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LETTERS OF EDWARD LEAR

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*Edward Lear & Chichester Fortescue.  
From a Daguerreotype taken at Red House, Ardee, Sept. 1841.*

LETTERS  
OF  
EDWARD LEAR

AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK OF NONSENSE"

TO  
CHICHESTER FORTESCUE  
LORD CARLINGFORD  
AND  
FRANCES COUNTESS WALDEGRAVE

EDITED BY  
LADY STRACHEY

OF  
SUTTON COURT

ILLUSTRATED

LONDON : T. FISHER UNWIN  
ADELPHI TERRACE

1909

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*Third Edition, September, 1908*  
*Fourth Edition, January, 1909*

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TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls  
Of water, sheets of summer glass,  
The long divine Peneïan pass,  
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,  
With such a pencil, such a pen,  
You shadow forth to distant men,  
I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page,  
And track'd you still on classic ground,  
I grew in gladness till I found  
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd  
And glisten'd—here and there alone  
The broad-limb'd gods at random thrown  
By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom  
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell  
The silver lily heaved and fell ;  
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea  
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,  
To him who sat upon the rocks,  
And fluted to the morning sea.

TENNYSON.





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*To Lord Tennyson my special thanks are due for his kind permission in allowing to be included in this book photographs of two of the pictures from "Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson illustrated by Edward Lear." This work was brought out in 1889, after Lear's death, by Boussod, Valedon & Co. The edition was limited to a hundred copies, and each copy was signed by the poet. For the sake of his old friend and to partly fulfil one of the most cherished objects of Lear's later life, which, alas! he never was able himself to carry out, this book was published, containing twenty-two out of the many pictures drawn and specially put aside for this purpose by Lear. I am also fortunate in being able to include such a poem as "To E. L., on his Travels in Greece," written by the poet after Lear's earlier visit to that country. Most readers know the poem, but many do not know to whom it was addressed. To these will come the surprise and to all the pleasure, of finding these verses used as it were in a dedicatory sense, both to the words of the man they praise and to the account he gives of a journey over the same ground they commemorate.*

C. S.

## INTRODUCTION

“True humour is sensibility in the most catholic and deepest sense ; but it is the sport of sensibility ; wholesome and perfect therefore ; as it were, the playful, teasing fondness of a mother to her child.”—CARLYLE.

IT is said that humour is allied to sadness, and that it is this quality which defines it from its kindred talent, wit. The writer of the following letters was a master of the former art, as well as a painter of beautiful and original pictures.

The English and American public of the present day, only know Edward Lear through his “Books of Nonsense.” To only a cultivated few and the survivors of a past generation who possess many of his works, are his pictures existent. But practically to none is known the depth of character and personality of the man who wrote these rhymes and painted these pictures. How few have realised the vein of sadness and other



## Letters of Edward Lear

qualities, which went to make Lear's humour of the highest order and his pictures of special interest. Therefore it has seemed to me that these letters to one of his most intimate and life-long friends, would be acceptable to the many whose childhood was associated and made glad by his inimitable fun and frolic, and that these should be given some idea of his real life-work—his paintings, to which he dedicated every energy of his being. Besides, the total want of knowledge by them of the man himself, has led I believe to a growing and rising interest in his doings and sayings, his aims and ambitions, as distinct from the mere writer of the immortal nonsense verses. Those who in their childhood loved him for the joyousness he gave them, now in their more mature days would be interested to know what kind of man was the writer of "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò," "The Owl and the Pussy Cat," and the verses and rhymes he brought to such perfection. These letters to my uncle and aunt, Lord Carlingford and his wife Frances Countess Waldegrave, show the man in every possible vein of humour, both grave and gay, and also show forth a most lovable personality.



## Introduction

I, who knew him from my earliest years, remember how he attracted me at all periods of my life. From the time when he drew for me an alphabet when I scarce can remember his so doing, when he sang with little voice but with intense feeling and individuality, songs by Tennyson his friend, which he had himself put to charming music; to the time when he sent me an exquisite framed water-colour drawing—a delicious harmony in blue of the “Vale of Tempe”—as a wedding gift. And later still when we spent a few weeks near him in his San Remo villa home in 1880, though much aged and broken by worries and health, still the same sad whimsical personality and undefinable charm of the man attracted as ever, and one day to us was literally shown forth, in his singing of an air to which he had set the “Owl and the Pussy Cat.” But of this rendering, alas! there is no record, as not knowing music though a musician by ear, he had been unable to transcribe it to paper, and grudged the £5 he said it would cost to employ another to do so. And again the last time I saw him, as we passed the San Remo railway station on our way north from Genoa to England. It was a Sunday, and he

## Letters of Edward Lear

happened to be walking dreamily away from the station as our train slowed into it, but out of earshot of our calls. The sad, bent, loosely-clad figure with hands clasped behind him, we did not know was walking away from us then and for ever, for we never saw him again.

The following letters date only from 1847, therefore a few pages of what is known of Lear's history and kindred before this period, will not come amiss in this introduction. There is a singular dearth of information on these points, considering the size of the family to which Lear belonged. Of its representatives now I have only heard of one member in England, and that one was, I believe, a colonial born, and a sister's great-grandson.

Edward Lear, the youngest of twenty-one children, belonged to a Danish family naturalized a generation or so back in England, and was born at Highgate on May 12, 1812.

His family had some connection, I believe, with Liverpool, and this fact seems to be borne out by Mr. Holman Hunt having, in consequence, presented a portrait drawing of Lear by himself to that city some few years ago. Lear's mother must have died very

## Introduction

early in his life, for he always spoke and in his letters writes, of his eldest sister Ann as having brought him up and of being as a mother to him. She must have been a woman of a good deal of force of character; for when domestic adversity and money difficulties came upon the family, it was through her small income and by her care, that Lear was educated and brought up.

He, at the age of fifteen, began to earn a living by painting. As a dreamy child, as he must have been, he pored over books of natural history and dabbled with paints. Thus he was led to "drawing small coloured pictures of birds, and of colouring prints and screens and fans for general use." As time went on he advanced in his art, and his remuneration and improvement increased in due proportion. This again led to his being employed at nineteen, through the good offices of a Mrs. Wentworth, at the Zoological Gardens as a draughtsman. The following year, 1832, he published his "Family of the Psittacidæ," a most interesting work, "one of the earliest collections of coloured ornithological drawings on a large scale made in England," "as far as I know," as he himself adds, with his usual devotion to accuracy and truth.

## Letters of Edward Lear

These carefully and exquisitely drawn pictures of parrots with their brilliant colourings, naturally arrested the attention of such men as Professors Bell and Swainston, Sir William Jardine, Mr. Gould and Mr. Gray of the British Museum, who recognised the merit of his work and his fidelity to detail. He further illustrated G. A. Gould's book on "Indian Pheasants" about this time, and did other work for the same author and others of those just mentioned. At this period came the great opportunity of his life, and to a small circumstance was he indebted for the lifelong friendship and help, of the first and greatest of the many important patrons for whom he worked during his life. At this time Lord Derby, who had brought together an interesting collection of rare animals and birds at Knowsley, was contemplating the illustrating and printing of a magnificent work, which he eventually privately printed in 1856, and which has now become the rare and valuable volume known as the "Knowsley Menagerie." He, one day, I believe, went to the Zoological Gardens, where he was so much struck by the work of a young man whom he observed drawing there, that he immediately made inquiries



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about him, and engaged him on the spot to execute the bird portion of the illustrations for his book. This was Lear. From this happy moment, for four years Lear continued not only to do work for his patron, but, as he observes in a small memorandum to Fortescue, in a letter many years later than those published in the present volume, during those years and many after, he met and mixed with half the fine people of the day.

Here I transcribe the fragment intact :—

C.s. writing of Lord Carlisle's journal reminds me of a curious discovery I have made lately in looking over old things of my dear sister Ann's. I remember telling C F. that for 12 or 13 years when at Knowsley, I kept a journal about everything and everybody, but one day in 1840, I burnt the whole. It has all turned up again, for I copied out all, or nearly all, in letters to my sister, and she preserved all those, and here they are!

During those years I saw half the fine people of the day, and my notes about some are queer enough. One for instance about Lord W. "The Earl of W.<sup>1</sup> has been here for some days: he is Lord W.'s 2<sup>d</sup> son, and married Lady Mary S. He is extremely

\* The second Earl of Wilton, second son of the first Marquess of Westminster

## Letters of Edward Lear

picturesque if not handsome, and dresses in crimson and a black velvet waistcoat when he looks like a portrait of Vandyke. Miss —— says and so does Mrs. —— that he is a very bad man, tho he looks so nicely. But what I like about him, is that he always asks me to drink a glass of champagne with him at dinner. I wonder why he does. But I don't much care as I like the champagne." And some days later I wrote, "I have asked why on Earth she thinks the Earl of W. always asks me to drink champagne, and she began to laugh, and said, because he knows you are a clever artist and he sees you always look at him and admire him: and he is a very vain man, and this pleases him, and so he asks you to take wine as a reward." Ha! Ha! Ha!

Note in 1871.

Still in our ashes  
etc. etc.

In 1846 Lear gave drawing lessons to the late Queen Victoria. Two stories he himself told of that time will be of interest. Lear had a habit of standing on the hearthrug. When at Windsor he was in the room with the Queen, and as was his wont, he had somehow managed to migrate to his favourite place. He observed that whenever he took up this position, the Lord-in-Waiting or Private Secretary who was in attendance kept luring him away, either under pretext of looking at a

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picture or some object of interest. After each interlude he made again for the hearthrug, and the same thing was repeated. It was only afterwards that he discovered that to stand where he had done was not etiquette.

On another occasion the Queen, with great kindness, was showing him some of the priceless treasures in cabinets either at Windsor Castle or Buckingham Palace I do not know which, and explaining their history to him. Mr. Lear, entirely carried away by the wonderful beauty and interest of what he saw, became totally oblivious of all other facts, and in the excitement and forgetfulness of the moment exclaimed, "Oh! how *did* you get all these beautiful things?" Her Majesty's answer, as Mr. Lear said, was an excellent one, so kind, yet so terse and full of the dignity of a Queen: "I inherited them, Mr. Lear."

In a delightful article by Mr. Wilfrid Ward several years ago in the *New Review* called "Talks with Tennyson," I have ventured to recall a story given *apropos* of Edward Lear:—

"On one occasion Tennyson's friend, Edward Lear, was staying in a Sicilian town, painting. He left the town for some weeks and locked up his

## Letters of Edward Lear

pictures and other things in a room, leaving the key with the hotel keeper. A revolution had just broken out when he returned, and he found the waiters full of *Chianti* and of patriotic fervour. He ventured to ask one of them for the *chiave* of his *camera* that he might find his *roba*. The waiter refused entirely to be led down from his dreams of a golden age and of the reign of freedom to such details of daily life. "*O che chiave!*" he exclaimed. "*O che roba! O che camera! Non c'è più chiave! Non c'è più roba! Non c'è più camera! Non c'è più niente. Tutto è amore e libertà. O che bella rivoluzione!*"<sup>1</sup> Constant little local revolutions took place at this time in Italy, and the inhabitants drank an extremely large quantity of *Chianti* and talked enthusiastically of *libertà* and *la patria* for a couple of days; and then things settled down into their former groove."

The acquaintanceship of Lear and Fortescue began in 1845, when Lear was thirty-three and Fortescue twenty-two. After leaving Oxford, the latter took an extended tour in Europe and Greece, before starting on a parliamentary career. Fortescue, with his friend Simeon, left England on February 1, 1845, for Italy, where they remained over six months. In the middle

<sup>1</sup> "Oh! what key? Oh! what property? Oh! what room? There is no more a key! There is no more property! There is no more a room! There is no more anything! All is love and liberty. Oh what a beautiful revolution!"



## Introduction

of March they reached Rome, where they stayed for over eleven weeks. In Fortescue's diary, very fully kept during this journey, we find the entries of his first meeting Lear, and of how rapidly the friendship which lasted till Lear's death, ripened between the two. A few extracts from my uncle's diary may be interesting to those reading the following letters :

*Thurs., April 15, 1845.*—Went with Conybeare to Lear's, where we stayed some time looking over drawings. I like what I have seen of him very much.

*Sat. 26th.*—Saw Lear.

*Sun. 27th.*—After church took a walk with Lear until nearly dinner-time.

*Thurs., May 1st.*—Simeon went with Scotts and General Ramsay to Tivoli. . . . I declined. Walked with Lear to the Ponte Salaro sketching. . . . I like very much what I have seen of Lear ; he is a good, clever, agreeable man—very friendly and *getonable* with. . . . Spent the evening in Lear's rooms looking over drawings, &c.

*Friday, May 2nd.*—Simeon and I started for Veii in a fiacre and overtook Lear. We drove on to near Isola Farnese, and then got out and sketched. . . . Then walked down the valley to the S. of Isola to the Arco di Pino. . . . The day which had been lovely had gradually clouded over, and we had not left the

## Letters of Edward Lear

Arco di Pino many minutes, before we were caught in a thunderstorm which lasted an hour or more. Lear and I ran to the Osteria at Isola. Simeon stayed behind under a rock. After eating our dinner and waiting some time we grew uneasy about Simeon, and set out in the rain to look for him. We found the little "Fosso" which we had stepped across an hour before so swollen, that we did not like to cross it, and Simeon, who had been delayed by the same cause, had to wade. . . .

*Sun.*—Went to Lear's in the evening. . . .

*Thursday.*—Started at 5 o'clock with Lear, Simeon, and a Mr. Chester to Tivoli per carriage. After breakfast started thence for Palestrina on foot, Simeon riding.

Explaining the places and views they passed, including "a villa built by some 'lotus eating' Cardinal who loved retirement, and dying under a hill on whose top stood a temple of the Bona Dea," they halted for Lear to see some fine aqueducts, which he admired.

Lear wanted to sketch them, and very grand they are—most striking in themselves and in the solitude of the glens which they cross. . . .

Still drawing and walking, they came to and were "entertained at his house, by a

## Introduction

friend of Lear's at Gallicano," and returned to Rome after a two days' expedition, too late to see the "Vatican by torchlight with 'Two-penny's' party."

Fortescue adds :

These were two very enjoyable days. Lear a delightful companion, full of *nonsense*, puns, riddles, everything in the shape of fun, and *brimming* with intense appreciation of nature as well as history. I don't know when I have met any one to whom I took so great a liking.

*Sat.*—Lear, Simeon, and myself drove to Veii. Sketched—walked . . . then Lear and I walked home some twelve miles. This was a delightful day.

*Sunday.*—Called with Lear to ask Bentinck to join our party to Soracte to-morrow. Lear found he could not go to-morrow, so that project was knocked on the head. I was disappointed and strolled alone . . . in rather a disgusted and gloomy state of mind. . . . Went to Lear's in the evening.

*Thurs.*—Lear dined with us and gave us a drawing lesson.

*Friday.*—Felt done, relaxed—in *abeyance*, as Lear says. . . . Dined with Lear. . . . I shall be very sorry to part with Lear.

*Sunday.*—Lear breakfasted with us. . . . Lear came to say goodbye just before our dinner—he has gone by diligence to Civita Vecchia. I have

## Letters of Edward Lear

enjoyed his society immensely, and am very sorry he is gone. We seemed to suit each other capitally, and became friends in no time. Among other qualifications, he is one of those men of real feeling it is so delightful to meet in this cold-hearted world. Simeon and myself both miss him much."

In 1844-45 he seems to have been much in England, and that probably is the reason why, no letters appear to exist during those years from him to Fortescue. With a friendship such as theirs had become they probably saw one another often, but still if Fortescue went to Greece in 1846-47, there must have been some communication between them, which has, unfortunately, doubtless been lost.

By the courtesy of Messrs. Warne & Co. permission has been given, for the inclusion in this introduction of a most interesting and condensed letter by Lear, of facts of his own life up to 1862, printed "by way of preface" to one of their admirable series of his "Nonsense Books." Through the numerous editions which have been published by them, many of the present generation have had the felicity of enjoying as their parents did before them these books, by the man of whom Ruskin said in his list of the best hundred authors, "I



## Introduction

really don't know of any author to whom I am half so grateful for my idle self as Edward Lear. I shall put him first of my hundred authors."

To all those who are not acquainted with this series, and to the mothers of the young children of to-day, I recommend these books for the cultivation in their children of blameless humour. Thus ever, a larger number of people may come to know the lovable man and fine artist, whose character is revealed in these letters.

MY DEAR F.—I want to send you, before leaving England, a note or two as to the various publications I have uttered,—bad and good, and of all sorts,—also their dates, that so you might be able to screw them into a beautiful memoir of me in case I leave my bones at Palmyra or elsewhere. Leastwise, if a man does anything all through life with a deal of bother, and likewise of some benefit to others, the details of such bother and benefit may as well be known accurately as the contrary.

Born in 1812 (12th May), I began to draw, for bread and cheese, about 1827, but only did uncommon queer shop-sketches—selling them for prices varying from ninepence to four shillings: colouring prints, screens, fans; awhile making morbid disease drawings, for hospitals and certain doctors of physic. In

## Letters of Edward Lear

1831, through Mrs. Wentworth, I became employed at the Zoological Society, and, in 1832, published "The Family of the Psittacidæ," the first complete volume of coloured drawings of birds on so large a scale published in England, as far as I know—unless Audubon's were previously engraved. J. Gould's "Indian Pheasants" were commenced at the same time, and after a little while he employed me to draw many of his birds of Europe, while I assisted Mrs. Gould in all her drawings of foregrounds, as may be seen in a moment by any one who will glance at my drawings in G.'s European birds and the Toucans. From 1832 to 1836, when my health failed a good deal, I drew much at the Earl of Derby's; and a series of my drawings was published by Dr. Gray of the British Museum—a book now rare. I also lithographed many various detached subjects, and a large series of Testudinata for Mr. (now Professor) Bell; and I made drawings for Bell's "British Mammalia," and for two or more volumes of the "Naturalist's Library" for the editor, Sir W. Jardine, those volumes being the Parrots, and, I think, the Monkeys, and some Cats. In 1835 or '36, being in Ireland and the Lakes, I leaned more and more to landscape, and when in 1837 it was found that my health was more affected by the climate month by month, I went abroad, wintering in Rome till 1841, when I came to England and published a volume of lithographs called "Rome and its Environs." Returning to Rome, I visited Sicily and much of the

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South of Italy, and continued to make chalk drawings, though in 1840 I had painted my two first oil-paintings. I also gave lessons in drawing at Rome and was able to make a very comfortable living. In 1845 I came again to England, and in 1846 gave Queen Victoria some lessons, through Her Majesty's having seen a work I published in that year on the Abruzzi, and another on the Roman States. In 1847 I went through all Southern Calabria, and again went round Sicily, and in 1848 left Rome entirely. I travelled then to Malta, Greece, Constantinople, and the Ionian Islands; and to Mount Sinai and Greece a second time in 1849, returning to England in that year. All 1850 I gave up to improving myself in figure drawing, and I continued to paint oil-paintings till 1853, having published in the meantime, in 1849 and 1852, two volumes entitled "Journals of a Landscape Painter," in Albania and Calabria. The first edition of the "Book of Nonsense" was published in 1846, lithographed by tracing-paper. In 1854 I went to Egypt and Switzerland, and in 1855 to Corfu, where I remained the winters of 1856-57-58, visiting Athos, and, later, Jerusalem and Syria. In the autumn of 1858 I returned to England, and '59 and '60 winters were passed in Rome. 1861, I remained all the winter in England, and painted the Cedars of Lebanon and Masada, going, after my sister's death in March, 1861, to Italy. The two following winters—'62 and '63—were passed at Corfu, and in the end of the latter year I published "Views in

## Letters of Edward Lear

the Ionian Islands." In 1862 a second edition of the "Book of Nonsense," much enlarged, was published, and is now in its sixteenth thousand.

O bother!

Yours affectionately

EDWARD LEAR.

The following letters from 1847 to 1864 tell their own story during those years, and therefore nothing further with regard to them is required in this introduction. But Lear's life continued and his letters to my uncle also, till his death at San Remo in 1888, at the age of seventy-six. Consequently a slight sketch is required here to make his life intelligible from the time the letters in 1864 cease, though it is hoped that at some future date should this series be found of interest to the public, a further instalment up to his death of equal value may be forthcoming.

From 1864 to 1870 Lear spent his winters in Nice, Malta, Egypt, and latterly at Cannes. His summers were busy in having exhibitions at 15, Stratford Place, and from thence visiting old friends in different parts of England. His output of a year's work ending April, 1865, was enormous, and is a sample of his stupendous industry and his marvellous capabilities of work, in the face of bad health and difficulties.



## Introduction

During the time mentioned he visited Crete, the Corniche and the Riviera Coast. To quote from a letter of his to Fortescue of the 18th of the above month, he writes: "You ought some day to see the whole of my outdoor work of twelve months—200 sketches in Crete, 145 in the Corniche, and 125 at Nice, Antibes, and Cannes." But at last in April, 1870, finding the lease of his Cannes rooms expiring and unable to be renewed and many things unsatisfactory and uncertain, he evolved the idea of buying a piece of land and building for himself a villa and studio. Land being very expensive at Cannes and a suitable plot besides not being available, he decided on settling down and establishing himself at San Remo instead.

He therefore finally removed from Cannes in the following June, and July finds him in lodgings at San Remo for a few months, till his new villa which he was building "shall be ready for my occupation." The studio was in such an advanced state if not quite finished, that he was able to use it and paint in it.

At this time, too, he had been unfortunate in selling his pictures, and he complains that he "only got £30 from the rich Cannes public this last winter." His pessimism, which grew

## Letters of Edward Lear

upon him more and more as time passed on, is more noticeable at this period when he writes, "that after he settles down in San Remo, his visits to England and his friends will be less and less," and wonders if he "will get any sales for his pictures."

