

Pictures In The Fire.

When the winds are crooning of the tempest rising near—
Shouting down the chimney, that the young and old may hear;
What a joy to gather, while the blaze is leaping higher,
And watch the pretty pictures that are painted in the fire.
There a ship is tossing that is wrecked upon the sea;
Here a ruined castle crowns a green and sunny sea;
Yonder smiles a garden, and a church with taper spire—
Ever coming, going, are the pictures in the fire.
Walls of stately mansions never framed a sight so rare in life;
All we do as wish them, and behold the pictures there!
Tender faces greet us. Oh, the heart can never tire,
Watching on a winter's night the pictures in the fire!
Tender bloom wild, stormy clouds, and near, Italian skies;
Life, with all its busy maze, is symbolized to our eyes.
Oh, the tranquil dreams that wake beneath the tempest's fires,
While looking at the pictures that are painted in the fire!

A PAST HISTORY.

I was "doing" the Riviera with my nephew, Dick Merrivale, when one morning that I had stayed indoors to write letters to friends in England Jack came bursting in like a whirlwind.
"He was a young fellow of about 23, frank, generous of disposition, handsome of face, devoted to art, was an artist by profession, and most charmingly, romantically poor. Perhaps this was why he, especially, was my favorite; also why I had made him my heir, though that of him was ignorant."
"Aunt, he cried, 'put aside your letters and come out! Don't say no—you must! I have seen one of the sweetest faces I ever saw in my life!' "Hoity, toity!" I exclaimed, "my dear Jack, this looks ominous—dangerous. Is this marvel a native?"
"No; a visitor, like ourselves," replied Jack, who had crossed to the window and was peering out to the right, then to the left.
"They came last night, and Fred Norris, who fortunately knows them, is going to introduce me. As to ominous and dangerous, aunt, if you mean that it looks very much as if I were in love, I plead guilty at once. I am over head and ears in love, and shall be the most miserable fellow on earth if I cannot win her."
"I beg, Jack, moderate your transports, and talk sense. In these practical days of science and school boards love at first sight has gone out of fashion, like all other romances."
"Then it is," broke in Jack, with an artist's and lover's enthusiasm, "because love's eyes never looked upon such a face as the one I've seen! Stay! not another word, aunt, until you have judged for yourself! Here they are—the young lady and her grandfather—a fine noble old fellow! Come! her sunshade is down, you can see her to perfection!"
"Catching my arm, he hurried me to the window.
I looked down into the road, started, and drew back.
"What is the matter?" asked Jack, perceiving something was wrong.
"What?" I repeated. "That man, with infinite scorn, 'a fine, noble old fellow?' Why, he is Mr. Jaffery Marston, the rich banker; that is Eva, his grandchild!"
"You know them, aunt?"
"I know him—that he is wealthy—and you, Master Jack, as poor as a church mouse; so be wise, get over your love, or leave the Riviera instantly!"
"That is absurd, aunt—or one as impossible as the other!" he rejoined.
"What, in heaven's name, makes you speak thus?"
I reflected a minute.
"Why should I not tell him? He ought to be warned of the character of Jaffery Marston. It might save him from—at least, prepare him for—disappointment."
"I will tell you, Jack, if you will listen!" I said, pushing my letters aside.
He evidently was divided between curiosity and a desire to follow Eva Marston. The former triumphed.
"He drew a chair near mine, saying: 'Of course I will listen. Who would ever have believed you knew the Marstons?'"
"Eva Marston—for the daughter bears the mother's name"—I answered, "and I was school fellows—not chums—for she was a little too to me. But I took a violent girl-liking to her; indeed, she was a favorite with every one."
"I don't wonder," interpolated Jack, "if her child is like her."
"Eva—my Eva—was the sweetest, bravest, most amiable of dispositions. Selfishness and she were perfect strangers, and she was one of those quiet natures which surprise one by their capacity for strong feeling. I loved her like a sister. She reciprocated the affection, and our friendship was continued when our school days were over."
"As I have told you, Mr. Marston is a banker and exceedingly wealthy. Eva was his only child, and he loved her passionately. He held her second to none, and she was one of the gayest, happiest girls imaginable until"—
"Until—well, aunt?"
"She fell in love," I replied. "In Jaffery Marston's bank there was a Halbert Fortescue. He had entered quite a youth, but soon had attracted the banker by his bright intelligence. He was handsome, a gentleman, but poor, upright, just and industrious."
"Jaffery Marston made a favorite of him, and saw to his rapid advancement. Halbert Fortescue was grateful, and strove more and more to please."
"It will be the making of him. One day, when he is well off, he shall remember he owes it all to me," the banker used to say.
"In fact, the young fellow was his hobby. He was proud of him. He thought how in time he would make him his sub-manager, aware he might trust all in his hands."
"Eva was about 18 when I noted a change in her. She was thoughtful, abstracted. I saw she had something

