

**THE VILLA PALMIERI.**

**This Famous Italian House To Be Occupied by an American.**

A recent cable dispatch said that James W. Ellsworth, whose New York home is at No. 18 East 53d street, had rented for the summer the famous Villa Palmieri, which is only a short distance from Florence, Italy. Mr. Ellsworth, who is a member of the firm of James W. Ellsworth & Co., of Cleveland, retired from business about seven years ago after securing a large fortune through operations in coal mines, and since that time he has lived in this city. He is a great lover of art, and in his home, in 53d street, he has many fine paintings which he has collected. Among these are a large number by Inness, which constitute one of the most complete collections of the works of this artist in this country. It is thought that a desire for further art study and a hope of obtaining other art treasures are the motives which prompted him to take up his summer quarters in the Villa Palmieri.

The villa is one of the most beautiful as well as one of the most historic in Italy. It stands above the River Mensola, near Settignano, a short distance below Villa Boccaccio, where the author of the "Decameron" lived and is supposed to have been born. In fact, many of the stories related in this famous book are supposed to have been told in the Villa Palmieri, to which the little coterie of storytellers moved after having spent some of their time at Villa Poggio Gherardo, their first stopping place after they had fled from plague stricken Florence. The Villa Palmieri dates back to 1336, if not earlier, and at the time of Boccaccio's writing the villa belonged to Cioni de' Fini. Soon afterward he sold it to the Tolomei, who in turn sold it to Matteo Palmieri, and it was a descendant of the latter who had the place partially rebuilt in 1670 and named it after himself.

During the last two centuries the villa has been a great favorite with the English people visiting that part of Italy. In 1776 Lord Cowper and his beautiful young wife visited the place, and they were so taken with its beauty that they made it their home. From then on it became a place of interest to Britons, and many were the brilliant social functions given in its spacious halls. From the year 1824 it was occupied by an eccentric woman, Miss Mary Parhill, who, after living in it for thirty years, left it to the Grand Duchess Marie Antoinette de Bourbon. In 1874 it passed into the hands of Lord Crawford, in whose family it has since remained. Several times the villa was lent by Lady Crawford to Queen Victoria, and it has been the scene of many latter day social affairs.

The villa has had many fine statues and paintings in and around it, some of them by old masters. One of the latter, which has since found its way into the National Gallery in London, is an interesting picture of the Assumption of Our Lady, attributed by Vasari to Botticelli, though now considered a painting of his school. This picture was painted for the Palmieri Chapel in San Pietro Maggiore, but the owner of the Villa Palmieri, who was an accomplished scholar and a friend of Cosimo de' Medici, had given offence to the Church by writing a poem which was declared to contain heretical opinions on the subject of angels. The painting, therefore, which contained pictures of Matteo Palmieri and his wife, Cosa Serragli, looking up at the angelic faces above them, was denounced by the Church, and in order to preserve it it was taken to the old scholar's villa and walled up. It was found there at the beginning of the nineteenth century and sent to the National Gallery. The stabs and cuts inflicted on the figures of Palmieri and his wife by zealots are still visible. Many other art treasures have been found within the walls of the old villa, and in the gardens there are statues of which it would be hard to compute the value.

The villa, with its present modern improvements, is a delightful resort in the spring and summer. All about it are beautiful gardens and terraces, balustrades and loggie, and there are high walls overgrown with ivy and cypress. A fine double stairway with a graceful sweep leads into the flower garden and through the vine covered walls of this are round openings, each of which frames an exquisite view of the surrounding country. Everywhere among the marbles and the flowers there is an air of antiquity and rest; perfume continuously filters through the halls from the gardens; the scenery from the balustrades is beautiful on every side, and there is little that is needed for personal comfort or pleasure which cannot be found in or around this famous old villa.