Besides, another very serious cause, which the following extract from a letter of July 31, 1870, will explain, suddenly came upon him at this time as a shock and added to this state of mind :

I must tell you that I have been, at one time, extremely ill this summer. It is as well that you should know that I am told I have the same complaint of the heart as my father died of quite suddenly. I have had advice about it, and they say I may live *any* time if I *don't run suddenly* or go *quickly upstairs*; but that if I do I am pretty sure to drop *morto*. I ran up a little rocky bit near the Tenda, and thought I shouldn't run any more, and the palpitations were so bad that I had to tell Georgio all about it, as I did not think I should have lived that day through.

But when he gets into the "Villa Emily" (so named, as he says in a letter, after his New Zealand sister's granddaughter), his spirits seem to rise again. But through all, his letters retain their humour—sometimes gay, sometimes sad—and their whimsicality and

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attractiveness never fail. Besides, there is added, a certain charm of the older experienced man with a riper knowledge of persons and things.

At his new house he remained more or less permanently, till he went to India in 1874, by invitation of Lord Northbrook then Governor-General, there making many sketches for future use; and from his return early in 1875 to 1881 with occasional holidays, the Villa Emily was his home. For some years it had been a very happy home, where he painted his beautiful pictures and entertained passing friends.

Although most anxious to sell his pictures, he may sometimes, by his strange ways, have turned from his door intending purchasers. He was by way of showing his studio on one afternoon in the week. On this day he sometimes sent his servant out and opened the door himself. This procedure was resorted to in order that he might keep out Germans, whose presence, for some unknown reason filled him with dread. If he did not like the appearance of a visitor, with a long face and woe in his voice he would explain that he never showed his pictures now, being much too ill. He would then shut the door, and his cheerfulness would return.

But gradually a grievance grew up, which

## Letters of Edward Lear

by degrees assumed proportions which so preyed upon his mind that he decided to abandon his beloved Villa Emily, and build another perfectly similar house on a site, where, he sadly and fancifully observed to his friends, he was safe, "*unless* the fishes build." This "nightmare" was the building of a huge hotel close to his villa, the reflection from the roof of which he declared, ruined the light of his studio, maddening him and rendering his life hideous.

It was a great trial to him this abandoning of his cherished home, the garden of which time had made a paradise. His new abode—the Villa Tennyson as he called it, after one of his best friends—though similar in every respect, had none of the mellowed charm which age had given the older house; and the garden, though he transplanted many shrubs and moved various arbours and pergolas from the Villa Emily, was balder and newer and had not the capabilities of the older one.

His faithful Suliot servant Georgio who had remained with him ever since his Corfu days, now having a young son to help him and train in his duties, was the mainstay of Lear's life. The artist took a short holiday to Bologna and the North of Italy



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while the change of houses was being accomplished, the faithful servant cheerfully coped with all the difficulties of the more practical side which moving to a new house entailed. And from this time till Lear's death on Jan. 29, 1888, his home was the Villa Tennyson, with occasional holidays during the early summer months to the North of Italy and later yearly to Monte Generoso, but after the year 1880 he never again came to England.

He lies buried at San Remo, beside the eldest son of his faithful Suliot servant Georgio Kokali, and the stone raised above his grave records the following touching memorial :—

In memory of

EDWARD LEAR, LANDSCAPE PAINTER

in many lands

Born at Highgate May 12. 1812

Died at San Remo Jan 29. 1888

Dear for his many gifts to many souls.

—“all things fair”

“With such a pencil such a pen”

“You shadow'd forth to distant men”

“I read & felt that I was there.”

CONSTANCE STRACHEY.

SUTTON COURT, SOMERSET,

Oct. 4, 1907.

## APPRECIATION OF LEAR AS A PAINTER

THE following note by my brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Strachey, is an artist's endeavour to estimate Lear's position as a painter. C. S.

The landscape painting of Edward Lear has never been popular either with artists or the larger public. The reason of this being so with the latter probably depended both on fashion and the fact that Lear chose to paint foreign countries rather than England. That fellow-painters should have been slow to appreciate Lear's work depended on other reasons. What these were it may be of interest to try to discover. I remember when I was a student at the Slade School, under Legros, I paid a visit to Lear at San Remo, and in talking of art he quoted to me, with complete approval, these words of some friend of his, "Copy the works of the Almighty first and those of Turner next." Now the

## Appreciation as a Painter

great and fundamental quality that lies at the root of the art of Turner is appreciation of atmospheric effect. His preoccupation was not so much what the objects painted were like in themselves, but how they looked when modified by the ever-changing atmosphere. It was the light that fell upon the mountain rather than the shapes of its rocks and slopes that Turner represented. He painted the scene for the sake of the light that fell on it, and not the light as an incident in the landscape. The lines on which landscape painters progressed during the latter half of the last century were on those of light and atmosphere both here and in the great schools of France. But Lear never seems to have had complete sympathy with any aspect of nature except one which showed him the greatest number of topographical details. If he painted the Roman Campagna every sinew in the plain was lovingly recorded, as was every arch of the aqueducts, and even the lumps of the fallen masonry in the foreground. One is sometimes tempted to think that when Lear painted an olive-tree near at hand against the sky he counted the leaves. A traveller could almost plan his route over a pass from one of this artist's faithful realisations of

## Letters of Edward Lear

mountains. To help him portray nature minutely the "topographical artist"—and I remember hearing Lear call himself by this title—wishes for quiet, equal light and weather. For his purpose the shadows of storm clouds are things which blurr and obscure, though for the emotional painter they may turn a commonplace scene into a picture. Lear's interest in landscape was dual: he was both a painter and a traveller. This appears in the letters forming this volume; indeed, it often seems as if the historic and geographical interest predominated. In saying this it must be remembered that it is much easier to express in words these constituents of a scene than it is a purely æsthetic impression.

If it must be admitted that a large part of Lear's outlook on nature was not purely pictorial, to him must be conceded a very real and true sense of beauty. It is because he could feel the beauty of nature and record it with individuality that his work is valuable, and not because it represents exactly some given piece of country. The labyrinthine valleys of the blue mountains above Thermopylæ, as seen in the picture reproduced in this book, weave patterns of beauty which are independent of historic association. In-



## Appreciation as a Painter

stances might be multiplied where the artist has got the upper hand of the topographer, and the result has been a picture. Lear painted both in water colour and in oil. It was, however, in the former medium that he was most successful. The delicate drawing and the tendency to use fine lines made the more fluid water colour answer to his hand better than the oil paint. Indeed, he seems never quite happy when working with the latter, and he is always trying to make it behave like the more limpid medium.

Only on the rarest occasions did Lear use the sky except as background. I cannot recall a picture of his in which the motive was essentially a cloud effect. This was partly due, no doubt, to the southern climates in which he painted, with their predominance of blue sky. Also I think the painter's love of the realisation of minute detail made him feel that things which stayed still to be drawn were those which best suited his style.

The love of detailed representation naturally made Lear range himself with the Preraphaelite painters. He, indeed, considered himself one of the brotherhood in the second generation. This is the meaning of his allusion in the letters to Mr. Holman Hunt as his father. I

## Letters of Edward Lear

remember his telling me that he looked upon Millais as his artistic uncle.

As a colourist Lear was simple rather than subtle. Straightforward harmonies of blue suited him best. Many exquisitely beautiful water-colour drawings of the blue Apennines overlooking the aqueduct-lined Campagna came from his hand. No one has given better than he has the strange charm of this melancholy landscape. His success in this direction is, I think, due to that delicate sense of style which he possessed and which is needed to interpret such a classic scene. If Lear's pictures cannot rank beside those of the great masters of landscape, the best of his works will always have a real value for those who see beyond the fashion of the moment. This will be so because the artist's work was always dignified and sincere, and he had a true if somewhat formal sense of beauty. Moreover, his style was perfectly individual and distinctive.

H. STRACHEY

## NOTE



AMONG the various small details and elucidations which have reached me since the first edition of this book was published, many have been too late to be incorporated in the text of the second impression. I propose, therefore, to condense these into a short postscript to my preface.

Through correspondents both known and unknown many small matters have been cleared up, and I am therefore able thus to make use of their kind help in these pages. Beginning with page xxxii, Lord Tennyson tells me it was always said in the family "that the Villa Emily was called after his mother, Lady Tennyson." This is very probably the case, and possibly in some way indirectly the grand-daughter, if a godchild of Lear's, may have been given the name of one of those he loved best.

At page 6 the Mrs. Sartoris mentioned

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in Roman society when Lear was painting there in 1848, was not Miss Barrington but her sister-in-law Mrs. Edward Sartoris, the well-known Adelaide Kemble.

Again at page 66, her husband Edward Sartoris, is supposed by a correspondent, to be identified in the drawing companion "Edward," whom Lear misses so terribly at Corfù in 1857.

At page 222, mention is made of "one Luard," who attracts Lear both as a person and by the "thirty lettered" definition of his tastes. Now Major-General C. E. Luard, R.E.

Since interrogatively and humbly naming the plate at page 243 for want of better, as Gozo, Malta, owing to a similarity of "shere rocks" between it and a photogravure given in "The Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson," illustrated by Lear, I have been informed by an old friend and pupil of Mr. Lear who possesses a sketch of the subject though also unnamed, that to the best of his remembrance he is certain that the scene represents "Kom Ombos, Egypt," painted to illustrate Tennyson's line "the crag that fronts the even, all along the shadowy shore." A correspondent a charming old lady of 81, refers in an interesting letter to the expression "Abercrom-



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bically" on page 129. In her young days, she says, Dr. John Abercrombie a great Scotch physician, was the well-known author of "The Intellectual Powers," "The Moral Feelings," and "The Culture and Discipline of the Mind." These works had a great vogue at that time, and young ladies were given them to read. She quotes, "How to live and act 'Abercrombically' is best shown on pp. 143 and 144 of the latter work. Dr. Abercrombie chose a high standard, and bade his disciples adhere to it uncompromisingly." Hence when Lear says Woodward preaches "Abercrombically," and Fortescue writes and acts so, they are carrying out the gospel laid down in these books. Consequently on these occasions their actions are full of correctness and decorum of a high order.

With reference to the Greek and its translation on which I had a great deal of correspondence, confusion has been caused by so much of Lear's Greek having been modern Greek. I have had kindly help from many Greek scholars, who have sent me corrections which, in a later edition if such ever sees the light, will quite perfect what now stands as faulty.

Of the more conspicuous mistakes in translation, the following corrections may be

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incorporated in this preface. Page 60, "O mighty Krites, Richard son of Cyrus, wishes me to send you greeting," should read, "The mighty judge, Sir Richard Bethell, wishes me to send you his greetings." Again at page 74, note 3 should stand as "The Morier, fat and beautiful," and at page 116, note 4 should read thus, "The day after to-morrow I will come to you before eleven o'clock to greet you—and see with admiration your pictures of Palestine. Fearful must be the ups-and-downs of the Ionian Sea, such brayings I never heard of."

At page 253, note 1 should read, "Let us talk to-morrow at breakfast."

On page 148, Lear writes *ἐπὶ κολόνοι* instead of the correct *ἐπὶ κολωνῶν*, perhaps as a pun on "Colonies."

Lord Sanderson, who was a friend both of the late Lord Derby and Lear, gives me the following interesting version of Lear's introduction to his great patron. The information, which was given to Lord Sanderson by the late Mr. Latter who had been librarian at Knowsley since 1871, and previously employed there he believes from his boyhood was as follows: "Lord Derby said to one of his friends who had been staying at Knowsley

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and was going up to London, that he wished to find some young artist who would come down to Knowsley and make paintings of the birds. The friend (I am not sure if I was told the name, but if I was I have forgotten it) promised to make inquiries, and some time afterwards he saw in a print-shop a small water-colour drawing of two birds and a nest, priced at a low sum, which struck him as having considerable merit. He bought the drawing and asked who the artist was. The shopman said it was a young man of the name of Lear, who was extremely poor and made these sketches for his living. The friend sought out Lear, made some further inquiries, and wrote to Lord Derby that he thought he had found a young man who would suit. The result was an invitation to Knowsley and the commencement of Lear's work there—which, however, was intermittent.

Mr. Latter also told me that on the "first occasion of giving a lesson to The Queen, Lear, who was rather roughly dressed and was always awkward in appearance, went to the door at Osborne and simply said he wished to see The Queen. The servants were a good deal perplexed, but showed him into a room where an equerry came to see him. On

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his repeating that he had come to see The Queen, the equerry blandly inquired what was the business on which he came, being convinced that he was a lunatic. To which he replied, 'Oh, I'm Lear,' and some further inquiries revealed the fact that he had an appointment to give a lesson."

Mrs. Henry Grenfell also gives me some valuable information as to Lear's introduction at Knowsley. She writes, "I have often heard my husband tell how Lear first got introduced to 'Society' at Knowsley. He (Henry R. Grenfell) lived much at his uncle's, Lord Sefton, at Croxteth close by, and was told the story by the young Stanleys. Old Lord Derby liked to have his grandsons' company after dinner, and one day complained that they constantly left him as soon as dinner was over. Their reply was, 'It is so much more amusing downstairs!' 'Why?' 'Oh, because that young fellow in the steward's room who is drawing the birds for you is such good company, and we like to go and hear him talk.'

"Like a wise man, instead of scolding them, and after full inquiry, he invited Lear to dine upstairs instead of in the steward's room, and not only Lord Derby, but all his friends were equally delighted with him, and it ended in his





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and reaching Rome, by Christmas Day. It is exact and minute, as he always was in all he did, and also proves his "genius" for friendship—typified on page 16 in the following sentence: "I trust to get through 14 or 15 visits out of my 68." It has seemed to me that a reproduction of this "Progress of Lear," in his own handwriting, would be of interest.

I rather think from investigation that the date must refer to the latter end of 1859, and that dilatory-wise Lear getting belated, only arrived as will be seen at page 157, as far as Marseilles by the 26th of December, on his journey Rome-ward.

I would take this opportunity of thanking the public and the reviewers, for the kind way the first edition of this book has been received. My reward is in knowing that the memory of one who was such a delightful and lovable combination of complexities, has had appreciation not only as the author of the Books of Nonsense, but as a man.

"Exceeding wise, fair-spoken, and persuading:  
Lofty and sour to them who loved him not;  
But to those men that sought him sweet as  
summer."





PENTÈDÁTILO.

*From Lear's "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Calabria" (R. Bentley, 1852).*

# Letters of Edward Lear

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## CHAPTER I

1847, to August, 1853

ROME, GREECE, AND ENGLAND

THE earliest letter in this collection which I have found is dated October 16, 1847, written to my uncle, Chichester Fortescue, by Edward Lear immediately on his return to Rome (his headquarters at that time) from his tour in Calabria. The diary he kept on that journey was published in 1852, illustrated by many striking lithographs made from sketches taken during the tour, two of which are here reproduced. The whole of Italy at this time was in a state of political upheaval and unrest; the people felt that the time for more liberal forms of government had come.

Chichester Fortescue, then in his twenty-



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fourth year, had, after a brilliant Oxford career, following the usual course of young men of the aristocratic class of that period, just completed the grand tour, including Greece, with his friend Sir Francis Scott, of Great Barr. He returned to find a seat in Parliament in his native county of Louth awaiting him, and at once was launched into political as well as social life in London. The sudden necessity of returning to England prevented his joining Lear in Rome as he had intended to do, and was the cause of the appearance of Sir Francis Scott alone, at which Lear took umbrage—afterwards regretting his conduct.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

107, 2DO, VIA FELICI, ROMA.

16 Oct., 1847.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—Do not expect an unhampered & simple epistle as of yore, but allow something for the effect of your M.P'ism on my pen and thoughts: Or rather I will forget for a space that you are a British senator, & write to that Chichester Fortescue whose shirt I cribbed at Palestrina.

Your letter, (one of 27, awaiting my coming, which coming took place extremely late last night,)



## Rome, Greece, and England

diverts me highly:—Proby<sup>1</sup> my constant companion (& few there be better,) agrees with me about your view of the road to Aviano—which we have only just, oddly enough gone over. Avellino is certainly exquisite, & so is Mte. Vergine when not in a fog,—But of Apulia we saw little, only from hills apart, because why? the atmosphere was pisonous in Septbr. Nevertheless Proby went to Cannæ, and I believe found one of Annibals shoes or spurs,—also a pinchbeck snuffbox with a Bramah lock belonging to a Roman genl.—I rather chose to go see Castel del Monte, a strange record of old F. Barbarossa & which well repaid no end of disgust in getting at it. We saw the tree Horace slept under at Mte. Volture, & were altogether much edified by the classicalities of Basilicata.

I will begin from the beginning. First then I went (May 3) to Palermo, & on the 11th set out with Proby for Segestæ. Excepting a run round by Trapani & Massala, & a diversion to Modica, Noto, and Spaccaforno, one Sicilian giro was like that of all the multitude. The Massala trip does not pay—& the only break to the utter monotony of life & scenery occurred by a little dog biting the calf of my leg very unpleasantly as I walked unsuspectingly in a vineyard. At the caves of Ipeica we became acquaint with a family of

<sup>1</sup> John, Lord Proby, eldest son of the Earl of Carysfort, of whom Lear speaks as such “an excellent companion,” was a friend of long standing. He died in 1858.

## Letters of Edward Lear

original Frogloodytes : they are very good creatures, mostly sitting on their hams, & feeding on lettuces & honey. I proposed bringing away an infant Frog, but Proby objected. Siracuse only wanted your presence to make our stay more pleasant : I waited for and expected you every day. We abode in a quarry per lo più, & left the place sorryly. From Catania we saw Etna & went up it : a task, but now it is done I am glad I did it : such extremes of heat and cold at once I never thought it possible to feel. Taormina the Magnificent we staid at 4 or 5 days, & then from Messina returned by that abominable North Coast to Palermo, just in time for the fête of Sta Rosalia a noisy scene which made me crosser than ever, and drove away the small remains of peaceful good temper the ugliness of the North Coast had left me.

So, 19th July—we returned to Naples—and there, as at Palermo was Scott—and to my disgust—no Fortescue. I fear when Scott sent up *your* card, & then entered too soon *himself*—I fear my visage fell very rudely. But I wish much now I had seen more of Sir F. Scott : as he improves immensely on knowing him. On the 26th we left Messina for Reggio. (N.B. I have crossed the sea from Naples to Sicily so often this year, that I know nearly all the porpoises by their faces, & many of the Merluzzi.) Would I had gone on to the 2nd & 3rd provinces : but the revolution which bust out in Reggio prevented me. What *is* the use of all these revolutions which

## Rome, Greece, and England

lead to nothing? as the displeased turnspit said to an angry cookmaid.—Returning to Naples for the 199th time, we disposed of a month as I have said over leaf, in the provinces of Basilicata, Melfi, Venosa, etc. etc., and were not sorry to have done so.

Rome is full of fuss and froth: but I believe now that Pio IX. is a real good man, & a wonder. Railroads, gaslight, pavements, for all to be done in 1960? The last part of my stay here was a blank from the death of my oldest Roman friend, good kind Lady Susan Percy.<sup>1</sup>

Remember me to my friends, & believe me,

Dear Fortescue,

sincerely yours,

EDWARD LEAR.

107 2DO VIA FELICI, ROMA,

Feb'y. 12; 1848.

Your letter of Oct. 25th 1847, ought to have been answered before now, & I have been going to do so ever since I had it, but I have said to myself "what's the use of writing to-day when you haven't 20 minutes—or to-day when you've got the toothache, or to-day when you are so cross? Fortescue won't thank you for a stupid letter, particularly as his was so very amusing, so you'd better wait you had. And so I have till I'm ashamed of the delay and therefore I'll send off note 18th be the letter of what degree of badness it may. First glancing over your bi-sheeted

<sup>1</sup> She was a sister of the fifth Duke of Northumberland.

## Letters of Edward Lear

epistle—thank you for your introduction to Baring:<sup>1</sup> he is an extremely luminous & amiable brick, and I like him very much, & I suppose he likes me or he wouldn't take the trouble of knocking me up as he does, considering the lot of people he might take to instead. We have been out once or twice in the Campagna, and go to Mrs. Sartoris,<sup>2</sup> or other evening popular approximations together. He would draw; very well, and indeed does, but has little practice. Altogether he is one of the best specimens of young English here this winter, tho' there is a tolerably good sprinkling of elect & *rational* beings too. In fact it is a propitious season, the rumours of distraction prevented a many nasty vulgar people from coming, and there is really room to move. Among families, Greys, Herberts, Clives<sup>3</sup> stand promiscuous; of young ladies, Miss W. Horton, & Miss Lindsay are first to my taste, & of married ones, Mrs. G. Herbert & Mrs. Clive,—then Lady W. is admired though by me not: she is so like a wren, I'm sure she must turn into a wren when she dies. The variety of foreign society is delightful, particularly with long names: *e.g.*, Madame *Pul-itz-neck-off*—and Count Bigenouff;

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards first Earl of Northbrook, Governor-General of India, 1872-6.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of Lord Barrington.

<sup>3</sup> George Clive, a close personal friend of Lear's, was a barrister and politician, and at this time Judge of County Court Circuits. He became Under-Secretary of State for the home department 1859-1862.



## Rome, Greece, and England

—Baron Polysuky, & Mons. Pig :—I never heard such a list. I am afraid to stand near a door, lest the announced names should make me grin.—Then there is a Lady Mary Ross,<sup>1</sup> and a most gigantic daughter—whom Italians wittily call “the great Ross-child,” and her mama, “Rosso-antico.” . . . I miss the Gordon’s<sup>2</sup> and my old kind friend Lady S. Percy sadly, & somehow the 6 & 30-ness of my sentiments and constitution make me rather graver than of old :—also, the uncertainty of matters here and everywhere, and my own unfixedness of plans, conspire to make me more unstable & ass-like than usual. . . .

And now regarding yourself I heard all about your Greek tour with interest, and that you were returned *to* England and *for* Louth, as you will have found by a disgusting little letter I sent you at the end of last October. The most important part of your letter seems to me that which gives me news of your being so rich a man<sup>3</sup> :—I can only say I am sincerely glad of it, and I don’t flatter you when I say I believe you will make as good a use of your money as anybody. I long to know how you like your new parliamentary life :—(Do you know a friend of mine, Bonham Carter M.P. for Winchester?<sup>4</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> One of the daughters and co-heiresses of the 2nd Marquess Cornwallis.      <sup>2</sup> Sir A. and Lady Duff Gordon.