on her mind. It was not long before she confided it to me. She loved Halbert Fortescue. More than that, he loved her. He had asked her to be his wife, and she had said 'Yes.'
"I could never love any one else, Nelly," she said to me. "I never could be happy with any other than dear Halbert!"
"But your father, Eva?" I suggested. "He may have higher views for you."
Eva laughed gayly.
"You do not know he likes Halbert," she exclaimed. "Halbert asks his consent this afternoon. I do not fear. He is such a favorite!"
"Poor Eva! The banker's liking was that of the patronized—the master to the servant. That Halbert Fortescue, utterly penniless but for the salary he received, should aspire to wed his child, he had no more deemed probable than that the sun and moon should rise together."
"Such presumption was arrogance, impertinence, blackest ingratitude." In his astonishment and rage he was not particular in his words. He refused the young fellow with contemptuous disdain, and presenting him with a check and his dismissal at the same time, forbade him ever to enter his house or to speak to Eva again."
"Did he obey?" asked Jack. "I would not."
"He on his part did; for the banker had used terms that had stung his honor. So he went, and poor Eva came to me for consolation and to weep over her troubles."
"In his fury the banker had said he was neither to speak to nor see her. He had not said nor write, and Eva wrote to him."
"One day she came to me, her manner very excited.
"Halbert's letters had been so very cheerful that she had mistrusted them. She had guessed that to save her pain he was deceiving her, and by another source had obtained information about him."
"She had learned that he was suffering from poverty; also was ill from despair. A banker's clerk is always a banker's clerk; employment was as hard to procure then as now, especially when one had not a character; and Jaffery Marston had refused one to Halbert Fortescue."
"Nelly," said Eva, her eyes sparkling, "I have resolved to go to him."
"Yes, my father is wrong; he is obstinate. He loves me too well, however, to let me suffer. I am the cause of Halbert's dismissal; when I am his wife dear papa will forgive for my sake; I know he will. He will see then I can only be happy with Halbert."
"I tried to persuade her, though I thought very possibly she was right. Jaffery Marston was not likely to discard a child who was as the apple of his eye."
"The next day Eva was missing—she had gone to join Halbert.
"I will not make too long a story; Jack, suffice it that we were wrong in our reading of Jaffery Marston's nature; stern pride, obstinacy, self-esteem, dominated the softer feelings. There seemed no middle course in his disposition. He cast off Eva as resolutely as he had discharged her husband."
"The letters she wrote he returned opened, saying he preferred to read them, to show what little effect they had upon him."
"At last, after a long silence, the last letter came. The old butler, who took it to the banker, could not resist waiting behind the portiere, hopeful for news of Eva."
"The banker read; then was heard to exclaim:
"She will write no more, but will pray once to look on me before she dies. Ah! we shall see!" and inclosing the letter, he directed it back.
"One evening, a month later, there was a knock at the door. The footman, opening it beheld Eva standing; there poorly dressed in black.
"How was and then was her beautiful face; yet what a spiritual expression clothed it! In her arms she carried her baby girl.
"The servants had been commanded not to admit her, but there was not one who would have obeyed. So when she inquired for her father, the footman respectfully pointed to the study. The calm, peculiar expression still on her features, Eva entered. She did not close the door; the footman peeped through, the banker was seated by the fire reading.
"He looked up at her entrance, then sprang to his feet; but as he gazed into her face he dropped back again, speechless.
"Eva went on and knelt on the rug before him.
"Father," she said, "Halbert is dead—dead from fighting the bitter world for my sake—and my heart is broken."
"He made no sign, but gasped as he stared at her. Gently she laid the child on the rug, and added:
"Papa, love little Eva for my sake. I said I would look once on you before I died—I have, Papa, forgive, as I forgive—say, leaning her cheek on his knee, 'Heaven bless you?'
"Then Jaffery Marston leaped up with a great cry, raised her on to a couch, wildly summoned the household, and sent for the best physician. "All was to no purpose—it was too late, and before an hour Eva was dead."
"And that, Jack?" I concluded gravely, "is the grandfather of her with whom you, a penniless artist, have fallen in love."
Jack looked grave too, but was silent.
"Well?" I queried.
"I'm very sorry for Jaffery Marston, aunt," he answered, rising; "but I shall take my chance."
"You forget it may be Eva's chance also," I said, almost severely.
"And you aunt forget that Miss Fortescue may not care that for me," snapping his fingers.
"Looking at the bright, handsome young fellow that he was, I felt justified in doubting, I said, however, maliciously:
"There is one comfort, so pretty a girl is not likely to be unengaged as it is." I saw his face fall; but he brightened in a minute, smiled, took his hat, and saying, "That's to be seen," started off on the track of his memorata.
One evening, when returning home

