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NEDL TRANSFER



HN 1R JZ -



THREE MEN IN A MOTOR CAR

HUGH ROCHFORD MAXSTED

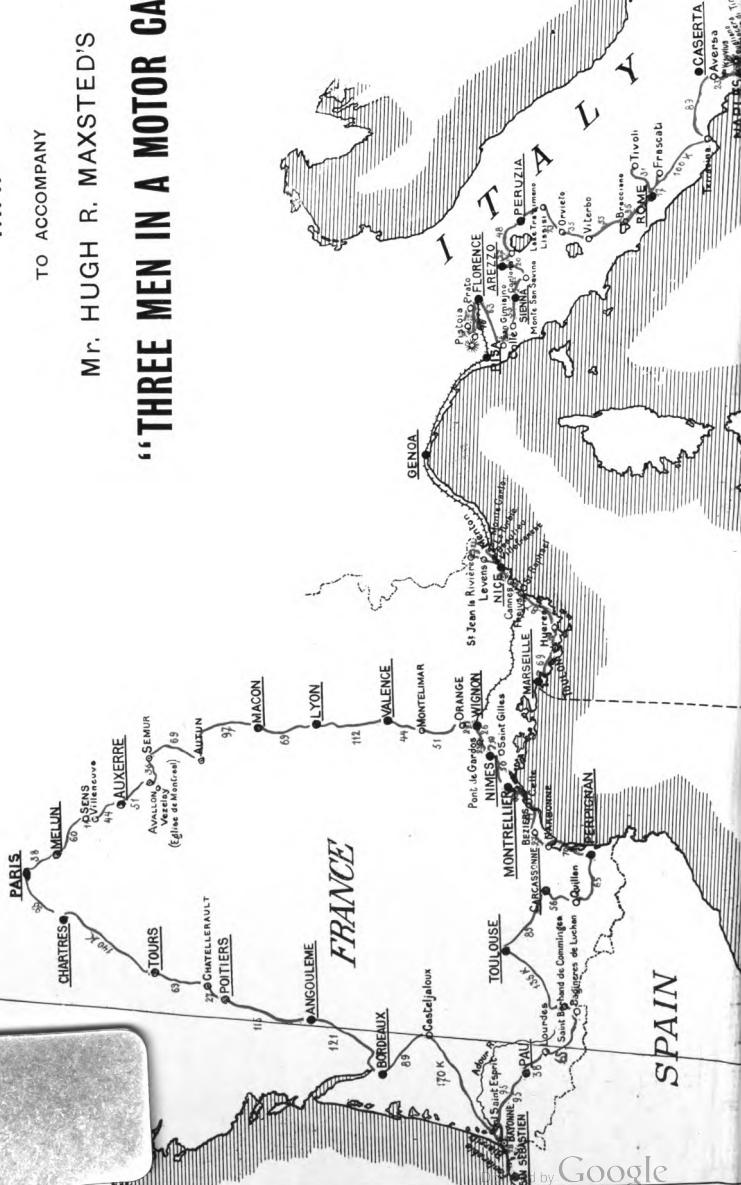
KD 27095

MAP

TO ACCOMPANY

Mr. HUGH R. MAXSTED'S

"THREE MEN IN A MOTOR CAR"

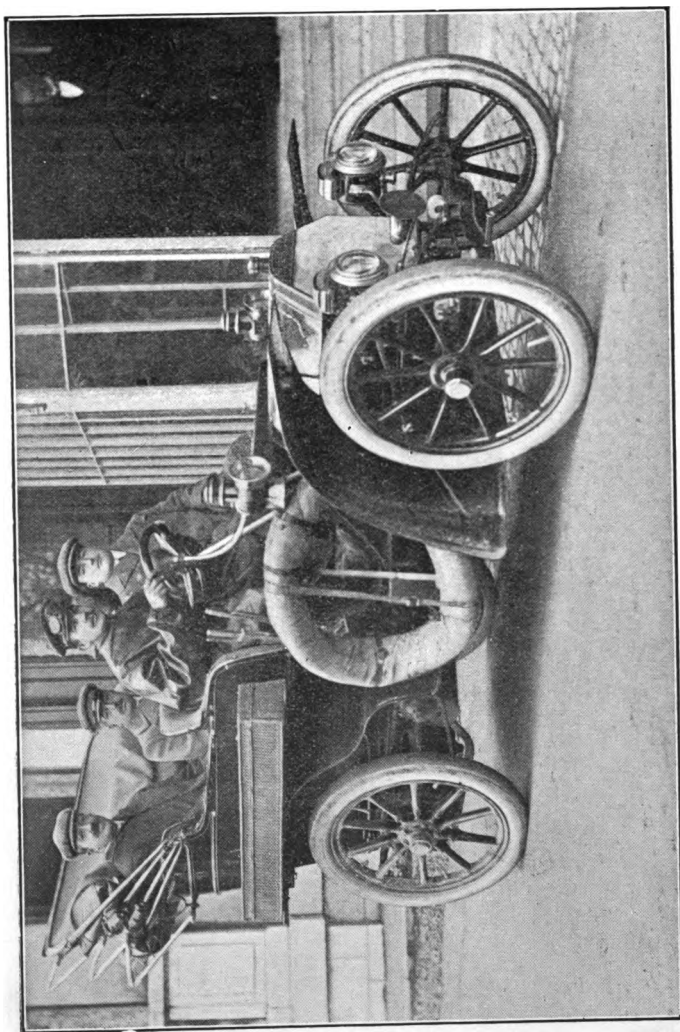


Three Men in a Motor Car

Geo. A. [unclear]

bot. Sept. 12/29
in a [unclear] shop
for 10⁰⁰.

[Frontispiece.



“We three and Joseph.”

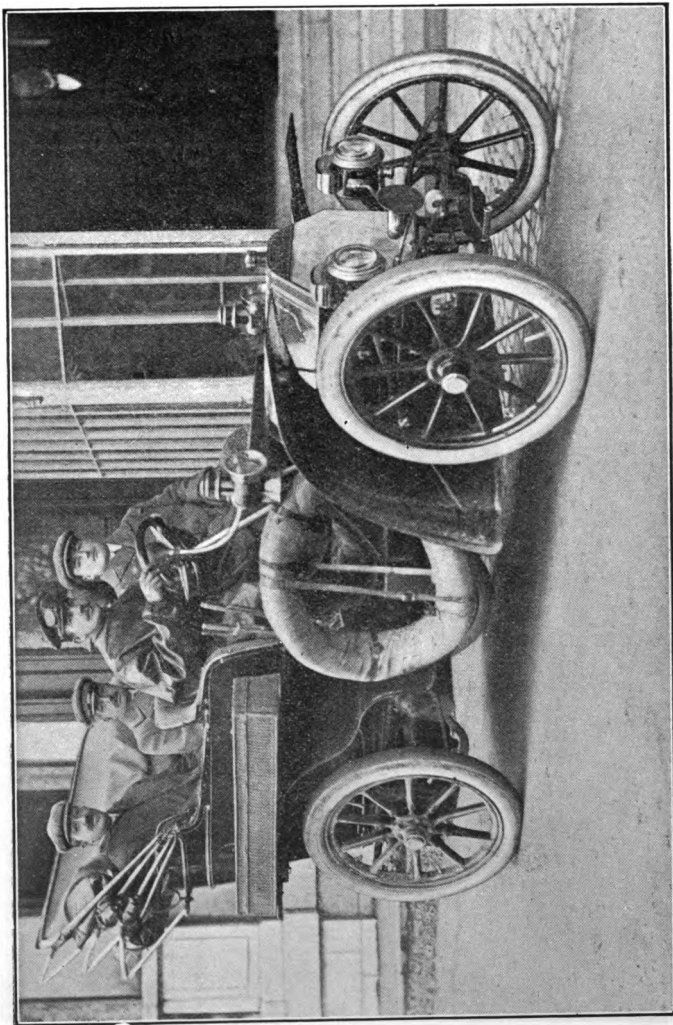
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[Frontispiece.]



“We three and Joseph.”

Three Men in a Motor Car

By

Hugh Rochfort Maxsted

Lieutenant of the 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and
Seconded for Service under the Foreign Office
1900

LONDON
ANTHONY TREHERNE & CO., LTD.
3 AGAR STREET, STRAND, W.C.

1904

KD 27095



46x209

Plan of Tours

TRIP No. 1

Date.	Place.	Times.	Dis-
			tances.
			Kilo-
			mètres.
Oct. 19	PARIS, . . .	Dep. 10.00	93
	Chartres, . . .	Arr. 12.30 2 ^h 30 ^m	
	Tours, . . .	Dep. 2.15 Arr. 5.45 3 30	140
Oct. 20	Tours, . . .	Dep. 9.10	96
	Poitiers, . . .	Arr. 11.50 2 40	
	Angoulême, . . .	Dep. 3.10 Arr. 5.15 2 05	115
Oct. 21	Angoulême, . . .	Dep. 8.50	121
	Bordeaux, . . .	Arr. 12.30 3 40	
Oct. 22	Bordeaux, . . .	Dep. 9.20	89
	Casteljaloux, . . .	Arr. 12.00 2 40	
	Biarritz, . . .	Dep. 1.15 Arr. 7.00 5 45	170
Oct. 25	Biarritz, . . .	Dep. 9.15	46
	San Sebastian . . .	Arr. 12.45 3 30	
Oct. 26	Biarritz, . . .	Dep. 9.15	95
	Pau, . . .	Arr. 11.50 2 35	

PLAN OF TOURS

Date.	Place.	Times.	Dis-
			tances.
			Kilo-
			mètres.
Oct. 27	Pau, Lourdes,	Dep. 9.15	38
		Arr. 11.00 1 ^h 45 ^m	
	Luchon,	Dep. 2.15	70
		Arr. 6.00 3 45	
Oct. 28	Luchon, Toulouse,	Dep. 1.15	148
		Arr. 7.10 5 55	
Oct. 29	Toulouse, Carcassonne,	Dep. 1.10	85
		Arr. 4.15 3 05	
Oct. 30	Carcassonne, Perpignan,	Dep. 12.00	121
		Arr. 5.45 5 45	
Oct. 31	Perpignan, Narbonne, Montpellier,	Dep. 9.00	70
		Arr. 11.15 2 15	
		Dep. 1.20	
Nov. 1	Montpellier, Nîmes, Avignon,	Arr. 4.30 3 10	104
		Dep. 9.10	
		Arr. 12.00 2 50	
Nov. 2	Avignon, Montélimar, Valence,	Dep. 2.15	49
		Arr. 4.30 2 15	
		Dep. 10.15	
Nov. 3	Valence, Lyon,	Arr. 1.15 3 00	78
		Dep. 2.50	
		Arr. 4.30 1 40	
Nov. 4	Valence, Lyon, Maçon, Autun,	Dep. 9.15	112
		Arr. 1.15 4 00	
		Dep. 9.20	
	Lyon, Maçon, Autun,	Arr. 11.30 2 10	69
		Dep. 1.15	
		Arr. 5.15 4 00	
			97

PLAN OF TOURS

7

Date.	Place.	Times.	Dis- tances.
			Kilo- mètres.
Nov. 5	Autun, . . .	Dep. 9.35	69
	Semur, . . .	Arr. 12.00 2 ^h 25 ^m	
	Avalon, . . .	Dep. 3.00	36
		Arr. 4.45 1 45	
Nov. 6	Avalon, . . .	Dep. 9.45	51
	Auxerre, . . .	Arr. 11.15 1 30	
	Sens, . . .	Dep. 3.00	58
		Arr. 4.45 1 45	
Nov. 7	Sens, . . .	Dep. 10.30	60
	Melun, . . .	Arr. 12.30 2 00	
	PARIS, . . .	Dep. 2.15	38
		Arr. 3.45 1 30	
		80 ^h 05 ^m	2431

TRIP No. 2

Date.	Place.	Times.	Dis- tances.
			Kilo- mètres.
Feb. 1	NICE, . . .	Dep. 10.00	38
	St Raphael, . . .	Arr. 12.45 2 ^h 45 ^m	
	Toulon, . . .	Dep. 2.00	117
		Arr. 5.15 3 15	
Feb. 2	Toulon, . . .	Dep. 10.10	69
	Marseilles, . . .	Arr. 12.30 2 20	
Feb. 7	ALGIERS, . . .	Dep. 9.15	73
	Tipaza, . . .	Arr. 11.15 2 00	
	Hamмам R'Ihra, . . .	Dep. 2.15	37
		Arr. 3.30 1 15	

PLAN OF TOURS

Date.	Place.	Times.	Distances.
			Kilo- mètres.
Feb. 9	Hamмам R'Ihra,	Dep. 9.15	53
	Blidah,	Arr. 11.30 2 ^h 15 ^m	
	Algiers,	Dep. 1.30	50
		Arr. 2.30 1 00	
Feb. 10	Algiers,	Dep. 9.00	105
	Tizi-Ouzou,	Arr. 1.15 4 15	
		Dep. 3.30	
	Taourirt-Ighil,	Arr. 6.45 3 15	100
Feb. 11	Taourirt-Ighil,	Dep. 7.45	32
	Bougie,	Arr. 9.00 2 45	
		Dep. 10.45	
	Kerrata,	Arr. 12.30 1 45	
	Setif,	Dep. 1.00	61
	Arr. 3.45 2 45		
Feb. 12	Setif,	Dep. 7.45	90
	N'Gous,	Arr. 9.55 2 10	
		Dep. 11.30	
	El Kantara,	Arr. 1.55 2 25	102
Feb. 16	El Kantara,	Dep. 8.10	66
	Batna,	Arr. 9.40 1 30	
		Dep. 10.00	
	Lambese,	Arr. 10.10 0 10	
		Dep. 11.05	
	Timgad,	Arr. 11.40 0 35	
	Dep. 3.30	48	
	Arr. 4.15 0 45		
Feb. 17	Batna,	Dep. 8.40	119
	Constantine,	Arr. 11.00 2 20	
Feb. 18	Constantine,	Dep. 9.05	111
	Hamмам Meskoutine,	Arr. 12.00 2 55	

PLAN OF TOURS

Date.	Place.	Times.	Dis- tances.
Feb. 19	Hammm Meskoutine, La Calle, . . .	Dep. 7.45	150
		Arr. 11.30 3 ^h 35 ^m	
	Beja, . . .	Dep. 1.15	120
		Arr. 4.30 3 15	
Tunis, . . .	Dep. 4.50	103	
	Arr. 8.00 3 10		
Feb. 26	Trapani, . . .	Dep. 8.25	50
		Arr. 10.30 2 05	
	Alcamo, . . .	Dep. 12.35	46
		Arr. 4.20 3 45	
Mar. 7	Palermo, . . .	Dep. 8.15	76
		Arr. 10.45 2 30	
	Cefalu, . . .	Dep. 12.30	110
		Arr. 4.30 4 00	
Patti, . . .	Dep. 4.45	70	
	Arr. 7.30 2 45		
Mar. 8	Messina, . . .	Dep. 1.25	53
		Arr. 4.00 2 35	
Mar. 10	Taormina, Castello di Maniaci, .	Dep. 8.15	42
		Arr. 12.00 3 45	
	Taormina, . . .	Dep. 2.30	42
		Arr. 4.30 2 00	
Mar. 15	Salerno, . . .	Dep. 10.45	14
		Arr. 12.00 1 15	
	Amalfi, . . .	Dep. 2.00	14
		Arr. 3.45 1 45	
Mar. 17	Sorrento, . . .	Dep. 8.00	53
		Arr. 11.50 2 50	
	Pompeii, . . .	Dep. 1.30	0 50
		Arr. 2.20 0 50	
Pugliano, . . .	Dep. 6.15	0 45	
	Arr. 7.00 0 45		

PLAN OF TOURS

Date.	Place.	Time.	Dis- tances.
Mar. 24	Naples,	Dep. 1.20	Kilo- mètres. 112
		Arr. 6.00 4 ^h 40 ^m	
Mar. 25	Terracina,	Dep. 9.10	100
		Arr. 11.00 1 50	
Apr. 6	Rome,	Dep. 9.45	90
		Arr. 1.00 3 15	
	Viterbo,	Dep. 3.00	35
		Arr. 5.00 2 00	
Apr. 7	Orvieto,	Dep. 9.00	73
		Arr. 12.00 3 00	
	Perugia,	Dep. 3.30 Arr. 4.30 1 00	
Apr. 9	Perugia,	Dep. 8.00	48
		Arr. 9.30 1 30	
	Cortona,	Dep. 10.00	27
		Arr. 10.45 0 45	
		Dep. 1.30 Arr. 4.00 2 30	
Apr. 11	Siena,	Dep. 10.45	62
		Arr. 12.00 1 15	
	San Gimignano,	Dep. 2.30 Arr. 4.15 1 45	
Apr. 12	Florence,	Dep. 10.45	33
		Arr. 12.30 1 45	
	Pistoja,	Dep. 3.45	61
		Arr. 6.30 2 45	
		10 ^h 30 ^m	3065

Introduction

WHEN I decided to write this book I felt myself under a moral obligation, not only to my charming fellow-travellers, but also to all those persons (of all colours) with whom I came in contact who so kindly supplied us with valuable information in many cases not even mentioned in guide-books.