<sup>3</sup> Fortescue inherited Red House, Ardee, Co. Louth, from Mr. Ruxton his uncle, whose wife was a sister of Fortescue’s father, Col. Fortescue of Dromiskin.

<sup>4</sup> Brother-in-law of Baring.

## Letters of Edward Lear

reminds me of "Have you been in India?" "Yes."  
"O then do you know my friend Mr. Jones?")  
So pray let me hear from you. . . .

Now I am at the end of replying to your letter, and a very jolly one it is. So I must e'en turn over another stone as the sandpiper said when he was alooking for vermicules. You ask what I am about, making of little paintings, one for Ld. Canning etc. etc., and one of a bigger growth for Ld. Ward, but I am in a disturbidous state along of my being undecided as to how I shall go on with art, knowing that figure drawing is that which I know least of & yet is the "crown and roof of things." I have a plan of going to Bowen<sup>1</sup> at Corfù and thence Archipelago or Greeceward, (Greece however is in a very untravellable state just now) should the state of Italy prevent my remaining in it for the summer. But whether I stop here to draw figure, or whether I go to Apulia & Calabria, or whether I Archipela go (V. A. Archipelago, P. Archipelawent, P. P. Archipelagone) or whatever I do, I strongly long to go to Egypt for the next winter as ever is, if so be as I can find a sufficiency of tin to allow of my passing 4 or 5 months there. I am quite crazy about Memphis & On & Isis & crocodiles and ophthalmia & nubians, and simooms & sorcerers, & sphingidœ.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir George Fergusson Bowen, and successively Governor of Queensland, New Zealand, and other colonies. At this time he was President of the University of Corfu, and in 1854 he was appointed Chief Secretary to Sir J. Young, Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands.



## Rome, Greece, and England

Seriously the contemplation of Egypt must fill the mind, the artistic mind I mean, with great food for the rumination of long years. I have a strong wish also to see Syria, & Asia Minor and all sorts of grisogorious places, but, but, who can tell? You see therefore in how noxious a state of know-nothing-at-all-about-what-one-is-going-to-do-ness I am in. Yet this is clear:—the days of possible Lotus-eating are diminishing, & by the time I am 40 I would fain be in England once more. . . .

But a truce to growling and reflections. I should have told you that Bowen has written to me in the kindest possible manner, asking me to go and stay with him at Corfù and I shall regret if I can't do so. I wish to goodness I was a polype and could cut myself in six bits. I wish you were downstairs in that little room.

The introduction to Baring, afterwards first Earl of Northbrook, of which Lear here speaks with such genuine pleasure, was to be the beginning of a friendship which lasted until his death. Baring, throughout his long and varied public career, was not only a true friend to him, but also a patron of the kindest and most generous description.

In the summer of the same year, Lear undertook a long-desired visit to Greece, in the company of Canon Church, another

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old friend and patron. To this visit we are indebted for one of the most beautiful pictures he ever painted, a large oil-painting of Thermopylæ. Several replicas of this work exist, but I believe that the one possessed by Fortescue and reproduced in this book, is the original.

HOTEL D'ORIENT, ATHENS,  
*July 19, 1848.*

Here I am having made somewhat of a dash into Greece, but most unluckily, obliged to haul up and lay by for the present. You may perhaps see my handwriting is queerish, the fact is I am recovering rapidly thank God, from a severe touch of fever, caught at Platœa & perfected in ten days at Thebes. I did not think I should ever have got over it, nor should I, but for the skill of two doctors, & the kindness of my companion Church. I was brought here by 4 horses on an Indiarubber bed, am wonderfully better, & in that state of hunger which is frightful to bystanders. I could eat an ox. Many matters contributed to this disaster, first a bad fall from my horse, and a sprained shoulder, which for three weeks irritated one's blood, besides that I could not ride. 2nd. A bite from a Centipede or some horror, which swelled up all my leg & produced a swelling like Philoctetes' toe, and lastly, I was such a fool as go to Platœa forgetting my umbrella, where the sun finished me. However, I don't mean to

## Rome, Greece, and England

give up and am very thankful to be as well as I am.

I came you know here on June 1st with Sir S. Canning,<sup>1</sup> and staid a fortnight *working like mad*. On the 13th Church and I set out. Chalcis is most interesting & picturesque, what figures! would, ah! would I could draw the figures! We then resolved to do Eubœa, so, 19th, Eretria, very fine. Aliveri, & Kumi. 21st. Pass of mountains, grandly magnificent! Alas! for the little time to draw! 28th Lamia. 29th a run up to Patragik a queer mountain place. All these things we were constantly warned off, as full of rebels, brigands &c., but we found all things as quiet as Pimlico. 30th Thermopylæ! how superb! & Bodonitza. July 1st. Costantino & Argizza. 2nd Proschinò & Martini. 3rd, over Kokino & the mountains to the Thebes. Only this last, of the last 3 days was good. Thebes is sublime, but as I said, the day following it became a grisogorious place to me.

I must stop for I am not much writable yet. Give my love to Sir F. Scott if you see him & to Baring: I am glad he is secretary or anything good, as he is such an extreme brick.

Therapia, 25th August, 1848.

Your kind letter, just exactly though what I expected, came to-day, much sooner than I anticipated.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Stratford Canning, afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, at this time Ambassador at Constantinople.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Alas! of myself I can give you but a most flaccid account, greatly to be summed up in the word "bed," but not wholly so. However I have known perfect health for 11 years thank God, and if the tables are turned I must not be ungrateful, indeed I have been able to suck a large lesson of patience out of my 2 months compulsory idleness, and I hope I may be like any Lamb if ever we meet again.

I continued to recover after I wrote to you, (20th July) & left Athens in good spirits & pretty strong, (*i.e.* I was able to walk as far as the Acropolis slowly, & with a stick,) on the 27th to Alexandria. Then I speedily fell ill again, but differently:—yet when I got to Const<sup>plc</sup> I was obliged to be taken up to the Hotel in a sedan chair. Well, after two days I went up to the Embassy & was instantly put to bed with erysipelas & fever, and did not emerge on the banks of the Bosphorus till about August 13; and then very feebly. Since then I went a-head but had bad fever fits from not minding diet: to-day as 2 days have gone and the enemy comes not again, I have hope an am an hungered. Hunger! did you ever have a fever? No consideration of morality or sentiment or fear of punishment would prevent my devouring any small child who entered this room now. I have eaten everything in it but a wax-candle and a bad lemon. This house is detached from the big Embassy Palace & is inhabited by attachés, and though Lady Canning †

† Wife of the Ambassador.





THE MOUNTAINS OF THERMOPIYLAÆ.

Painted by Edward Lear, 1832.

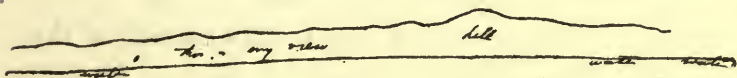
*From the Picture formerly belonging to Chichester Fortescue, now the property of Lady Strachey.*





## Rome, Greece, and England

is as kind as 70 mothers to me, yet I see little of them. Could I look out on any scene of beauty, my lot would be luminous; bless you! the Bosphorus hereabouts at least, is the ghastliest humbug going! Compare the Straits of Menai or Southampton Waters or the Thames to it! It has neither form of hill nor character of any possible kind in its detail. A vile towing path is the only walk here



or a great pull up a bare down,—of course,—sun and climate make any place lovely, & thus all the praises of this far-famed place I believe savour of picnics, &c., &c. However I have seen but little of it so I will not go on, but lest you think ennui or illness disgust me let me say, that Thebes & Athens shed a memory of divinest beauty over much worse and more tedious sufferings than those I have endured here, which indeed are nought but weariness now.

What to do, my Dear Fortescue when I return to England!!?? ¿—¿! (expressive of indelible doubt, wonder, & ignorance.) London must be the place, & then comes the choice of two lines; society, & half days work, pretty pictures, petitmâitre praise boundless, frequented studio &c., &c. wound up with vexation of spirit as age comes on that talents have been thrown away:—or *hard study* beginning at the root of the matter, the human figure, which

## Letters of Edward Lear

to master alone would enable me to carry out the views & feelings of landscape I know to exist within me. Alas! if real art is a *student*, I know no more than a child, an infant, a foetus. How could I. I have had myself to thank for all education, & a vortex of society hath eaten my time. So you see I must choose one or other—& with my many friends it will go hard at 36 to retire—please God I live for 8 or 10 years—but—if I did—*wouldn't* the “Lears” sell in your grandchildrens time!—But enough of this, and self. Grandchildren make me think of Baring's marriage,<sup>1</sup> which I am so really glad to hear of & shall write to him by this post. That good-natured fellow wrote to me from England, which I wonder anyone does so busy as you all must be there. I sincerely wish him a long career of happiness. But I trust you will soon follow his example & I keep on expecting of it.

A year later finds Lear in England, paying visits to various friends, and meeting again Lord Derby, who had been his patron from the first. “The admirable quality of Lear's work for the Zoological Society had won him the close friendship and the generous patronage of the thirteenth Earl of Derby, for whom he drew the beautiful illustrations of that now rare volume ‘The Knowsley

<sup>1</sup> Baring's marriage to Miss Sturt took place in September.

## Rome, Greece, and England

Menagerie.'” Thus says his friend and executor, Franklin Lushington, in his preface to the “Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson,” illustrated by Edward Lear, and brought out after his death, by Lord Tennyson, as a tribute to his memory.

TABLEY HOUSE, KNUTSFORD,  
1 August, 1849.

On leaving town I came to the James Hornby's<sup>1</sup> at Winwick, & then migrated with them to Knowsley. After a week at each place and a day or two about Manchester, I came for 4 days to Tatton's of Wythenshawe and now am here for as many more. . . .

Now all this time I have been living in a constant state of happiness. My dear old friends Mr. Hornby & Lord Derby I found just as ever, though 72 & 75 and every day has caused fresh shaking of hands with old friends. Certainly English people do go on with friendship just where they left off, as you go on with a book at the page you last read. So you see, barring the queer climate I have been intensely happy, & if one were morbidly inclined, one would think that like Dives one was enjoying all one's good things here below. This place is one of the very nice dwellings in this land, the old house & the church & the lake are a perfect picture. So was old Elizabethan Wythenshawe, & at Winwick

<sup>1</sup> J. Hornby of Winwick, brother-in-law of Lord Derby.

## Letters of Edward Lear

and dear old Knowsley there was a lot of sunshine quite vavacious to feel. Immense fun we have had, one has done little but laugh, eat, drink, & sleep. . . .

I trust to get through 14 or 15 visits out of my 68. Willingly would I an your house were one:—but I must be back in town by 20th Sept. at latest, (then comes furnishing & fidgetting & fussing,) after that hard real work. Did I tell you I had finally settled on taking 17, Stratford Place?<sup>1</sup> signed sealed and delivered, O! yes. How I hope you will come very often to look yourself into other lands.

What do you think of my having *nearly, all but* become possessor of 40 or 50,000£? Fact, I assure you, it makes me laugh to think what I could possibly have done with such a statistic heap of ore! However, I have never it seems been attentive enough to the old Lady<sup>2</sup> who always said she would enrich me, so she has died and left all to 30 poor widows for ever & ever, and much better too that she has left it thus, for I should not have made as good use of it. I thought directly I heard of this matter that I would instantly marry one of the 30 viddies, only then it occurred to me that she would not be a vidy any more if I married her.

<sup>1</sup> "Stratford Place," now Lear's headquarters when in England for some years. He had several "shows" of pictures both at 17 and later at No. 15.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot trace this old lady, but she was not a relation, I fancy, for I believe he had no relations outside his own brothers and sisters, few of whom were still living at this time.



# Rome, Greece, and England

LYDFORD, NEAR BRIDESTOW, DEVON,  
July 19, 1851.

*Enter* MARY.

“Mary, has the boy come back from the Post with the letters yet?”

“Noa zur, hiss be drewndid!”

“He’s what Mary?”

“Hiss be drewndid zur in the powerfil rain.”

“Well, it certainly does rain Mary but I hope he aint drowned, for all that.”

*Exit* MARY.

*Re-enter* MARY.

“Here be tew litters zur:—the boy is all queet drewndid zur as ever you see!”

Upon which I took up one, and you having been in my thoughts during this very morning, says I, how odd, it’s Fortescue’s writing!

Upon which I opened it.

Upon which I found it was from Mr. Gladstone.

Upon which I said, Pish!

Upon which I took up letter No. 2.

Upon which I found that was really yours.

Upon which I took this paper and began,

Dear Fortescue,—I was very glad to find you were pleased with the painting, for I have taken long and great trouble about it, all my artist friends say I have made an enormous stride, so I hope to go on, but only by the same road, *i.e.*, *constant study* and perseverance. You suppose rightly that I felt Lord Derby’s death; I

## Letters of Edward Lear

have not felt anything so much for many many years:— 22 years ago I first went to Knowsley, & have received nothing but kindness from him & his family ever since, so it is no great wonder his death should cause me sorrow. The painting<sup>1</sup> belongs to the present Earl, who will kindly allow me to have it for some time yet. Overworked and unwell & unable to bear the disquiet of London, I came at once to this very out of the way place, as, to get away *at all*, I was obliged to select a deadly *cheap* place, since while here I have to pay for 17, Stratford Place, also. I shall remain here and hereabouts, a tour in Cornwall with Lushington<sup>2</sup> etc. till nearly November.

Genus homo! I aint. I'm a landscape painter, & I desire you to like me as sich, or not at all:—if I grow worse in my professional power, be sure I shall worsen in all ways:—Lord how it does rain! It always does here, but that's nothing, for I have a house full of books, & I've got a little bedroom and a small parlor, & a big loft made into a study (which would be pleasant if the cats didn't bumble into it every 5 minutes). And all that costs 5s. a week:—& I have 3 meals of food daily for 1s. 6d., and I'm finishing some water-coloured drawings by degrees, and arranging in my mind some paintings for the winter. There's only a curate as lives opposite, & keeps bees:—all the rest

<sup>1</sup> Lord Derby died on June 13, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin Lushington, another intimate friend and patron of Lear and his executor after his death. He was one of the two Justices in Corfu when Lear first went to reside there.

## Rome, Greece, and England

of the village is miners, which reside underground. On Sunday I go to church, when there is a congregation of 7 or 10 and a tipsy clerk. O! beloved clerk! who reads the psalms enough to make you go into fits. He said last Sunday, "As white as an old salmon," (instead of white as snow in Salmon), "A lion to my mothers children" (for alien) & they are not guinea pigs, instead of—guiltless! Fact:—but I grieve to say he's turned out for the same, & will never more please my foolish ears.

I suppose you never come into Devonshire?

Lord! how it rains!

I have forsworn by this provincial step of mine all the luxuries & niceties of the year, to wit, cherries & all fruit, wine, & a number of other necessaries of life. We primitive Christians of Lydford have thrown off such fopperies.

Please recommend all the Grand Jury to buy my 'Journal of a Landscape painter.'<sup>1</sup> What are you doing with a Grand Jury?

Where are you going this summer? O Lord! how it keeps raining!

Every post brings heaps of dinner & evening invitations. I think myself well off to be able to decline them at 1d. a piece. Now I must go back to my drawing of Syracuse, which thank goodness, is nearly done.

<sup>1</sup> This was the "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Albania," published in 1851; the companion volume in Calabria was published in 1852.

## Letters of Edward Lear

LYDFORD, NEAR BRIDESTOW, DEVON,

26 August, 1851.

I have only just returned here, from a ramble in Cornwall, (not Simeon but the county,<sup>1</sup>) and among a heap of letters, one from you, shall be answered first of all, barring sister Ann<sup>2</sup> & R. Hornby.

You do perfectly well to project all your uncomfortablenesses into my ear & buzzim at all times, for I can sympathize with you most perfectly, though I can do nothing else. Lord, how I wish I was a sucking Socrates like some men I know, wouldn't you have 5 sheets of advice! But as I aint I may as well say that there is nothing of which I have so distinct a recollection as the fearful gnawing sensation which chills & destroys one, on leaving scenes & persons, for which & whom there are no substitutes till their memory is a bit worn down. I say, there is nothing I so distinctly remember, because those feeling are with me already taking the form of past matters, never again to recur, like cutting ones teeth, measles &c. Not that one has actually *outlived* the possibility of their repetition, but rather, I *prevent* them by keeping them at arm's length:—I *wont* like anybody else, if I can help it, I mean, any new person, or scenes, or place, all the rest of my short foolish life. But the vacuum which you describe I used to suffer from intensely, & can quite feel for you. Yet *you*, it appears to me, might put an end to all chance of such

<sup>1</sup> Cornwall Simeon, his friend, son of Sir R. G. Simeon.

<sup>2</sup> His eldest sister, who had been a mother to him, she being the eldest and he the youngest of a family of twenty-one children.





SULI.

(From Lear's "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Albania and Illyria," 1851)





## Rome, Greece, and England

blacknesses, by asking any young (or old if you prefer) Lady to marry you, which if *you* asked her she instantly *would*, whereas if *I* asked any, she instantly *wouldn't*. Well, I suppose you will one day : but I shall be in a horrid way till I see her, because as you are of the sensitive order, you will either be very happy or you won't.

I shall not allow you to be deceived into the idea, that I am perfectly tranquil & happy here :—quite the contrary. There is only one fine day out of 15, & all the rest are beyond expression demoralizing & filthy. My “straitened circumstances” forbid moving now I am here, and besides, I hate giving up a thing when I try it, & having declared I *would* paint the Glen scene, I *will*, I'll stay till I do. I would not so much care for the wet, as for being obliged when it is wet, to look at a dead wall and a rubbish heap opposite, and to see nothing all day but 27 pigs, & 18 cows. Experience teaches, and a village summer in Italy is another thing to this. . . . I have faithfully promised to pass some days with C. Church near Ilchester before I return :—these things, with the vain and frustrated attempts to get some studies of weeds and rox fill up my beastly Autumn, and send me back again to Stratford Place.

I don't improve as I wish, which added to the rain, and the view, prevents “happiness and tranquillity.” It is true I don't *expect* to improve, because I am aware of my peculiar incapacities for art, mental & physical :—but that don't mend the matter, anymore than the

## Letters of Edward Lear

knowledge that he is to be always blind delights a man whose eye is poked out. The great secret of my constant hard work is, to prevent my going back, or at best standing quite still. I certainly did improve last year a little, but I aint sure if Lydford and the rain and the cows won't have made me go back this year. However I did it all for the best, as the old sow said when she sat on her little pigs. . . .

Bowen I must write to again, he wrote since I last did so to you, & I answered him. He is very good-natured, though as you say his rhinoceros-like insensibility to the small annoyances he deals out, would aggravate me. He is going to review my Albania he says,—Bye the bye, I should think that little book has had as much good said of it as any ever have. I dare say you saw the *Athenæum* &c., & *Tait's Magazine* for this month. I wish I may get something for all this. When I return to town I shall join a nightly Academy for drawing from the life :—thus you see showing you that I believe *hard work* is the best substitute for the *Ideal*. I shall try also to set about sundry big landscapes. But I *will* paint this glen, for all the rain and cows, if I stay here All my life.

O Lord! Lord! it *is such* a beastly place! ! ! ! !

I can go on no more. It makes me almost cry to think of what I suffer. So I'll read King Arthur.

Write please. I wish I could see you, but I think you'd like me better where I am just now. I'm so savage.

Alfred Tennyson has gone to Italy.

## Rome, Greece, and England

On his return to London, Lear joined the Academy schools, as the following letter and pictures will show:—

94 Stratford Plain.  
20<sup>th</sup> July.

Dear Fortescue

What fun! - pretty  
little dear - ! - he got  
into the Academy - he did?  
- yes - so he did.

You will be pleased  
to hear that the R. Academy  
has been on my drawing  
from the antique, & that  
I am a "probationer"

Letters of Edward Lear

very much like a piece  
when I - I drump them  
to make all the eyes  
but or - shall be admitted  
for 10 years as admitted  
or - respect. -  
Systems qual said.

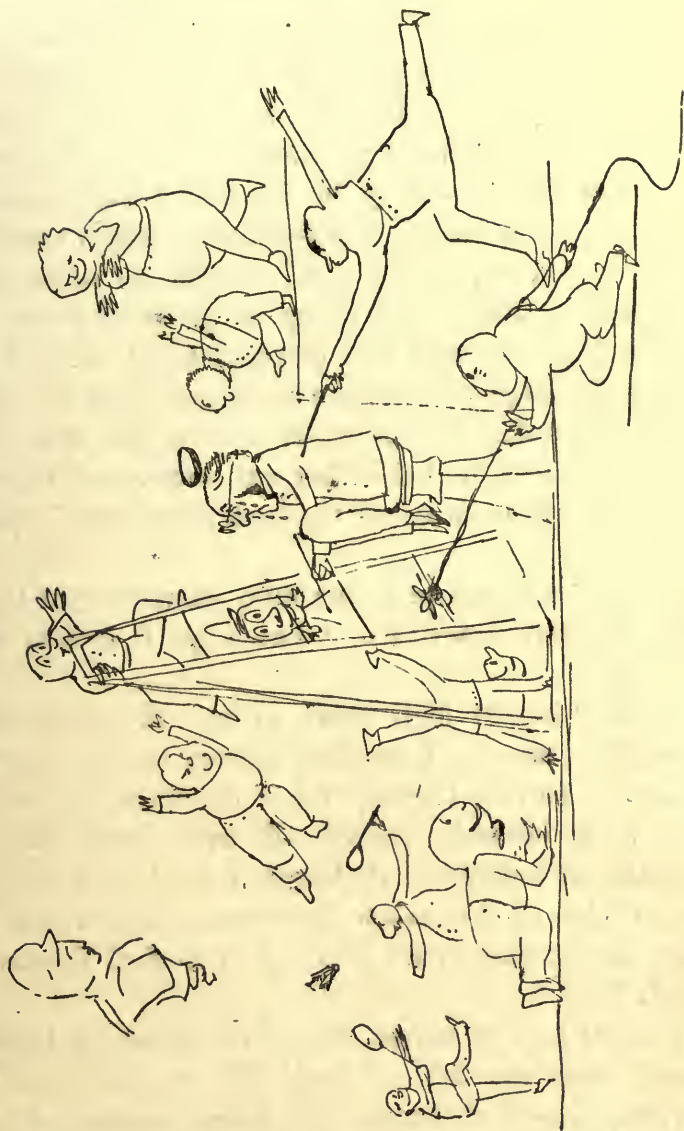
Friday - 57 - little  
boys - to 19 years are  
admitted. And now  
I go with a large  
book and a pencil

I shall to school  
every day take  
a good large box -





# Rome, Greece, and England



## Letters of Edward Lear

HASTINGS (vulgarly 'astins), SUSSEX,  
Jany. 23, 1853.