alone, as I passed the Villa Montinari, the residence rented by Jaffery Marston, hearing the whisper of voices I looked and beheld among the orange trees two figures—male and female. A second glance told me they were Jack and Eva. His arm was round her waist, and her head rested on his bosom. I needed no explanation; I knew the Rubicon had been passed.
"How is this pretty Eva's love affair to end?" I thought, hurrying on, almost nervous to be in the vicinity of the lovers. "Is it to be another tragedy?"
I was aroused by the sound of a step approaching; raising my eyes, I beheld Jaffery Marston. What possessed me I can't tell, but I stopped when he stopped, and said:
"Mr. Marston, are you aware what has been going on between Miss Fortescue and my nephew?"
A dark shadow came over his face; he was silent a second; my heart was all in a tremble. Then he spoke:
"Yes, Mrs. Fielding; unfortunately, only too well aware of it; I have no desire to disparage your nephew, but I had far different views of Eva."
"Of course you had!" I rejoined, a little desperately. "My nephew, save for what he will make by his own exertions, is penniless until my death."
"Unfortunately," he answered.
"Mr. Marston," I said, looking at him keenly through the silver night, "may I ask what you intend to do in this matter?"
"Mrs. Fielding," he replied, in a low quiet tone, "this is my answer: I deeply regret what has happened; but Eva has her mother's spirit; she loves your nephew; I am too old, and have too few to care for me, to risk breaking another young heart. I think you understand; let us never refer to the past again. Good evening!"
He raised his hat and went on. As I returned the salutation, I knew that he recognized me as Nelly Boyd, his daughter's bosom friend, from the first.
Jack returned that evening in high spirits. Not only had he been accepted by Eva, but won the banker's consent. They, Eva and Jack, have been married some while now, and Jaffery Marston has never regretted the consent he gave; indeed he is vastly proud of his clever son-in-law whose pictures are hung on the line at Burlington house. He and I often have quiet chats, and games of chess and bezique together, but never again has he referred to that past history, neither have I.

At Sea.