My object is to tell the story of our trips simply and impartially, showing things precisely as we found them, in the hope that the reader will be charitable enough to pardon any error he may find.

I regret that there is no romance connected with this story, but it has been my endeavour to make it as light reading as possible.

The accompanying map can be relied upon: the roads are, so to speak, "copied from nature,"

and it has occurred to me that automobilists will be pleased to have the whole of our second tour on the same map.

Therefore, to the friends who accompanied me, and to all those persons whom this story may interest, this book is dedicated.

THE AUTHOR.

PARIS, *June* 1904.

Three Men in a Motor Car

CHAPTER I

IN the summer of 1903 I returned to England from the centre of Africa, whither I had been sent, in 1900, by the British Foreign Office. After three years spent in a tropical clime, one can imagine with what pleasure I set foot again on English soil, and breathed once more the insular coolness of England. But I was not destined to enjoy for very long the society of my friends and relatives. In fact, it was during this leave that I was invited to Paris to join some friends about to make an automobile tour of Southern France, and afterwards of Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, and Italy.

I naturally accepted, and on the 15th of October left England for Paris.

I will here reproduce a few facts which I find in my diary :—

“Arrival at the Gare du Nord about 7 P.M. I espy my friend’s carriage (we afterwards called him the Baron) through a half-open door. Impossible to reach it, for a formidable *douanier* stood between it and me. I should have remembered that porters are a luxury at the Gare du Nord, Paris; in fact, to make sure of one you would have to travel upon the engine, and even then make a rush and hold on to him. In desperation, I seized one of the Railway Company’s lamplighters, and politely offered him a franc to kindly condescend to find me a porter. This franc worked a miracle, and presently I was following my baggage into the Customs’ purgatory, from which arose a chorus of angry voices and ‘heated’ discussions. The *douaniers* did not seem to see that I was in a hurry, that word being unknown in their vocabulary. After they had asked the usual questions as to whether I had whisky, cigars, or plum-pudding to declare, had satisfied themselves that I had not by thrusting their unwashed hands among my clean shirts, and had paid some attention to my hat-box—a probable hiding-place for plum-puddings (?)—I was finally allowed to depart. This little ceremony had lasted exactly one hour and fifteen minutes.

“At last I reached my friend’s carriage, and set out home fearless of the congested traffic, feeling safe in the hands of our faithful *piquieur* Jean. The Ville Lumière, gaily decked in garlands of flowers and little coloured lamps encircling the flags of every nation, resembled the fairyland scene in *Aladdin*. It was a great fête, for all Paris was awaiting the arrival of their guests. I don’t think that they were ourselves; far from it—for presently personages of no less importance than the King and Queen of Italy drove past on their way to the Opera.”

The few days previous to our departure were spent in preparation for our journey. There are so many things to think of and to purchase, such as warm gloves, bandages, goggles, eye lotion, and maps.

Monday, October 19th, 1903.—Everything is ready, and the weather smiles on us. Our 18-24 Mercédès glided gracefully and noiselessly away. The crowd smiled and passed rude remarks as we appeared wrapped in great furs, for all the world as if off on an Arctic expedition.

There were three of us: the Baron (whom I have already mentioned), the Count (owner of the car), and myself. Our chauffeur Joseph, who

had watched our machine built and put together while in Cronstadt, seemed part of the machine, which obeyed him instinctively more than mechanically, just as his horse obeys the Arab. Joseph, like the Arab, seemed to *feel* the wants of his mount, and, besides being a skilful driver, we found in him a very polyglot, for he spoke seven languages perfectly.

As if carried along by a whirlwind, we dashed up the Avenue des Champs Elysées and through the then leafless Bois de Boulogne, which we were allowed to leave after having fulfilled the octroi's formalities, to which all automobiles leaving Paris are subjected. This, as all automobilists know, consists in having your quantity of petrol controlled. Naturally one takes only just enough to carry one past the gates of Paris, as the price of petrol outside is considerably lower; and to anyone on a long run this is a great consideration.

We then shaped a southward course towards Chartres. As we passed through Versailles, we caught a glimpse of the former palace of *le Grand Monarque*, and, turning a little to the westward, dashed past the great fort of St Cyr, and, later on, came in sight of the once famous Château de Maintenon.

It was half-past twelve when we drew up at the Hôtel du Grand Monarque, Chartres, where we lunched.

Here our rearguard, consisting of a second automobile carrying our servants and baggage, came up and followed our example. Having satisfied the inner man, we set out to visit the Cathedral, which certainly is one of the most interesting and most beautiful in Europe, dating back, it is said, to the thirteenth century. But our feeble pen will not here presume to describe what the American poet Lowell has so vividly painted in his "Cathedral."

As we neared the Cathedral gates on our way out, we heard Joseph warning us that time was up by toot-tooting on the horn. The Baron was loth to leave the sacred edifice; he loved sight-seeing, and nothing but the thought of being late for dinner had power to tear him away. The Count, on the other hand, found no charm in mouldy walls and ivy-covered buildings. He lived in the twentieth century, and, like the poet, considered that the "dead past" might "bury its dead."

This condition of mind of the Baron and the Count often struck me as somewhat incongruous. The former, whose physical development might

have been a drawback to walks and violent exercise, was for seeing everything. The latter, who took great pride in his slim waist and perfect training, said that he had seen everything worth seeing and preferred fresh air.

We were, however, in the best of spirits and a happy trio as we glided out of Chartres, at 2.15, *en route* for Tours. The Count and the Baron both being absolute martyrs to cigarettes, we often slowed down or stopped altogether, that they might light up. The question of matches was always a difficult one, for we could never find them without upsetting the whole "apple-cart." I, being a non-smoker, had the pleasure of looking on and inhaling the fumes of a Turkish or Virginian brand mingled with an occasional whiff of Joseph's French-grown *Caporal*.

Each of us had our allotted task: the Baron was our navigating officer; and the Count, as owner of the car, saw to the execution of plans and set the course. I was the means of communication between headquarters and Joseph, to whom I acted from pilot to greaser.

We ran into Tours as night was falling and went straight to the comfortable Hôtel de l'Univers, where, after a good wash, we sat down to our well-earned dinner. We afterwards took



The baggage car.



En panne.

our coffee in a café near by, and, for the first time since our departure from Paris, we despatched a batch of illustrated post-cards.

What a dreadful task we had taken in hand! Everybody we knew seemed to want some. The craze was then at its height, and our first thought on entering a town was where to find a garage and a post-card shop. It was no small matter, even after having bought the post-cards and taken your table at a café to address them, to make the waiter understand, in various languages, that you wanted pen, ink, and blotting-paper. For this privilege you are forced to order some diabolical concoction, pay for it, of course, and not forget the tip.

The odds are that the café's pointed pen will not write on glossy post-cards, and the blotting-paper, on which is printed some advertisement, smudges all your writing. Then you have to be careful not to write more than five words behind the post-card, as this is the amount of correspondence allowed for a five-centime stamp. Exceeding this, a ten-centime stamp is required. Finally, having bought the stamps at some tobacco shop, and finding that their letter-box is not emptied till the next day, in despair you trundle off to the post-office. Absolutely killing!

As there are no lifts in country hotels, our

weary limbs are forced to carry us to the various floors, where we search for the rooms allotted to us. Electricity is unknown in some of these "palaces," and the bad-smelling *bougie*, for which one generally has to pay a franc, gives just enough light to reveal some hideous-coloured lithograph on the wall, and the never-forgotten hair-tidy hung on the looking-glass, and so highly useful, particularly to bald-headed men. I must not forget to mention that French bedrooms are supplied with a jug and basin which, for size, would be better suited to a doll's house.

Having blown out the candle, got between two horribly coarse sheets, and laid my head on a pillow as hard as the seat of a chair, I forgot my discomfort in the arms of Morpheus and slept the sleep of—the automobilist.

We experienced no insomnia from the change of beds, and after a good night's rest, the morning tub, and the *petit déjeuner*, served in our rooms, we settled our bills and tipped the sharks.

CHAPTER II

AT 9.10 A.M. the Hôtel de l'Univers and Tours had grown faint in the distance, as we disappeared in a cloud of dust on the road to Châtellerault, where we spent twenty minutes stretching our legs in its pretty botanical garden with its fountain and monument of the Revolution.

We are on the road again! Terrified chickens and dogs as well as peasants vanish on either side as we approach, and at 11.50 we arrive at the historical town of Poitiers, so prominent in the annals of England and France.

At the sight of these old-time battlements and towers our thoughts reverted to times when the fertile fields surrounding them were the battleground of two contending creeds. The guide-book historian seems to have glided over this for ever memorable battle of Poitiers and the routing of the Mussulman invaders with the most ignorant indifference, for under the very walls

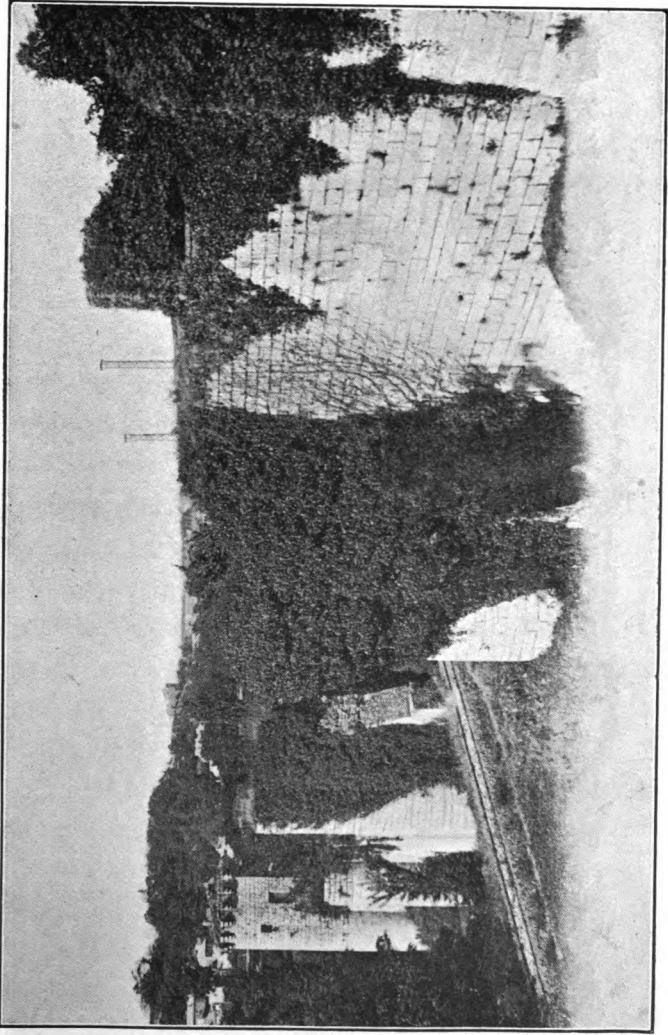
of this old town, at whose gate we stood, was fought a battle which decided the fate of Europe and of the Christian world.

“One thing is very certain,” observed the Baron, “that if Charles Le Martel had not beaten the Saracen host at Poitiers, Europe and all of us would be Mussulman to-day.”

The Baron’s conclusion satisfied us all excepting the Count, who simply muttered: “Rats! my good sir, who told you that?”

The hungry lion growling within reminded us that we must lunch, which we did at the Hôtel de France. Afterwards we visited the old Cathedral, and at ten minutes past three steered for Angoulême. At a quarter past five we came to a halt in front of the Grand Hôtel de la Poste, having covered a distance of nearly one hundred and twenty kilomètres in two hours. In fact, our Mercédès was now beginning to show its true qualities, which proved to be far above our expectations. After dinner (not as good as *à la Parisienne*) we as usual sought out the best café, to attend to our post-card duties and read the latest news.

The ordinary traveller cannot fully understand the life of the Frenchman of the provinces, if he neglects to visit one of these evening rendezvous.



Poitiers.

There is an entire absence of affectation or mannerisms, and the character of each individual is easily read on his happy countenance, from which the cares of life have momentarily vanished. There are the *vin rouge*, or *café noir*, dominoes, and cards. The great word *Fraternité* cannot be better understood than in the camaraderie pervading these meetings, where the man only, and not his position or rank, is considered. These provincials work hard all day, and well deserve their hand-made cigarettes, their *verre de vin*, and pleasant after-dinner jokes. We were absolute strangers to these good people, yet they were always ready to supply us with information and bid us *Bon voyage* when leaving. Even on the highroad the peasants saluted us as we passed. Another great feature of French provincial life, which speaks well for this great nation, is the absence of drunkenness.

Wednesday, October 21st, brings wet weather with it, and at 8.50, after the usual formalities of leaving hotels, we drive slowly and cautiously through the slippery paved streets of this old cathedral town.

Here, for the first time, we made use of a leather hood, of which the Count is very proud. He had insisted on having it made of black

leather, instead of canvas, and it was the first leather hood, I believe, in use on a Mercédès. It proved a great success throughout the journey, and we all praised the Count's foresight. He had also fitted to either side of the car two baskets, in which we placed all the necessary accessories.

When the drizzly rain ceased, we made a few halts to stretch our legs and to smoke. It was nearly mid-day when we reached the Octroi of Bordeaux, and our troubles now began in earnest. The town was looking its worst with its streets of slippery tram lines and black oily mud. A bad advertisement, we thought, for Bordeaux wines. In fact, it gave us a feeling that we could never again fancy anything that came from there. However, we were soon comfortably installed at the Hôtel de France and our damp coats put to dry. We then ate a good lunch, and afterwards saw the "sights" of the town, including the Baron's wine merchants, Messrs de Luze & Co., who took us all over their wonderful and most interesting cellars, which had been illuminated specially for us with hundreds of candles; and it was certainly a sight not to be forgotten. There were miles and miles of casks, all numbered and dated and piled on top of each other, forming little streets.

"It is not unlike the catacombs of Rome," observed one of the men who followed us round with tubes and glasses for sampling the various wines.

We smiled dubiously.

To anyone who has never tried sampling, it is impossible to appreciate the different states through which the wine has to pass before it reaches our tables, for wine, like some men, improves with age, and our spirits had decidedly benefited by this visit.

In the evening we dined at the world-renowned "Chapon Fin." As we had anticipated, it proved an excellent dinner. And on our way back to the hotel we walked through a local fair, which was then in full swing,

We awoke on Thursday morning to find the weather still showery, but at 9.20 the clouds cleared away and we pressed on southward towards the old ruined town of Casteljaloux, which we reached at mid-day in good time for lunch at the Hôtel Giroit. At 1.15 we are off again, fine weather and good roads favouring us. We made a splendid run through some of the most beautiful pine forests imaginable, and were almost loth to leave their perfumed atmosphere and shady paths. Had we been suffering from some lung trouble,

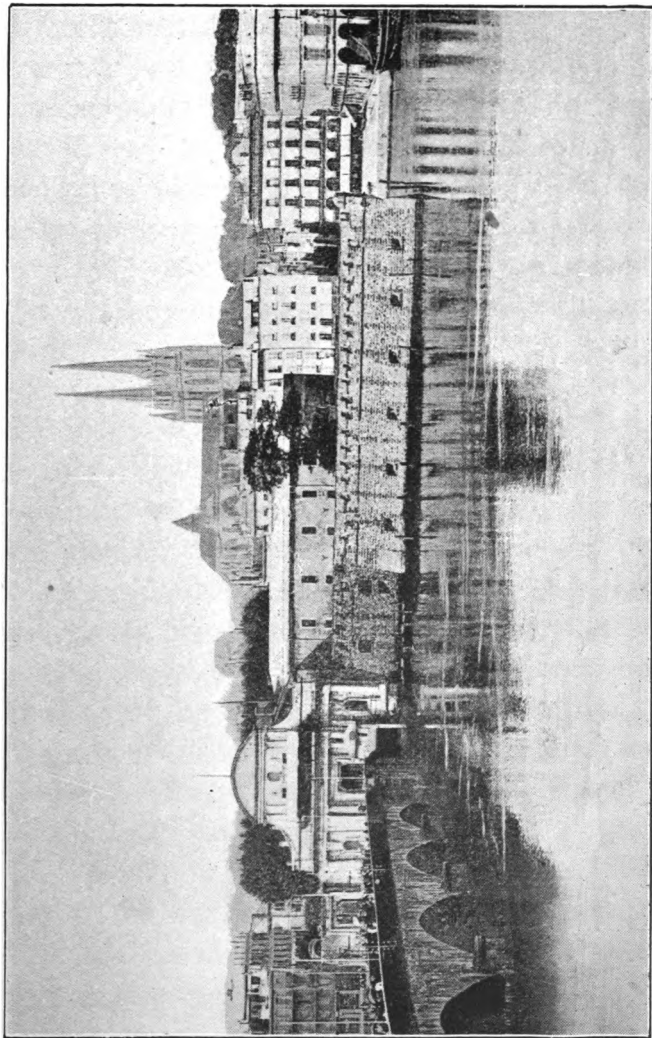
we should perhaps have been tempted to camp under the trees.