You know all about how my front room ceiling fell down last July. Well—after a very regular application here I completed 3 paintings—Venosa, Reggio, and Thermopylæ—all 3 far the best I ever didded (or dod). On the 6th. Jany.—having written beforehand to put my rooms right, I went up to town: anyhow, my time would be up at Stratford place at the half-quarter, so I was prepared to go on with a search for lodgings, you have heard me speak enough against the darkness of those I lived in. But lo! when I arrived the horrid fact was announced to me that *that very morning* all the back room ceiling had fallen!

“Is there confusion in the little room?” (said I to myself when I saw it). “Let what is broken so remain!”

It was indeed high time to quit the stage of Stratford Place, so I instantly packed up—no slight operation with my immense lot of drawings and boox—and as instantly rushed all over North West London for lodgings. At length I fixed on a house which Hansen has taken for himself, and where I have taken 2 floors for 1 year—at 65, Oxford Terrace, Hyde Park.

I could not, of course, stay in the Stratford Place abroad after the fall of Paris No. 2., nor can I get into the Oxf<sup>d</sup> Terrace till Feby. 10—so I had nothing to do but come down here again—where at

## Rome, Greece, and England

least there are fresh air, and muffins. I must tell you what you will be very glad to hear: wizz: that my large Parnussus is bought by the new Slissiter General—my old and kind friend, Mr. Bethell (Sir Richard to be shortly).<sup>1</sup> It will be capitally placed and well seen—a futuer wh: compensates for my not having got so much for it as I axd. Wots the hods so long as ones appy?

I am now doing a huge picture of Syracuse Quarries;  $\frac{1}{2}$  starved Athenians judiciously introduced here and there. Since August I have been, as I told you, painting on an oly different principle, and so far with gt. success: I hope the Thermopylæ will be hung in the Brit: Institution.

If you come up to town before the 10<sup>th</sup> let me know—might you not rush down to dine here with me by a 5 p.m. train on Saturday and stay all Sunday? I now could give you a bed—as the cucumber bed is too cold, and I have got a spare room. Do you know I have cut 2 new teeth? It was supposed I was ill of the mumps—whereas it was dentifery. I impute all my health, and sperrits, and improved art and sense herefrom to the arrival of these 2 teeth.

My sale of Parnussus, just enables me to pay part of the annual bills off, and to begin decently at Oxf<sup>d</sup> Terrace. Like a nass I gave away all I could, so as usual have none over to spare. One of my sisters is

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards first Baron Westbury. Became Lord Chancellor 1861.

## Letters of Edward Lear

horridly poor, and another is going with all her child<sup>n</sup> and grandchild<sup>n</sup> to N. Zealand, and another wants some port wine being ill, and so on. But the fact is, I only wish for money to give it away, and there's lots to be done with it here if people wouldn't be above looking at what they *should* do, and wouldn't keep fussing about those fooly blacks.

I've been reading Brooke's "Borneo" lately. What do you think of a society for clothing and educating by degrees the Orang outangs?

The more I read travels, the more I want to move. Such heaps of N. Zealand as I have read of late! I know every corner of the place—ditto V. D. land—ditto N. Holland. Will you go there? Will you go to the Lake Tchad? Someday though, if I can't scrape up money to go up the Nile, I think I shall ask you to take me there. I should like to go up there for 3 or 4 months well enough.

Have you ever read "Calabria" yet? If you haven't do get it and recommend it astuciously to heaps of Dukes and Dsses. : it will do them good, and me too.

In town I saw hardly anyone—as you may suppose from my cadent ceiling and its sequences. The Bethells—my sisters &c., and A., and o! Mrs A. How frigid that icie ladye was no Polar or N. Zemb-lan tongue can tell! Not to *me* though—for she is always very good natured to me—but to all things in heaven and earth generally. By jingo! it's too dreadful to me that awful indifference! Yet they seem





GIOTIOSA.

*From Lear's "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Calabria" (R. Bentley, 1852).*





## Rome, Greece, and England

happy together. No, my dear Fortescue, *I* don't mean to marry—never. *You* should, but there's time enough yet for you—6 or 8 years perhaps. In my case I should paint less and less well, and the thought of annual infants would drive me wild. If I attain to 65, and have an “establishm<sup>t</sup>” with lots of spoons &c. to offer—I *may* chain myself:—but surely not before. And alas! and seriously—when I look around my acquaintance—and few men have more, or know more intimately, do I see a majority of happy pairs? No, I don't. Single—I may have few pleasures—but married—many risks and miseries are semi-certainly in waiting—nor till the plot is played out can it be said that evils are not at hand. You *say* you are 30, but I believe you are ever so much more. As for me I am 40—and some months: by the time I am 42 I shall regard the matter with 42<sup>de</sup> I hope.

In one sense, I am growing very indifferent to the running out of the sands of life. Years are making me see matters with totally different eyes than I formerly saw with:—but at the same time I am far more cheerful. I only wish I could dub and scrub myself into what I wish to be, and what I might be I fear if I took proper pains. But *chi sa?* How much will be allowed for *nature*, and early impressions, and iron early tuition? Looking back, I sometimes wonder I am even what I am. I often wonder and wonder how I have made so many certainly real friends as I have. Sometimes 6 or 8 of the kindest

## Letters of Edward Lear

letters in the world come together, and the effect is rather humiliating tho' not to my peculiar idiosyncrasy.

I hope to go to Reigate to see Ld. Somers.<sup>1</sup> He is a great favourite of mine, from my knowledge of many excellent points of his character, from our having many sympathies in common, and from our looking at many present-day matters with similar views. She is a most sweet creature. I think her expression of countenance is one of the most unmitigated goodness I ever contemplated. I call that a model of a woman. Bother : I wish they wern't Earls and Countesses—though I don't much care—for I've been so rummy independent all my life that nobody thinks Ie ver like rank for ranks' sake I should think.

I don't understand the Gladstone question—only as I detest the bigotry of Denison and Bennett,—so I suppose G. has a shade less of it.<sup>2</sup> Ma non troppo me ne fido anche a lui.

But I grant your present Govt. are the best lot of workers we have had for a long time yet, and I do not see why *Conservatives* should be growled at if they advocate moderate reforms,—*without* which a

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Lord Eastnor; succeeded to the earldom in 1852, husband of the beautiful Virginia Pattle (one of the loveliest women of her time), himself a man of great culture and artistic perception.

<sup>2</sup> After the defeat of Lord Derby's Ministry, Mr. Gladstone became very unpopular with the Conservative party, and was violently attacked by Archdeacon Denison and others, who said that the University of Oxford which Mr. Gladstone had been elected to represent, could place no more confidence in him.

## Rome, Greece, and England

blind man may see that nothing will be *conserved* at all very shortly. O mi little i's and pegtops! how it do rain and blo!

Will you give my compliments and remembrances to L<sup>d.</sup> and L<sup>dy.</sup> Clermont.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Clermont was the elder brother of Fortescue, and had married a daughter of the Marquis of Ormond.

## CHAPTER II

1856 and 1857

### CORFÙ AND ENGLAND

THREE years later we find Lear settled at Corfù, then under British protection, and he remained there at intervals until the cession of the Ionian Isles to Greece in 1864. The light thrown by his letters on a little-known chapter of our foreign policy gives them an additional interest. In 1854 Lear had gone to Egypt and Switzerland, and in 1855 again to Corfù, but I unfortunately have failed to find any letters of those years.

The long gap between the following letters and the last one quoted may be partly accounted for, by the fact that several written by him in the interim never reached Fortescue at all.

#### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU, 19 Febry., 1856.

It seems we were a writing to each other pretty nearly at the same time, for yours which I was truly



## Corfu and England

thankful for, is dated Jan. 6th and I sent mine off to you on the 6th. But the letters were different, mine I fear me was so glumy that you might have been uncomfortable about me ever since, notwithstanding my growlygrumbleταρος (most), known nature, and therefore and wherefore, I shall send you this, though it will not be a long letter, rather than not write at all, for the days are so full of occupation that I vainly try for leisure. Up at 6, Greek master from 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  to 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ . Breakfast &c., to 9, then work till 4, or sketching out of doors, and either dining out or at home with writing and drawing fill up my hours. First, I wish you a happy new Year, & continually, if I didn't do so before. At all events I wish you a lot of happy new Leap-years.

I still think of making Corfu my head-quarters, & of painting a large picture here of the Ascension festa in June, for 1857 Exhibition, & of going over to Yannina and all sorts of Albanian abstractions.

I hope to send your drawing soon, together with Sir John Simeon's & Mr. Clive's pictures. The reason I did not send the fellow to your "Morn broadens"<sup>1</sup> was because I could not satisfy myself at all as to the quality of the one I began. Yours is so finished a picture that I should not like a less good one by its side.

Do you know there has been literally no winter here; they say it is 27 years since there was so little

<sup>1</sup> "Morn broadens on the borders of the dark," a beautiful oil belonging to Fortescue.

## Letters of Edward Lear

cold, & still some think we shall have a touch of rigour in March:—in fact, I have scarcely any Asthma, & no symptom of Bronchitis at all. When I get a house, you *must* come out and have a run, & I'll put you up: I'll feed you with Olives & wild pig, and we'll start off to Mount Athos. Bowen his marriage<sup>1</sup> takes place at the end of April. The Balls are all over now & gaiety generally, dinners excepted, though I am going to soon back out of all, by dining early. The not being able to get any properly lighted painting room annoys me horribly, and I confess still to being at times very lowspirited and depressed, but not so much as before.

You cannot tell me news of the Millais: the blind girl picture<sup>2</sup> was begun when we were together in Sussex. W. Holman Hunt has just come back, & Mr. Tennyson<sup>3</sup> writes is going there. I wish he was here—The sort of lonely feeling of having no one who can sympathyze professionally with one's goings on, is very odious at times. Lushington would more or less, but his work is tremendously heavy, & when he gets any leisure, he rides or yachts, or shoots, all out of the way sports for me, except the former; I *did* ride all last Saturday for a wonder, & wish I had tin to keep a

<sup>1</sup> He married a Greek, daughter of Roma, who was appointed Vice-Governor of Ithaca in 1858. Her brother married a sister of the Queen of Montenegro.

<sup>2</sup> Now in the Birmingham Art Gallery.

<sup>3</sup> Tennyson became a great friend of Lear's, who often stayed with him when in England. One of his poems is dedicated "To E. L., on his travels in Greece."

## Corfù and England

horse. Have you any message to Lady Emily κοξξηρις? <sup>1</sup> The Lord High C.<sup>2</sup> & Lady Young are very good-natured, but I don't take to Court life, and not playing cards am doubtless a bore, or rather useless. But I suppose they are good people. There are really some very nice people here among the Militia Officers—Ormsbys, Barringtons, Powers, &c. &c., and their going would aggravate them as stays behind. I am painting "And I shall see before I die the palms and temples of the south," for Sir John Simeon, being Philæ by sunset,<sup>3</sup>—but my eyes give me a good deal of trouble, and I don't know how they will bear the summer.

The following letter from Fortescue, containing an early reference to the celebrated Lady Waldegrave, may be of interest. Frances, widow of George, seventh Earl Waldegrave, was at this time the wife of George Harcourt, of Nuneham. She was the daughter of the greatest of English tenors, John Braham, who in his time carried the musical world by storm. He was of Jewish descent, a man of intense personality and independence of mind, and his daughter inherited these charac-

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of the second Earl of Clancarty and a cousin of Fortescue's. She married Signor Giovanni Kozziris in 1843.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Young was appointed Lord High Commissioner in 1855.

<sup>3</sup> A replica of this was painted for Fortescue this year.

## Letters of Edward Lear

teristics together with many others, which united to make her one of the most remarkable and interesting women of her day. She eventually married Fortescue: he had been devoted to her for years, and it was one of the happiest of unions.

### *Fortescue to Lear.*

RED HOUSE, ARDEE,  
17 Sept. 1856.

. . . During the latter part of the season I passed almost every Sunday at Strawberry Hill,<sup>1</sup> which Lady Waldegrave has restored, and made the oddest and prettiest thing you ever saw. She often asks after you and says she hopes often to see you there. I am sure you would like it, and she gets a charming society around her there. She did not go out last season at all on account of her father's death. Charles Braham<sup>2</sup> sang two or three times at the Haymarket opera with Wagner and Piccolomini. He was dreadfully nervous, but I am in great hopes will do well. . . . I was at a great Nuneham party. We had the D'Aumale's<sup>3</sup> there, and very likeable Bourbons they are. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Strawberry Hill, Walpole's historic villa at Twickenham—during the sixties and seventies the resort of all fashionable London.

<sup>2</sup> Brother of Lady Waldegrave.

<sup>3</sup> The Duc d'Aumale was the fourth son of Louis Philippe, and was then living at Orleans House, Twickenham, to which he had retired after the revolution of 1848.





FRANCES COUNTESS WALDEGRAVE, ÆTAT. 20.

*From a coloured lithograph of a crayon drawing by J. K. Swinton.*

*To face page 30.*





## Corfù and England

I am for holding hard by the Ideals—and, if one set go, getting another ordered as soon as possible—as we do our coats and boots when they wear out. This life is meant to be a life of ideals. We ought to feel like children—and live on ideas of the future, as children do of the time when they will be “grown up.” This is a cheerful view—you will say—and easier preached than practised. True—I often “reck not my own rede”—and I could give you a reason for this view of things at this moment presenting itself to my mind. Nevertheless it is true. And, if we cannot keep hold of our ideals, Schiller tells us of two companions which never forsook him, and which I suppose would console and soothe—though I think there are some ideals even they would never replace—Friendship and Employment. As to myself, I got through the Session and season pretty well. . . . I made one Parliamentary effort of some importance in defence of the Irish system of National Education, which I believe to be a just one and doing great good. I had a very nice letter from your amiable Lord High Commissioner, congratulating me on my speech on that occasion. Touching you, he speaks thus:—“I ought to have written to you before in answer to your note about Lear. We have found him a most agreeable person—and a great addition to our society, and we all like him very much—especially Lady Young, who has taken to sketching with great ardour.” I have always liked Sir J. Y.: I never knew much of her Ladyship.

# Letters of Edward Lear

*Lear to Fortescue.*



PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL

QUARANTINE ISLAND, CORFU,  
9. October, 1856.

I have just returned from a 2 month's tour, whereby I have seen and drawn all Mount Athos,<sup>1</sup> & have seen Troy, slightly and whereby, which is far better, I have gained a great amount of health bodily & mentle, to my great satisfaction & I hope thankfulness, & also I trust to the benefit obliquely of many of my felly creatures who will hereafter peeroase my jurnles, and admyer my pigchers. Among a heap of 28 letters one from you delights my soal: date—R.D.<sup>2</sup> 17. Sept. I am glad you are so merry & that you are enjoying the summer so much. You have not written to me, (you nasty brute!) for six months. I wish I could see Strawberry Hill. Have you seen Alfred Seymour<sup>3</sup> since he came back? I was very glad of your parliamentary movement.<sup>4</sup> I'm *not* for holding by the "Ideals": they've bothered me all my life, and I now mean to try how far I can make some realities.

<sup>1</sup> Athos was his *magnum opus*.

<sup>2</sup> Lear's way of writing Ardee.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Seymour, a barrister, younger son of Henry Seymour of Knoyle House. Entered Parliament 1863.

<sup>4</sup> On the 17th of June Mr. Walpole moved a resolution on the subject of Education in Ireland, which was carried against the Ministry, but Mr. Fortescue subsequently moved a counter-resolution, which, after a considerable discussion, was carried.

## Corfu and England

Nevertheless a letter from Mrs. A. Tennyson tells me that Alfred is writing away. (I saw CEnone on the plains of Troy: she had a pink gown on: one arm and one breast wholly uncovered, a large mole upon the latter & a slight moustache on her upper lip: altogether a different person from what one expected.)

Sir J. Young's notice of me was flattering, tho' I vow I was never agreeable at all. Lady Y. is a good-natured lively woman, albeit she takes no especial part such as her position might warrant, as to schools &c. &c. I believe seemingly Sir John is an amiable well-meaning man, but wholly easy & quite in the hands of Bowen: as indeed how for a time can it be otherwise, since in so short a time, not even Solomon could understand these Islands.

Please give my best remembrances & compliments to Lady Waldegrave. Her conduct to her father and family has evidently always been heart-action, and everyone respects her for it, as being like unto what very few dare to practise.

I trust to paint a magnificent large view of Corfu, straits, and Albanian hills. This I trust to sell for 500£ as it will be my best, and is 9 feet long. If I can't sell it I shall instantly begin a picture 10 feet long: and if that don't sell, one 12 feet long. Nothing like persisting in virtue. O dear! I wish I was up there, in the village I mean, now, on this beautiful bright day! However I got unwell, & bluedevilled, & I made up my mind that I could work no more till something called out my boddly & mentle N.R.G.s.

## Letters of Edward Lear

So I said, I'll go to Mt. Athos : (I should have gone to M. Negro with A. Seymour had I not missed the steamer). And off I set on Aug. 7th taking my servant, canteen, bed & lots of paper & Quinine Pills. F. Lushington saw me as far as *φιλαθες*, but then I fell down a high flight of (19) stone stairs & damaged my back sadly. I thought I was lame for life, but after 4 days on a mattress, I got on pillows & a horse, & went over to Yannina & to Pindus, & (in great pain) to Larissa, & finally to Saloniki. There getting better I went slick into Τὸ Ἅγιος Ὄρος or the Holy Mountain, altogether the most surprising thing I have seen in my travels, perhaps, barring Egypt. It is a peninsular mountain about 2000ft. high & 50 miles long ending in a vast crag, near 7000 feet high, this being Athos. All but this bare crag is one mass of vast forest, beech, chestnut, oak, & ilex, and all round the cliffs and crags by the sea are 20 great and ancient monistirries, not to speak of 6 or 700 little 'uns above and below and around. These convents are inhabited by, altogether perhaps, 6 or 7000 monx, & as you may have heard, no female creature exists in all the peninsula :—there are nothing but mules, tomcats, & cocks allowed. This is literally true.

Well, I had a great deal of suffering in this Athos, for my good man Giorgio caught the fever, & nearly died, & when he grew better I caught it, but not so badly. However I persisted & persisted & finally I got drawings of every one of the 20 big monasteries, so that such a valuable collection is hardly to be





TEMPE.

(From Lear's "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Albania and Illyria," 1851.)



## Corfù and England

found. Add to this, constant walking—8 or 10 hours a day—made me very strong, & the necessity I was under of acting decidedly in some cases, called out a lot of energy I had forgotten ever to have possessed. The worst was the food & the filth, which were uneasy to bear. But however wondrous and picturesque the exterior & interior of the monasteries, & however abundantly & exquisitely glorious & stupendous the scenery of the mountain, I would not go again to the "Άγιος Όρος for any money, so gloomy, so shockingly unnatural, so lonely, so lying, so unatonably odious seems to me all the atmosphere of such monkery. That half of our species which it is natural to every man to cherish & love best, ignored, prohibited and abhorred—all life spent in everlasting repetition of monotonous prayers, no sympathy with ones fellow-beans of any nation, class or age. The name of Christ on every garment and at every tongue's end, but his maxims trodden under foot. God's world and will turned upside down, maimed, & caricatured:—if this I say be Xtianity let Xtianity be rooted out as soon as possible. More pleasing in the sight of the Almighty I really believe, & more like what Jesus Christ intended man to become, is an honest Turk with 6 wives, or a Jew working hard to feed his little old clo' babbies, than these muttering, miserable, mutton-hating, man-avoiding, misogynic, morose, & merriment-marring, monotoning, many-mule-making, mocking, mournful, minced-fish & marmalade masticating Monx. Poor old pigs! Yet one or two were

## Letters of Edward Lear

kind enough in their way, dirty as they were : but it is not them, it is their system I rail at.

So having seen all, and a queer page in my world-nollidge is Athos!—I came back to Saloniki, and set sail for the Dardanelles, where being obliged to stay 4 days for a steamer, I spent 3 in seeing Troy. But dear Mother Ida I could not reach, & I do trust to go there in the spring of 1857, for there is a something about the Troad scenery quite unique,—if it be not equalled by the R. Compagna as to grand and simple outlines.

Thence I came by sea to Corfu, getting here on the 7th & being thrust into this place till Saturday the 11th & be d——d to the owls for their folly.

### *Fortescue to Lear.*

RED HOUSE, ARDEE,  
9th December 1856.

. . . I am delighted to hear that, while you abuse the “Ideal,” you are growing rapidly into the ideal Edward Lear—the “model man.” Don’t you know that there is somewhere or other an ideal Edward Lear—and an ideal Chichester Fortescue? There we are arranged in some Divine Museum—probably ticketed to avoid mistakes : the question is, how like the actual E. L. and C. F. are to their *idée*. Do you think we should know ourselves? Let us try—in God’s name—to grow as like our ideals as we can. What a splendid saying that is “till we all

## Corfu and England

come to the *Perfect Man*—to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” . . .