One does not seem really to have got out of doors till he goes to sea. On the land he is shut in by the hills, or the forests, or more or less housed by the sharp lines of his horizon. But at sea he finds the roof taken off, the walls taken down; he is no longer in the hollow of the earth's hand, but upon its naked back, with nothing between him and the immensities. He is in the great cosmic out-of-doors, as much so as if voyaging to the moon or to Mars. An astronomic solitude and vacuity surrounds him; his only guides and landmarks are stellar; his only companions disappear, the horizon has gone; he has only the sky and its orbits left; this cold, vitreous, blue-black liquid through which the ship ploughs is not water, but some denser form of the cosmic ether. He can now see the curve of the sphere which the hills hid from him; he can study astronomy under improved conditions. If he was being borne through the inter-planetary spaces on an immense shield, his impressions would not, perhaps, be much different. He would find the same vacuity, the same blank or negative space, the same empty indefinite, oppressive out-of-doors.
For it must be admitted that a voyage at sea is more impressive to the imagination than to the actual sense. The world is left behind; all standards of size, of magnitude, of distance, are vanished; there is no size, no form, no perspective; the universe has dwindled to a little circle of crumpled water, that journeys with you day after day, and to which you seem bound by some enchantment. The sky becomes a shallow close-fitting dome, or else a pall of cloud that seems ready to descend upon you. You cannot see or realize the vast and vacant surrounding; there is nothing to define it or set it off. Three thousand miles of ocean space are less impressive than three thousand miles bounded by rugged mountain walls. Indeed, the grandeur of form, of magnitude, of distance, of proportion, etc., are only upon shore. A voyage across the Atlantic is a ten-day sail through vacancy. There is no sensible progress; you pass no fixed points. Is it the steamer that is moving, or is it the sea? or is it all a dance and illusion of the troubled brain?
Yesterday, to-day and to-morrow you are in the same parenthesis of nowhere. The three hundred or more miles the ship daily makes is ideal, not real. Every night the stars dance and reel there in the same place amid the rigging; every morning the sun comes up from behind the same wave, and staggers slowly across the sinister sky. The eye becomes a-hungered for form, for permanent lines, for a horizon wall to lift up and keep off the sky, and give it a sense of room. One understands why sailors become an imaginative and superstitious race; it is the reaction from this narrow horizon in which they are put—this ring of fat surroundings and oppressive emptiness that is escaped by invoking the aid of the supernatural. In the sea itself there is far less to stimulate the imagination than in the varied forms and colors of the land. How cold, how merciless, how elemental it looks!

Pearls Foll From His Mouth.

"I made a big 'speck' to-day," said the horse reporter to the religious writer.
"How so?" was the response.
"Well, I paid 20 cents for half a dozen fresh oysters and got about \$20 worth of pearls. I was calmly chewing one of the cracked bivalves when I suddenly felt a sensation as if my teeth had suddenly become loose and wanted to desert my mouth. I opened the latter, when out dropped eight good sized pearls on the table in front of me, much to the astonishment of the other patrons of the place. I shall have them polished and made into a necklace. I feel now that I have rivaled the mythological damsel who was wont to drop pearls whenever she attempted to speak."

SOME THINGS ABOUT SALADS.

Another Scream on Summer Food and Feeding.