Evening had fallen as we entered Bayonne.

To the south-westward there was a bright reflection in the sky, as though from some great fire, but little did we think that we should have to run the gauntlet of the flames.

The pretty little port of Bayonne, situated about four miles inland from the Gulf of Gascogne, is bisected by the river Adour, over which a picturesque stone bridge has been built. The only direct route to Biarritz from the north is that across the Pont St Esprit, as the bridge is called, and through the town of Bayonne. Lying a little back from the side of the bridge, on the north bank of the Adour, is a block of buildings and shops. One of the latter was on fire, and the flames, driven by the wind, formed, as it were, a tunnel over the entrance to the bridge. We hesitated a little and consulted each other. As we wished to reach Biarritz that night, we all agreed to charge through, and accordingly put on full speed. It was an anxious moment, for if one spark had found its way into our reservoir of petrol, well!!! . . . R.I.P. . . .!!! But all is well that ends well, as we did at the other end of the bridge.

The Baron looked a little flushed, which he



Bayonne—Pont St Esprit.

attributed to the heat of the fire, and the Count observed, with no small satisfaction, that his moustache was intact. We then lighted our lamps and followed the tram-line into Biarritz, which we reached at seven o'clock. Our Mercédès had behaved splendidly, and had come out of the flames unscathed. So we sent it to the garage and adjourned to our allotted rooms at the Grand Hôtel.

Giovanni and Russell, our servants, had arrived before us and had put everything in readiness. It was a pleasure to sit down and dine and to go over the day's adventures. There were a few familiar faces in the same room. The next day we were notified that we had been elected honorary members of the British Club, of which kindness we took advantage, the Count enjoying some good games of bridge there; while the Baron and I, being of a musical turn of mind, went to the Casino to hear the band, which we did hear in vengeance!

The 24th we spent in watching a great storm which had broken over Biarritz. The sight of the waves and foam dashing against the rocks was beautiful beyond description and moved us strangely. The weather was cold, and we decided to move on. The proprietor of the garage gave us full information and a little plan relative

to our projected excursion into Spain, and, by following his advice, we were exempted from the heavy tax on automobiles imposed by the Spanish Government.

We accordingly left for San Sebastian, *via* Fuenterrabia. At the Spanish frontier we presented a card which the owner of the garage in question had given us, and, after having paid a franc or two for the road dues, were allowed to pass without difficulty or incivility. In fact, I would strongly urge everyone crossing the Spanish frontier to secure information and this permit from his garage.

The dreadful Spanish roads jolted the life nearly out of us, the automobile itself seemed to complain under its burden, and we longed to be back on the French roads again.

The fine little Spanish town of Fuenterrabia, spread over the summit of a hill, was soon reached. We walked through its picturesque streets and visited its church of Gothic architecture. The interior of this church is the most gorgeous display of Spanish splendour. We afterwards went over the old Castle, and bought some post-cards. It was 12.45 when we reached San Sebastian, and, as the season was not yet in full swing, had to content ourselves with a small hotel overlooking

the pretty little bay and which still remained open. We tried the Spanish wines and found them very much like any others. We then drove a home-ward course back to Biarritz by the road to the right of Fuenterrabía, leaving the Pyrenées and the Land of the Toreadors to our south-east.

CHAPTER III

MONDAY morning is beautiful, and at 9.15 our wheels nearly leave the ground as we dash over the excellent roads which lead to Pau. We arrived there at 11.50. The sunshine had cheered the spirits of us all, and even the machine seemed to appreciate the fine weather. Travelling at such a high speed, we might have been flying for our lives or afraid of sunstroke, being unaccustomed to more than five minutes' sunshine at a stretch. The Baron had some years ago stayed at the Grand Hôtel de France, and, for "auld langsyne," we resolved to stay there too. The rooms were very comfortable and free from flies. We spent the afternoon visiting the Château and Golf Club, and in the evening dined with some friends at their villa.

On Tuesday, the 27th, before leaving Pau, our photographs were taken in our car by Numa Blanc (see frontispiece), and at 9.15 we started

on our pilgrimage *en automobile* to Lourdes. We visited the famous Grotto, church, etc., bought relics for our friends, drank holy water, ate a horrible lunch, and, as far as we could see, the only benefit we had derived from our visit was the mere fact of our having been there.

At 2.15 we were glad to leave behind this unwholesome Mecca, filled with cheap nicknack shops, the owners of which press their wares on you as you pass.

The scenery between Lourdes and Luchon is beautiful beyond description. In fact, you must go over these mountains of the Pyrenées range, through these fragrant valleys, and down into the cool depths of these gorges, to fully appreciate it; for I will not here presume to paint such a picture.

Night had fallen on Luchon before we arrived, and the rain was setting in. Luckily we found the Grand Hôtel open, and put up there for our slumbers.

The mountain air and beautiful scenery had induced perfect sleep, and it was already late next morning when we awoke, to find, to our great disgust, that rain was falling in torrents. We decided to wait and see if the rain would improve, trusting in the old saying: "Rain before seven, fine after eleven." Meanwhile we went over the

Luchon bath establishment, and came away feeling thankful that we were whole and thoroughly convalescent.

We then lunched, and, the rain having stopped, started off at 1.15 P.M. for St Bertrand de Comminges. As we neared this little place, we began to encounter really serious difficulties. The rain had made the roads almost as slippery as ice, and the machine was unable to make any headway. We were skidding from one side of the road to the other, and the Count's nerves were visibly suffering from the delay. Then it was that an idea occurred to him which extricated us from our difficult position. Before leaving Paris, he had purchased a Parsons Patent Chain. This was soon applied to the wheel, and we started off again as though we had been running over gravel. Without this wonderful chain, we should never have reached St Bertrand.

The Baron took the whole thing very coolly, and contented himself with a cigarette and a few desultory remarks. The Count had now regained his peace of mind, and heaved a sigh of relief that his life had been spared; for those who motor know that feeling of vertigo one experiences when one's machine tries to dance a Highland schottische on its bagpipe-shaped legs.

We reached the hill on which stands St Bertrand de Comminges, with its beautiful Cathedral; and I venture to say that no finer scenery than that which surrounds it can be found anywhere. We were, however, anxious to push on and did not tarry here, merely contenting ourselves with visiting the Cathedral, where we particularly admired the fine carving in the chapter and the stone pillar of the four Evangelists in the cloister.

We were soon off again for Toulouse, and the large number of geese on the road announce the proximity of the great *foie gras* centre.

The Grand Hôtel, where we stayed, was a fine new building and modern in every respect. There is nothing really beautiful about this old city, which, from the time of its foundation by the Romans until 1814, when Wellington defeated Soult under its very walls, had never enjoyed fifty years of peace. Its history, in fact, is one long tale of crime, insurrection, and sieges. We were not sorry, therefore, to leave it the following day, and started after lunch at 1.15.

On the road to Carcassonne, the tyre of the wheel immediately under the Baron's seat burst with a terrific noise, and we felt ourselves all over to see where we had been shot. Whether it was due to the Baron's weight or not was never ascer-

tained, and for that matter never discussed aloud. This caused a delay of forty minutes and occurred just outside a village, so that an admiring crowd gathered around us and passed sarcastic remarks. I believe the Baron and the Count were almost pleased with the mishap, as it gave them another chance to smoke. Pumping up tyres is no small matter, and I felt ready to burst as I helped Joseph fill the new tube. This was our first puncture since our departure from Paris, and we were unanimous in our praise of the famous Michelin.

“*Qui boit l'obstacle,*” added the Baron, drily, as he examined the punctured tyre.

Our luggage car caught us up as we were nearly ready to leave, and no doubt it “made their heads swell” to see us *en panne*. They followed close behind us into Carcassonne, and the Count turned round in his seat now and then to see if they were laughing. After some difficulty, we found the old-fashioned Hôtel Bernard, which one would expect to find more up to date in these days of civilisation.

Next morning, October 30th, we visited the towers and castle of this picturesque old town, and, for the first time since our departure from Paris, we were obliged to make use of a horse, as

automobiles do not enter the narrow streets of the old fortified city.

From Carcassonne, Perpignan is reached by two different roads. We took the southern route and drove a straight course to Quillan. A little way beyond this place, we turned sharply to the eastward and reached Perpignan at 5.45.

As we approached this latter place, we met with an accident which nearly cost me my life. We were travelling at about 80 kilomètres an hour over a splendid road. In front of us was a large peasant's waggon moving along slowly, well to the right of the track, with a second horse tied to the back. The sound of our machine coming up behind probably frightened this second horse, for just as we were about to pass the waggon, he started to back away. This movement caused the heavy vehicle, in which was a huge iron bar projecting far beyond the first horse's head, to swerve round across our path. To stop was impossible, and, as we dashed past, the iron bar swept across my chest and ripped open the basket fastened to the side of the car. I confess I thought my last moment had come; but the thing was done so quickly that it was all over before we fully realised it.

When we had pulled up, the peasant came and

asked whether we were hurt. We told him that we appreciated his solicitude and that he need not worry about the basket, since there was no stupid *sergent de ville* about, as in Paris, to draw up a *procès verbal*. Some people contend that country-folk show a marked hostility towards automobiles; but our experience, in France, refutes this statement; for we, although foreigners, were always received with every civility and afforded ready assistance everywhere we passed.

Perpignan is a cheerful little garrison town, through which runs the river Basse. We found the Grand Hôtel all that we desired, and ordered dinner.

To a healthy man who awakes in the morning with a good appetite, the ordinary *petit déjeuner*, consisting of a cup of coffee and a little *croissant*, is not sufficient. To satisfy my fragile proportions, I was obliged to order the equivalent to a small beefsteak, but not so tough, in the form of two eggs *à la coque*, which I noticed were always charged for as a luxury, whether fresh or not.

At nine o'clock we were battened down into the car and ready to face a terrific gale which was blowing from the sea. As we forced our way at full speed along the coast, the fresh air literally burnt our faces, and we were glad to take shelter

at 11.50 within the walls of the honey-famous town of Narbonne, and went straight to the Grand Hôtel. We visited a few of the principal buildings, and at 1.20, after our *café noir*, resumed our flight towards Montpellier. We glided through Béziers without a sound, hardly terrifying either the inhabitants, dogs, or numberless ducks.

Here we noticed that our horn had changed its tune, and found that, owing to its being placed right in front of the car, the dust of the road was slowly choking it. Hence its occasional squeak or groan.

At 4.30 we ran into Montpellier and stopped at the Hôtel Métropole. Not very far from this town is the fashionable sea-bathing resort of Palavas, where ladies and gentlemen alike, it is said, bathe in nothing but a coat of sunshine.

CHAPTER IV

ALL SAINTS' DAY, November the 1st, was fine, and at 9.10 we headed eastward for St Giles du Gard. Presently I heard a great discussion going on behind me, and as far as I could understand, the Count did not want to go to St Giles, while the Baron was bent on it. The latter, however, always got his own way in the end, and we soon arrived at this old church, which was just then packed with people attending divine service. The Baron, accompanied by the *Suisse* in all his regimentals, visited the church, whilst the Count and I bought and addressed post-cards.

A short run northward brought us in sight of the beautiful town of Nîmes, and at mid-day we sat down to lunch at the Hôtel du Luxembourg. We visited the old Roman arena and the Maison Carrée, from which the Paris Madeleine is copied. I will not pause to describe the Jardin de la Fontaine, filled with relics of a vanished splendour,

for these parts are too well known to all who travel and read. We took a pleasure, however, in lingering among these ruins of another age.

At 2.15 the Baron insisted on my going with him to see the Pont du Gard. This bored me dreadfully, and more so when I found that I should have to climb like a monkey if I wished to see anything at all. In fact, my legs ached when I had finished climbing about this old aqueduct and rejoined my companions, who, instead of following me in my ascents, had quietly gone back to the car and were smoking their cigarettes.

At the first inn, I insisted on stopping, feeling both hot and tired, and ordered a *siróp de grenadine* and *eau de Seltz*. This put me in a more amiable mood, and, turning to the eastward, we were soon in sight of the famous Pont d'Avignon. We ran into this old town at 4.30, and went straight to the Grand Hôtel de l'Europe.

It is impossible to look upon what was once the home of the Roman Catholic faith, and the scene of so many crimes, without a certain feeling of awe; and although the Roman invader does not seem to have raised anything which, as in other towns of France, remains to-day, it is evident that Avignon, or Avenio, as it was then

called, enjoyed a more peaceful time under the Cæsars than after their departure.

As we approached the hotel, I met an old Eton friend on his honeymoon, also travelling *en automobile*. I did not like to disturb him at such a time, so we merely smiled at each other as we passed.

This was the last evening the Count spent with us, for on Monday morning he left early for Nice. We were all very sorry at his departure, for he is an excellent host and a charming companion.

At 10.15 we were once more on that endless road which follows the beautiful and fertile valley of the Rhône. We made but short halts on the way to Paris, for the Count's departure had broken up our party, and we pressed on with all speed. At Orange we merely visited the famous Arc de Triomphe and Roman Amphitheatre, and dashed off again towards Montélimar, which we reached at 1.15. We had barely got over the effects of the Toulouse *foie gras* when we were called upon to digest and struggle with *nougat*, for which Montélimar and Loubet are noted. The proprietress of the funny little Hôtel des Princes was a charming person, and when we were leaving she offered to post a number of little boxes

of this succulent mixture to my friends in Paris and in England.

With aching jaws we leave at 2.50 for Valence, which is as well known for its oranges as "Brazil, where the nuts come from." We reached Valence at 4.30, and put up at the Hôtel du Louvre et de la Poste. At first sight this town does not impress one very favourably. No doubt those who live there think it is one of the finest places in the world, but to one passing through in an automobile, and often feeling dirty and tired, how can he be expected to see things to their advantage?

As we advanced northward, we encountered colder weather, and before leaving Valence we wrapped ourselves up in greatcoats.

At 9.15, Tuesday morning, November 3rd, we are off again!

I will pass but lightly over the journey from Lyon to Paris,—this part of the country is so familiar to most people, and even those persons who have not visited it are acquainted with its beauty and charms from reading.

Four hours' journey along the lovely road which runs parallel to the Rhône, with the mountainous Dauphiné on our right and the plains of Languedoc on our left, brought us in sight of the black chimneys and smoke of Lyon.

It was 1.15 when we reached the Hôtel de l'Europe et Métropole, one of the finest we had ever stopped at.

My diary, I find, says but very little about the run from Lyon to Paris. The times are as usual indicated; there are a few notes in the margin relative to the places we visited, and we appear to have been very much impressed by the beautiful vine-covered plains of Bourgogne.

From my diary :—

“We reach Maçon at 11.30, lunch at the Hôtel de l'Europe, and drink the famous wine. At 1.15 we are *en route* for Autun, where we arrive at 5.15, just in time to visit the Cathedral before nightfall. The Hôtel St Louis de la Poste answers all our requirements, so we put up there for the night.

“Thursday morning is fine and bracing. We leave this pretty little town at 9.35 for Semur, visiting on the way the Church of Montreal, the beautiful carvings and the choir stalls of which are in themselves works of art. We reach Semur at mid-day and lunch at the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or. We afterwards visit the curious old gateway and church, and at three o'clock are on the road to Avalon. We pass Vezelay on our left. This is a pretty little village spread over

the crest of a hill, on the very summit of which rises one of the most beautiful churches I have ever seen.

“The little houses and cottages, painted white, seem to have clustered around it as though for protection. But we get but a few glances at it, for the chauffeur, urging his machine to its utmost speed, dashes round the corner of a hill, and Vezelay is lost to view. It is 4.45 when we reach the Grand Hôtel du Chapeau Rouge, Avalon, and prepare for dinner and a good night's rest.

“Next morning is fine, and at 9.45 we leave for Auxerre, which we reach at 1.15, feeling very hungry. We lunched at the Hôtel de la Fontaine, but did not drink ‘Château la Pompe.’ At three o'clock we left Auxerre for the cathedral town of Sens, *via* Villeneuve-sur-Yonne, and arrive at the Hôtel de Paris for the night at 4.45.

“Saturday, November 7th, at 10.30, we leave Sens for Melun, where we lunch at 12.30, at the Hôtel du Grand Monarque. Leaving again at 2.15, we reach our Paris residences at 3.45.”

As we approached the gay capital of this beautiful country, our hearts sank within us at the thought that this was the last day of our

trip, and the Baron and I, there and then, resolved to make another and far more extensive one. In fact, that same night we wrote to the Count and laid our projected trip before him.