I am looking forward to Tennyson's book. My temper was sorely tried the other day by old Lady Ormonde saying that “she wondered how an old man could write such nonsense as Maud.” .

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU, II. *January 1857.*

Let me see, the best way to answer your letter is to look over the document hisself, & go on a answering it symoniously. . . . 1st Come remarks about my Athos tour:—I am getting up (by my usual dilatory but sure process of penning out and colour) all my drawings of the Monasteries, and have them ready all but 10 or 12, thanks to after dinner applection and stayathomeaciousness. They are a reemarkible lot of work, as I hope one day you will see: mind, if you *do* come while I am here, I have now a better spare bed-room than you'll get anywhere in the town, & you should do just as you liked, barring leaving the windys open all night, because then my landlord's 29 cats would perforate the domestic tranquillity of my establishment. I must tell you with a feeling of pride & conflatulation that I have made such progress in Greek as to be able to read the Testament (in *old* as well as modern,) quite comfortably:—and since I can read the life of Christ in the Original, my desire of seeing the actual places he lived in are not to be stoppled any more.



## Letters of Edward Lear

I gain more fixed and real ideas from the actual history than from our translation.

2ndly I understand you now quite about the "Ideal":—My dear boy, I alas! am a long long way off my ideal! & I don't see how it can ever be got at, though I am notwithstanding happy to say that I sometimes DO think I am a little bit nearer the mark than I was. But, hang it, there *must* be an ideal *Mrs* Lear to make up the perfect ideal, & how that is to come about I can't yet tell. Some of your expressions on this head are exactly like my friend Lushington's here, only that yours come out spongetaneous, whereas his have to be got at by wrenching and imploring, he being, though a diamond as to value, yet hidden in a tortoise's shell, & doing nothing so little as contributing an iota of personal experience for the benefit of others.

3rd About the blessed Bowen. On the day your letter came, burst out the news that he was, to use his own account, "offered the Gov. Secretaryship of Mauritius, such change being intimated as a mere step to further advancement:—and that he should return here as Lord H[igh] C[om].<sup>1</sup>

4th All you said of "Maude" is true & interesting. O my i! Lady Ormonde!. In this queer place very few ever heard of Maude or Tennison, & if you hear of such a song spoken of as from "Maude" so certain are you to hear "oh! indeed! Colonel Maude of the

<sup>1</sup> Bowen did not go after all.

## Corfù and England

Buffs! very distinguished officer, but I had not the least idea he was a poet!"

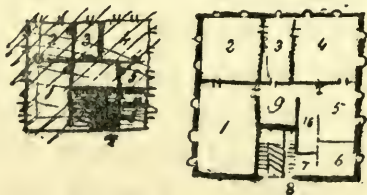
5th I trust your Aunt<sup>1</sup> will recover quite and be spared to you many years. You are a great comfort to her, & I certainly should like to see her. Somehow that does not seem to me so much off the cards as a year ago. For though I shall hardly come to England this year, yet if I do so next, I really believe you'll see me in Patland. Prepare notwithstanding the ideal, to see me a good deal changed like Dan Tucker, all de wool comes off my 'ed, & I am older than Babylon in many ways. I wish sometimes I grew hard and old at heart, it would I fancy save a deal of bother:—but perhaps its all for the best.

There, that is all of the answering. And I must needs wind up with a short & serious account of myself. On coming out of Quarantine, the brutal earthquake having spifflicated my old rooms, I had to remove, & I thought it better to get an expensive place at once, on condition I could find a room for work. Whereby I took the ground floor of Scarpa's house on the Condi Terrace, or more properly speaking, Bastione, St. Atanasio,—for which I pay 6£ a month. This is the plan of the baste. 1. is my stewjew 30 feet long: 3 windys all a looking to the North East, whereby the light is always perfect.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Ruxton, widow of Mr. Ruxton of Red House. She was devoted to her nephew Fortescue, and this affection was fully reciprocated by him. He spent much of his time with her at Ardee.

## Letters of Edward Lear

This room I use only as a study,—Greek & painting. My great 9 feet canvas makes a good show of work in it just now. 2. is the sitting & dining room : very



nice & comfortable,—library,—good table,—matting, & very old prints of Oxford Terrace around : Tennyson, Lord Derby, & Mr. Hornby portraits : various Athos oddities here & there. 3. is a small & sinopothomastic chamber adorned with my framed sketches & pick pictures as are finished, for people to come & see. Vich the coming of a live Markis & Marchioness (Drogheda) and several other members of the Peeriage vos the proudest moment of my life. 4. is my bedroom plain & comfortable. 5 a lumber & spare room—to be done up proper for you when you come. 6. my man Giorgio Kokali's<sup>1</sup> room. It is Mr. Kokali's opinion & compliment that the painting I am now doing of Corfù will prevent all other Englishmen coming here, for says he *διότι είναι ὥστε τὴν φύσιν, τόσον ἀκριβῶς ὅτι κανένα θέλει νὰ πληρώσει νὰ ἔλθῃ ἐδῶ*—where's the good of people paying for coming so far if they can see the very same thing at home? Giorgio is a valuable servant, capital cook, & endlessly obliging

<sup>1</sup> Giorgio Kokali, Lear's faithful servant, lived with him till he died at San Remo, when his son took his place.

## Corfù and England

and handy, not quite as clean as I should like always, but improving by kindness. I teach the critter to read & write, & he makes long strides!

Over-head live Major & Mrs. Shakespeare, really clever & nice quiet people. The houses here are so thin that one hears everything, so good neighbours are real blessings. Condi Terrace is the "West-end" of Corfu and we are all more or less swells as lives in it. Next door lives my friend the Justice F. Lushington. Further on the Cortazzi, a family of whom more another time. Then the Parson, which is a brick. At the other end Colonel Gage, & the other Justice Sir James Reid.<sup>1</sup> If you come I'll ask them to come and dine: being a distinct Lord of the Treasury<sup>2</sup> it behoves a friend to match you with almighty swells.

Well I set to work fearfully, riz at 5½ always—at 6½ & to 8½ ὁ διδάσκαλος ἔρχεται.<sup>3</sup> And then I paint till 3 or 4 having breakfasted at 9 and I walk a bit till 6. Dine at 6½, and pen out my Athos drawings till 10. My 'elth is on the 'ole pretty good & I can work longer than before this year. My big Corfu will be a stunner, & I mean to try for 500 guineas for him, he be 9 feet 4 inches long, & 6 feet 'i. I hope to get him to Manchester in time.

I meant to finish out & out a regular long letter

<sup>1</sup> Member of the Supreme Council in Ionian Islands, holding office of Supreme Justice in rotation, 1837-58.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue was appointed a Lord of the Treasury in March, 1854.

<sup>3</sup> "The master comes."



## Letters of Edward Lear

but cannot do so, for 6 letters having come by post, and among them one very sad one from Holman Hunt, who writes in great affliction on account of the death of his father, and of Seddon our friend who was with us in Egypt.<sup>1</sup> So I have to reply to that as well as 3 others. One is from Alfred Seymour, a very nice letter. I am so sorry I have not received one he wrote from Vienna. If you see him, thank him & say I will write very omejutly. Moreover, the wind has turned South & so virulent, that my chimblly smokes, so that I can't go on no how, & it is so damp & cold I must go to bed I fear. This is the only drawback to the house.

The Palace folk continue to be very kind to me, & I like them better. Sir John Y. is evidently a kind good man, & I fancy more able than he was thought to be. The truth being that it is no easy matter to act suddenly, where as here, language & people are unbeknown & all power is in the hands of the secretary. Lady Y. lives too much for amusement, but she certainly improves & I believe I should end by liking her very much if I saw more of her. Now my dear boy I must close this as the Cyclopes used to say of their one eye. I wish I had written more or betterer, but can't. My 'ed is all gone woolgathering. Do you write again as soon as ever you can, if ever so shortly, & believe me always, Dear Fortescue,

Yours affectionately

EDWARD LEAR.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Seddon, the landscape painter.



## Corfu and England

May this and many others be very happy New Years to you.

Here my boy! give me your eternal thanks for what I am going to suggest to you as a parliamentary motion, to be brought out & spoken on by yourself, to the ultimate benefit of society & to your own post-perpetual glorification. As soon as Parliament meets, move that all Sidney Herbert's distressed needle-women be sent out at once to Mount Athos! By this dodge all the 5000 monks young and old will be vanquished:—distressed needle-babies will ultimately awake the echoes of ancient Acte, & the whole fabric of monkery, not to say of the Greek church will fall down crash & for ever. N.B. Let the needle-women be all landed at once, 4000 at least, on the South-east side of the peninsula & make a rush for the nearest monastery, that subdued, all the rest will speedily follow.

CORFU, *May 1*, 1857.

My dear 40scue, *May 4*. Which the above was writtle flee days ago, but this very mominlet comes a letter from you, date *Apl. 23*? as usual always one of my regular pleasures. Now, this letter will neither be a nice one nor a long one, but, just the hopposit for it is to say I am coming to England fast as I can, having taken a rédboom at Hansens 16. Upper Seymour Street, Squortman Pare, and also a rork-woom or Stew-jew at 15 Stratford Place.

My big picture is in a mess, & without Holman Hunt's help I can't get on with it, though it is done

## Letters of Edward Lear

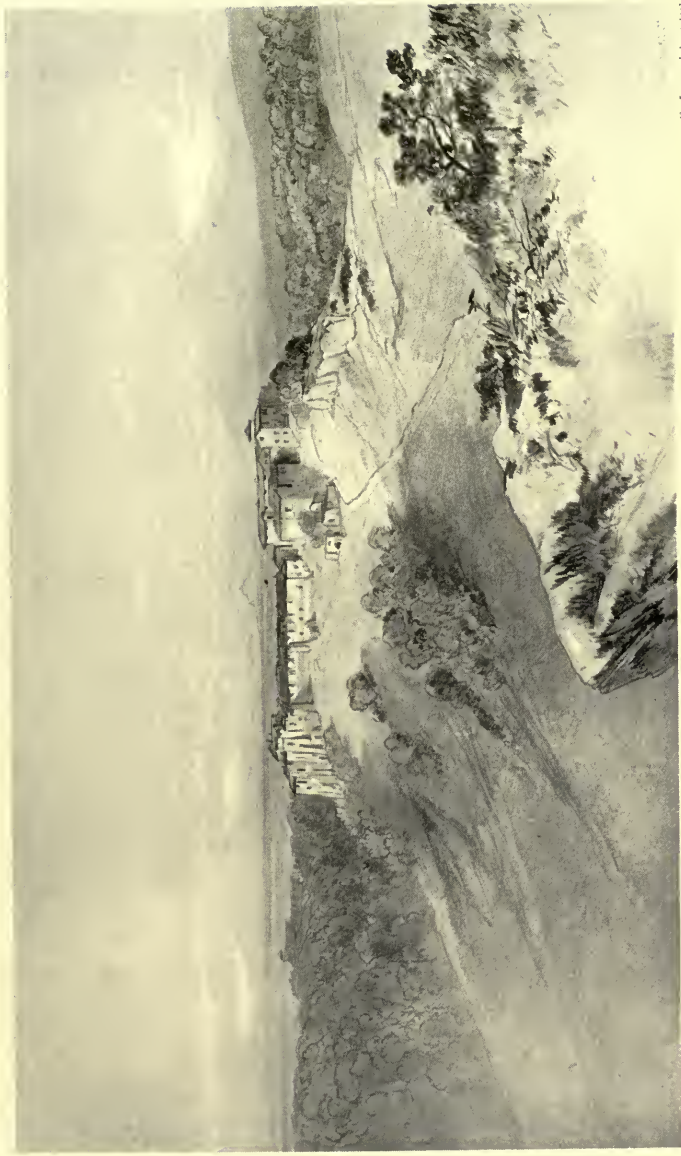
as to what must necessarily be done here, and requires but 2 months of cropping and thought. Pray heaven I may sell it. I bring to England my drawings of Athos, I hope, for publication. Also sketches of Corfû for separate lithogrofigging, & sale here. Also one or two paintings to finish. Why are you coming say you? because I can't stay here any longer—without seeing friends & having some communion of heart & spirit—with one who should have been this to me, I have none. And I can't bear it. And I want to see my sister. And also another sister who is going to N. Zealand, before she goes. And some Canadian cousins. And *you*. And my dear Daddy Holman Hunt, & other people. So I'm off.

*What a talk* we will have! B[owen] goes about saying that Mauritius is very angry that L[abouchere]<sup>1</sup> sent them out a *Doctor*,<sup>2</sup> and beg for *him*. . . . I am glad T. Baring is M.P.<sup>3</sup> he is a good-hearted boy. I shall do you the little Jerusalem con amore. Don't pollygize about your not writing: I gnoo how bizzy u were. I didn't go off East, because Clive did not come, he stood for Derbyshire and failed. I hope I may see Strawberry Hill with you. Give my remembrances to Lady Waldegrave.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Labouchere, at this time Colonial Secretary, became Lord Taunton in 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Humphrey Sandwith, C.B., was appointed secretary at Mauritius. He had had a varied and interesting career, as correspondent to the *Times* at Constantinople in 1853, and as staff-surgeon, &c., during the Crimean War.

<sup>3</sup> For Falmouth.



J. Lear del. et lith.

SAN VITTORINO.



## Corfù and England

How I long to have a talk with you. You seem to me to be much more be firm-ified & be-moral-strengthefied and goaheady since we parted. I don't know what to say about the Secretaryship for the Colonies.<sup>1</sup> Personally I should like you there naturally:—but the place *ought* to be filled by one who KNOWS and *studies* the subject thoroughly. (Stanley<sup>2</sup> for instance.) But I don't say you wouldn't or couldn't. Do not decide hastily on non-application for it. But who is going out of it? Just a beastly letter as this never was! O life! life! life! What is the next to be?

*Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

RED HOUSE, ARDEE, 14. Sept., 1857.

DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,—I think you may be amused by my writing you some account of my visit to Ireland, if you have courage to look at such an alarming sheet of paper as this is: but if it appears too frightful you can easily tear it up, or at least not read it. You will have heard from Charles Braham that we were very comfortable at Ravensdale:—really I never saw a more delightful place, nor a better house than Lord Clermont's, & the days I passed there were most pleasant. I had known Lord & Lady Clermont

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue's friends wished him to apply for the post. He became Under Secretary for the Colonies from 1857 to 1858, and again from 1859–1865. Afterwards he was appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, &c., &c.

<sup>2</sup> Edward John, second Baron Stanley of Alderley, at this time President of the Board of Trade.



## Letters of Edward Lear

years ago in Rome, (even before I knew the Fortescue,) & as they are extremely nice persons, Ravensdale, including possessors, grounds, gardens, house, hills, heather, views, peacocks, & rabbits, rivers, dinners, with all the objects and things in general, seemed to my thinking a first rate place. Nevertheless I was curious to see RD, & the Red House, & above all the Aunt, so that I was not sorry to come here, the rather that I am always more or less disagreeable if I am not at work.

The Irish are funny people, & the moment one lands here it is evident that England & Ireland are very different countries in many respects. Among other odd ways of speech, the common people never by any chance say Yes, or No, :—*e.g.* Is it time to go? "*It is not Sir*" or "*It is Sir*" Have you cleaned my boots. "I have Sir" or "I have not Sir." When we asked at Dublin if the Scientific Association meeting was over, they said "Indeed & it isn't, but the strength of it is pretty well broken," as if it were a revolution. But one of the best absurdities is told of an old woman here, who though pretty well off grumbled horribly, & when they said to her that for good clothes, prosperous children, a kind husband & comfortable house she ought to thank God—"And sure don't he take it out of me in Corns!" said she. I go into fits of laughing here, when they call after Fortescue, "MIMBER!" and it is also very queer to hear them congratulate him on being at home again.

But the wonder and crowning part of Redhouse is

## Corfu and England

the Aunt, Mrs. Ruxton :—I never saw such a delightful or so extraordinary an old lady :—at 85, she has all the activity of mind and body of persons at 60 in usual life, & far more of the bright intelligence, absolute fun, constant cheerfulness, unselfishness, good sense and judgment, kindness of thought & deed than usually can be found united in any individual of any age. Only she is a little deaf, but that at times, not always. It is quite singular to observe how she enters into the interest of all kinds of matters, & never seems to tire, tho' she is out in the garden by 7, & goes to bed not before 11 at night ! What with her garden, the grounds, the house, writing letters, visiting her poor people, attending her schools, (she drives herself about in a pony-chaise,) reading and talking, she never seems to have an unoccupied moment, & tho' at first I thought this might be an unusual state of things, I find she is exactly the same day by day. The old lady has still the remains of great beauty & her expression is one of the most perfectly benevolent & animated you can imagine. She is immensely fond of Fortescue, & no wonder, for he is just like a son to her. Chichester Fortescue has in fact appeared to me quite in a new light since I saw him here : I always knew many of his qualities well, his good and general taste in matters of literature, art, &c., his great truthfulness & his warm and generous disposition : but I was not prepared to find him so active in all county & parochial business, nor had I ever seen him in the position of a most affectionate child as he is to Mrs.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Ruxton. It is always a great thing to find that longer and closer knowledge of character makes it more esteemed & liked, and my stay here has already caused me to think higher of Chichester Fortescue & to like him better than I ever did before, & that is saying no little.

Another point of Mrs. Ruxton's character is her quiet & regular piety, though that you might assume from my description of her goodness : she is in a word a tip top Christian multiplied by 20 & I never believed I could see so much to admire in any old lady.

Our party is small here only Chichester Hamilton, Fortescue's nephew, a good quiet lad. (They are all anxious enough about his brother John,<sup>1</sup> who is near Benares). And a fourth person is a lady, formerly governess to Miss F[ortescue].<sup>2</sup> A very good person also, but given to enunciate sentences & ask questions as if she were reading from a book in a manner that tries our gravity now & then. "Have you ever, Mr. Fortescue, been induced to tempt the tempestuous waves of the remote Atlantic in order to visit the wondrous New World?" "Tea is an innoxious & wholesome beverage & is acceptable at all times," are specimens of what I mean :—but Miss B. is very full of information & very amiable & attentive to Mrs. Ruxton. After prayers & breakfast, I collapse into a

<sup>1</sup> John Hamilton was at this time holding a post as Engineer, and was in the thick of the Indian Mutiny. He died on October 19, 1858.

<sup>2</sup> Younger sister of Fortescue, and wife of David Urquhart, later M.P. for Stafford.



MRS. RUXTON.

*From a photograph of a picture.*

*To face page 54.*





## Corfu and England

small studio which they have given me, where I paint away till luncheon time, & again afterwards till 6, when I walk with C. F. till 7 : but I am not sure that the experiment of working in a friends house is a good one, seeing that I am always wrapped up in what I am about, and as I rarely succeed as I wish, am in proportion cross and disgusting. Meanwhile everybody is very kind and good natured and lets me do as I please, so that I have nothing particular to growl at, not even having corns, like the old lady above mentioned.

DUBLIN ROYAL HOSPITAL,  
3. *October*, 1857.

I have at last left the Red House and its happy family, for so they really are. I cannot remember to have been so happy for a long while past. As for Mrs. Ruxton, she is certainly a more extraordinary and delightful old lady than any description can convey an idea of: she is so constantly the same and yet with such varied interest and liveliness that one cannot help liking her more and more each day. I am so glad to have a photograph of her with Fortescue, which is very good I think.<sup>1</sup> On the 26th F. & I went to Newcastle, which is not in Northumberland as the school books tell us, but in the county of Down, & is a village by the side of the omnivorous ocean. Lord & Lady Clermont had a house there, & the scenery all about the place is very charming. One

<sup>1</sup> The frontispiece is a companion one, taken of Lear and Fortescue at the same time at Red House.

## Letters of Edward Lear

day we passed at Tullamore Park,<sup>1</sup> a really fine place, full of beautiful ruins & bridges & trees & roads & mills & hills, & lawns & laurels & a high mounting above all, up to the top of which, Lady C. F., Miss Hamilton,<sup>2</sup> & I walked, which was not an easy task because we 3 had to go at such a pace to keep up with Fortescue,<sup>3</sup> who, having the luncheon in his pocket, insidiously endeavoured to distance us, to eat it, so our fears told us, clandestinely, before we reached him. Nevertheless we all reached the top together, & behaved very well & amiably, all of us. In coming down thro' the woods we were seized with frightful pangs of hunger, & devoted some time to the immoderate consumption of blackberries. After that we found a place where there had been a picnic, & we amused ourselves very intellectually for a long period in shying stones at a bottle, which nobody hit, tho' after Lady Clermont & I turned & left the spot, 4oscue & his niece basely made a tinkling sound on the glass, & declared they had thrown at it successfully. After that we found a million of bits of blue paper, torn up by the picnic-makers in triumphant certainty that oblivion would rest upon their names thus destroyed : but we employed a considerable space in sedulously joining all the little bits, & finally made out two cards & addresses, viz, "Miss Maconochie" & "Dr. Forde"

<sup>1</sup> The residence of the Earl of Roden.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue's niece.

<sup>3</sup> Fortescue always outdistanced all walkers, and brought them in a state of breathlessness to the end of their walks or climbs.

## Corfu and England

which we left openly in the middle of the road, to the dismay & disgust of all deceitful & presumptuous lovers hereafter.

On Tuesday the 29th we all broke up, & C. F. & I returned to Red House. A letter came yesterday from John Hamilton at Dinapore, but to his father,<sup>1</sup> so its contents were unknown: but the fact of its being sent seems to be good news, at least of his safety.

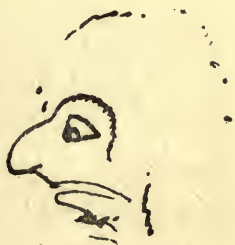
O dear! such a many people have rushed upon me, that I must leave off:—This good kind Lord & Lady Seaton are exactly the same as they used to be 10 years ago. Excuse my detached & absurd note, because I am so distractable.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

ROYAL HOSPITAL Oct. 3. 1857.

MIMMBR!

