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THE WONDERS OF SICILY

STORY OF THE MONASTERY OF SAN DOMENICO.

A Land Where History and Story and The Beauties of Nature and Art Blend so Marvelously.

Later in my stay at Taormina I found out more about the old monastery of San Domenico, which is now a hotel. The story is more interesting even than I had thought at first. The monastery was founded by Damiano Rosso in the year 1400. He was a direct descendant of Tancred l'Hauteville, and therefore claimed kindred with William the Conqueror. The place has remained in the possession of the Rosso family ever since, and it was the present representative of the family who told me its story. In all its long history services in the church have been kept up, and they are so still in one of the chapels, though this is only a private mass for the Rosso family and their household.

The wood carvings in the choir and the sacristy and on the pulpit, which are so marvelously rich and fine were the life-work of one of the old Benedictine monks, who labored upon them forty years, finishing in the year 1602. This man must have been a kind of Fra Angelico, for every figure bears testimony to his fervent piety, as well as to the exquisite refinement of his art and the religious scrupulousness with which every detail was wrought out. The lovely surroundings of his monastery taught the monk how to adorn his stalls and his pulpit, and right well did he use the flowers, fruits and leaves that filled his garden and covered the mountain sides above and below his cell in embellishing his capitals and corbels and all the surfaces of his construction work.

There is among the other carvings a curious "Tree of St. Domenico," whose body seems to have been a fruitful soil for the production of abbots and saints, for each branch of the tree that grows from his side has borne fruit in one of them.

This same most pious and devoted monk had time in spite of his forty years of carving to paint the missal of the church and adorn it with pious carvings.

There is something most beautiful and interesting about the spirit which pervades this ancient church, and buyers get in its lovely cloisters in spite of the intrusion of careless priests who come and go, having no part nor lot in it. It is pathetic that a place so holy, so sacred, so altogether apart from earthly things as San Domenico must have been to the artist monk, should now be thus laid bare to the world.

One must linger awhile at Taormina to learn about its beauties. No hasty glance suffices. The theater in the arms of its mountains is not the same in the morning as in the evening, and at midday it is again quite different. At few places do the lights and shadows produce a more impressive effect upon the landscape than here.

To see the sunset from the Greek theater at Taormina is an event in anyone's lifetime. There is no other place where such a sight can be seen. As the sun sinks behind the mountains shadows creep over the theater, deepening, ever deepening, till it becomes quite gray and dark, while the Calabrian mountains on the Italian shore are still gray and luminous, and Aetna, towering far above them all, seems still light almost to its base. Gradually, however, the vast mountain begins to glow. It becomes deep purple down among its valleys, then amethystine, then more roseate till the snow-crowned dome shines out in radiant pink.

Long after the sea has lost its blue and the shadows have covered even the highest Italian mountains, after even the clouds that have been bathed in rosy light are beginning to pale, there is still a radiance about the crest of Aetna. It seems as if the great dome far up in the heavens were luminous in itself, light-giving perhaps because of the fires within. But no; that cannot be, for as the moments pass a pearly gray succeeds the rose color, and only the column of smoke remains, red, like a pillar of fire, upon this highest, purest sanctuary of the Sicilian land. At last even this one gleam of color fades away, and for a time soon shadows cover the vast mountain and all its attendant peaks.

But soon the moon's light touches the white dome of Aetna. Then a broad path of silver leads across the sea from Italy to Sicily. At last all the gray rocks and crags and castles and the little towns and monasteries that rest quietly on their hill crests are silvered by the moonbeams. The great mountain that dominates all the land is bathed from base to dome in a flood of tremulous moonlight.

In such a light and such a place all the wonderful story of Sicily seems to be told again. The old people who lived here long before the Greeks built yonder castle far above the theater. Then the Greeks came and Syracuse arose in all her beauty and grandeur, and the majestic temples crowned the hills about Girgenti. Then came the Romans and conquered after long wars, leaving their amphitheater and many another noble building to tell of their power. Christians, Saracens and Normans follow in the train of these, and with them came Monreale and the Royal Chapel, lustrous gems of art, inspired by the love and power of the conquering Christ.