**THE RESULT OF LYING.**

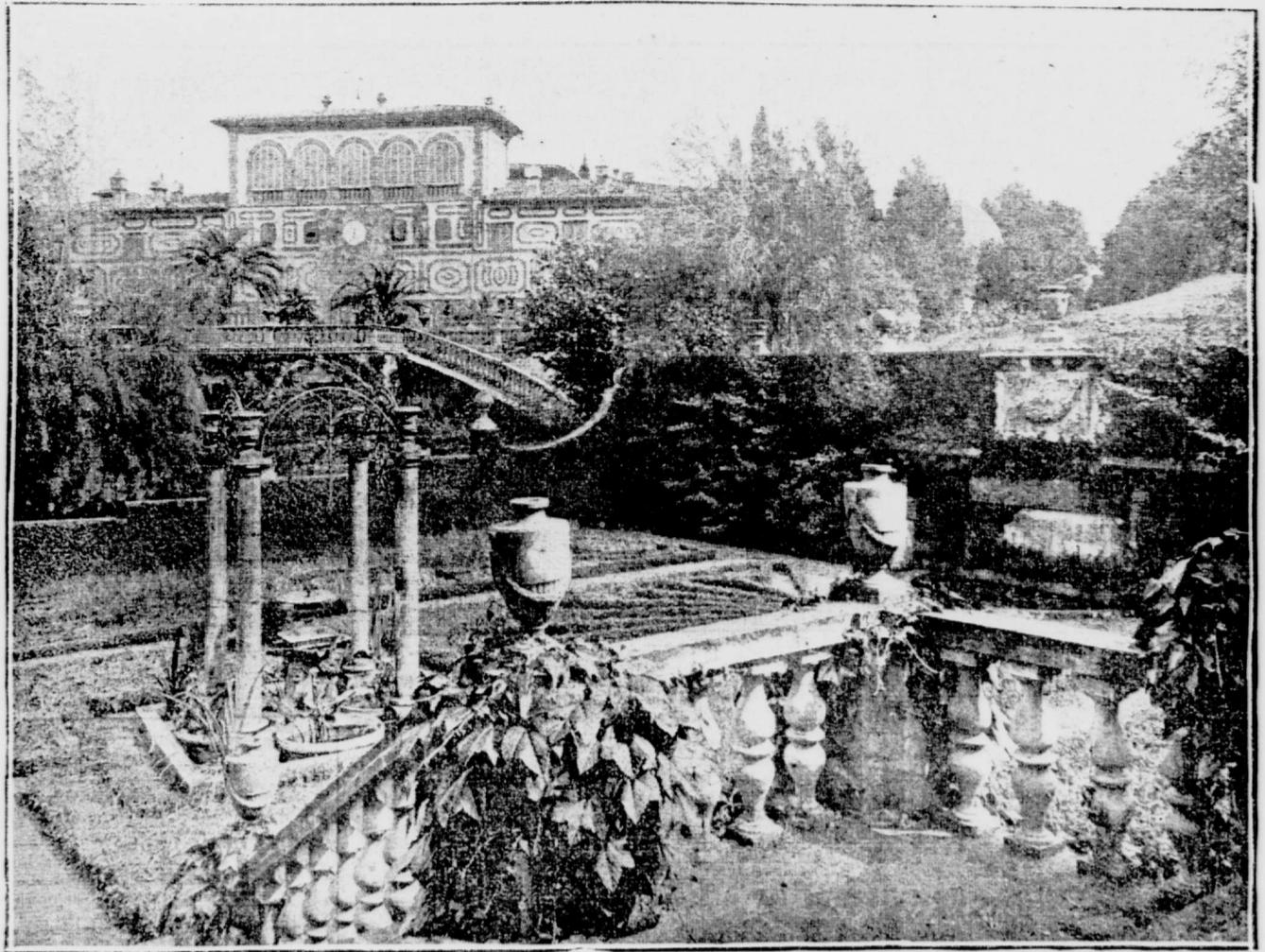
"Maarten Maartens," the Dutch novelist, was talking at a magazine office about realistic fiction.

"If realism is truth," he said, "then I am for it. In books, as in life, the truth is always best. Lies fall.

"Lies fall in books as they fall in life. I know a woman who intensely desired to have a good photograph taken of her little son.

"But in the studio the child bawled as though he were going to be tortured. It was impossible to calm him, impossible to keep him in the chair. For an hour he filled the place with his howls and yells. For an hour he tore up and down the room like an imp.

"But, darling," said his mother, "the gentleman isn't going to hurt you. Just smile and



GENERAL VIEW OF THE VILLA PALMIERI.

keep still a moment and it will be all over before you know it."  
"Yes," roared the youngster. "Yes, I know. That's what you told me at the dentist's."

**MISUNDERSTOOD.**

At a meeting of the famous Bill Club of Jefferson City—his whose name is not William may not join this club—ex-Congressman Cowherd told a Memorial Day story.

"Memorial Day," he said, "always makes me think of a pedler who came to my cousin's house in Jackson County when the war was at its height.

"This pedler, a strong, tall young man, was peddling ferns, and my pretty cousin said to him reproachfully:

"I am surprised to see an able bodied young man like you selling ferns at this crisis. Why are you not with the army?"

"The pedler looked surprised."  
"Why, they don't want ferns in the army, do they, lady?" he asked."

**WORTH TRYING.**

D. H. Morris, ex-president of the Automobile Club of America, was describing in New York the success of a certain wily automobile "cop."  
"The man's cleverness is wonderful," Mr. Morris ended. "In some ways it reminds me of the cleverness of old John Jates.

"I thought you said you were going to bring a friend home to dinner with you this evening?" snapped Mrs. Jates, as they seated themselves at a beautifully appointed table.

"He couldn't come," John answered, calmly.  
"And then, with no little enjoyment, the clever fellow fell to upon the first decent meal he had sat down to for some weeks."

**FORCE OF HABIT.**

Editor—What is the matter with that new compositor? Instead of following copy in this story and setting up "foaming steel" he insists upon making it "foaming stein."

Publisher—I guess we will have to forgive him. You see, he comes from Milwaukee.—Chicago News.