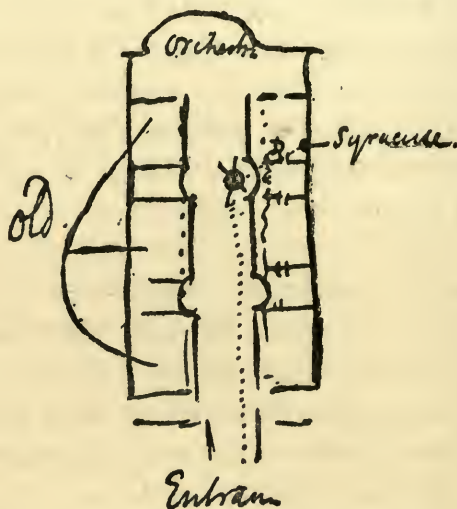
I shall write you a line, though there aint much to say. I got to Dublin safely, only discompozod a little because the only person in the Railway compartment I got into was a very fat woman, just exactly like a picture of Jonah's whale I used to see when a child in a picture bible. I was horribly afraid she would eat me up & sat expecting an attack constantly, till the arrival of the train relieved me of apprehension. At the Bilton I found a note from that kind good Lady



<sup>1</sup> Husband of Fortescue's eldest sister.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Seaton, saying as an old acquaintance of mine, Mr. Drummond & others had left suddingly,—& there vos beds to spear. So I went on, and passed a very pleasant evening. Some of the party were excursing in Wicklow, & among them the fair De Salis<sup>1</sup> who only came in late, & I don't think I delight in her appearance or manners any more than I used to do.



The Pictures gave great pleasure, & I had a good deal of talk with fine old Lord Seaton<sup>2</sup> about the Indian *Revolt*. He believes that Havelock will succeed at Lucknow.<sup>3</sup> I have pretty well made up my mucilaginous mind to cross to Liverpool to-night. The day

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Count Jerome de Salis, and afterwards wife of Col. Challoner, of Portnall Park.

<sup>2</sup> One of the most distinguished soldiers of his time, and a Peninsular and Waterloo hero. He died in 1862.

<sup>3</sup> The city was relieved on the 25th of September



## Corfu and England

is highly beastly & squondangerlous, & there is no fun in going about in the pouring rain in a car to make calls, so I shall write to Arch<sup>d</sup>. Strong, & send a book to Dudgeon's children, whereby you see, albeit I quiet my conscience, yet I am not so virtuous as You thought. However, it is all on your shoulders.

So, I shall very probbably be in the great Exbt<sup>lon</sup>. on Tuesday, after all. Stand at the 2nd arch-place marked X—and looking through the door D. you will see Syracuse.

I wish I was at Redhouse, a dispensing of Butter. Goodbye, my dear Mimibr.

A fortnight or so later, after a series of visits to Henry Bruce afterwards Lord Aberdare another patron of his, Gambier Parry and many others in the South and West of England, he finds himself at Wells, with his old friend Church, now Canon of Wells, and shortly afterwards he writes in Greek from Hackwood :

HACKWOOD PARK, HANTS,

*Noubr.* 2, 1857.

ὦ Φόρτεσκου, Ἀγαπητέμου φίλε

Πρέπει ὅτι σᾶς στέλλω τάντην τὴν ἐπιστολὴν, διότι θέλω ἐπιζρέψει εἰς Λονδίνον αὔριον ; ἤδη ἔγραψα πρὸς ἕνα φίλον μου, καὶ τὸν ἐφάνεροσα ὅτι ἤθελον πηγᾶινει νὰ γευματίζω μετ' αὐτοῦ,—εἰν αὐτὸς μὲ ἤθελα γράψει ὅτι εἶναι εἰς τὸ σωτηγόν σου,—ἀλλὰ, ὅταν δὲν μὲ ζτέλλει τίποτες,—δυνατὸν καὶ καλὸν πρᾶγμα ἤθελεν εἶναι νὰ γευματίζωμεν ὁμοῦ.—Ὁ ὁ μεγάλος



## Letters of Edward Lear

Κρίτης, ὁ Κύριος Ρικκάρδους Μπέδελλ θέλει ὅτι σὲ πέμπω  
τῶς ἀσπασμούς σου.<sup>1</sup>

Which is to say, if the Beadons aint at home, what time shall you be where & when & which? If I get no note from them I will call on you at any hour you will name in a note sent to 16 Upper Seymour St. or be at the Blue Posts &c.

<sup>1</sup> Merely saying to his "beloved friend Fortescue" that he has already written to another friend to propose himself to dine with him, but if he does not do so he will dine with F. He ends up with "O mighty Krites, Richard son of Cyrus wishes me to send you greeting." Lear's Greek is "atrocious," so scholars I have consulted have told me. But with so exact a man, so minute in detail and with such a perfect ear, as Ruskin said, for versification, I cannot help thinking that perhaps a part of what seems to the outsider hopelessly incorrect may have been intentional, and that there was "a method" of his own in his madness. In English he joked and, as it were, executed acrobatic somersaults of imagination to the wildest degree in that language, and it is possible he may have attempted the same thing in Greek, a sample of which may be seen in his translation of "Oly mountain," the wrong turn of the apostrophe, being, I feel sure, made intentionally.

It has been thought best to give the Greek sentences in words as near the original as possible, but this is difficult, as Lear always turned his Greek *l*'s upside down besides giving a double-lined comet-like tail to them, and ornamented with wonderful flourishes and additions many other letters. Besides, he was, it must be remembered, learning ancient and modern Greek at the same time, and who knows what combinations he may have effected consistent to his own mind if to no other? Therefore I ask leniency on the part of readers understanding Greek, both as to orthography and translation.

I would also add in this note that Lear loved to "frisk and to gambol" in spelling as in all else, and the results in the following letters have been most carefully preserved by both editor and publisher, and in no case are *misinterpretations* or *misprints*.

## CHAPTER III

November, 1857, to March, 1858

CORFU

SETTING out for Corfu again on the 20th of November, he writes :

*Lear to Fortescue.*

PAIRLIM HOTEL, FOLKESTONE,

20 Nov. 1857.

I got your last letter at Hastings, together with an extremely nice one from Chi:—Many thanks, & also for the extracts from dear old Mrs. Ruxton's letter. Do not forget to thank her from me, & also the Chi. for his letter.

All the ill luck and bad omens possible seemed to conspire to prevent my starting, 1st the ticket master at Lewes gave me a wrong ticket, (on my way to Bournemouth,) so I was hauled up at Brighton, & nearly missed the Portsmouth train: but I didn't. 2nd. We ran into a semishunted goods train at Botley, & squashed our carriages. Happily we were not

## Letters of Edward Lear

going fast. Meanwhile my back was very badly jarred, & I was unable to walk without great pain. Laying up next day at good Mrs. Empson's bettered me & tho' still very lame, I am now getting over the wrench. At first I thought I could not have started at all. . . .

To-day at noon I am going to start by the stereopyptic sophisticle steamer & so on to Paris—the weather being miscelaynious & calm, thanks be to Moses.

I am glad to know you are working hard :—the more you conquer the details & grammar of the “whole duty” of the Colonies, the better for you. Know every detail of every kind in all the colonies if you can, & the character &c. of everybody employed. For, whenever (if ever) the time should come that you may put into practise theories of a wider & grander kind than fill the noddles of many men, then you will feel the advantage of being up to the full use of the instruments & circumstances you have to work with & by—to shift, control, or forbid, as fate may turn up. I quite understand your dinner at the Chiefs :—he is a good easy man used to public life :—voilà tout.<sup>1</sup>

Of *you*, I heard a grumpy man say a few days back, to my great pleasure, “That F. used to be the veriest idler, & would have turned out good for nothing in spite of his head if he hadn't begun to work—but now he does, I can see, besides being told

<sup>1</sup> Labouchere.

## Corfù

so." I hope to be in Corfù by the first week in December.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFÙ, December 6. 1857.

I cannot persuade myself to do anything for more than 10 minutes. Painting, drawing, looking at sketches, reading all kinds of books, German or Greek exercises, sitting still, or walking about, not a possibility of application can I make or discover. But for all that I shall try to get a letter done for you, because I shan't be able to get on at all unless you write, & I know I can't hear till I write first. So here goes, for a fortnight's journal. The knock-shock-sprain which I got in that Southampton train bothered me a good deal as I left England, & it is by no means clear away yet, but I got off hook or by crook on the 20th, & had a neasy passage over to Boulogne, none the less so that there was Lady Somers to talk to & look at:—she is certainly the handsomest living woman. It seems that she, S, & Coutts Lindsay really landed at Athos, & lived there 2 months! in tents, various mucilaginous monx coming now & then to see them. A few more such visits would bust, or go far to bust, the Greek monasticism, I think.

Well, I didn't stay in Paris, except that night, & got on to Strasbourg on the 21st, sleeping there, and going on to Heidelberg on Sunday morning. The rest of the day I passed with the Bunsens,<sup>1</sup> who live

<sup>1</sup> Baron and Baroness de Bunsen. He had been German Ambassador in London 1841-54. She was the eldest daughter of Benjamin Waddington, of Hanover.



## Letters of Edward Lear

in a house opposite the castle : I thought that evening very pleasant and quiet, talk & music & domesticity, which you know are in my way. Next afternoon, 23rd, I got to Frankfort & cut away all night long, sustaining myself by a big bag of books, which I read by lamplight till day break. Have you read C. Bronte? It is very curious & interesting. The morning & middle of Tuesday 24th, I passed at Dresden, certainly the prettiest city I ever saw, but how cold it was! Allowing time to dine, I got on to Prague by night, & without stopping, to Vienna early on the 25th. Undoubtedly the railroads in Germany are most delightful, when compared with ours ; nevertheless long continuance of railway travel plays the deuce with my irritable mind & body. I found out the hearty good Morier soon, & saw a good deal of him that day & the next. We got on very simultaneously, (none the less so because he speaks of you in a way that pleases me,) & had long talks on various subjects. Robert Morier<sup>1</sup> seems to me a man who thinks about his business or profession, & I imagine he would be one to get on, if want of talent and want of principle were not a sure pass to prosperity. We talked too of Tennyson, Pattledom, Strawberry Hill, & all kinds of things ; nor was a very good dinner and wine an item of my visit to be left unnotified.

<sup>1</sup> At this time unpaid attaché at Vienna. He fulfilled Lear's prophecy, and had a long and useful diplomatic career. In 1884 he became ambassador at St. Petersburg till his death in 1893.



## Corfu

Early on Friday 27th I was off to the Rail again, & certes no scenery can be more striking, beautiful, wonderful than that of the R. way between Vienna and Trieste. But I wasn't sorry to be at my journey's end, nor the next day, to embark in the "Jupiter" for Corfu. The first part of the voyage was Hell:—that is a mild expression for the torture I suffered, but I can't find any stronger at present:—the second part was better, and anyhow the whole was short, for we were at Corfu by 8 on Monday 30th. And as my man Giorgio came down to meet me, and as my boxes went straight to my rooms, which I found all arranged just as I left them, & as I had only to unpack my things,—you can't tell how absolutely ridiculous the effect of the whole common placidness of matters was & is to me. Moreover, Lushington came & asked me to dine that day, & Sir James Reid the next, & the 46th mess for the next, & the Youngs for the next, & as in all these cases, plates, food, conversation, & persons were precisely the same as they all were 6 months ago,—the ludicrous sentiment of standstill & stagnation was truly wonderful. Wonderful at first, but gnawing & shocking to me now. My dear Chichester, I do not know how I shall bear it, being an ass:—& if you don't write, & if others don't write, I really can't tell what I shall do.

Just figure to yourself the conditions of a place where you never have any breadth or extent of intellectual society, & yet cannot have any peace or quiet: Suppose yourself living in Piccadilly, we will

## Letters of Edward Lear

say, taking a place with a long surface, from Coventry St. to Knightsbridge say. And suppose that line your constant & only egress & ingress to & from the country, and that by little & little you come to know all & every of the persons in all the houses, & meet them always and everywhere, & were thought a brute & queer if you didn't know everybody more or less! Wouldn't you wish everyone of them, except a few, at the bottom of the sea? Then you live in a house, one of the best here it is true, where you hear everything from top to bottom:—a piano on each side, above and below, maddens you:—and you can neither study nor think, nor even swear properly by reason of the proximity of the neighbours. I assure you a more rotten, dead, stupid place than this existeth not.

All this you would understand as coming from me, but others would speak differently of the place. Lady Young for instance calls it Paradise. No drawbacks annoy her at home, and between horses, & carriages, & yachts, she is away from it as she pleases. The Reids do not dislike Corfu as they would, had they not a nice family, and themselves to care about. The Cortazzi are gone, almost all the military offices are full of new people. My drawing companion Edward<sup>1</sup> is gone, & I miss him terribly. I vow I never felt more shockingly alone than the two or three evenings I have staid in.

Yet all this must be conquered if fighting can do it. Yet at times, I have thought of, I hardly know what.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot trace this companion of the former visit.

## Corfu

The constant walking and noise overhead prevents my application to any sort of work, & it is only from 6 to 8 in the morning that I can attend really to anything: Then ὁ γέρος διδασκαλός μου ἔρχεται, καὶ ἐργαζόμεθα ὁμοῦ εἰς τὴν παλαιὰν Ἑλληνικὴν γλῶσσαν.<sup>1</sup> I am beginning bits of Plutarch and of Lucian dialogues. And then, if I can't sleep, my whole system seems to turn into pins, cayenne-pepper, & vinegar & I suffer hideously. You see I have no means of carrying off my irritation: others have horses, or boats, in short:—I have only walking, and that is beginning to be impossible alone. I could not go to church to-day. I felt I should make faces at everybody, so I read some Greek of St. John, wishing for you to read it with—some of Robinson's Palestine, some Jane Eyre, some Burton's Mecca, some Friends in Council, some Shakespeare, some Vingt ans après, some Leakes Topography, some Rabelais, some Tennyson, some Gardiner Wilkinson, some Grote, some Ruskin—& all in half an hour O! doesn't "he take it out of me" in a raging worry? Just this moment I think I *must* have a piano: that may do me good. But then I remember Miss Hendon over my head has one, & plays jocular jigs continually. Then what the devil can I do? Buy a baboon & a parrot & let them rush about the room? Δὲν ἔξέρω τίποτες.<sup>2</sup> I still hold to going to Palestine if possible.

<sup>1</sup> My old master comes and we work together upon the ancient Greek language.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps I shall discover something.

## Letters of Edward Lear

If I could but get myself comfortable and untwisted by the noise & general discomfort of these houses, I think I could bring myself right yet, but I cannot tell. Sometimes I think I must begin another big picture, as I want something to gnash & grind my teeth on. If Helena Cortazzi had been here, it would have been useless to think of avoiding asking her to marry me, even had I never so little trust in the wisdom of such a step.

That's enough of me, I think for this once. If you don't write a lot about yourself you are a spider & no Christian. Meanwhile things here are *not* as, by all I was led to suppose, they were represented to you as being. . . .

There is one thing here which cannot be grumbled at:—at present at least. The weather, it has been simply cloudless glory, for 7 long days & nights. Anything like the splendour of olive-grove & orange-garden, the blue of sky & ivory of church & chapel, the violet of mountain, rising from peacockwing-hued sea, & tipped with lines of silver snow, can hardly be imagined. I wish to goodness gracious grasshoppers you were here. I believe the cussed people above stairs have goats or ox feet, they make such a deed row. Among the chilly mocky absurdities, opposite me on Friday, as I dined at the Palace, sat Lord Clermont's first cousin, L. J. E. Kozziris: <sup>1</sup>—neither

<sup>1</sup> His mother was a daughter of the second Earl of Clancarty, a cousin of the Fortescues, who in 1843 married Signor Giovanni Kozziris.



## Corfu

Greek, Irish, nor English. As for Lady Y. she looks handsomer and younger than ever. Lord & Lady Headfort<sup>1</sup> are expected daily. How comes it Lord Strangford<sup>2</sup> is dead?

*Dec. 27th, 1857.*

I am glad to hear of your riding: I wish to heaven I could, or purchase a Gizzard. Tell me something of the general aspect of things at Red House, including the curly brown dog & the two milkophagous calves who abode in the square field. I had met Norman Macdonald<sup>3</sup> at Lord Cannings sometimes. Lady Buller<sup>4</sup> his sister, the generals wife here, has collapsed into nonreception along of his demise.

The uppermostest subject in my feeble mind just now is my Palestine visit. I read immensely on the matter, and am beginning to believe myself a Jew, so exactly do I know the place from Robinson, De Sanley, Lynch, Beaumont, Bartlett, & the old writers from the Bourdeaux Pilgrim to Maundsell, not to

<sup>1</sup> The second Marquis.

<sup>2</sup> The seventh Viscount. He had been Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1846. He had some reputation as a political journalist, but was better known in his early career for his connection with the "Young England" party.

<sup>3</sup> He was Controller of the Lord Chamberlain's Department. He was seized with apoplexy while talking with Lady Ely at Lady Elizabeth Hope Vere's, and died quite suddenly at St. James's Palace on the 1st of December.

<sup>4</sup> Wife of Sir George Buller, G.C.B., who after serving in the Crimean War and the first and second Kaffir Wars, was now commanding a division in the Ionian Isles.



## Letters of Edward Lear

speak of Stanley, & Josephus, whose works I can now, thank goodness, read in their natural garb. Now my particular idea at the present hour is to paint Lady Waldegraves 2nd picture from *Masada*<sup>1</sup> whither I intend to go on purpose to make correct drawings, though, whether I shall get up without breaking my neck is a doubt. In that case Lady W. cannot have my painting. My reason for this choice is, that not only I know the fortress of Masada to be a wonder of picturesqueness, but that I consider it as embodying one of the extremest developments of the Hebrew character, *i.e.* constancy of purpose, & immense patriotism. This subject I believe will as it were "match" Jerusalem well.

At present I think my view for Lady W. will either be from Scopus, or from the glen coming up from S. Saba. I shall like to show her all the drawings of this place—which I wish I could see her now walking past, or into this room, with the brown-lilac velvet many banded dress, and a nosegay in her hand. You are certainly right in thinking most women are like Copses after her: only Lady Y. here is not copse-like being highly vivacious: but she lacketh other of my Lady's qualities which one would fain see, hear, & be sensible of. Why the deuce I compare them I don't know, only Lady Y. is the only lively creature here. They have been very good-natured since I came, but I never go to the evening

<sup>1</sup> Now in the possession of the Hon. Mrs. Stanley, of Quantock Lodge.

## Corfù

parties, rising as I do, at a little after 5, I cannot bring myself to dress & go out to parties wholly without interest, at 10.

They asked me on the 15th to meet Lord S. de Redcliffe<sup>1</sup> at a luncheon. He is a remarkable old gentleman, & I was surprised to see him so unbroken & with his eagle eye still so clear. I sat next to Lady Y. at table, and Lord S. shook hands with me across, and was otherwise exceedingly amiable—nothing can be more regal and sostenuto than his manners, and one can only believe in his temper by observation of his brow and eye. Old Lady Valsamachi (Mrs. Heber<sup>2</sup>) rushed in where angels fear to tread & came unmasked to the Palace, with the ancient bore, her Greek husband; but Lord S. was I remarked particularly kind and affable. Just as he went off in the steamer there was an Earthquake, big enough to send people out of their houses & the bells ringing, but whether the coincidental concussion was caused by, or for, Lord S. de Redcliffe, I leave you as a more educated man than myself, to determine.

Since that day I have not been to the Palace, not even to see the live Marquis & Marchioness of Headfort,<sup>3</sup> who with Miss Erskine, Lady H's reputed

<sup>1</sup> See note, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Widow of the Bishop of Calcutta.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Headfort was Lady McNaughten, widow of Sir William Hay McNaughten, Bart., of the Bengal Civil Service. Assassinated at Cabul, Dec. 25, 1841.

<sup>4</sup> Afterwards knighted. Had been private secretary to the Earl of Derby in 1852. He was at this time British Resident at Cephalonia.

## Letters of Edward Lear

heiress, & Col. Talbot<sup>4</sup> on his way to his Island Kephallonia, arrived a week ago. Lord H. is described to me as a well got up blasé old boy; milady not to be perceived clearly, along of Indian shawls and diamonds, of which jewels and of her concealment of them, during a flight from some Afghan place when she was Lady Mc. N., wonderful tales are about.

The weather has been utterly wonderful, this the 28th day since I came, being the first with a single cloud in it! Nor has there been the least wind, or temporal annoyance of any kind, but always a lovely blue & golden sphere about all earth sky & sea. How different from the 2 preceding years this! And the Olives are one bending mass of fruit. I have however walked but little. I grow weary of the 3 dull miles out & 3 back in order to reach any scenery. And although J. has walked with me at times, yet it is a weary silent work, & now that he has got a dog, one cannot help feeling how far more agreeable it is to him to walk with that domestic object, to whom he has not the bore of being obliged to speak. We are on perfect good terms, but all or anything might happen to either, & neither would dream of telling the other, a state of things I do not call friendship. But on this and such a matter I dwell as little as possible. I have to live alone & do so though ungracefully:—(Whereas you who are pretty well alone as to the possibility of others sympathizing with you in your principal interests, manage to do so remarkably well). So I stay at home, and



EDWARD LEAR.

*From a photograph taken about 1853 or 1854.*

*To face page 72*





## Corfu

oppose the morbids. I can tell you that I miss Helena Cortazzi though—a few—now & then. The Reids are good and friendly people, but of them even I see little. Campbell of the 46th (Simeon's cousin) is a really nice fellow, but all these people are mad after snipes & woodcox now, & abjure all intellect & repose. Edward my last years companion I miss abominably. Bunsen <sup>1</sup> as I said is a good little chap, clever, but talks like 50 thousand millions of tongues.