There is another land like this in which history and story and the most exquisite beauties of nature and of art are blended in so marvelous a way? WALTER CRANSTON LARNED.

CHURCHILL.

Winston Churchill's new novel of the civil war, "The Crisis," was published May 25, yet it has already sold 150,000 copies, and the demand shows unabated. Literature is not so despicable a profession nowadays for those who pull out the plums. Mr. Churchill has been before the public some three years, and in that time has published three books, which together must have sold their half-million copies. The author's profits should come to some \$150,000, to say nothing of the stage rights to "Richard Carvel" which must mean a good many thousands more. Altogether this young writer must be making well over \$50,000 a year at the very outset of his profession, a sum which would not seem small to men who by a life-time of work have gained eminence at the bar, in the church, or in medicine. But ambitious writers who glory in these figures must bear in mind that they are as misleading as the reports of fortunes made in stocks. Such prizes are the very rare exception, and luck counts for quite as much as merit.—Springfield Republican.

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ROMANCE OF TRANSVAAL

NIECE OF GENERAL JOUBERT TO WED.

The Groom is an Italian Officer Who Has had a Most Adventurous and Varied Career.

Colonel Ricchardl, ex-commandant of the Italian legion in the Transvaal, has just arrived at Brussels to complete the arrangements for his marriage with Miss Myre Guttman, niece of the late General Joubert and sister-in-law of Mr. Eloff, nephew and private secretary of Mr. Kruger. Ricchardl was born at Alba and served as captain in the Italian army; was afterward commissioned to Siam in 1893 as director of the military college of Bangkok. The Siamese government sent him to Australia for the purchase of mounts for the Siamese cavalry, after which he was delegated by the same government as commissioner to the Chicago exhibition. At the close of the world's fair he went to China as a journalist; then to the Philippines as war correspondent, where he had frequent interviews with Aguinaldo. In 1899 he went to the Transvaal as war correspondent shortly after the outbreak of hostilities. Four months afterward he enlisted as a volunteer in the commando of Kruger's nephew, wounded at Colenso, he was sent to the Pretoria hospital. There he met Miss Guttman for the first time in her role of hospital nurse and fell in love with her. Ricchardl was wounded a second time at Dalmanutha in August last year. He it was who was sent by Botha to Roberts on Sept. 6 with the Boer counter-proclamation regarding the annexation of the two republics. Ricchardl met Miss Guttman again at Modderpoort in General Buller's commando, where she had accompanied her aunt, Mme. Joubert. Again they met when Mr. Kruger arrived at Marselles, and here it was that they were affianced. At first Mr. Kruger opposed the marriage owing to the difference in religion, Colonel Ricchardl being a Catholic, but finally withdrew his opposition owing to his personal esteem for the colonel.—Chicago Record-Herald.

SUGAR MEN TO FIGHT.

Representatives of the beet sugar industry admitted in New York yesterday that a big war was on between the sugar trust, represented in San Francisco by Claus Spreckels, and the Oxbarbs of the American Beet Sugar Company. They said that such a struggle would inevitably bring great hardship to California beet sugar farmers, who depended upon the Oxbarbs for the disposition of their crops. By cutting half a cent a pound off the price of sugar the trust will reduce the value of this year's crop by \$1,000,000. Further cuts are expected.

A MINISTER'S GOOD WORK.

"I had a severe attack of bilious colic, got a bottle of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy, took two doses and was entirely cured," says Rev. A. A. Power, of Emporia, Kan. "My neighbor across the street was sick for over a week, had two or three bottles of medicine from the doctor. He used them for three or four days without relief, then called in another doctor who treated him for some days and gave him no relief, so discharged him. I went over to see him the next morning. He said his bowels were in a terrible fix, that they had been running off so long that it was almost bloody flux. I asked him if he had tried Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy and he said, 'No.' I went home and brought him my bottle and gave him one dose; told him to take another dose in fifteen or twenty minutes if he did not find relief, but he took no more and was entirely cured. I think it the best medicine I have ever tried." For sale by all dealers. Benson, Smith & Co., general agents, Hawaiian Islands.

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