Italia both went off with astonishing effect. Nothing can be more delightful than the exquisite trio and indeed the whole piece of L'Inganno felice, and the quintett of Il Turco is inimitable in situation, effect, and music.

Highly pleased, as were my companions, we walked home and admired the Pantheon's magnificent outline in bright moonlight. It is by far the noblest edifice of Rome, either Ancient or Modern, which we can see in a state to judge of. It is indeed a Temple never to be forgotten.