CORFU. *Jan. 3. 1858.*

o mi i! how cold it is! The weather hasn't changed after all, & I believe don't mean to. It's as bright and cold & icicular as possible, and elicits the ordibble murmurs of the cantankerous Corcyreans. As for the English they like the cold generally, I don't:—Notwithstanding which, I must own to being in absolously better health than for I don't know how long past. Yesterday I went up a mounting & made a sketch, *ἔκαμε μίαν ζωγραφίαν.*<sup>2</sup> A majestic abundance of tympanum-torturing turkeys are now met with on all the roads, coming into Corfu to be eaten. These birds are of a highly irascible disposition, and I never knew before 2 days ago, that they objected to being whistled to. But Col. Campbell informed me of the fact, and proved it to me, since when it is one of my peculiar happinesses to whistle to all the Turkeys I meet or see, they get into such a damnable rage I can

<sup>1</sup> Theodore Bunsen, son of Baron and Baroness de Bunsen.

<sup>2</sup> He wrought a painting.

## Letters of Edward Lear

hardly stand for laughing. After all, suppose a swell party in London, say at Cambridge House, if any one person began to whistle furiously at all the rest, wouldn't *they* get into a rage I should like to know?

On the first of the year I was wishing you and others a happy (new) one and many such, when lo! your letter from Holyhead of the 22nd came, to my great pleasure. I am so glad you will have been able to pass your Christmas at Redhouse. Stay, let me look over the epistle, & reply εἰς τὰ ὁπῶια<sup>1</sup> want comments. It *is* (pronounced strongly *izz*) a satisfaction to talk with you, & both doing so & receiving your letters does me a great deal of good.

In re Bunsen—the telegraphic small Bunsen here, talks as I never nevernever heard anyone talk:—he makes you long to scream.

I wish I had studded with you at Dresden.<sup>2</sup> I quite feel how that life and your present one seem like that of two persons, from having seen you in Ireland I now can understand all your life pretty well: the more analysis one brings to what one is interested in, the more one not only understands but gains by the process,—secondo ame.

Ὁ Μῶριε, ὁ παχὺς κὴ καλὸς.<sup>3</sup>

Reflections on daily life, etc.: what you say to me is exactly true, but infernally difficult to follow out, *i.e.* "That the freedom of the inner man consists in

<sup>1</sup> Upon whatever matter.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue lived in Dresden for four months of the winter of 1846 to learn German.

<sup>3</sup> O Morier, big and beautiful.

## Corfù

obedience." Doubtless whenever the time comes that a man so willingly practises obedience as to find no annoyance from the process, he does so with a good will, & therefore a choice, & that is freedom. For my own part at present I find stuffing every

moment with work the sole panacea <sup>a?</sup> } against more  
um? }

thought than is good for one. I only wish there were 28 hours in every day.

I do not, sir, read the Testament now—much—leastways in Greek:—though I could do so with pleasure. But would you believe it, I have read the death of Socrates & Plato. I was so struck by *Φαιδον* that I rose at night and worked till I made out the last part of it entirely. How is it that the thoughts of this wonderful man are kept darkly away from the youths of the age? (except they go to the universities, & then only as matters of language or scarcely more) because Socrates was a "Pagan"? I shall have more to say, & think about, concerning Socrates, whose opinion on death I now read for the first time, & there is no harm in wishing that we two may some day read Plato together; we both have much similar tendency to an analytical state of mind I think. Intanto, my old *διδάσκαλος*<sup>1</sup> persists in keeping me in *Πλουτάρχως*, & also in Lucian's dialogues, & won't hear of Plato. The former, Plutarch, I hate—Lucian delights me as so very absurd and new.

<sup>1</sup> Master.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Dining at the Palace 3 days ago, I sat next to Sir J. after dinner & he talked to me a good deal. (His way of talking of you moreover is agreeable to me.) His appreciation of Greek character is all the more near the right one, inasmuch as he is longer here: but as you say in your last, the firm hand is wanted here, & I add is wanting.

I stop my letter to add what I cannot yet quite realize, but what grieves me most extremely. Lushington writes in a note that Mrs. Cortazzi has just died at Paris. We heard she was ill but not dangerously.

Poor Helena, & Madeline! what will become of those poor girls?

4th. I can't add much more to this, my dear boy. In so small a place as this one is more dependent than I had fancied on the few one sees and at all cares for. The absence of the Cortazzi was a blank in itself, but now to know, that poor Mrs. C. died before she saw her English friends! (She was a Lancashire Hornby, and first cousin of William Hornby who married Sir Philip's daughter,) and without seeing her only son, is sad enough. Besides that, I became interested enough about Helena to feel for her extremely. As yet we know no particulars.

Here are 10 woodcox, what can I do with them all?

I must leave off, I feel like 5 nutmeg-graters full of baked eggshells—so dry & cold & miserable.



## Corfu

CORFU, 10th. *January*, 1858.

I shall begin a letter & let it burn up gradivally like the gun-powder which they throw on the fire. I have been working tooth & nail at Lord Clermont's Athos, & am succeeding in making it the best I have done of that 'oly mounting. In the foreground there is a Nilex tree, which I take no end of pains about, and the little woody dell will I think be a pet bit of the picture with Lord C. It is doubtless, though still to have much added, a better picture than the one I did at Redhouse, but I can't help that. The other 2, Mrs. Empson's Athos and Corfu, are also less good, which I am sorry for, but I can't help either, for naturally every successive piece of work should be better than its foregoer.

And I am doing the bilious memories of *Ξένοφων* concerning Socrates, by which I am immensely interested. Life goes on here very dummily, :—I feel however, the want of forcing myself to undertake some work of a tougher, or more difficult gnashmyteethupon nature. At the Palace I have been once or twice to dinner; for to the Evening Balls I can't & won't go. Lady Y. is always certainly very kind in inviting one, a brute. Lady Headfort comes out each time in new & astounding jewels. We get on very well, having endless topics of mutuality-talk, from Rosstrevor & Lady Drogheda, to "Virginia Pattle," or Afghanistan. They "the court" (I suppose Sir John also) are all off to Athens in a fortnight or so. Lady Y.



## Letters of Edward Lear

characteristically observing "I have always wanted to see the Ball room at the Palace, and there are to be some fine fêtes." My! won't Queen Amelia be down on them! for Sir John's profundities are pretty well known there.

I am reminded that I told you quite wrongly something of the state of feeling here as developed in representation, nearly all the members of this Island are anti-English, the contrary is the case with Cephalonia. Yet in the main perhaps I was right, as to the greater general dislike to us in the latter place. Neither was I correct about the Italian or Roman Catholic element:—The Greek screw has been allowed to be put on so much more strongly, with each successive Govt., that every other consideration is giving way to a settled desire to join Greece, & get rid of English.

After these observations, which are more temperate and less triumphiliginous, than those I last wrote, I shall proceed to state that Shakespear is come, by which assertion I do not mean the author of "As you like it," "Hamlet," or other popular drammers, but the Major of that name of the Royal Artillery, who used to live over me, & whose wife is one of the very nicest, even if not the nicest woman here. They are gone to live in the Citadel, next door to the General. The General objects to the odour of cooking generally & of onions particularly. Lady Buller has not expressed any opinion on the subject so far as is publicly known:—the matter rests in

## Corfu.

a state of oblique & tenacious obscurity for the present.

Last night I, the Shakespear's, & Wyndham, dined with the honourable Edward & Arabella Gage,<sup>†</sup> very good people. We of this Terrace & this part of the town chaff the Shakespears, who now live so far off, and we ask them to "set us down" on their way to "Wimbledon." It is but right you should know the important life concerns of the Island, and therefore I shall not hesitate to insert the following facts before I conclude this morning's scribble. Madam Vitalis, the Greek consul's wife has purchased a large red maccaw. Mrs. Macfarlane's female domestic has fallen down stairs, by which precipitate act Mrs. M's baby has been killed. Sir Gorgeous Figginson Blowing has had an attack of fever. Colonel Campbell (first cousin of Sir J. Simeon,) dined with Mr. Lear the Artist on Thursday. On Friday that accomplished person entertained Mr. Bunsen & Mr. Justice Lushington. Capt. R. has purchased a Cornopeon, & practises on it, (Mrs. G. invariably calls it a cornicopean.) but it is not heard generally, on account of the superior row made by Mrs. Vitalis' maccaw, Capt. P's howling dogs, & about 400 turkeys who live at ease about the terrace and adopt a remarkable gobble at certain periods. Lady H[eadfort] has astonished the multitude by a pink satin dress stuffed with pearls. Bye the bye I heard rather a good thing

<sup>†</sup> Brother of Viscount Gage and a Colonel in the Royal Horse Artillery. Married to a cousin, Miss Arabella Gage.

## Letters of Edward Lear

yesterday, Lady H. (with an aide de camp,) has been "doing" the sights of Corfu, & among others the churches. At the Greek Cathedral a beggar came and importuned the glittering Marchioness, who at the moment was indulging in the natural & pleasant act of sucking an orange. Lady H. after a time paused & said or implied "silver & gold have I none," but such as she had, (being the half sucked orange,) she politely gave the beggar-woman, who (oranges being any number for a half-penny,) threw the fruit in her Ladyship's face, and rushed frantically out of the desecrated edifice.

*Jany. 18th. 1858.*—Hooray! Here's a letter from you dated Jany. 6th. What a good boy it is! I shall post this to-morrow therefore. The day is so cold that I can hardly hold my pen, & feel that all or more than all the population of Corfu will expire, or become icicles. No such cold was ever known here, a keen east wind, the first I have ever felt in the Island. Snow on Salvador:—and a great deal of sad illness among the natives. Of course the Anglo-saxons rather like the freezing than no, I don't, & yet am well because the air is so pure I suppose. Mr. George Cockles, my Suliote, refuses to write his copy. Ποῖος ἠμπορεῖ νὰ γράψῃ, Κίριε, εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κρίον.<sup>1</sup> But until yesterday we have had wonderfully lovely weather & never yet any rain to speak of, sun nearly ever. To-day, however, all is gray and ugly. With your letter came a letter

<sup>1</sup> How did you travel or paint in this cold weather?

## Corfu

from sister Ann, who was 67 yesterday, I am sorry to say.

While I think of it here are two anecdotes, this time from the Citadel. Colonel Campbell has a celebrated horse, a stallion, called "Billy." I hate the sight of him myself, in as much as he bites and kicks whoever he can. The other day being loose, and seeing a helpless horse in a cart, he pounced on him and began to oppress him horribly, the two making any amount of row. This happened opposite Lady Buller's window, whereon the lady being of a tender-heart and a decided manner, opened the window & called out, Sentinel! (Sentinel shouldered & presented arms) "Shoot the horse directly," (Sentinel looks horribly bewildered but does nothing) "Why don't you shoot it"! (S) "Lord Madam! its Billy!" Lady B. "What's Billy? what do I care for Billy? shoot it I say." (Billy all the time tearing & biting the prostrate victim horse.) Sentinel "Can't nohow madam my lady, cause its the Colonel's Billy." Here the General Sir J. came up & tranquillized the agitated nerves, of lady, sentinel, & both horses.

Another anecdote is that Sir Henry Holland<sup>1</sup> being here, & dining at the General's:—Lady B. said promiscuously, "Sir Henry in all your travels were you ever in Albania?" Can't you fancy Sir

<sup>1</sup> Physician to William IV., Queen Victoria, and Prince Albert. Author of "Travels in the Ionian Islands, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia," 1815.



## Letters of Edward Lear

Henry's smile & quiet:—"Why, Lady Buller, I wrote a book on Albania, because I happened to be there as Physician to Ali Pasha in 1812 & 1813."

I think there are no more anecdotes, but, (as Ollendorf may say) there is much ice & innumerable woodcox. They say old Nassau Senior<sup>1</sup> is coming to Athens, also General Fox<sup>2</sup> is reported to be at hand. All last week my *Διδαίναλος* has not been to me his only child being about, I fear, to die: he has lost 4 before, poor man. So I shall poke on alone in Plato & *Ξένοφων*<sup>3</sup> & wish you were here to help me.—To-day all the Palace folk were to come, but Lady Y. is unwell, & could not. I dine there to-night, if I don't die of the cold first. Patrick Talbot is here, whom I like. As yet I do not hear anything certain about Jaffa & the rotten Arribs:—but I shall do so before long. We, intanto, abound in turkeys this year, the whole country is black with them, and a sound of gobbling pervades the Corcyrean air.

My friend Miss Dennett must have had a sad shock by Lord Spencer's sudden death.<sup>4</sup> Everyone should

<sup>1</sup> Author of "Journals Kept in France and Italy from 1848 to 1852," "Conversations with M. Thiers, Guizot, and other Distinguished Persons during the Second Empire," &c., &c.

<sup>2</sup> A natural son of the third Lord Holland. Had the finest private collection of Greek coins in the world, purchased by the Royal Museum at Berlin, 1873. <sup>3</sup> Xenophon.

<sup>4</sup> The fourth Earl. Fought at Navarino, 1827; afterwards Vice-Admiral on the reserve list. Steward of Her Majesty's Household, 1854-57, &c., &c.



## Corfù

know that so high was his esteem for Miss D. (who brought up his two daughters, and was much with Lady S. at last) that he settled an income of £200 per annum on her for life. Let me look over your letter & see if anything wants replying to. I was enormously delighted with it, because being morbid, I fancied I might have written too violently in my last but one. (I remember calling Mr. Labouchere a muff a dummy &c.,) but one gets angry sometimes. The fortifications go on, and the blasted bartizan before my windows will improve the landscape by being blown up. You are very kind to have thought & written to Lady W. as you did about me. I assure you, your active and living sympathy is of value to me here not to be expressed. Dear good Mr. Clark came here two days ago, seeing I have not been at church, but he never said a word about it. He is really a good man spite of the Dogmas & Catechisms. Yesterday I went like a good boy and he preached a sermon from "be not slothful in business" etc. hardly to be surpassed. He might be split into fifteen Bishops.

I can't write any more now, but will try when I come home from the Palace, to finish this. Meanwhile, I must go & try & birculate my clood, by a rard hun on the righ hoad.

11pee hem :—I've just come from the Palace, where the dinner was agreeable enough. I sat next Lady Young, & Miss Eisenbach, the Austrian Consul's daughter, and opposite poor Lady Emily Kozziris :

## Letters of Edward Lear

certainly her husband is a stunner of a misery-bore. Then there were Col. and the pretty Mrs. Herbert, Miss Erskine, Miss Murray, the live Markis and March<sup>ss</sup>, old Eisenbach, Capts. Furville, & Churchill A.D.C's. Nautical Capt. Bromley,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Evans, & the landscape painter. Certes! Lady Y. is a singular woman, no end of talents of a sort, but rayther "proncée." Her singing is sometimes wonderfully good. Old Lord Headfort persisted in supposing Miss Eisenbach my daughter—why, I can't conceive: I wish she were: but I'm glad she ain't my wife.

So I came moam & rote this. Alack my dear Sir John:—you lack some things. They are going to England this year I find.

I meant to have written a lot about the priests & signori, and the good peasantry, & the orange-trees, and sea-gulls, and geraniums, & the Ionian Ball, & Jerusalem Artichokes, & Colonel Paterson, & old Dandolo's palm-tree, & my spectacles and the East-wind, & Zambelli's nasty little dogs,<sup>2</sup> & fishermen, & Scarpe's cats, & whatnot, but I am too sleepy.

CORFU. *Feb. 1. 1858.*

I shall send a little letter to-day, as the time draws nearer for going eastward, so that if possible I may get still one line from you before I start.

I cannot tell you much of anything at present, &

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir Richard Madox-Bromley, at this time Accountant-General of the Navy.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Lear detested and feared dogs and they seemed to dislike him.

## Corfù

besides that I am full of little fussy letters & botherings, I am so cold, as to be half-dead. No such winter has ever been known here, & last night Lushington who dined here was glad, as was I, to wrap ourselves in Railway rugs as we sat on each side of the fire.

While I write the post comes, & one letter contains a bit I will transcribe, as I know it will please you as it does me. "When Lady Waldegrave came to ——, I met her in a spirit of prejudice & ignorance,—but I recovered from that while she staid & *made* herself known. She certainly is one of the most remarkable characters of the day, which few give her credit for being, at least none who know her superficially."

Well I wish I were at Redhouse and you reading me the diary in the small Jam studio :—or walking up & down the long walk with or without Chi, the perspective struggling milkly enthusiastic calves afar off—the Million<sup>1</sup> remotely seen in the far background. I shall write to you from Jerusalem. Goodbye my dear 40scue. Remember if I die you are to choose a book from my books :—B. Husey-Hunt, & W. Holman Hunt are my executors."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Ruxton's companion, so called because she was "one in a million."

<sup>2</sup> The well-known artist and another intimate friend of Lear's. Amusing remembrances of his first meeting with Lear are told in Mr. Holman Hunt's Memoires.

## Letters of Edward Lear

### *Fortescue to Lear.*

RED HOUSE,

Thursday night, 4 Feby. '58

. . . I shall get Beaumont's book and "insense" my Lady about Masada. She has been surrounded by French Royalties and English Dookes etc. etc. What a contrast to my life here! The brilliant crowd of her friends—many of them very intimate—is terrifying. I feel sometimes as if I should not be able to reach her through the throng—or to see her quietly. But I must hope it will not prove so. . . . "So runs the round of life!"

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

13 Feb. 1858

Slowly goes on the Indian horror, (beg pardon the "mutiny") what is John Hamilton about? It does not quite seem to me that "all will be quite settled in a month or two," as the *Times* said a long while back. I hope I shall hear from you before I go, but I hardly think I can get any letter if you have not yet written.

Regarding my lady, courage and quiet: if you do not light on bright times it seems strange: some day or other. Let me know always how you go on.

Now mind, write if you can, I will write once more before I go. Confound the Cats!

Febry. 27, 1858.

Your letter of the 19th. has just come, & is one of the nicest of the many you have written since I



## Corfù

left England. I shall sit down and answer it at once, & this time I won't be irritated if I can help it. I vex myself often after I send off hastily written letters. However, you are so very just as well as kind in weighing my ways and doings, that I am not afraid of having vexed you much. In this infernal hole of a place, so little novelty occurs that some small worry constantly friddles ones temper. You aint "red tape" and you can't help the state of things: whereby I recant my observations.

I am sorry you were so beastly unwell, not but that a good routing may do good, and still more sorry about Mrs. Urquhart's child.<sup>1</sup>

I shall write to you from Jerusalem, & to Lady W. as soon as I have returned from Masada:— It was Miss Dennett who wrote that:<sup>2</sup> I knew you would like it—you do not say you have seen her, Lady W. since your return. Tell her I shall take great pains about her views, if she asks about my going. I think her Sunset must be from Scopus. (Bye the bye, I have been reading a good deal, my old teacher being quite knocked up, so that I have had but 2 months of Greek lessons out of the last 12.—Finlay's 5 volumes of Greece are admirable. Try to get Gambinis pamphlet on the Jews. I have

<sup>1</sup> In this letter of the 19th, Fortescue says: "While in bed received a summons from my sister to go down to her instantly, she having lost her little boy."

<sup>2</sup> The passage with reference to Lady Waldegrave in the previous letter.



## Letters of Edward Lear

just read Paul Ferrol a very nasty odious book. Lady Buller lent it to me. She is a very nice woman, I dined there two days ago for the first time, and was really pleased. Everyone seems to like her. As for Lady Y. she has been a flouncing off to Egina with the K[ing] of G[reece] & the whole Palace party are not yet returned.

I shall long to hear from you in the Holy Land. Clowes<sup>1</sup> has written but does not come:—& so I go alone, & perhaps it is better. There are but few I could travel with & yet keep my own thread of thoughts unwispy & unentangled. The journey to Palestine will give one really a great deal to think of in many ways. Sir J. Reid says I must do a large Jerusalem and get Sir Moses M. or Rothschild to buy it. Now I finish 3 Alphabetes for children—and so get pretty wearied at end of the week. O! for a quiet passage! And again ditto from Alexda. to Jaffa! I shall leave off now, & wind up.

The following letter refers to the overthrow of Lord Palmerston's Ministry in February, 1858. The Bill to amend the Law of Conspiracy, brought in by the Prime Minister in consequence of Orsini's attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French, was the cause of the Government's defeat. Lord

<sup>1</sup> F. Clowes was a godson of Lear's, I think. He was some relation of the Lancashire Hornbys and in the 8th Hussars.

## Corfu

Stanley became Colonial Secretary, but a little later was appointed Secretary of State for India, when Sir E. Bulwer Lytton took his place.

*Fortescue to Lear.*

ST. JAMES' PLACE,

Sunday, February 28 1858

What events have happened since I wrote last! Here I am out of office—no more “red tape” for the present. I wound up at the C.O. on Friday—bid goodbye to Merivale and Co. and had a great many flattering and pleasant things said to me. Merivale was just going to telegraph the news to Malta and Corfu—so that you no doubt know that Lord Stanley is Secretary of State for the Colonies, after having held out for some days against taking office in a Government with which he can feel very little agreement. He is in a false position privately and publickly.

I do not take these political events to heart, but I am sorry for what has happened. . . . These people will very probably not last long, but they may survive upon the dissensions of their opponents—If those were to be made up—particularly the matter of Palmerston and Russell, they would go at once—or at all events would dissolve and then go. . . . Palmerston has greatly mismanaged the French affair. I believe he was spoilt by success, and had become overbearing and rash. At the same time, substantially I think

## Letters of Edward Lear

he's right, in endeavouring to strengthen the law of Conspiracy to Murder, in order to give some protection to our ally the Emperor—or at least to show that we would not have the “right of asylum” so abused, if we could help it, while maintaining the right for all peaceful refugees. Lord Derby, D'Israeli etc. had espoused the same opinion in the strongest way, and I think their joining with Milner Gibson to defeat the Government was a most inconsistent and dishonest party move, but they were unable to “resist the temptation.” . . .

I dined at Lansdowne House last night—a great dinner . . . I got next Lady W. who dined there—in wonderful beauty and force. Then went to a small party at poor G. Palmerston's—he looking low.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

On Pistol shooting, Liars, and other subjects,

CORFU, March 9. 1858.