**ADDED TO ART MUSEUM.**

**Some of the Recent Acquisitions at the Metropolitan.**

The collection of sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art has recently received an acquisition in a life size bronze cast of "L'Age d'Airain," by Auguste Rodin. It bears the marks of his handiwork where he retouched it here and there before its completion. The original was purchased by the government of France after the sculptor had innumerable trials endeavoring to gain recognition from the critics, and now stands in the Luxembourg. The statue which the Museum now has in its possession was presented by Mrs. J. W. Simpson, and it is of interest because it is taken from the original plaster model which was Rodin's first contribution to the Salon.

In the art gallery an example of nineteenth century art has been acquired in "The Charpentier Family," painted by Renoir and purchased through the Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Fund. This is by common consent one of the finest works of this painter.

To the collection of arms and armor has been added an interesting Turco-Austrian cannon, a gift of Rutherford Stuyvesant, which dates from the late seventeenth century. The cannon is mounted on the original carriage, and is a curiosity that causes one to smile when he compares it with the engines of war used to-day. The relic is only five feet long and fifteen inches high, with a barrel not much over two inches in diameter. This is of Damascus steel and inlaid with silver, while the ball used in this weapon is only three-quarters of an inch in diameter. The gun is not a heavy thing, and when used in the Turkish operations around Vienna was drawn by the soldiers.

**A STONEWALL JACKSON STORY.**

"Stonewall Jackson," said a Virginia veteran, "used to tell a good story about a bridge builder.

"This bridge builder was called Old Miles. He was necessary to Jackson because the flimsy bridges on the line of march were continually being swept away by the floods or destroyed by the enemy, and in these contingencies Miles was a regular jewel. He could run you a bridge in the time it would take another man to make the measurements.

"One day the Union troops burned a bridge across the Shenandoah. Stonewall Jackson called Old Miles to him and said:

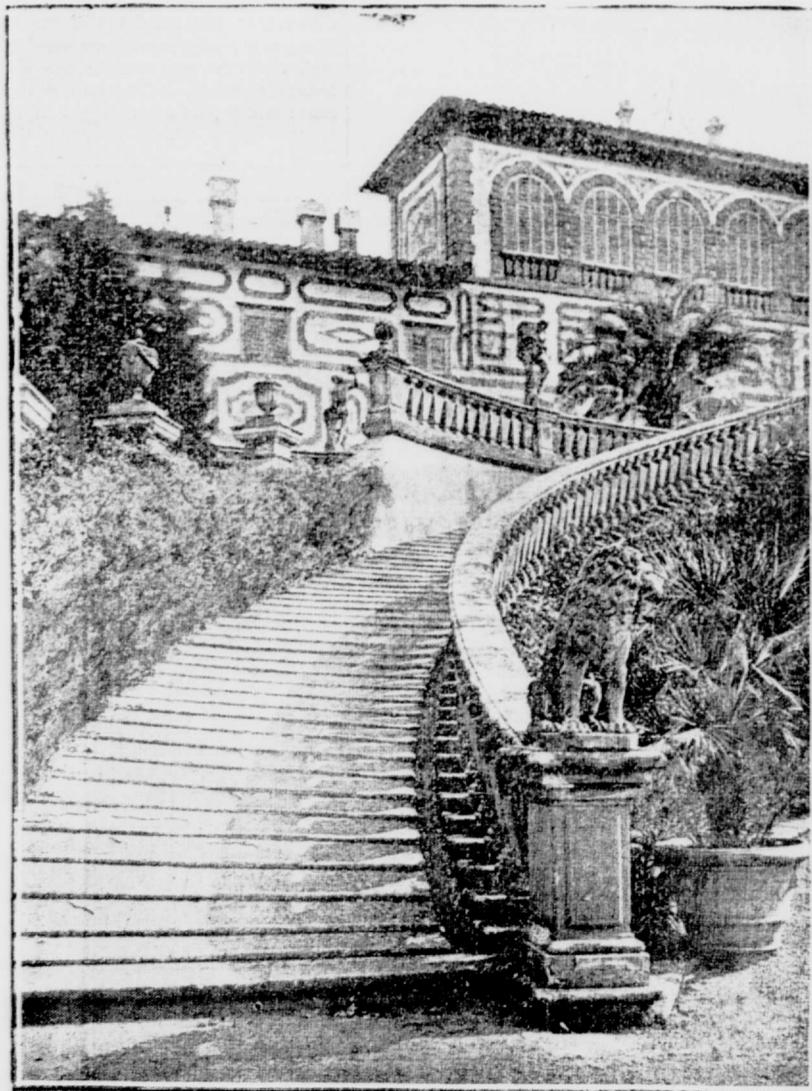
"You must put all your men to work, Miles, and you must keep them at it all night, for I've got to have a bridge across this stream by morning. My engineer—an invaluable fellow, by the way—will draw up the plans for you."

"Well, early the next morning, Jackson, much worried, met Old Miles.

"See here," he said, dubiously, "how about that bridge? Did the engineer give you the plan?"

"Old Miles took the cigar from his mouth and flicked the ash off with a sneer.

"General," he said, "the bridge is done. I dunno whether the pieter is or not."



WESTERN STAIRWAY, VILLA PALMIERI.

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