A shrewd writer insists that when Nebuchadnezzar was punished by being condemned to a life of salad-eating the punishment consisted in the deprivation of savory oil, vinegar, and salt; but if the wicked king had known enough he could have given most piquant flavor to his salad by adding sorrel. Cucumber, celery, and endive separately, without other admixture of vegetable, made the salad proper for a gourmet, the other salads for the dulled epicurean appetite needing stimulants require capers, pickled herring, fowl, fish, olives, eggs, gherkins, cheese, cold potatoes, bacon, and these convert the salad proper into simply a mayonnaise.
Whatever Germany has contributed to the world in literature and art, history fails to point to a German salad-maker of distinction, with the exception of a woman. The woman also won lifetime notoriety by knowing how to keep a secret, for—
If you tell it to one, she will tell it to two;
At the next cup of tea they'll plot what they'll do!
Therefore she won the salad wrath during her life by her delicious, stomach-chilling, noble compound, but lost future renown among other great salad-makers because she accomplished her work in the dark, firmly believing that salad should never be exposed to the light, which ruined its freshness.
Salad-makers, like poets and artists, must be born to the art, from Nebuchadnezzar down to the far-famed Davids, who postponed the dinners of great men to suit his own engagements as the prince of salad-makers. His price for driving in his carriage to make the salad for his illustrious patrons was 10 guineas. Brilliant-Savarin, the prince of gourmets, asserted that baked pike and cold salmon lost their flavor without a salad.
All lower animals eat salads and console their stomachs with grasses, herbs, and sorrel; but in the kitchen, where cooks generally are not supposed to comprehend chemistry and medicants, sorrel needs to be used with great caution. It should be picked in September, as it is then less liable to fermentation, washed several times, and boiled with one glass of water to ten pounds; add a handful of salt, cover tightly, and let it boil over a slow fire until thoroughly cooked. Then strain and let it cool, press through a sieve with a wooden spoon, and put it back in the saucepan to boil for fifteen minutes, stirring constantly. Put the puree in earthen jars, cover with mutton fat well cooked, and keep the jars in a cool place. This refreshing vegetable contains a great deal of oxalic acid and potash, and is considered an excellent medicament by physicians.
None but the ignorant immerse themselves in strong drink of any sort when summer days are long; none but the foolish eat of fat and fried meats, Salads cool the blood. Shakespeare puts the words in the mouth of Jack Cade. When he climbed over the wall of Iden's garden while in hiding, he looked for a bit of salad or grass, "Which is not amiss," he adds, "to cool a man's stomach this hot weather." "There was no sallets in the lines to make the matter savory."
The vagaries of fashion have not yet regularly introduced frogs in our American bills of fare, and, as far as taste is concerned, it is to be hoped no such innovation will be attempted. But if custom ordains it, it may be a consolation to reflect that our cooks will prevent them from tasting like frogs—they will so spice, and flavor, and combine, and dilute the dish. What says Sam Slick? "Veal to be good must look like anything else but veal. You nautn't know it when you see it, or it's vulgar; mutton must be incoog, too; beef must have a mask on; anything that looks solid take a spoon to; anything that looks light cut with a knife; if a thing looks like fish you take your oath it is fish, and if it seems real fish, it's only disguised, for it's sure to be fish; hothin' must be natural. Natur' is out of fashion here. This is a manufacturer country; everything is done by machinery, and that that ain't must be made to look like it; and, I must say, the dinner machinery is perfect." Eating for the refined gratification of the taste per se is peculiar to high culture.
The French do a great deal with fruit, while other nations take it raw. For example, they make delicious apricot cheese, gooseberry loes and jellies; they eat their melons with pepper and salt, with sugar and vinegar, sticking slips of cinnamon and cloves in the green and crimson flesh for flavor; oranges are sliced thinly with a sharp silver knife into a glittering cut-glass compotier, seasoned with powdered sugar, orange-flower water, and half a glass of brandy. This must stand several hours before serving.
Another exquisite invention of the French is the Chantreuse cake of variegated fruits. They line a Charlotte mold tastefully with various sorts of fresh fruit—stewed cherries, strawberries, pieces of peaches, apricots—in fact, whatever is in season—and by dipping them in jelly form some pretty design at the bottom of the mold, which has been previously placed in ice, build them up in reverse rows when well set, terminate when time to serve by dipping the mold in warm water and turning it out upon the dish. If there is a quantity of fruit left have in readiness a quart of orange or lemon jelly, place a layer of it in the Charlotte, alternate with layers of the fruit until quite filled; place it on ice; serve garnished round with jelly in the skins of the oranges cut in quarters and set in ice.
These recipes and the following are the invention of the famous Sorer. The Nesselrode pudding is incomparable. Blanch three or four dozen good chestnuts, leaving them in boiling water till tender; pound them in a mortar with a pod of vanilla, a pound of sugar, and a glass of Marschينو; stir this into a quart of thin cream or new milk, and beat up the yolks of ten eggs; stir this over the fire till it thickens to a custard, then freeze

it in a freezing pill to the thickness of ice cream; stone two ounces of raisins, shred two ounces of candied citron, and add to these two ounces of currants; pour over them a half-pint of Marschينو, and leave them for twelve hours; then mix them with the pudding, adding half a pound of sugar to reduce it to a syrup, and beat in the whites of six eggs whipped to solid froth with one pint of whipped cream; mold the pudding, freeze it, and turn it out when needed.
It is a common error to suppose that French cookery is more costly and more highly flavored than English or American. Experience will soon prove that the reverse is the fact. These renowned chefs make use of every scrap that we disdain. They instruct the rich as well as the poor in the art of obtaining the greatest amount of nourishment and enjoyment from the simplest food. In the anticipation of a pudding a la Reine, save all the stale bread-crumbs and also cake; then butter and paper a mold, fill up with the crumbs, pour some custard in until full; flavor with any white liqueur or essence you please, for instance, citron or orange; use peel thinly sliced, and so on for any flavor you please.

MISPLACED CONFIDENCE.

How a Generous-Hearted Lady was Sold by an Auction Capper.