On our arrival in Paris we thank and take leave of Monsieur A. Georges, the chauffeur and owner of the second car, which had followed with our baggage and servants: many and most valuable were the services he had rendered us during our tour, and it was with pleasure that we accepted an invitation to go and visit his automobile establishment at 23 Rue Bayard, Paris, whither the good fellow now retired to enjoy a well-deserved rest.

As will be seen in the table at the beginning of this book, we had covered a distance of about 2431 kilomètres in about 80 hours (from which must be deducted the time spent in halts and visits *en route*), making an average, roughly speaking, of 30 kilomètres per hour. This would be but a poor average had we made the whole run over good, straight, and level roads; but quite three-quarters of the distance covered was through mountainous country, where it would have been courting death to urge the machine beyond a certain speed.

CHAPTER V

NEARLY three months have elapsed since our return from our first tour, and the pleasures of that delightful trip are still fresh in our memory. The fever of automobiling, in fact, is growing stronger within us every day. We cannot wait any longer, and accordingly draw up our plans for our second tour. We leave Paris on January 20th, 1904, to join the Count, Joseph, and the car in the South of France.

On our arrival, the Baron and I found everything in readiness for this long and, as it afterwards proved, adventurous trip. But fancy our disgust at having to go and book places in a stuffy sleeping-car! However, we had no alternative.

The Baron must have been happy indeed at the prospect of another automobile tour, for in the middle of the night he began for some unknown reason to sing in his sleep, which awoke me and the other occupants of the car with a start. One

man, evidently taking exception to the words or tune of the Baron's song, shouted out with some warmth: "!!! . . . !!! . . . X . . . Z" and other expressions, which made the car rock from side to side. The Baron's song must have been written in B sharp, as the melody soon came to an abrupt end, followed by muffled snoring. But then the compliments showered at him probably had a soothing effect on his nerves. However, I was lucky enough to find my boots in the morning.

The next day brought us into warmer climes, and the bright sun of the South warmed our hearts and cheered our spirits. It was about mid-day when we reached Cannes. I got off the train here to join some relatives, and the Baron went on to Beaulieu. On January 24th I rejoined the Baron at the Hôtel Bristol; and on Monday, the 25th, the Count, who had been staying at the villa of some friends there, appeared at 9.30 in the car, with the great Joseph at the helm.

We were all delighted to see one another, to which the broad grins on our faces amply testified. The Count took us first to Monte Carlo *via* Axe and the high route de la Corniche. Here we spent about an hour, while the Count had his teeth fixed in tight by his dentist. Our jaws



In the Vallée de la Vécubie.



I snap the Baron as he gets out for lunch.

being in very good order, we gave our fingers exercise at the famous tables. Fortunately the Count's torturer did not keep him long, for he soon came and tore us away.

We then returned to Beaulieu, where we lunched with his friends. Tuesday, being a most delightful day, we drove up the Vallée de la Vésubie and lunched at St Jean la Rivière. On our way back, two mules harnessed to a heavily laden cart took fright at our "teuf-teuf," and upset the whole show. I should not care to estimate the extent of the damage we unwillingly wrought on this occasion, and some highly savoury language reached our ears as we dashed onward.

We got to Beaulieu safely after a most enjoyable day. While here, we made some pretty walks in the neighbourhood, particularly to St Jean, which, as everyone knows, is noted for its *bouillabaisse* (a kind of fish hash). We also admired that enormous bronze statue of the Virgin erected at the very point of St Jean by the French Government, and destined to serve as a beacon light for the use of mariners.

On Saturday, the 30th, my ardour was somewhat damped on receiving a telegram from my home in England, to say that the B.F.O. had

wired that my brother was dangerously ill in Africa, but later on in the day I received better news, and was not, as I had feared, forced to abandon my trip.

Our second tour really begins in earnest on February 1st, 1904.

I had bought a lady's diary, knowing that the ladies all have a great deal to say, and feeling sure that I should have plenty of space for my notes. I consulted it and read :

“ FEBRUARY 1ST, FULL MOON 4.33 P.M.”

My diary seemed to have been written for the occasion, for when we started off from Beaulieu to Nice to join Joseph and the car, we, like the moon, were full—of hope and good cheer. At 10 A.M. we moved off, slowly following that beautiful road which runs parallel to the sea-coast, known as the “Côte d'Or,” and due to the initiative of the Touring Club de France. At Cannes my relatives came to wish us a pleasant journey, and we dashed off again towards St Raphael, where we arrived at 12.45. We lunched at the Grand Hôtel des Bains, and I fancy the pretty pine woods through which we had passed and the lovely scenery and fresh cool air had given us rare appetites, for we ate like lions.

At two o'clock we are off again. We soon reach Hyères, and at 5.15 run into the great French naval base of Toulon and go straight to the Grand Hôtel. On this trip along the coast I particularly noticed the large number of villas to let, and we attributed this to the enormous automobile traffic and dusty roads. Of course, we visited Toulon, which, although so dirty, was looking quite bright and gay with the many-coloured uniforms of the soldiers and sailors. We spent the evening in sending off post-cards and listening to a concert.

Tuesday, the 2nd, is a wet, drizzly day, and we shiver at the idea of turning out; but as we had made all arrangements in Nice for the shipping of our car at Marseilles, and had purchased our berths, we felt it our duty to push on, which we did at 10.10 A.M. Thanks to our Parsons Patent Chain, we were able to run through the slimy streets of dirty Marseilles, and arrived at the comfortable Hôtel du Louvre et de la Paix, where we were well received and looked after by the courteous Monsieur Echnard.

Joseph took the car straight down to the wharf to be shipped on the *General Chanzy*, as it was necessary to get it there twenty-four hours before the steamer's departure. We all dreaded—

though we did not say so—Wednesday, the 3rd, which proved really fine in the early morning, and some friends of ours having come and cheered us up as we were having breakfast, we ate more than we might have done had they not been there. We then drove down to the docks, our friends accompanying us. I took a few snapshots, in case we were never seen again, and at one o'clock that horrible groaning whistle, which stirs the marrow of one's bones, announced that everything was ready. Then began that peculiar motion and rattle of the steam winches. There was a smell of burnt oil from the engine-rooms, and from the galleys came the odour of food cooking. To these was added that dreadful smell which seems to emanate from the bilges. All the gaiety of our send-off had vanished in a moment, but the Count and the Baron were in the best of spirits.

I should just like to tell you something about the preparations which were made for us and our servants at Nice before starting. The agents of the Compagnie Transatlantique had first to be found. We found them. They regretted, they said, the delay; but were forced to wire to Marseilles to the head office to know how many days' notice would be required, and also when and how the automobile could be shipped, and the cost

thereof. We called again at their offices. Instructions not quite understood. Had to give our names in full, nationalities, etc. The list was a long one, as one of our servants was Italian, another Hungarian, and the other English. The "Compagnie" evidently anticipated a possibility of the boat sinking, and we appreciated its thoughtfulness, for with this information it would be enabled to send our various families a word of condolence. Then a plan of the boat had to be secured, as the Count could only travel amidships on the port side.

However, his berth was chosen and registered after many questions. The Baron did not like that part of a ship; he wished to be as far forward as possible, so as to avoid any bad smells reaching his cabin, and in order to catch all the fresh air he could. He probably counted on having a smooth passage, which would allow him to open his port-hole. Alas! he little knew what was in store for him. I shared this first-class "hovel" with him. Then the Count also insisted that his servant Giovanni, who proved the worst sailor ever born, should share a cabin with the other servants, so that they could look after him. We found the automobile fastened down to the deck and wrapped in tarpaulin.

The Count and the Baron sought the smoking-room, while I stayed on the upper deck until I was wet through. I well knew that if I once dared to go below, which was all battened down, I should give my seamanship away.

When a short distance from port, we struck a heavy gale, and the *General Chanzy* started to roll and pitch dreadfully. I cautiously and sadly grovelled to the smoking-room, where I found the Baron alone, the Count having already disappeared. The Baron's eyes were fast closed, and I am sure it was as well for him that he could not see his fellow-creatures around him. I have an idea that he heard and dared not look. However, a tap on the shoulder had the effect of making him open his unwilling eyes. This rude awakening had a volcanic effect on his inner man. He was out of his seat in a twinkling, and presently I found him looking over the side of the ship, no doubt singing to the fishes, for I saw his head nodding and his body continually heaving. I did not wait to listen to his song, for I was in a hurry and could not stop until I got to my cabin, where I remained chewing dry biscuits and chocolate all day.

I half expected to see the Baron come down, but he did not do so for a long time, probably

preferring the society of his aquatic friends. How we could have appeared at dinner that night I do not know, but it was wonderful to note the effect starvation had on us. I refused some of the dishes, such as fish in oil, donkey sausage, etc., and contented myself with a very simple fare, but stupidly ate an apple rather quickly, I am afraid, for it sat on my chest until the next morning.

CHAPTER VI

DAYBREAK brought no consolation; it was raining hard, and the *General Chanzy* was rolling heavily. I was feeling very "cheap" when I went on deck. As none of the servants had appeared, I made a dash down the passages to their quarters, and was thankful to find them just alive. I soon, however, beat a hasty retreat into fresh air again. We did not see Algiers until we were well in the harbour, for rain was falling in such torrents as to hide it from our view. Strangely enough, we seemed happy to leave the *General Chanzy*, and were unanimous in our decision that we would never take the same route again, and that the sea was no place for us.

It was three o'clock as we hurried off the boat in the rain. Directly we set foot on the quay we were surrounded by half-drowned Arabs, all of whom wanted to take us to a different hotel. But we had one in view, and, with what little voice we

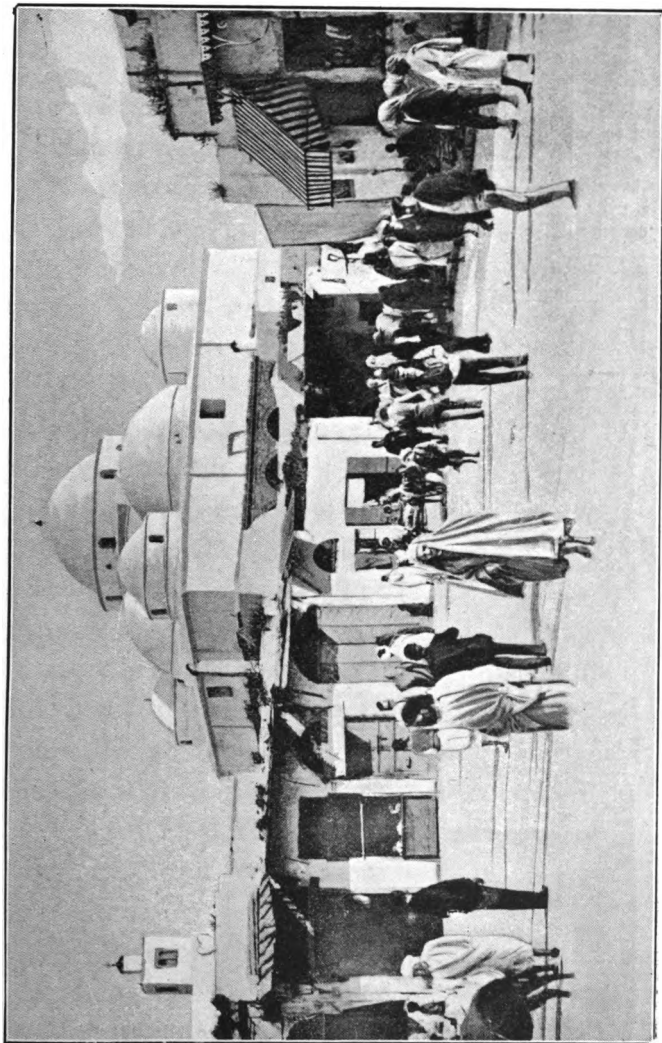
had left, we meekly asked for the dragoman of the Grand Hôtel de l'Oasis. This man, who is known to the select few he frequents as "Tête de Veau," took us to the hotel's omnibus and there left us sitting in wonder and discomfort. We imagined that he had gone to look after the luggage or other passengers, but he soon reappeared dragging a half-drowned traveller with him. We did not hail with much delight this new addition to our number, for we were already packed like sardines in a box, and when the door was shut it was absolutely impossible to move.

We were hermetically sealed in now, and, even if we could have opened the window, not only should we have been half drowned by the drenching rain, but think of the enormous loss to insect life. Old "Tête de Veau" at last gave the signal to the driver that he might proceed, which he did with a great flourish of a wet whip, and we were soon before the Grand Hôtel de l'Oasis, Algiers. The manageress having, by some accident, received our telegram, had reserved rooms for us; but, as the late occupants had not yet left them, we repaired to a café near by to pass away the time until the rooms had been well aired and disinfected and the sheets changed. I fancy we must have looked more like Polish emigrants

than anything else. Oh! how we longed for a bath and change! My room had evidently been occupied by a lady, as I found many traces, such as hairpins, etc., etc. After a good wash and change, and a glass of whisky and soda to warm our frozen hearts, we ate a really excellent dinner, served to us in the hotel's restaurant.

On Friday morning I heard a familiar sound under my window, and, looking out, saw Joseph and the automobile, which had been successfully removed from the ship without damage. During the gale, however, some salt water had got into it, and it had to be taken to a garage and thoroughly overhauled. We spent the day visiting the town, and I drove out to the Maison Carrée to see the Pères Blancs (White Fathers), as I had met some of them during my travels in Uganda. Remembering their former kindness to me while out there, I took a real pleasure in visiting their Algiers headquarters, where by the way I received a most hearty welcome. Their habitation occupies a unique position overlooking the sea, and everything within its walls speaks of hard work and industry.

After dinner, under the guidance of "Tête de Veau" and a stout walking-stick, we visited Algiers by night.



The Mosque, Tunis

Saturday, the 6th, was not a very tempting day to start off, so we decided to leave on Sunday, for "the better the day, better the deed," is what I was always brought up to understand.

A quarter past nine saw us comfortably settled in the car and ready to try the African roads. We were no longer among Frenchmen, although on French soil, and occasionally my smattering of Arabic came in very useful. To begin with, the Count and the Baron had an argument as to which was the best road to take to go to Tipaza. Each contended that some well-informed persons had told him that that was the way. Judging from the nature of the information, it came, I believe, in both cases, from our old friend "Tête de Veau." However, after a great deal of talking, we decided to ask the first person we might meet and abide by what he said. We did not wait long, for presently some Arabs came along, who told us the way. I think they must have taken us for some new species of infidel, with our goggled eyes, for they were some minutes before they answered.

We were now well out of the town and on a very fair road, which followed the edge of the cliff overlooking the blue Mediterranean. On either side were little villages and farmsteads, and

endless vineyards ; in fact, every inch of land was under cultivation, as is the case in France, and we could not but admire that agricultural development which is the wealth of the great French nation.

It was quite a change for us to be amongst these people, dressed for the most part in a mere bundle of rags, and leaping by bounds or clutching at one another's garments in their haste to get out of the way. Joseph was greatly amused to see these thin overclad Arabs tumbling over each other and yelling like Indians at our approach.

At 1.15 we reached the Hôtel du Rivage, Tipaza, and ordered lunch. In the meantime we visited the old Roman ruins in some gardens and fields near by. I felt I should like to live here for a few months in peace and quietness. After a really pretty walk among these ruins (Joseph accompanying us), we returned to the hotel, where a plain but very good lunch awaited us. The red wine (30 centimes per bottle) grown in the neighbourhood was of the best I had ever tasted. At 2.15 we resumed our journey, and were very sorry to leave this quiet and pretty little village with its small harbour and overhanging cliffs, and the deep blue Mediterranean stretching away as far as the eye could see, and glittering in the sunlight like a sea of pearls.

The road is splendid, and we literally fly along, enjoying the fresh air and mountain scenery. At 3.30 we started to wind up and up and round and round the hill on which stands Hammam R'Ihra, where we found some friends staying at the Grand Hôtel des Bains. I have visited some pretty spots during my travels, but have never seen anything so pretty as the view from the hill of Hammam R'Ihra. We were in fact quite overcome by the panorama before us. The hotel with its baths is not what one generally expects to find in Africa. Surrounded by beautiful palm-trees and gardens, Hammam R'Ihra might well be called the garden of Algeria. It is, in fact, surprising that this paradise is not better known to the world. The Baron and I lost no time in writing to our people to tell them that, if they contemplated wintering abroad, they must not forget to visit this place. We found quite a colony of English and Americans here, and on Sundays divine service is held under the palm-trees.

The next day I took lessons from Joseph in driving the Mercédès, in case anything should happen to him. I do not think for one moment that the Baron or the Count would ever have trusted themselves at any high speed in my hands.