"Where did you get that watch?" said her husband, as she very ostentatiously pulled out a watch and looked at it.
"I bought it."
"A present?"
"No; I bought it for myself. I couldn't help it. I couldn't see a poor family starve, and I bought the woman's watch."
"Just like you," he said. "You are always doing something kind—with my money."
"You're not mad, John, are you?"
"No; let me look at it. What did you give for it?"
"Forty dollars."
"Forty dollars!" and the husband began examining it.
"I'll tell you how it happened. I was passing along the street and there was an auction going on in a store."
"An auction! Oh!"
"Yes, I was listening and looking, and as I stood there a poor, distressed man came up. He pulled out his watch and he asked the auctioneer if he'd auction it for him. He said his wife and family were starving, and this was an old family heir-loom, and he wanted to sell it. Well, the auctioneer he said he'd sell it, and he put it up, and all they bid for it was \$7. The poor fellow began to cry. 'It's worth \$100,' he said. 'Won't somebody give more than \$7?' I can't sell it for that. I've had an offer of \$45.' And I got mad and sorry for the poor man and I bid \$5 and somebody bid \$9, and I bid \$10, and finally they got it up to \$40 and I bought it. Poor fellow! the man went off quite relieved and happy, and I felt so glad that I'd done a good deed at a bargain."
"Yes, the poor chap was relieved, I don't doubt it. This watch is worth \$175, and that was a mock auction, and that distressed-looking man was a capper for the establishment. He does that twenty times a day."
"Oh, John?"
"Just like you, my dear. Always doing something stupid—with my money."
"Well, I declare!"

Warnings.

Many people still believe that they receive warnings in dreams, and it is impossible to rebut the arguments for such a belief, but we may confidently assert that any general reliance on the confused and contradictory indications of dreams would involve the most inconsistent vagaries of conduct wholly unworthy of a rational being. Our reason and our dreams are often so hopelessly at variance that to desert the former for the latter would be equivalent to relinquishing the bright shining of the sun in order to pursue a treacherous will-o'-the-wisp.
The writer once had occasion to engage a passage for a long sea-voyage, and the only vessel available at the desired time was a steamer which had been a great favorite in her day, but was then so old that doubts were entertained regarding her seaworthiness. In spite of warnings on this point, he engaged his berth, and on that very night he had an intensely vivid dream of shipwreck and drowning at sea. Undeterred, however, he set sail without serious misgivings and had a most agreeable and prosperous voyage. In this case the dream was evidently no supernatural warning, but I rather think the result of the effect produced upon the imagination by the hints thrown out regarding the vessel's supposed unseaworthy character. Presentiments of all kinds are almost invariably groundless, and when on rare occasions a presentiment is verified by the result, the explanation is the very simple and obvious one that in this instance our fears correctly forecasted the future. We fear and we hope many things more or less probable.

A Cheap Paper Rack.

Buy or buy at some fancy goods shop a pretty handkerchief box, such as nice handkerchiefs come in to the dealers. They are about twelve inches square and five-eighths or three-quarters of an inch deep. The covers of these often are far more artistic in their ornamentation than half the wall pictures and decorations we see every day. The bottom of the box forms the back, the cover the front. Set the edge of the back at the bottom edge, within the cover's bottom edge, and sew together with strong thread; make holes in the sides of both front and back so that they will come opposite each other; through these neatly-punched holes draw ribbons and tie in bows, there should be three bows on each side; the sides could be four inches apart at the top. Silver or brass headed tacks will secure this simple wall-pocket against the wall.

THE LADY OF THE CASTLE.

The Magnificent Mountain Home of Adellina Patti.