In the afternoon we took a delightful walk of about eight kilometres through the pine woods with some friends, accompanied by a donkey-cart, which carried the lady, and which I was obliged to push behind, as the donkey was not up to the task.

The Baron and the Count appeared very nervous and preoccupied, and I noticed that they were continually glancing from side to side and sometimes turned right round to look behind them. For some time I was at a loss to account for the reason of their unrest, but suddenly the cause of their nervousness dawned upon me. A story had run through the hotel that a giant panther was at large in the vicinity. There was, of course, a certain amount of danger, but panthers do not as a rule attack a party of people. However, we got back safely to the hotel, and rested for a while under the shade of the palm-trees, watching a game of tennis.

A few days after our departure, we learnt that the panther had been shot by some natives, an account of which appeared in the *New York Herald*, Paris edition, of March 24th, 1904.

On Tuesday morning, February 9th, we bade farewell to Hammam R'Ihra, and left these lovely mountains, friends, and palm-groves for Blidah. Applying all the brakes, we glided down the hill

and steered for the Chiffa gorge, so well known to those who have visited Algeria.

This wonderful gorge is ten kilomètres in length, and about fifty kilomètres from Hammam R'Ihra. We of course went through it, and were surprised to find such a good road in such an accidented region. We did not see the monkeys in the trees, which guide-books point out as one of the features of the gorge ; they had probably not been let out of their cages that day, or perhaps our speed was too great to enable us to see them. We passed a pretty little hotel half way through the gorge, called the Hôtel du Ruisseau des Singes, where I bought some post-cards, and had to pay for them at monkeys' prices.

On the road to Blidah we passed a peculiar dome-shaped affair which, in the distance, looks like an orange half-buried in the ground, or a perfectly round-topped hill, but which is really the tomb of a queen of Mauretania. However, we contented ourselves with a distant view and a post-card of it.

The monkey-famous Chiffa gorge had made us perfectly ravenous, and we were uncommonly glad to sit down at half-past eleven at the Gerome Hôtel, Blidah, and tackle the proverbial omelette.

Blidah is a garrison town, and at every street

corner you meet French officers and Zouaves. The town is nothing much to look at : there is a Turkish mosque and Moorish cafés, and the usual bundles of dirty rags (which some people call Arabs) walking about. Beggars are as numerous as the flies, and we felt no regret at leaving Blidah.

It was 1.30 when we set out for Algiers, which we reached an hour later, after a splendid run. We found our landing-place alive with American sailors from a man-o'-war lying off the coast, and everyone we met spoke in praise of their smartness and good behaviour. They were a sturdy and jolly set of men.

CHAPTER VII

THE Count and the Baron, neither of whom could sit still for very long, went off immediately to gather information about the best roads to go to Bougie, and on their return looked somewhat troubled. They had learnt that they might have to sleep the night in the mountains *à la belle étoile*. But what really disturbed them both far more was the idea of being kidnapped, or robbed, or even killed by brigands, as we had just heard that a caravan had been looted by these light-fingered Arabs.

However, after a good night's rest, we start off fearlessly at 9 A.M. The machine behaved well until 10.15, when the tyre under the Baron burst again. After the usual gymnastic exercises on the part of Joseph and his "greaser," a new one was soon in place, and we glided on towards Tizi-Ouzou. Just as we reached this town, at 1.15, burst went the same tyre under the Baron again. Was it fate, fat, or what?

"Mere coincidence, gentlemen," said the Baron.

The Count did not seem to see the joke. Two punctures mean time and money, and the possibility of passing a night in the mountains which my two friends dreaded so much. Between Tizi-Ouzou and Bougie there is only a little ch[^]alet, or inn, by the roadside, where travellers sometimes find shelter. Our stock of Michelins was also getting low.

At the H[^]otel de la Garde, Tizi-Ouzou, we got something to eat, and at 3.30 we were off again, straining every nerve to reach Bougie before night.

Here began the most wonderful and most picturesque road imaginable, resembling in certain respects the Pyr[^]en[^]es. It was most tiring however for Joseph, on account of the many sharp turns, inclines, declines, Arabs or donkeys, cows and goats: in fact, he was forced to keep a sharp look-out and slow down continually. In many places the slightest deviation of the steering-wheel would have meant a leap into the valley below and an abrupt ending to "three men in a motor car." At six o'clock darkness came rapidly on us, and I heard my two friends moving uneasily in their seats behind me.



Nearing the Châlet de Taourirt-Ighil.



A glimpse of the Mediterranean.

As all sportsmen know, wild animals drink at sunset. Well, the Baron and the Count fancied they could see all sorts of terrible things, as we went through this wood, and Joseph, evidently fearing the worst, had placed his revolver on the seat beside him. Suddenly, much to my amusement, we saw a jackal, which the Count declared was most dangerous and generally found in company of lions and other man-eaters. Joseph wanted to shoot at it, but it beat a hasty retreat on catching sight of us. We had evidently startled the poor thing, and Joseph was quite indignant when I told him that he could not hit it, and that, if he did, he would be killing a useful scavenger.

The Baron and the Count were just beginning to get over the shock, when, Providence favouring us, we came alongside a little dimly-lighted window. It was 6.45, and the night was so black that it was dangerous to go any further.

We knocked at the door, and were delighted to find that we were at the Châlet de Taourirt-Ighil, kept by Monsieur Lambert, who had been dead for six months. Madame Lambert was away visiting friends and had left her habitation in the hands of a servant-girl, who could neither read nor write. This "lady" was protected by a

sixteen-year-old native boy of Kabylia. The dirty appearance of them both had a bad effect on the Baron and the Count, and, I believe, they both thought that their end was near. The strange couple seemed very frightened and upset by our appearance, and I think they were horrified to find that we intended sleeping there that night.

We were given two damp rooms between the four of us. Fortunately, our servants had been sent on by rail to Sétif, otherwise some of us would have been forced to sleep in the passages, for the two rooms put together were about the size of an ordinary cupboard. In the way of food, there was just one live chicken in the place, and it seemed to object to being captured by the dirty boy. He caught it by the tail, and, of course, all the feathers came out in his hand with a great deal of cackling. The wily Arab then gave chase. It is no easy matter to catch a chicken in the dark, but he finally succeeded in cornering it, and then proceeded to kill it in the most noisy way possible, quite upsetting my friends' appetites. As on board the *General Chanzy*, we ate but daintily.

Having wrapped ourselves up in our fur coats and rugs, for it was freezing up in those moun-

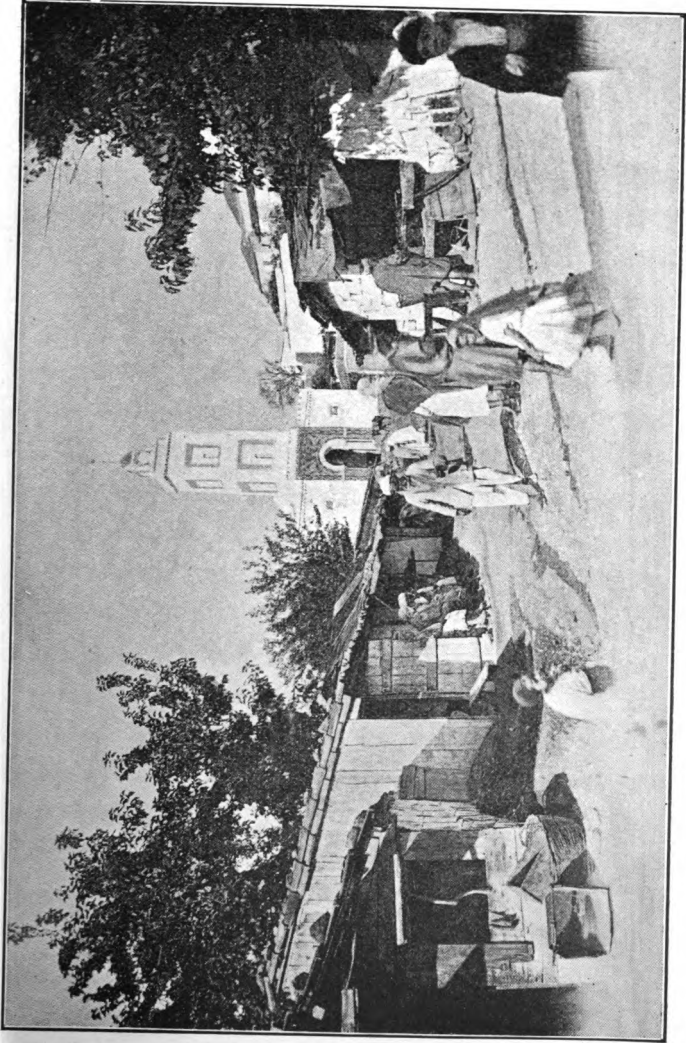
tains, we lay down and slept until about two o'clock in the morning, when we were rudely awakened by a most unearthly knocking and shouting outside. This was too much for the Baron and the Count. They sprang up, and I believe that all their past life flashed before their eyes. This was surely the beginning of the end—the house was being attacked by brigands!

Being accustomed to sleep out of doors in Africa, I went out to see what all this noise was about, and found four men, who had just arrived in a cart, knocking at the door. Like ourselves, they probably thought they would like a roof over their heads for the rest of the night. I found this quite natural, and went back to bed again. My friends wanted to know what it all was, who it was, and all about it, and whether they looked dangerous. I assured them that their lives would be spared, on condition that they went to sleep again and kept very quiet. I then turned over and slept peacefully until morning. But I don't believe they benefited much by their night's rest, for they rose earlier, I fancy, than they had ever done in their lives before, and their eyes were hollow and their faces drawn. In fact, it took them days to get over that "awful night in the mountains."

As soon as it was light enough (at 7.45), and without much breakfast, we resumed our journey towards Bougie, which we reached safely at nine o'clock. We took some more breakfast at the Hôtel de France, and were about to start, when we found that the air had escaped again from the tyre under the Baron. This, of course, delayed us, and it was already 10.45 when we left.

The route between Algiers and Bougie is certainly unsurpassed for beauty and scenery, although most tiring and difficult for the chauffeur. I would not have missed this trip for anything, and the Baron and the Count soon forgot that "awful night in the mountains."

For several kilomètres the road winds round the great bay, with the sea on one side and hills on the other. Bougie looked very pretty in the distance, stretching out to the very tip of the little promontory and glittering in the sunlight. Presently the road turned sharply to the right, and we lost sight of Bougie. On this road we passed an automobile *en panne*, and Joseph, with his courteous Hungarian manners, pulled up and asked if they required our help. As they did not need our delicate attentions, we passed on without the loss of any spare parts. Further on the road started to decline, and pre-



Bougie.

sently we were running through the beautiful gorge of Chabet-el-Hakra, which everyone should visit when in Algeria. People would find these cool and shady haunts somewhat difficult, it is true, to get at, but far more pleasant than Algiers or Mustapha Supérieur. We passed a carriage of tourists, who evidently knew what was worth seeing.

At 12.30 we reach Kerrata, where we drink coffee, eat oranges, smoke, and take the air. This little native town seems to be a great trading centre. It was market day, and, judging from the noise, I fancy a lot of business was being transacted. The Arabs seemed deeply interested in our red machine, and it was really funny to see these curious individuals jump when we pressed the horn.

At one o'clock we were ready to start, and, smiling to the crowd, we threw some money among the children and were off. At 2.45 we entered the gates of the town of Sétif, and went straight to the Hôtel de France. We then visited this pretty Arab town, with its Moorish baths, and the Roman ruins in the Jardin d'Orléans.

We had ordered our servants to go to Constantine by rail and await our arrival, but the

Count and the Baron had, as usual, changed their minds meanwhile and declared they would not go there. They had heard of a new road to El Kantara, and decided to try it. Through the courtesy of the station-master, our servants and luggage were allowed to get off the train at Sétif and proceed to Biskra the following morning. This amiable official recommended to us a certain Arab porter who knew the new road to El Kantara, and he was engaged at once as pilot. He bought himself a brand new pair of lemon-coloured boots at once to celebrate the event.



Arabs admiring our car.



Camels at Ampère.

CHAPTER VIII

AT 7.45 on the morning of the 12th we are actually in a hurry to get away, and found the road to Ampère (50 kilomètres from Sétif) excellent in every way. I think our new pilot, who weighed about a ton (he sat on my feet), was somewhat alarmed when, in places, we were averaging from 60 to 80 kilomètres an hour. The tears gushed from his eyes, and I am sure he saw very little of what was going on. In fact, he thought more of his yellow boots than of the course. His shoes seemed very much coveted by his fellow-countrymen, who could not have looked upon him with more reverence had he been Mahommed come back to life. He did not kneel on the foot-board at mid-day, nor did he so much as look towards Mecca, and we will hope that the great speed at which we were travelling exonerated him from all blame.

At Ampère we encountered our first camels.

The market was in full swing, and these gaunt, clumsy-looking animals, with their loads of dates and merchandise, mingled with the desert Arabs and caravan leaders, gave it quite an animated aspect. The Count found it all very pretty, so we stayed a few minutes longer to give him time to absorb some desert life, and Mahommed, our pilot, a chance to wipe his eyes and see daylight once more. We then pushed on, encountering some very bad roads, and at 9.55 reached the Hôtel du Roulage, N'Gous.

This is a funny little place, and quite a crowd of people gathered around to look at us. Our table was laid outside, and we enjoyed a nice little lunch. This mud-built Arab village, with its little mosque, was something new to the Count. Strangely enough, we were allowed to enter this mosque after the carpets had been removed, and were surprised to find that the guardian of this sacred edifice actually accepted small or large remunerations.

At 11.30 we were off again for El Kantara, which we reached at 1.55, having traversed some of the most extraordinary sandhills and winding route imaginable. It was, in fact, quite a novel experience for Joseph and our Mercédès, neither of whom seemed any the worse for it.



Mahomed guards the car.



Arab dwellings, N'Gous.

M. Bertrand, proprietor of the Hôtel Bertrand, where we stayed while in El Kantara, told us that it would be madness to attempt to reach Biskra by road, that there were several rivers to cross without bridges, and that the road was not yet finished. The Baron was furious, having fully made up his mind to float across the rivers if necessary. He tried to persuade M. Bertrand into saying that the road was practicable, but the latter did not intend to be bamboozled in this way or retract one word of what he had said, even to please the Baron. Therefore, having no alternative, we were forced to go by rail, our pilot accompanying us. We dismissed this "gentleman" on our arrival at Biskra, and he promised to return to Sétif that night. The next day, however, we saw him in the town. He had met, he said, so many friends, who would not let him go. We walked from the station through the public gardens to the Hôtel de Dar-Diaf, or Casino de Biskra.

How strangely flat this funny desert town strikes one, with its stately palm-trees waving their broad leaves to and fro so high above the ground! Like all houses in Algeria, our hotel had a flat roof, from which we got a fine view of the oasis and of the desert beyond. There is

something indescribably sad about the great Sahara stretching away to the grey-blue line of the horizon, and dotted here and there with mud-walled villages and clusters of palms. There is also something wonderfully peaceful, and yet mysterious, about this endless plain; and those who expect to see ostriches with their heads buried in the sand are disappointed as a rule, I should imagine.

“Sharks” from every part of the world are to be found in this town, and one has to beware of them.

On Saturday we strolled about the town visiting the market and Arab shops. After lunch we went over the world-renowned gardens of Comte de Landon. We were escorted through the beautiful palm groves and avenues of this shady place by a white-robed Arab guardian. We next visited the old fort and ancient town of Biskra, and then drove through the modern town and skirted the desert for a few kilomètres, until we came to the famous Hammam Salahin, or sulphur bath establishment. But the smell which arose from the water was so unpleasant that we decided not to take a bath, and returned to Biskra for dinner.

Sunday, the 14th, being a hot day, the Count

rose early and went for a walk by himself through the orange gardens. By way of a treat for us, he had hired the most uncomfortable and shaky carriage I have ever got into, and, after lunch, we set out in this rattletrap for an almost endless drive through the desert to Sidi Okba, passing several oases on the way. It is a curious old Arab town. We visited its ancient mosque, and went through many ceremonies before we were allowed to enter. However, we got out of it alive, and proceeded down narrow streets, each of which had a special and very ancient smell of its own. Thousands of flies settled on our noses, and tickled us until we were nearly crazy. Sidi Okba seems to be a great date centre, and I feel certain that if people saw this fruit laid out on the ground of this dirty mud-village they could never thoroughly enjoy eating it. Arab children, stark naked, with their sore eyes and matted hair, worried the Baron and the Count until they went nearly mad. Their anger, however, only attracted a greater crowd than ever. In a kind of hovel we saw how rugs are made, and when we got back to the little inn where we had left the carriage, our nostrils were full of dust and our throats literally parched. We are not sorry, in fact, to leave this dirty but interesting

old town to those who like that sort of thing. I shall not try to write poetry on the "beauty of camels coming in from the desert," or any other such nonsense.

On our way back to Biskra we passed large gangs of French convicts, who work like slaves in the hot sun, mending the roads. I cannot help thinking it is a bad example for the Arabs to see white men in bondage and working like this amongst them, and often under their orders. I felt a kind of pity for these wretched convicts, whose moral sufferings must be terrible at times. We reached Biskra just as the sun disappeared behind the town.

Monday, the 15th, at 2.50 P.M., we left by train for El Kantara, having "done" Biskra thoroughly. On our arrival we found our faithful Joseph ready to take us on a run to the outskirts of El Kantara. We noticed in the hotel's visitors' book many familiar names, and learned that there was good shooting to be had in the neighbourhood. We visited the red village and oasis not far off, and, after a good night's rest, left this pretty spot, so cool and fresh after sandy Biskra. At 8.10 A.M., following a nearly straight road to Batna, we frightened a caravan of camels loaded with children, etc., who stampeded into the desert.

Strange to say, we did not give chase, and at 9.40 reached the Hôtel des Etrangers, Batna, and reserved rooms. At ten o'clock we made an excursion to Lambese, about a 10-kilomètre run, which we covered in ten minutes. There we visited the Roman ruins, which were being excavated by more gangs of convicts. As you see, we were "rushing things." At 11.5 we were on the road again, and at 11.40 reached the Hôtel de Timgad, Timgad, where we lunched.

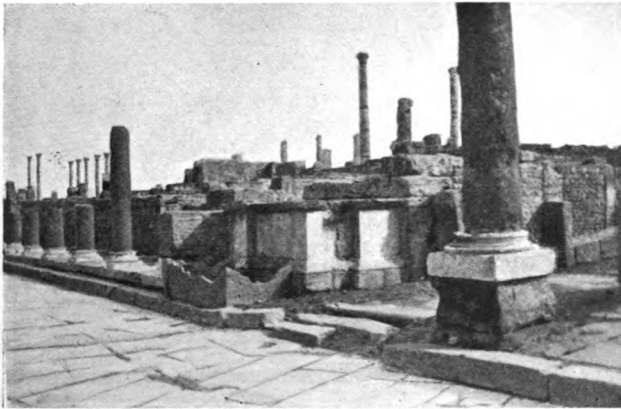
We had some difficulty in coaxing the proprietor to give us something to eat. We said we were in a hurry. "Alright," he said, "you had better go back to Batna; I have no lunch for you." He then informed us that he had lost a lot of money over this hotel, and we have an idea that he will lose more unless he alters his way of receiving customers. We hurried through our lunch, which he finally condescended to serve us, and then visited the Roman ruins of Timgad.

Although but little of this once great Roman city has yet been brought to light, it is easy even now to get an idea of its former importance. In fact, later on, when we stood before the ruins of gay Pompeii and recalled those of Timgad, we were impressed by the smallness of the Italian city as compared with its African sister.

Old Thamugadi ceased to exist towards the end of the sixth century, and had probably just become Christianised when it was taken and sacked, and its inhabitants probably put to the sword, by the Arab invaders, who were beginning their march northward about this time. Like most Roman cities, it has a forum, basilica, amphitheatre, and numerous baths. We left these ruins at 3.30 for Batna, which we reached at 4.15, after a magnificent run by the same route which we went by.



A Roman street at Timgad.



Roman ruins, Timgad.

CHAPTER IX

BEING Mardi Gras (Shrove Tuesday), the whole town was indulging in a holiday. Most of the people were wearing their carnival costumes, and the cafés were gay with dancing, which we went to see.

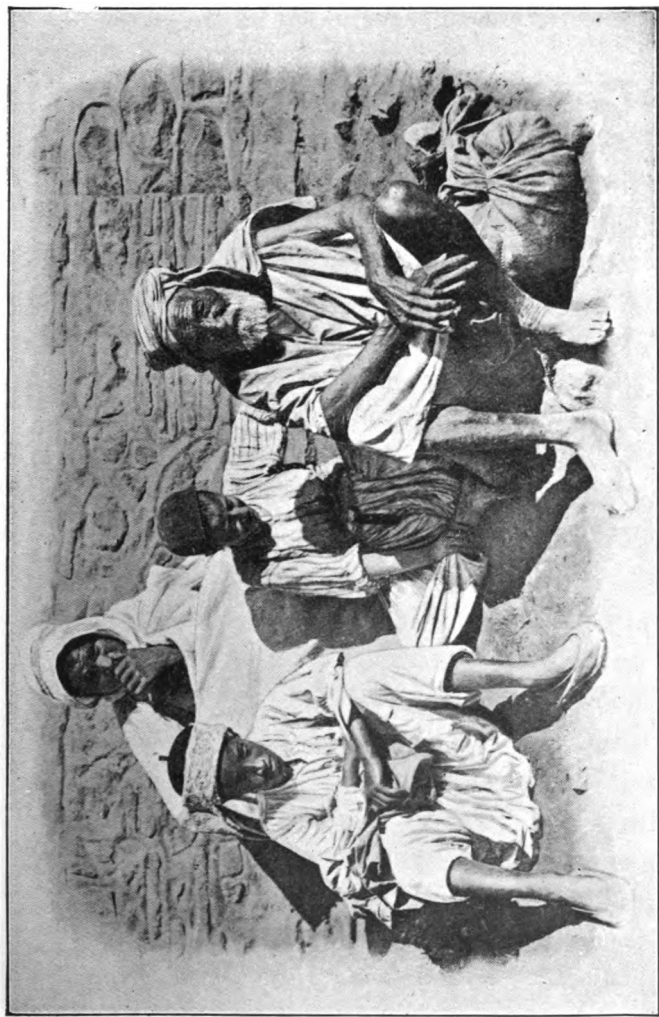
Ash Wednesday was fine, and at 8.40 we started on our way to Constantine, halting a little *en route* for the usual smoke. At 10.45 we caught sight of this town standing on a hill, and, forging our way up its narrow streets, we soon reached the Grand Hôtel de Paris. The road from Batna is excellent, and we were glad to find in this large town a good garage.

In the afternoon we visited the famous gorge at the north end of the town. Personally I would not recommend this excursion, unless you are prepared for a good walk. Last time the Baron was here he and his friend lost their way, and finished up, I believe, by walking through a

railway tunnel. But the Baron, who was evidently not satisfied with this experience, and probably not feeling so tired as myself, insisted on visiting this uninteresting cutting in the rocks. I was bent on taking a guide, much against the Baron's wishes. He considered it as an unnecessary expense. I thought it cheaper to pay a trifle than run the risk of another tunnel experience and possible funeral expenses.

While in Constantine we purchased some pneumatic covers and inner tubes.

The Count fell ill in the evening. Thinking he might be suffering from pneumatic prostration, I went to a shop and bought some peppermints. This evidently had the desired effect, for in the morning the Count was quite ready to leave. At 9.5 we glided down through the narrow streets, until we reached the bottom of the Constantine hill and were once more on the dusty road. Some mules carrying Arabs took fright at our approach, and two Arabs fell off on to their heads. I got out immediately and picked one up, and found it was an Arab girl, stunned by the fall. An old buck Arab came up and got quite nasty, his temper becoming more violent every minute. Finding I could not keep time with his vocabulary, I left this noisy Mahommedan to



The people from whom we glean information as to our route.

bring the damsel to life again, and left a franc as "backshish" to buy medicine with.

Further on we flattened a dog out, and the owner had wired to the police ahead of us. Presently, on reaching a little town, a formidable-looking policeman asked me, in his own language, if we had run over a dog. I answered in English, preferring to battle in my own tongue with representatives of French law. He, not wanting to appear totally ignorant, remarked, in French, in the hearing of some of his friends, what idiots Englishmen were and that they never understand anything. Much to my relief and satisfaction he marched off again, none the wiser. I should like to see his reply to that telegram.

Following a bad and winding road we reach Mr Mercier's Hotel, Hammam Maskoutine, at mid-day. This up-to-date proprietor keeps a motor-omnibus, which is considered the height of civilisation out here—in fact, it is talked about throughout the length and breadth of Algeria. We had just finished lunch when Joseph rushed into the hotel shouting for a gun. He had seen a wild boar amusing itself in the garden. He was informed that this animal was a pet of the house and quite as tame as he was. Not in the least ashamed of his mistake, he ran to me to

take a snapshot of this darling pig, which I did. Its name was Antoinette, and, much to my discomfiture, it followed me about like a dog.

The Baron, whose ailments always suited the place he was staying at—and Hammam Maskoutine being celebrated for its hot sulphur springs—ordered a bath of this evil-smelling liquid to be prepared for him, as he felt he had rheumatism in the top of his arm. People who live in this place spin all sorts of “rotten” yarns about these sulphur cascades. They certainly had a splendid effect on the Baron, as he came out cured *pro tem*.

In the evening our servants and luggage arrived, having taken longer by train than we had done by road, which was nothing new. Mr Mercier seems to have spared no trouble in arranging his pretty garden, full of orange-trees and other vegetation. In Africa, as in the South of France, we found plenty of the flat prickly-leaved cactus plants, which are decidedly uncomfortable to sit down on in the dark. On Friday, the 19th, the Baron having been cured of his rheumatism and the Count having had enough of Antoinette’s delicate attentions, as also those of a Belgian lady staying at the hotel, Joseph fetched us away at 7.55 A.M. We found it

most difficult to obtain correct information about these outlandish parts, and finally struck the little port of La Calle at 11.30, and lunched at the most unappetising place called the Hôtel Nicolet, where we sat jumbled up with the natives and *élite* of that seaport.

We left at 1.15, and, frightening everything we met, arrived at the funny little town of Beja. We heard that the blacksmith here had a small motor car, and would perhaps sell us some petrol. While the Baron and the Count were regaling themselves from the whisky flask, I searched for the famous blacksmith car-owner. He was a fine big man, and condescended to let us have about thirty litres of petrol. Stupidly, I had forgotten to make a bargain with him, and we were forced to pay the exorbitant price this oily gentleman asked or go without it, not being desirous of being towed into the port of Tunis by a horse.

It was 4.30 when we reached Beja and 4.50 when we left, and little did we know what the next odd hundred kilomètres held in store for us, otherwise we should have arranged to have slept somewhere that night instead of pushing on. Darkness fell rapidly, and we had to light our lamps, for we were in a land entirely unknown to us, without a soul to tell us the way. Our strong

acetylene lamps threw out a good light ahead of us, and it was quite astonishing to see the large number of rats, bewildered by the glare, running in every direction. It would have made a fox-terrier's mouth water.

Suddenly Joseph applied the brakes, and we were forced for kilometres and kilometres to proceed at snail's pace, picking our way over most uneven roads. In places there were great holes, which could have broken or overturned the car, and not until 8 P.M. did we reach the gates of Tunis. Here, not knowing our position or how to find the hotel, we took a pilot on board. It was a pretty sight passing through these narrow dimly-lighted Arab streets. People dressed in long white gowns came out of their doors, and heads peered out of the windows at the sound of our horn.

Imagine the Count and the Baron's delight when they caught sight of the Tunisia Palace Hotel, so new and up-to-date. We left the car to Joseph's care, and the Count, feeling too hungry to see about rooms, made a rush for the restaurant. The Baron and I, although almost famished too, chose the rooms, and then joined our hungry friend. It was a picture in itself to see the Baron's eyes sparkle when he saw the good dishes

awaiting us. The good cheer made us forget the long day, and we went to bed feeling quite proud of ourselves.

The following morning I called on our consul-general, and, after lunch, we took a carriage and visited Bardo and the Musée Alaoui, near the Bey of Tunis' palace. In the evening we witnessed a performance of *Carmen* at the Casino Theatre. Next day we accepted the services of a certain Shadali, who proved a very good guide. He took us round the native shops, etc., and in the afternoon we drove to Carthage, and were fortunate enough to enter the Cathedral while the White Fathers were singing. I had rarely heard such beautiful music. I presented a letter from the Bishop of Algiers to Monseigneur, who showed us everything, including the Museum. The ruins do not impress one very much, though they are, of course, very interesting, and it is wonderful what good work the White Fathers have done in the way of excavation and the amount of relics of value which are to-day in their Museum.

On returning to the hotel we found several of our friends who had just arrived, and, having thoroughly visited the mosques, native bazaars, and the city generally, we devoted a little time to a game of bridge.

We had intended to go to Tripoli, but, hearing that the roads had been washed away in parts, and many other difficulties presenting themselves, we were obliged, much to my disappointment, to abandon this idea. After having despatched some boxes of dates to our friends, and purchased our tickets by the Italian Steamship Company, we left on Thursday, the 25th, at 5 P.M., in the steamer *Carridi* for Trapani (Sicily). The boat was very small, and we had a most uncomfortable crossing. The car had to have its wings taken off in order to get it on deck. We learned that this was the *Carridi's* last trip, and that a larger and faster steamer was to replace it. About time!

We arrived off Trapani about four o'clock in the morning, but were not allowed ashore until 7.30. We hastily left the ship, loaded as it was with horses, chickens, fleas, and deck passengers. Our car was swung into a flat barge and taken ashore. We breakfasted at the Grand Hôtel, which faces the harbour, and at 8.25, none of us feeling any the worse for our journey, left for Alcamo, discussing what we should do if we were attacked by brigands. We noticed that nearly everybody outside this town was armed with a gun. This is not very comforting to the highly-strung nerves of some people. I thought

they looked very sporting, and the only difference between them and myself was that I carried a revolver in my pocket, where it could not be seen, while they, on their shoulder, carried a gun which was uncomfortably visible.

Just outside Trapani we came across the first of those quaint Sicilian carts, with their bright colours and curious paintings, which generally represent one or more of the owner's superstitions or some legend. The roads were horribly stony, and all the horses and mules took fright at our approach, and we were continually obliged to slow down and sometimes halt to get past or to let them pass.

At 10.30 we startled the inhabitants of Alcamo as we drove through the town to the Three Stars Inn, where we lunched. It was necessary to lock the Mercédès up in the stable, for the whole town seemed to have turned out to look at it. I believe ours was the first automobile these good people had ever seen. Having satisfied our hunger with large helpings of "maccaroni au gratin" and fennel bulbs, at 12.35 we left this quaint and picturesque little Sicilian town, amid the wildest excitement.

CHAPTER X

THE road now became terrible, but pretty beyond description. As was to be expected, we soon got a puncture on this loose-stoned road. Resuming our journey after the usual delay, we drove cautiously along. On either side of the road are endless lemon-groves, and at one point we noticed, in the distance on a hill, an ancient Greek temple. All the carts we overtook were packed with boxes of lemons going to Palermo, and those we met coming from there with empty ones to be filled. From Palermo they are shipped to all parts of the world. It is indeed a pity that the roads are not better kept in this beautiful country.

We are glad to arrive without further damage at 4.20 in front of the Villa Igiea Hotel, Palermo. The crowds of fashionable people staying there make one feel sorry to come back to such civilisation. The beauty of automobiling, I find, is the

“don't care” kind of life and the utter absence of all social formalities. We spent the next few days visiting Palermo and its environs. On the 27th we visited Monreale, with its famous church. This is a sight which should not be left out of one's programme.

On St David's Day—not that any of us were Welshmen—we visited the Cathedral, an old church, and finished up with the Museum, which is full of interest. We strolled through the pretty botanical gardens, and after dinner witnessed a performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Palermo's beautiful opera-house. There, to my great astonishment, I met friends from near my home in England. One of these kind ladies, who must be very short-sighted, afterwards met one of my sisters, and said she had seen me in Palermo with one of my other sisters. Of course I immediately received a letter from home asking me whom I was “palming off” as one of my sisters. I am since wondering who this presumed sister could have been, seeing that we were “three *men* in a motor car.” I expect that if this discreet lady sees me again, she will say she saw me with my wife and family. How dull the world would be without the female element and gossip!

On Wednesday morning the Baron and I left by the 9.55 train for Girgente, which we reached at 2.30. Nearly one hundred kilomètres in four hours and thirty-five minutes!!! Fortunately there was a ridiculously small luncheon car on the train, filled with loose chairs, which were rather dangerous when going round corners. You are apt to put your fork through your cheek instead of into the place it is meant for. The Count was quite satisfied by looking at photographs of Girgente, so he stayed behind and played bridge with some friends at the Club.

On our arrival we drove to the Hôtel des Temples, which was near the temples, and about half an hour from the station and the town. We then visited these sacred edifices, where we met some of our friends, took snapshots, and returned to the crowded hotel. The proprietor has an automobile and is a member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Just think of it, and he a Sicilian too!

On the morning of the 3rd the Baron and I visited the town of Girgente and its Cathedral. We then ate a Sicilian lunch at the Restaurant de Palerme. The food was excellent and pleased us both, and after having ordered a glass of Sicilian red wine for our "Jehu," who was wait-

ing outside with a cab to take us to the station, we are off again at 12.5 by that slow form of locomotion back to Palermo, where we arrive at 4.30, after a very stuffy journey, most of the time of which I spent reading the *Lightning Conductor*. On arrival we drove straight back to the Villa Igiea, where we found the Count in good health and high spirits. We all dined together and talked over recent events.