About 100 miles from London, in Wales, in a picturesque chain of mountains, is situated the majestic and beautiful Castle of Crag-y-Nos, the home of Adellina Patti, in the style of the fifteenth century.
Numerous hot-houses offer fruits and flowers of every kind, while the stables are provided with superb horses, which the diva handles with the skill of an Amazon. Nor are carriages of every description wanted, one of which always stands waiting for the guests at the station of Crag-y-Nos. The kennels contain twenty packs of hounds, and in the poultry yard are pheasants and every kind of fowl. In the kitchens, kept with extreme neatness and order, the most appetizing viands are prepared by skillful cooks, and the cellars furnish the most exquisite wines and liquors in the world. The castle is built entirely of stone.
But who can give an adequate idea of the grandeur and beauty to be found within these walls? says a correspondent of the San Francisco Call. There are two dining halls—one for winter, the other for summer. Near these two rooms is a magnificent conservatory, while in the center of the castle is a spacious reception room, with furniture of exquisite taste, embroidered in gold. This room is adorned with pictures, Oriental rugs and draperies of great value, as well as many jewels of price—all being presents which the diva has received. The beautiful tankard of gold set with brilliants and the massive golden laurel crown ornamented with diamond stars, both of which superb gifts were given her by her enthusiastic admirers in San Francisco, are there, testimonies of their affection and good will.
Among the jewels is a casket of silver of artistic workmanship, a gift from her fellow-students of the Vienna Opera troupe, while birds of pure gold with eyes of rubies, a small piano inlaid with precious stones and the choicest fans, albums, pictures and artistic works of every sort and of great value form a part of the collection of the lady of the castle.
The honor of the diva looks like a dainty little box, with its rose-colored and blue furnishings. Here stands an upright piano of satin-wood, while on the wall hang photographs and pictures, all gifts from friends. Nor are there wanting portraits of all the crowned heads of Europe, as well as of the most renowned artists and musicians. Autographs and subscriptions under these show the high consideration in which Patti is held. There are also water colors painted by the diva herself, which testify that were she not the queen of song she might have distinguished herself in the realm of painting.
There are also two large rooms containing billiard tables, and it is here that Nicolini spends his evenings. While the ladies and gentlemen amuse themselves with the game they listen to as harmonious music as one could desire, for an orchestra of 100 musicians could not render more exactly every sort of music than does the grand orchestra made in Geneva at the express order of the diva at a cost of 1,000 Italian lire, to say nothing of 100 cylinders, each costing 500 lire.
Slightly elevated, yet making part of the billiard-room, is the card-room, containing another grand piano. Here playing for money is forbidden, according to the express desire of Mma. Patti, who, however, prefers billiards to any other game, and in Signor Nicolini has a skillful and excellent master.
The bed-room of Patti is tapestried in bluish gray embellished with gold, and the furniture of inlaid rosewood is in common with nearly all the furniture of the castle, surmounted by her monogram and the coronet of marriage, while her dressing-room is a perfect bijou.
Signor Nicolini's apartment is well furnished, the walls are hung with pictures of game and fish. The great wardrobes are full of every possible gear invented for hunting and fishing, for these two pursuits, with billiards, are Signor Nicolini's pastimes. The grounds and lakes belonging to the castle not sufficing him, he has leased seven square miles of land and five miles of the river in order to have alone the right to hunt and fish there. The very day of my departure Signor Nicolini caught before my eyes a salmon weighing twenty-nine pounds.
The few and scattered villages in the neighborhood are poor, and the villagers are ignorant. Patti is known to them by no other title than the "Lady of the Castle." She has bestowed her charities so often on the people for miles around that they have a special veneration for her.

Magnolias as Ornamental Trees.

There is hardly a tree that can compare in beauty with the magnolia, and still we see very few planted. The objections are that the tree is a slow grower and thus becomes an object of beauty only after a long while. That the trees are slow growers for the first year is true, but when they once get a strong hold in the soil it is by no means of slow growth. Of all the trees I know of, the magnolia stands the pruning life the least. Whenever a limb is cut off it dies down to the next joint, or perhaps branch, and one may keep on cutting off dead limbs until the tree is gone. In fact, the magnolia should never be touched by a knife or pruning shears, except in very rare cases, when a whole branch should be cut clear off to the main tree. Grafting wax should then be put on the wound. The magnolia is a swamp plant which delights in water, and many failures are caused by stinting the tree of water; in fact, the more water the plants get the finer they will grow. Nothing is really more beautiful than a magnolia green with branches and leaves from the very ground, and when it opens its numerous white and fragrant flowers, it is indeed the queen of trees.
It is much easier to meet with error than to find truth; error is on the surface, truth is hidden in great depth; and the way to see it does not appear to all the world.