It is interesting to go and see the various native amusements in Palermo. There are marionette entertainments and little native Sicilian restaurants, where you eat macaroni in its various forms, native crystallised fruits, and fried octopus. This latter dish is rather like chewing a piece of gum or eating a snail. The next day, after having flattened out another dog, we went to tea at the beautiful Villa Eleonora. We were shown all over that lovely place by its owner, an Italian prince, and particularly admired his fine collection of valuable antiquities. His son returned and dined with us.

On Sunday I lunched with some friends, and was shown their rare museum of stuffed birds, and, after having visited the royal chapel, returned to our hotel to have tea on the terrace, from which you get a beautiful view of the bay

and town of Palermo, with the incoming and outgoing ships.

Deeply to the Count's regret, on Monday, March the 7th, we leave Palermo behind at 8.15, arriving in Cefalu at 10.45. The run was very pretty but the roads not good. We lunched at the Albergo Italia and visited the Cathedral. Much to our astonishment, many of the Sicilians spoke English. It appears that they emigrate largely to America from these parts, and when they have made what they call a fortune, return like wise folk to enjoy it. We left Cefalu at 12.30, and continued along this pretty sea-coast route, reaching Patti at 4.30. It is supposed that the famous singer took her name from this town. I tried to buy some biscuits in a shop there, and, thinking the man did not quite understand my Italian, I remarked aloud to myself: "I wish you understood English." But much to my astonishment he answered in my tongue: "So I do; what do you want?" This gave my "automobilic" nerves such a shock that I nearly did not get my biscuits.

In a few minutes we were off again, and dashing at a high speed along a good piece of road, quite forgetting that on Sicilian roads you are apt to come across great drainage gutters

running right across the track. In fact, you sometimes do not see them until you are in them. The inevitable soon happened, and, with a tremendous bound, we went in and out of one of these awful holes. The shock must have displaced the Count's liver and the Baron's teeth, by the way they chattered about it. Directly we could get the machine pulled up, Joseph and I examined it to see how much damage had been done, and found to our amazement that beyond the fact that the lubricating oil tank had shot a lot of oil about, the machine was none the worse. We felt certain that something must have been smashed by the fearful bomb-like sounds which rose from beneath us as we plunged in and out of that hollow.

At 7.30, with our lamps lighted, we entered Messina, and arrived quite whole and intact at the Hotel Trinacria. We all thought ourselves heroes, and were glad of a good night's rest after our long day.

On March 8 we visited the principal points of interest of this old town, and made all the necessary arrangements at the railway station for sending our machine by rail from Messina to Salerno. We then called at the International

Car Company's Offices and booked sleeping berths between Reggio and Salerno. I think the latter officials must have been glad when we left, for the Count and the Baron asked a hundred and one different questions.

CHAPTER XI

AT 1.25, after lunch, we tried to leave for Taormina, but so great a crowd had gathered round to see us off that it was absolutely impossible to move. The police, however, with great courtesy, cleared a way for us through these good-natured people, whose curiosity was now fully aroused. These dark-eyed Sicilians seem to have nothing to do, as though they had a thousand years to live. We afterwards found that the *dolce far niente*, as this condition of mind is called, characterises the people of Italy in every station of life.

When some distance from Messina we passed a little seaport town, where parts of the road had been entirely washed away. A temporary road had been made through somebody's garden, and with difficulty we made our way through it. Every hundred yards drainage-gutters ran athwart the road, and we were forced to pull up

continually to avoid running over chickens, dogs, and peasants. At one place a mere baby ran out in front of us, sat down in the middle of the road, and howled with all its might. Fortunately Joseph was able to pull up in time, otherwise the child must have been killed. Just then its mother rushed out and picked up her foolish offspring. She then turned to us, and, although we did not understand what she said, we guessed, from her attitude and flashing eyes, that she was not saying anything very nice. Her voice grew shriller as she went on, and when we left her she was literally shrieking.

Further on the roads had been entirely washed away, and we made but little progress through the thick mud. A bridge over a stream, which we were obliged to cross, had been completely demolished by the current. Fortunately, though fairly wide, it was comparatively shallow, and we were forced to wade our way carefully across. The water came above our footboards, and had there been a hole or depression in the river bed we should have been upset, as the current was very strong. The Count and the Baron seemed greatly relieved when we reached the other side, and we all thanked Joseph for the skilful way in which he had piloted us through.

This journey was full of perils, and presently we came to a part of the road which had been flooded by some stream and was now but a stagnant pool, half mud and half water. Being unaware of its depth, we urged our Mercédès forward at the slowest possible speed. But when half-way through the engines stopped; and now came the question as to who was to undress and get out into this tempting mud-bath to start them again. I suggested that, if I held Joseph's heels, he could lie along the front of the machine head foremost and start the handle. My advice was followed, and we were soon out on to the hard road again. We were pleased to note that, despite all these duckings, our machine had not suffered in the least.

We struck better roads as we neared Taormina. This lovely coast route is pretty beyond description, and an old castle, which juts out into the sea, adds to the beauty of the scene. Presently we start to wind up and up and up until we enter the town of Taormina. It was four o'clock as we made our way through its narrow streets towards the old Dominican Convent, now the Hotel Santa Dominica, over 600 feet above the sea level. The view around is simply grandiose. Giardini, which lies right at the foot of the hill, is the

nearest railway station, and must make it very difficult to bring heavy luggage up to the town.

We did not remain in Taormina very long. We visited the places of interest in the neighbourhood, chief among which was Mount Etna, and the Castello di Maniaci, residence of the Duca di Bronte, Lord Bridport. Ours was the first auto to enter its gates, and the first ever seen in those parts. To reach it we passed through the picturesque little town of Randazzo, and I think we fairly startled the inhabitants out of their wits. To our left was Etna, smoking through its snow-capped top. The road is excellent, and later on we passed over a stream of hardened lava.

Near the Castello di Maniaci lives the famous brigand-killer known as Leanza, who, as our host at the Castello told us, has killed many brigands. I am afraid that if he lived in our country he would be had up for manslaughter, but, in Sicily, brigand-shooting is evidently sanctioned by the game laws, and is therefore a legitimate sport.

On our way a very amusing incident occurred. Coming towards us was a Sicilian cart loaded with little casks of wine. We saw that the mule was restive, and so pulled up to let it pass, but, instead of doing so, the obstinate animal swerved to the side of the road, the cart and mule made



A road in Sicily crossing a river.



In the garden, Castello di Maniaci.

two complete somersaults over the embankment, and landed—the former on its wheels and the latter on its feet. Apparently none the worse for the fall, the mule looked up in mild surprise, but the old driver, in trying to save the situation, had got his shins barked. Of course I got out at once to see what damage had been done, and found two of the casks broken and the wine flowing out. I tried to explain matters to the old driver, but he simply poured volumes of very rude language at me. He seemed to have gone quite mad, so rather than be stilettoed, I suddenly found I was in a hurry, and off we went, leaving the man shouting. It was a sight not to be forgotten, as that cart and mule rolled over the embankment, to see the Count and the Baron grabbing each other and everything in their fright and excitement. Joseph covered his eyes with his hands, and I fully believe that they were all inwardly disappointed at not finding the old man a corpse, instead of the swearing old demon he afterwards proved to be.

I was dressing for dinner that night when I was informed that there were two policemen waiting to see the occupants of the red car. Having completed my toilet, I went down to face these two gallant members of the Taormina

police force. I found them in the manager's office with my old cask friend. He seemed greatly flurried and excited, so I asked the manager, who spoke Italian, to tell him to keep cool. Of course he began by saying he was a poor man and other uninteresting things of that kind. He had brought these two policemen with him, I presume, to frighten me, but having been in charge of police myself, I was the wrong person to be overawed. The manager asked the old man how much his vinegary red wine was valued at, and having come to the conclusion that fifty francs would fully repay him for this liquid, I handed him a fifty-lira note. The police seemed as pleased as he was, and no doubt all drank our health that night. We were not, as a matter of fact, forced to pay this good man at all, seeing that his mule was the chief offender.

One afternoon, as Joseph was taking some friends of ours from Taormina to Giardini Station, he and the other occupants of the car had the narrowest escape they had ever had in their lives. The road is cut out of the side of a hill, with gardens overhanging it. This is exceedingly dangerous, as *débris* of all kind might fall from these gardens. As the car went by one of these, some malicious person threw a piece of rock as large as a man's

head at it. It struck the arm of the seat between Joseph and the lady sitting beside him, lightly touching both of them, but not injuring them. Joseph swears he will never drive another car in Sicily or Southern Italy, and declares he would rather be in the fighting ranks of an army. I myself was one day hit in the face by a small stone, and since then I hardly ever wear my goggles, as broken glass in your eye is "no catch." I should have mentioned that the Taormina police did their best to capture the culprit, who, of course, is still at large.

The rest of the time we spent in visiting the old Grecian remains of Taormina and making short excursions on foot, as our Mercédès had left with Joseph for Messina, to be put on a railway truck for Salerno. The reason why we sent the car by rail to Salerno was because we heard that the roads were not any too good, the hotels poor, and that there were no means of replenishing one's supply of petrol unless it is sent on by rail well ahead of you.

CHAPTER XII

IN the afternoon of the 14th we took train at Giardini Station for Messina, where we changed on to the ferry-boat and went into the saloon to dine. These flat-bottomed ferry-boats are fitted to take the train bodily on board, as in the case of the Trans-Siberian over Lake Baikal. We had scarcely finished dinner when we reached Reggio, where an old-fashioned Pullman sleeping-car was waiting to take us to Salerno.

In the early morning I went out on to the platform of the car to see the old temples of Pesto as we passed. On our arrival at Salerno at 8 A.M. we found Joseph at the station waiting for us, and he had had the good sense in the meantime to go to the Royal Hotel, Naples, to fetch our letters. We breakfasted at the Hôtel de l'Angleterre, "did" the town and churches, and, at 10.45, started off for Amalfi.

This run is considered one of the finest in the



En route to Amalfi.



The Baron on the steps of the Hôtel de Cappuccinni.

world, and no doubt when railway conditions in these parts have been improved it will be a close rival to the Riviera. At noon we are picking our way through and round layers of macaroni stretched about along the sides of the road. This is evidently one of the "features" of Amalfi, and to see the dirty but picturesque urchins scrambling about on all-fours among this doughy paste, keeping it turned constantly to the sun, makes you feel inclined to omit that dish from your menu. We come to a halt under the steps of the Grand Hotel di Cappuccinni, near which, as many will remember, was the great landslip, when I believe many lives were lost. This recollection made us feel a little uncomfortable. We lunched in this quaint old monastery, whither hundreds of visitors flock every year to devour the superb scenery.

Those who have not got automobiles drive over from Sorrento in carriages, and it was most necessary to keep a sharp look-out along this tortuous sea route. We met some stupid horses harnessed to a carriage, who seemed to object to our colour, and who manifested a desire to deposit their human luggage into the sea. The occupants were out of that carriage "mighty sharp," and, after a little persuasion, we got by safely. To cheer them up we told them that some of our friends

were following behind us in a veritable thrashing machine, and warned them to be ready to leap again for their lives. Poor things! I felt really sorry for them, for the automobilist *au fond* is not such a dreadful creature as some old-fashioned ladies would like to make out.

After lunch, at 2 P.M., we scrambled down, and the car's nose was turned towards Sorrento. The Baron and the Count made us pull up continually to admire the beautiful scenery, which I did until my eyes nearly ached. To weak-eyed, nervous, or disagreeable people I do not recommend automobiling. For them a quiet inland health resort is preferable. Bath-chairs, as a rule, have not very frisky chauffeurs, and in the different waters reputed to cure any disease going, weak-eyed people can bathe their eyes, and the disagreeable can sit in a chair and munch—dry biscuits.

At 3.30 we are in sight of Sorrento, and those who have visited this charming place know how difficult it is to find your way about its streets with those high walls on each side. We wished we had picked up some native to pilot us through this maze. Anyhow, at 3.45 we are taking our rooms at the Hotel Imperial Tramontano and Tasso, where the Baron had stayed before. In

the evening we watched the talent of Sorrento dance their native "tarantella." If the weather is warm, it is as well to take rooms overlooking the sea and Vesuvius.

Wednesday, the 16th, being a lovely day, we embark on the steamer *Principessa Mafalda* to visit the Isle of Capri. Before landing we put off in tiny little boats, so as to pass through the small entrance to the well-known Grotta Azzurra (Blue Grotto).

If you want to look like a silver-coated sea-nymph and be admired by your friends, just plunge into this icy-cold water and you have it. If you do *not* care to chill your liver, there are professional divers awaiting the unwary traveller, but it is as well to arrange a price with them before they exhibit. These shivering objects of humanity splash about for a few seconds, and are soon out again to receive their fee. We are not sorry to get out of this blue glittering cave with its human glow-worms.

We soon landed at the port of Capri, and hired one of those strange little Capri carriages, which took us up the hill to the town, where we lunched, visited the sights, and admired the scenery. At 4 P.M. we steam for Sorrento, where we arrive about 4.45, and, like a lot of old ladies, are glad to

get a cup of tea to restore our equilibrium after the ship and sea breezes.

Thursday, St Patrick's Day, new moon and a very fine morning. We leave this town of tarantella dancers at eight o'clock, bound for Naples, *via* Amalfi, Salerno, La Cava, and Nocera; and at 11.50 we halted for lunch at the Hôtel Suisse, Pompeii. The reason why we took this round-about but pretty route was owing to the Castellamare road being under repair. It being Thursday and a free day, the interesting sights at Pompeii are not on view, so we make up our minds to visit it another time. At 1.30, taking a pilot with us on the step, we leave for Pugliano, the terminus of Thomas Cook's funicular railway for Vesuvius, where we arrive at 2.20.

As we were nearing Pugliano through the crowded streets of these dirty Neapolitan suburbs, the Count suddenly put his hand to his face and seemed in great pain. A piece of wood had just missed me and struck him in the eye, fortunately only causing temporary pain. I saw it thrown by an urchin, by way of showing his pleasure, we will hope. Further on we just managed to stop a man throwing an empty bottle at us. If it had not been for a good stout carriage whip which Joseph had wisely bought, one of us might now be

under ground. I made a dab with the whip at this swarthy Italian gentleman. He raised his arm to protect his body, and was thus prevented from throwing the bottle, as we dashed past at full speed.

At 3.20 we started for the summit of Vesuvius, and arrived as near the top as one can get at 4 P.M. Here you are worried by men wanting to carry you to the edge of the crater, or lend you a walking-stick, or pull you up with a rope. The Count had one man pulling and another pushing. But, finding the sulphur fumes too much, he quickly departed. The Baron tried to enjoy it, but the smoke tickled the larynx of his throat and made him cough, until it was almost impossible to say whether it was he or Vesuvius that was erupting. We were both glad to leave this unhallowed spot and the unearthly sound of rocks flying about. At 6.15 we were safely at Pugliano and ready to make a bee-line to Naples. It was, in fact, 7 P.M. when we arrived at the Royal Hôtel des Etrangers.

At lunch the next day we saw friends of ours sitting at one table and the Right Hon. and Mrs Joseph Chamberlain at another. I was surprised to see him wearing *pince-nez* instead of the eyeglass he is always depicted with. I am afraid

the Count did not mention this fact when he was talking to him. When visiting the Museum we were lucky enough to get a special permission to look at the famous tapestries secluded there. These are never exposed to the public gaze, owing, I believe, to some misunderstanding between the Government and the donor.

We spent Saturday, the 19th, visiting Pompeii, and when we recalled the vast ruins of Timgad, we were impressed by the smallness of the old Italian city. We understood that every few weeks something new is excavated from this pumice-stone-covered town. Having bought a few bits of rattletrap for those of our friends who collect old stones, and being well fleeced by the wily Neapolitan, we shook this dust of centuries from our weary feet and left the ruins of Arbaces's mansion and Glaucus's palace, feeling tired out. As far as I can see, half one's life seems to be spent in finding some new way of tiring yourself. Looking like dusty pilgrims, we are glad to get back again to our comfortable hotel.

Sunday, the 20th, being the fifth in Lent, we leave at 11.45 in the car for Baia, arriving about one o'clock for lunch at the Vittoria Restaurant, which I do not recommend to epicures. After this "fodder" we went on to Pozzuoli, where we

inspected the Roman amphitheatre, still in fair preservation. The female guide who took us round insisted on nearly every archway being a place where "wildie beasties" were kept. A little way off we visited the old temple, which is not very exciting. On our way a "rough" threw a stone at us. Joseph immediately stopped, reversed the machine, and we gave chase to the culprit. I jumped out and followed him up a little street, where I ran him to earth. I had just finished kicking that part of his anatomy on which he sits, and severely whacking him, when I was surrounded by an angry mob of henpecks, who tore him from me, and I feel certain that I only just escaped being knifed by this angry crowd. This incident nearly made the Baron and Count give up automobiling, as this was the third time we had been attacked in Southern Italy.

The peasants here seem to object to having their dogs, chickens, or children killed or maimed, which to us automobilists appears so curious and unreasonable of them.

Monday we spent in looking up old friends and visiting the San Martino Museum, and lunched at the Gambrinus Restaurant, which is quite near the King's palace.

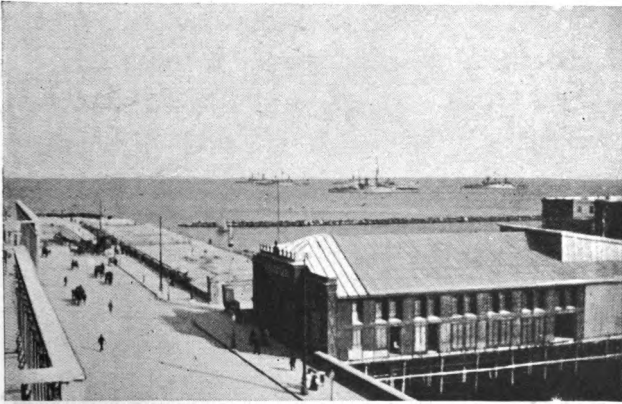
Tuesday, the Italian fleet came in and

anchored just in front of our bedroom windows, which made quite an interesting picture. In the evening we went to the Opera, the Baron having a craze for the theatrical art. Thursday, the 24th, early in the morning, you would have thought that the town was being bombarded, but it was only the German Emperor arriving in a chartered steamer and being saluted by the Italian warships as His Imperial Majesty stepped on board the Royal yacht *Hohenzollern* awaiting him in the harbour.

This being one of the days when you can visit the King of Italy's palace, we did so, and at 1.20, after our lunch, we bade farewell to Naples. We were quite content, for does not the old adage say, "See Naples and die"? We thought ourselves lucky in getting there, much more in getting out of it, without being killed.



Some fine columns at Timgad (*see page 78*).



Arrival of the German Emperor at Naples.

CHAPTER XIII

JUST as we reached Aversa, at 2.10, the tyre under the Baron again exploded. We gave him our blessing, repaired it, and, half an hour later, were off again bound for Terracina, arriving there at six o'clock, at the Hotel Reale et de la Poste. We could hardly believe that we were destined to take our slumbers there. Then came the visitation of the bedrooms, which, instead of being numbered, were indicated by a name—for instance, I slept in "London," the Count in "Vienna," the Baron in "Paris," and the chauffeur in "Genoa." The shutters and windows of these chambers had probably not been opened for the last six months, by all appearances. As was to be expected, the Count and the Baron naturally felt ill, and had suddenly developed "spasmodic rheumatism" and some other unheard-of ailment. To make the scene at this seaside health resort

prettier, a drizzly rain was falling when we arrived and when we left.

Just as we were dining an excessively noisy and smelly automobile arrived, and we wondered in what "town" its occupants would find rest.

The fact of the dining-room being upstairs necessitated my descending to find out what kind of car the newcomers possessed and have a look at this peace-disturber, in order to never make a mistake and buy one like it; for, judging from the noise it made, it might have been a traction engine let loose. Little did I think, however, that the chauffeur of that thrasher was going to give me some valuable information.

He showed me quite a novel use of old tyre covers, which consists in applying them over the new ones. He also showed Joseph and me the way to put them on. You simply stretch them over the new ones and do not have to fasten them on in any way, as they grip so tightly when the latter are blown up. It requires a little persuasion to get them over, and they do not look very pretty. But, apart from the question of appearances, the saving is enormous, and it is a great protection against punctures on these terrible roads. We found it was necessary to go carefully round corners, as the great pressure on

the outer tyre is likely to move it a little and make the car skid. This idea was the means of saving us a lot of money, and is now followed on stony roads by many chauffeurs who study their masters' pockets.

Friday, at 9.10, with joyful hearts at the prospect of leaving this "mansion," we pass through the beautiful town of Albano and enter the Roman Campania. Leaving Frascati to our right, we soon came in sight of the "Eternal City" and St Peter's dome, and at 11.45 we reached the Grand Hotel, where many of our friends were staying.

Fortunately we had ordered our rooms well in advance, as nearly every available space in Rome seemed to have been taken up for Holy Week. It was somewhat annoying to find that our servants had to sleep about ten minutes' walk from the hotel. On Saturday morning I called at 22 Via Degli Artisti to visit the Pères Blancs, one of whom, an Englishman, kindly offered to show me all over Rome and do all he could to make my visit interesting and agreeable, which he did perfectly, knowing what churches and buildings were of interest and the best times to visit them. I will not attempt to explain the sights of the city—they are familiar to all and too

numerous ; and such would be information which every guide-book contains.

Monday was a great event in my life. I was to have an audience of Pope Pius X. Great preparations had to be made, such as buying rosaries and *médailleurs*, to get them blessed by His Holiness. Then to hire a private carriage, as cabs are not allowed within the Vatican walls. At three o'clock the *cortège*, consisting of the Baron, the Count, and myself, sets off, picking up on the way my friend the "Père Blanc," dressed in his white robes, who was to interpret and present us to His Holiness. Dressed in our evening clothes, which are *de rigueur* on such occasions, we climbed the Vatican steps, which fairly "pumped" the Count, and were escorted by the Pontifical Guards through the sentries of the fine Swiss Guards, until we were at last deposited in a large square red room, where several cardinals strolled about in their purple robes looking mighty important.

Down we go on our knees as the Pope comes in. He gave me his finger, on which he wore the apostolic ring, to kiss. After this we exchanged a few words, and I received (for my part) a special blessing, for the help I may have given to some of the Roman Catholic missionaries

during my sojourn in tropical Africa. And myself not a Roman Catholic too! The Baron and the Count took this ceremony and themselves very seriously, and we actually drove straight from the Vatican to visit a new church. Here the Count's circulation gave out; he vanished from the sacred edifice, and bottled himself up in our stuffy old landau. We soon joined him and returned to the hotel, leaving our White Father at his residence *en route*.

On Tuesday, after lunching with a friend of mine at our Embassy, a little party of us drove over in the automobile to Tivoli, and, on the way, visited the Villa Adriana, an old Roman residence now in ruins. At Tivoli we got a beautiful view of the Cascades and the surrounding country, and, after a cup of tea at the Hotel Sirena (near the falls), returned to Rome. That evening I dined with the Pères Blancs, and passed a charming *soirée* in their delightful society. To finish the month of March well, the Baron and I went to see the ceremony of the washing of the altar at St Peter's and the showing of the holy relics; and my legs still ache when I think of these hours passed on my flat feet.

We celebrated the 1st of April by fooling

each other, and in the evening of the 2nd the Colosseum was illuminated—a really fine *coup d'œil*. Tuesday, the 5th, we visited the Palatine Hill, in company of my “White Father,” and lunched together, after which I actually went up the dome of St Peter’s, right into the bronze ball at the top of it.

Automobilists visiting Rome for the first time will be surprised to see the extraordinary number of churches. One would think this was the most holy city in the world, whereas it probably ranks with some of the most wicked; and the poverty, like in other great centres, is deplorable. The Count took but little interest in anything, but the Baron was “all there” and in his glory. The former had a decided advantage over us in knowing Italian almost perfectly. Our spare time in Rome was taken up in “exploring,” tea-drinking with friends, and making short trips in the neighbourhood.

Our “Roman fever” having decreased a little within us, we left Italy’s capital on Wednesday, April 6th, at 9.45 A.M., for Orvieto, a friend of ours accompanying us in her Mercédès as far as Viterbo. *En route* we visited the old mediæval castle of Bracciano, and toured round the lake of the same name. The scenery was superb, and

it was a treat to be in the country and away from Roman ruins, which make you feel as old as Methuselah.

I was in our friend's car, and the Baron and the Count, who were following us, lost the route and did not arrive at the Grand Hotel d'Ori until nearly 2.30 P.M. They were both furious and hungry, and I tried to console them by telling them that if, instead of asking so many ridiculous questions from friends before starting as to the route, they would condescend to question a raw native of the district, they might arrive in time for lunch at places and not keep their anxious friends waiting.

We paid a rapid visit to the little picture gallery in the town, bade adieu to our friends, who returned to Rome, and sped on our way to Orvieto, celebrated for its sweet white wine and its Cathedral. We arrived at the Hotel Aquilla Bianca at five o'clock. This hotel is kept by the mother of the proprietor of the Royal Hotel, Naples, so we felt bound to go there.

CHAPTER XIV

WE visited this antiquated wine city with its narrow streets and Cathedral (of which the outside is the best part), and hard by, the Museum, which you are graciously allowed to visit in exchange for a lira. There is a railway at the bottom of the hill, and a lift from the station up to the town, for Orvieto is built on a mass of high rocks, no doubt absolutely impregnable in the days of yore, and, for that matter, almost as impregnable to-day from auto attacks. But our own, being a good climber, fought its way in by the unguarded gate.

Thursday was a beautiful morning, and at nine o'clock we leave our quaint abode, looking back again and again for several miles, until Orvieto is lost to sight in the opposite mountains. Wending our way cautiously through these mountains, we reach the Hotel Subasio, Assisi, at mid-day for

lunch. Here the Baron insisted on us visiting the old Franciscan monastery, but the Count refused to visit anything else on foot and hired a carriage. The Baron and I visited the Temple of Minerva and two churches, one of which seems to have been raised in memory of the celebrated Franciscan saint. Very soon, feeling hot and tired, we left for Perugia at 3.30.

At about three miles from Perugia we visited the ancient Etruscan burial-ground. Some of the tombs are most interesting, especially that of Volumni, dating back to the third century B.C. The entrance to this place is on the right-hand side of the road, immediately after crossing the railway.

We were glad, however, when we caught sight of the Grand Hotel Brufiani, Perugia. Here we enjoyed a real English meal, consisting of buttered toast, a very little plum cake, and English-tasting tea. This hotel is kept by English people, and naturally every comfort one requires is there. The Baron had stayed here before, years ago, and the proprietor immediately recognised him, so we went up five per cent. in their estimation at once. This picturesque old town is more than full of interest for "searchers" like the Baron and other admirers of the antique. We spend Friday,

the 8th, visiting churches, museums, hotels, picture galleries, restaurants, etc.

At the hotel we met two English ladies, friends of ours, who were also touring about, so that we were able to exchange views and post-cards.

Saturday morning was ideal, and at eight o'clock precisely we left, with regret, old Perugia. A crowd of people had gathered on the terrace of the public gardens to see us off, no doubt hoping to see a smash, but they were disappointed. We reached Cortona at 9.30, hastily visited the little Museum there, and at ten o'clock were scorching along towards Arezzo, passing pretty Lake Trasamino, and arrived at 10.45 for lunch at the Albergo e Restoratore d'Inghilterra. Here we visited some interesting old churches, and left at 1.30 for Siena, halting on the way at Monte San Savino, to see a fine Dei Della Robbia in the church. During this visit we were followed by half of the population, and the Count, having soon seen enough, returned to the car, while the Baron insisted upon my going with him to visit a Loggia, by San Gallo, and some other things, no doubt very interesting, but which we never found.

At four o'clock we arrived before the Grand Hôtel Continental, Siena. Having chosen our

rooms, we set out at once to visit the Cathedral, which is "just too beautiful" for me to explain, with its pictures, pulpit, and a hundred and one other things. After dinner we watched a long torchlight procession organised by students from Rome. Sunday, the 10th, as my diary says, was Low Sunday, most appropriate, as the clouds were low and rain was falling. This did not stop the Baron from hauling me round the town to visit churches and other objects which interested him.

The Count did not feel well, so stayed at the hotel. We witnessed the great procession of carrying St Catherine's skull round the town in a glass case. This ghastly and grinning relic was a hideous sight. The different groups of the procession were wearing costumes of every period, conspicuous among which were the Brothers of Pity in their hoods.

In the evening, one of the Rothschilds (a friend of the Baron) arrived in his Mercédès, and we chatted over many experiences and the qualities of our machines, which were sisters, but not twins, one being a little more powerful than the other. In this town is a fine column of "Romulus and the Wolf," of which, we will hope, everyone knows the story.

Monday, at 10.45, we left this "artist's paradise" for San Gimignano, *via* Collé, where we arrived, at the Hôtel du Lion Blanc, at twelve o'clock. Here, as we were having lunch, some policemen came in chattering like chimpanzees and followed by an infuriated coachman. The point in dispute seemed to be that cabby was forced, by some secret compact, to drive all the travellers he picked up to some special hotel. This time, however, he had picked up the wrong cargo, for they insisted upon being deposited at this one, and refused to go any further either. The police informed them that they could get off where they liked, which they did, and I don't blame them. Life is too short to be compelled to eat where your coachman wants you to.

After visiting this old town, with its thirteen existing towers, we left at 2.30 for Florence, where we arrived at the Hôtel de la Ville at 4.15. We were not exactly pleased to find that the garage was far away. The hotel people seemed to have gone right off their heads, for they were expecting a crowd of automobilists on their way from Turin to Rome, to present their compliments to Loubet, and rooms were scarce. The next day, Tuesday, the 12th, we left at 10.45 for Prato, where we visited the Cathedral, and then pushed on to

Pistoja, where we visited another of these sacred edifices.

We arrived at Pistoja at 12.30, and lunched (chiefly on macaroni) at the Restaurant Rossini. After this repast we visited the town, where, it is said, pistols were invented, and which about B.C. 60 was the scene of the fiercest struggle between Guelphs and Ghibelins. Having seen the Cathedral, looked at the terra-cotta bas-reliefs by Andrea, a silver altar, and other interesting objects, we visited the Ospedale del Cappelletto, the outside of which has a long frieze of reliefs in terra-cotta, by Giovanni Girolamo and Luca della Robbia. At 3.45, after a casual glance at the town generally, we left for Florence, *via* Monte Cattini. The latter place might be called "the Harrogate of Italy." We got back at 7.30 to the hotel and dined at the Florence Club. Early on Wednesday morning I awoke feeling exceedingly uncomfortable inwardly. The Count and the Baron, as soon as they knew it, sent for a doctor who had attended them years ago. I waited for this physician until about mid-day, when I was informed that he had left Florence ten years since. I promptly sent out for one whom I knew, but, unfortunately, he had left for Ceylon, so I was left to the mercy of the waiter to find me one, as

the Baron and the Count had, at my own wish, left me to die in peace and had gone out on an excursion. The third practitioner arrived, and declared that I had been poisoned by fish or veal, both of which dishes, he assured me, were dangerous in Italy.

The next day, however, I was on the road to recovery, and about again visiting friends, the Cathedral and the Castello di Vincigliata, which belongs to an Anglo-Saxon family. This castle has been fitted up in mediæval style, and overlooks most beautiful country. We enjoyed our little automobile trip round there and to Fisioli very much.

On Saturday, April 16th, I took a guide and visited most of the sights of Florence, and on Monday, the 18th, bade a sad farewell to our host the Count, who remained here with the car.

We had enjoyed our tour immensely, and I think tears were in our eyes as we waved our hands to the Count standing on the hotel steps watching us drive off in a shaky omnibus. Then just think of us having to creep into a smelly train! We stayed a few hours at Pisa, and naturally went up the famous Leaning Tower. We then joined the sleeping-car, after an excellent dinner at the

Minerva Hotel, near the station. In the train we found friends bound, like ourselves, for Paris.

About 8.30 on Tuesday morning I was roused by the car conductor, who told me that we were at Modane Station, and that I must dress at once, as there had been a landslip at Praz, a few miles down the line. We were thankful, however, that we had not been blocked up in the Mont Cenis tunnel. At 2.30, after having been well fooled about by the railway authorities in this cold mountainous place, we proceeded, on a single line, until we were past the scene of the disaster, and did not arrive in Paris until 12.30 midnight, having been away exactly three calendar months.

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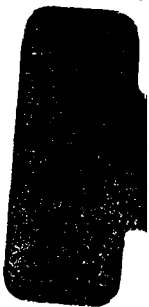
Looking back at our tour and considering the great distance we had covered without accident or mishap, beyond a few punctures, which we seemed to associate with the Baron's "delicate" frame, I think we "three men in a motor car" are among the luckiest who ever lived. We cannot praise too highly our chauffeur Joseph and the machine.

We are now making our plans for a tour through Brittany. The Baron has purchased a new pair of enormous goggles, quite a patent of

his own, and which should prove quite a success if size has anything to do with it.

There is one thing I am afraid the Baron will never forgive me, and that is for waking him up to that "awful sight" in the smoking-room of the *General Chanzy*.

"Vive l'Automobile!"



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