It is particularly kind of you to have written this last—(date Sunday 28th—) which I got yesterday. All your letters are so like yourself—so even & clear & regular. I have been thinking a great deal about you since this break up, which I believe would have come somehow or other, French matter or not. That was the tree or steeple which drew down the lightning storm, but the storm was all ready to burst somewhere, for sometime past. I had heard enough

## Corfù

of Lord P [almerston] latterly, to expect it :—and his own altered public & private manner, the gross error of Lord Clanricarde's readmission and other things, were but forerunners of a crash ; but I wholly agree with you in every word you write. The combination is odious, & with all respect to my friend & patron, he is not the man to be a leader of England for any long period. I cannot conceive how he can like to be in power on such terms. For Lord Stanley I am vexed, for as you say he cannot really unite with those from whom he differs so much. Pakington<sup>†</sup> I suppose accepted. What sort of a man is Lord Carnarvon ? I believe Lord John will be in tho' perhaps not Premier, before 6 months are out.

In the mean time don't you drop habits of study & business, but keep them up all the more. Make yourself master of anything Colonial. The compliments and pleasant things said are but what was your due, not only for your strict attention to routine of business, but for your earnest wish to do what was right, tho' you had not much power in your hands. Give my love to the late Mr. Labouchere, & say he's a miserable muff. Also to Mr. Merivale & say he is either dishonest or stupid. Thank God you so far as you have gone in public life are as white as a Jerusalem artichoke, and I believe you will always keep so.—Tell both of them they are no better than they should be !

The Palace party are come back, they had horrid

<sup>†</sup> He became First Lord of the Admiralty.



## Letters of Edward Lear

weather & an Earthquake. Corinth is totally ruined, *not one* single house habitable. People all fled. Vialimachi down flat on the ground. These earthquakes are dreadful. Boyle, who has just come back from Naples, fills us with horrors! Amalfi, Sorrento and such lists of old lovely places, all gone! down on the earth, and every inhabitant killed or maimed.

O! here is a bit of queerness in my life. Brought up by women—& badly besides—& ill always, I never had any chance of manly improvement & exercise, etc.—and never touched firearms in all my days—But



you can't do work at the Dead Sea without them. So Lushington, who is always vy kind and good—makes me take a 5-barelled revolver, & I have been practising shooting at a mark (I can hardly write for laughing), & have learned all the occult nature of



## Corfù

pistols. Don't grin. My progress is slow—but always  
(I trust) somewhat. At 103 I may marry possibly.  
Goodbye dear 40scue.

Yrs. affectionately,

EDWARD LEAR.

I've left you all Leeke's Greece, in case of my being  
devoured by Arabs or fever.

## CHAPTER IV

April to November, 1858

PALESTINE, CORFÙ, AND ENGLAND

ON the 13th of March, 1858, Lear set out for his long-projected visit to Jerusalem, accompanied by his servant, George Kokali. Arriving there on the 27th, he writes :

*Lear to Fortescue.*

JERUSALEM, *April 1st.* 1858.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—During my stay here this the 5th., day, every moment has been occupied, or rather fussed away :—writing a long letter to my sister, & a short line to Lushington, walking all about the neighbouring hills, to understand its most pictural points,—endless interviews with interminable Dragomen, besides the hourly distraction of a public Hotel chok full of people, & the overcrowded state of the streets, all this will give you some idea of the landscape painters state of body & mind.

Leaving Corfu on the 13th. or rather 14th. of

## Palestine, Corfu, and England

March, a decent voyage brought me to Alexandria on the 17th, too late for the French Jaffa steamer by one day. So I passed 5 days in a trip to Cairo, which I greatly wish you could see some day, & renewing delightful impressions of the Pyramids, Caliph's tombs, Heliopolis, &c., &c. Returning to Alexandria on the 23rd, I sailed on the 25th. in the Austrian Jaffa steamer, in which the crowds of clean & dirty, high & low pilgrims was a wonder, and you may suppose its combinations to some extent, when I tell you that 20 different languages were spoken on board. Most happily the voyage was fine, or I can't tell you what we must have suffered.

At Jaffa we arrived on the 26th. at noon, but owing to the immense crowd of Eastern pilgrims, the landing & getting under way were most difficult matters, & had it not been for Arthur Stanley's Dragoman, I do not know how I could have got on. By 3, p.m. we were off, loaded & mounted for Ramleh, where we slept, or rather stopped that night. The way thither is through one almighty green lovely corn-field, perfectly delicious at every time of day, and not at all unlike many parts of the Roman Campagna; though more resembling the southern plains of Sicily, particularly in the long unbroken line of blue-lilac hills, poetically the "frowning mountains of Judah," though I could not see any justice in the term so applied to them. From Ramleh the same cheery plain of corn extends to the foot of these hills, & you then ascend through shrubby & stony & olive planted

## Letters of Edward Lear

passes, up & down, (though always upper not downer) till about the 8th hour after leaving the aforesaid Ramleh, you find yourself toiling up a steep & bare rocky hill-side, at the top of which an undulating level of rather wearisome duration brings you in sight of the western walls of the Holy City.

The Holy City itself is just now in a most odious state of suffocation & crowding, this one week uniting all sorts of creeds & people in a disagreeable hodge-podge of curiosity & piety. Lucky it was for me to get even the last single room & one for my servant, and that day I was content to give up struggling through the fearfully thronged hustle-streets, & after a tabledhôte dinner was glad to be thankful & sleep at Jerusalem, which I had so long wished to see. On Sunday 28th, service in our church was a real pleasure—well arranged, simple & good in all respects, and the more to find the preacher an old friend, son of Ralph Barnes the Bp. of Exeter's Secy. Afterwards my delight in going, (on Palm Sunday too,) to the Mount of Olives you can imagine. But the immense beauty of the environs of Jerusalem you *cannot* nor could I before I saw it. Independently of the grandeur of the position of this wonderful place, & the claim every part of its walls & buildings, has on the Xtian as well as the observer of general history & antiquity, most of the vallies of Johosaphat & Himmon abound in beautiful quiet scenes, wholly unexpected by me as part & parcel of Judean Landscape:—Then the ancient tombs cut in the rock, the innumerable flat

## Palestine, Corfu, and England

ones, the scattered olives, (not fine as at Corfu but pollardy,) the constantly varying beauty of the Mount of Olives, the realities of Siloam, Zion &c. and the very ancient traditional sites of Gethsemane &c &c &c., keep you constantly alive to the fresh interest that awaits you at every step. I had not the slightest idea of the amount of wonder & admiration the walks hereabout must call up, in all thinking visitors.

Meanwhile, I am off now to Bethlehem & Hebron in a few hours : too glad to get to some quiet from this noisy place. Thence I go by the Dead Sea to Sebbeh, (Masada) Engedi, Mar Saba, & Jericho, & possibly beyond the Jordan, returning here for a fortnight or 3 weeks.<sup>1</sup>

### *Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

DAMASCUS, 27th May. 1858.

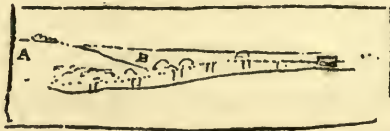
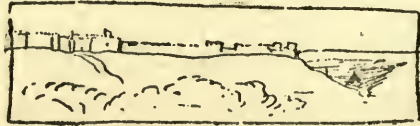
I had thought of writing to you long ago, to tell you what I had done by way of trying to fulfil the commissions you kindly gave me ; but the difficulties of sending anything like a letter " while I am on the road " in these countries, are not to be told. At least they are great to me, who am always unable to write by candle-light; and the early morning is snatched for moving forward, while mid-day heat & weariness put a veto on all labour, but that of catching & flapping away flies. And when in Hotels, (in the very

<sup>1</sup> A scarcity of letters at this period, will be explained by the following paragraph : " I have told Ann [his sister] to send you my letters, & you will post them to the address you will obtain."



## Letters of Edward Lear

few spots where such houses exist) there are so many things to look after and look at, & so much re-arrangement for the next journey, that the time for a real sitting down for letter writing never seems to



come. To-day the Syrian Haj takes its departure for Mecca, and as there is no chance of drawing anywhere out of doors, along of the excitement of the pious Moslem mind, which finds a safety valve in throwing stones at Nazrāni, I shall remain here and fill a sheet, if not two, which may reach you to amuse an hour or two of your leisure some fortnight hence.



My stay in Jerusalem or rather opposite the City,—for I pitched my tents on the Mount of Olives when I had ascertained the point I thought you would like best for your picture, was the most complete portion of my tour: *i.e.* I was able to attend thoroughly, and to the best of my ability to what I was doing, in peace &

## Palestine, Corfù, and England

quiet: whereas much of the rest of my Palestine journey has been toiled through under far other circumstances.

After describing at great length the reasons which led him to select a north-east view of



the city for Lady Waldegrave's picture, illustrated by various little sketches reproduced here, he continues:—

And now what shall I say on the subject of the companion painting? One of the most remarkable as well as of the most picturesque studies, I have



obtained, is of Sebbeh, or Masada, the history of which you will find in ? Translation of Josephus. This was one of the places I so much wished to visit & one which I am so pleased at having drawings of. It is like this somewhat, only I cannot give here what only detail & colour can produce. The great depth

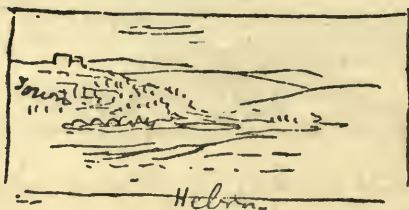
## Letters of Edward Lear

of the ravine below. A. is the Dead Sea :—B. is the line of Moab mountains. This scene, as that of the last Jewish struggle for freedom against Rome, would I think be a very excellent subject in its way, but



MASADA.

in case you should not like this there is Hebron, which is very particularly a Hewbrew antiquity, & is besides sufficiently picturesque to form a good picture : though why Abraham choose to live there I cannot think : I found it abominably cold & wet, & besides, they threw stones at me whenever I drew, so that I wished the whole population in Abraham's bosom or elsewhere 20 times a day.



Another subject which is astonishingly grand is Petra. (Not that I can ever see the sketch without feeling my ears tingle at the memory of the filthy Arab savages.) Petra was the capital of the Nabathœan

## Palestine, Corfu, and England

(or Idumœan) Kings, who reigned in Jerusalem as Herods, & it was one of them who built Masada. The magnificence of Petra is not to be told, I mean the magnificence of combined ruin, splendour of



sepulchral architecture and excavated temples, united to the most romantic mountain or rock scenery & the most beautiful vegetation.

At present the heat is getting too great to allow of my drawing much, & also the country is in such a state that many places can only be visited at the risk of robbery &c., even if the traveller goes over



the ground as rapidly as possible. So travelling,—he may escape outrage, but with me, that mode of progress is useless:—I must stop often and for a considerable time, so that it is not easy to escape



## Letters of Edward Lear

those odious Arabs. The whole plain of Eisdroelon for instance swarms with them, & they attack all passengers. Of known names Lord Dunglas,<sup>1</sup> Col. Cust, Sir J. Fergusson<sup>2</sup> & of unknown names, numbers have been stopped:—and lately many Americans have been robbed & some murdered, which in one sense is a very good thing, since I do not understand that the American Govt., think proper to uphold the fiction of Turkish renovation, & instead of being compelled to pooh-pooh the entirely dislocated state of all order in Palestine & Syria, they will it is to be hoped get riled and act accordingly. If it were not shocking, the fate of one large American party near Nazareth is beyond belief absurd:—the Arabs actually went off with all but one large blanket, of which Mr. & Mrs. T. made two garments & therein rode to the town. Some revenge was probably mixed up in the case, on the part of some Arab it is said they had threatened; for they took every book & drawing, & paper, & even Mrs. T.'s wig & spectacles. Of Dr. Beattie's<sup>3</sup> party 10 days ago, the ill-fortune was as great or even greater:—they were setting out for America, but these animals took all their treasures, not only clothes, but books, collections of plants &c.,

<sup>1</sup> Eldest son of the Earl of Home.

<sup>2</sup> At this time Governor of Malta.

<sup>3</sup> Foreign Secretary to the British Archæological Society. He had been Physician and Private Secretary to the Duke of Clarence.



## Palestine, Corfu, and England

things of no use to them, but I believe taken as diversions for their nasty little beastly black children.

Of my own mishaps at Petra you perhaps have heard; how about 200 of them came down on me, and every-thing which could be divided they took. My watch they returned to me, but all money, handkerchiefs, knives, &c., &c., were confiscated. Since then my 2 muleteers, whom I sent by land from Jaffa to Beirût were robbed of their little all by the way, & one might add others. But, *cui bono!* English people must submit to these things, *because we have no influence in Syria or Paestine, nor in the East generally.* I should like to hear of a French party being stopped or murdered!! The Arabs (& Turks) know too well that neither French nor Austrians can be touched with impunity.

The time is evidently near at hand when all the country will be a field of dispute for Latin & Greek factions once more, and the most miserable Jerusalem once again the bone of contention. If on the one hand the Latin Patriarch is building a great Palace & Convent near Bethlehem, and the Austrians are raising a splendid "Hospital" (a sort of Knight Templars affair,) in Jerusalem itself, to be opened by Pius IX it is said,—on the other hand the Russian clergy have constantly increasing influence among the natives, & even just now a particular delegate has come to the "Holy City" with important powers from Alexander. In the meantime, the "Protestants"

## Letters of Edward Lear

stand alone as a mark for Hebrew, & Heathen, Musulman, Latin, Greek, & Armenian, to be pointed out by all & each as the living Pharisees of the day, professing a better & simpler form of Christ's religion than their fellow Xtians, yet scandalizing the whole community by their monstrous quarrels; their Consuls & Bishops regarding each other with hatred, & each acting to each with open contempt & malignity, while every portion of their resident fellow religionists take one or the other side of the faction. And this forsooth at a place for example for Turks & Jews; this at the very place where He whom they believe the founder of their faith, died! By Heaven! if I wished to prevent a Turk, Hebrew, or Heathen, from turning Christian I would send him straight to Jerusalem! I vow I could have turned Jew myself, as one American has actually lately done. At least the Jews do not lie; they act according to their belief! and among themselves they are less full of hatred & malice (perhaps,—for by the bye, they excommunicated Sir M. Montefiore in 3 synagogues because they said he tried to introduce Xtian modes of life,) than the Xtian community. But these latter, arrogating to themselves as they do all superiority in this & the next life, trample the most sacred doctrines of Christ below their feet daily: "I say unto you love one another" are words which Exeter Hall, or Dr. Phillpotts,<sup>1</sup>—Calvinist, or Puseyite, Monophysite

<sup>1</sup> The famous Bishop of Exeter, who spent about £25,000 in litigation. In 1847 he refused to institute the Rev. G. C. Gorham

## Palestine, Corfù, and England

Armenian & Copt, or Trinitarian Greek, & Latin receive with shouts of ridicule & blasphemous derision. —“ Almost thou persuadest me *not* to be a Xtian ” is the inner feeling of the man who goes to the “ Holy City ” unbiassed towards any “ religious ” faction :— & it is at least my own deliberate opinion that while “ the Christ that is to be, ” is so far, far removed from the Xtian priesthood and Xtians in a body as it is in South Palestine, while, in a word Jerusalem is what it is by & through Xtians dogmas & theology, —so long must the religion of Christ be, and most justly, the object of deep hatred & disgust to the Moslem, of detestation & derision to the Jew. From all this mass of squabblepoison let me except the Americans :—these alone, particularly in Northern Syria seem to think that Christ’s doctrines are worth keeping thought of : as far as I can perceive, they are as much respected for their useful practical lives, as for their uniform peaceful & united disposition of brotherly love one towards another.

One word about the Jews : the idea of converting them to Xtianity *at* Jerusalem is to the sober observer fully as absurd as that you should institute a society to convert all the cabbages & strawberries in Covent garden into pigeon-pies & Turkey carpets. I mean that the whole thing is a frantic delusion. Are the

to the living of Brampford Speke. Gorham appealed to the Privy Council and was instituted in 1850. A fierce controversy arose, in the course of which Dr. Phillpotts excommunicated the Archbishop of Canterbury.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Jews fools that they should take up with a religion professing to be one of love & yet bringing forth bitter hatred & persecution? Have the Jews shown any particular sign of forgetting their country & their ancestral usages, that you should fancy it easier for them to give up their usages in the very centre of that country they have been so long attached to, & for the memory of which they have borne such and so much misery? Once again the theory of Jew-conversion is utter boshblobberbosh—nothing more nor less.

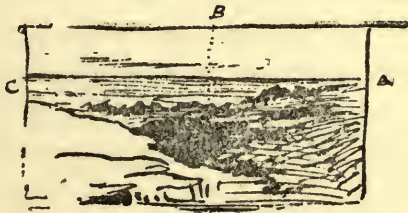
With all this, and in spite of all this, there is enough in Jerusalem to set a man thinking for life, & I am deeply glad I have been there. O my nose! O my eyes! O my feet! How you all suffered in that vile place! for let me tell you, physically Jerusalem is the foulest and odioussest place on earth. A bitter doleful soul-ague comes over you in its streets. And your memories of its interior are but horrid dreams of squalor & filth, clamour & uneasiness, hatred & malice & all uncharitableness. But the outside is full of melancholy glory, exquisite beauty & a world of past history of all ages:—every point forcing you to think on a vastly dim receding past, or a time of Roman war & splendour, (for Ælia Capitolium was a fine city) or a smash of Moslem & Crusader years, with long long dull winter of deep decay through centuries of misrule. The Arab & his sheep are alone the wanderers on the pleasant vallies and breezy hills round Zion:—the file of slow



## Palestine, Corfù, and England

camels all that brings to mind the commerce of Tyre & other bygone merchandize.

Every path leads you to fresh thought :—this takes you to Bethany, lovely now as it ever must have been : quiet, still little nook of valley scenery. There is Rephaïm & you see the Philistines crowding over the green plain—Down that ravine you go to Jericho : from that point you see the Jordan and Gilead. There is Anatoth, & beyond all, the track of Sennacherib—Mishmash, Giba, Ephraim. There is the long drawn hill line of Moab. There is Herodion



where the King-Tetrarch was buried : below it you see the edge of Bethlehem which he so feared. That high point is Neby Samuel and beyond it is Ramah. Close by, that single peak is Gibeah of Saul, where Rizpah watched so long. (Bye the bye that is a 5th subject to choose from, for I went there on purpose to get the view : & wonderful it is. A. the Moab hills. B. Dead Sea. C. Jordan.) And thus, even from one spot of ground, you are full of thought on endless histories & poetries—I cannot conceive any place on Earth like Jerusalem for astonishing and yet unfailling mines of interest.



## Letters of Edward Lear

But to leave an endless subject: My stay at Bethlehem delighted me greatly, And I then hoped to have got similar drawings of all the Holy Land. All the country near it is lovely, and you see Ruth in the fields all day below those dark olives. (This is the 6th subject. A. the Moab hills.) Next to those I came to the Dead Sea, which is a wonder in its way, but the finest part, Ain Gidi, I could not draw well, by reason of more Arab botheration. Beyond there I saw little else of Southern Palestine, the plain of Jericho, but *not*



the Jordan, for there again my beloved Arabs destroyed my peace. Mâr (Deir) Saba, a wonderful monastery "all as one cut of a Cheshire cheese" as my man said:—the plain of Sharon, & Jaffa:—this was all.

The last part of my journey, (for I came from Jaffa by sea to Beirût,) has been of a different kind. All the Lebanon country is safe & pleasant, & the Maronite Xtians are kindly & respectable critters. But on the other hand, there wants that indescribable charm, far above and beyond all local beauty & novelty, which the scenery of sublimer Palestine

## Palestine, Corfù, and England

brings to the mind. The higher portions of Lebanon, *i.e.* the outer side—recall Etna:—& the stonier & more confined scenes, many a well known Cumberland & Westmoreland dell:—The whole plain of Cœlo-Syria, green & lovely as it is, is but Sicilian landscape, or Thessaly on a larger scale. The interior of Lebanon is however wonderfully fine:—a kind of Orientalized Swiss scenery:—innumerable villages dot the plateaus & edge the rocks which are spread on each side of & rise above dark ravines, winding winding downward to the plains of Tripoli and the blue sea. All these I could well have wished to explore and draw, & I might have gone thither, had I not become so very unwell from the extreme cold of the upper part of the mountain as to be obliged to return into Cœlo-Syria as soon as I could, having my drawing of the Cedars as a sign of my Lebanon visit.

Next I saw Baalbec but I can by no means endorse the enthusiasm of travellers regarding these very grand ruins. Their immense size, their proportions, the inimitable labour & exquisite workmanship of their sculptured details; none can fail to be struck with, nor to delight in contemplating. But, all the florid ornaments of architecture, (Roman withall,) cannot fill up the place of simplicity, nor to me is it possible to see hideous forms of Saracenic walls around & mixed with such remains as those of Baalbec, without a feeling of confused dislike of the whole scene, so incomplete & so unimpressive. To

## Letters of Edward Lear

my mind, the grand and positive-simple Temple of Pæstum—the lonely Segesta the Parthenon & Theseium, & above all, the astonishing singleness of the Egyptian temples are worth heaps of Baalbek.

Possibly also, the presence of 6 tents full of English travellers, of a rope-dancer from Cairo, with consequent attendant crowds, & of a village full of tiresome begging impical Heliopolitans had somewhat to do with my small love of Baalbek & its neighbourhood. The day's journey thence half way over Anti Lebanon, & the following journey down hither would be of great interest could more time be spent on the way:—but though I have added little to my collection of drawings, the view of this city and its plain is almost a recompence for any trouble. Imagine 16 worlds full of gardens rolled out flat, with a river and a glittering city in the middle, & you have a sort of idea of what the Damascus pianura is like. I really hope to get a good view of this, but I am sadly put out at losing two days by the vagaries of these horrid Musclemen, not to speak of my being lame from a stone thrown at me yesterday, pig! I shall set off from here on Saturday the 29th & get to Beirût I hope on June 1st.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. 18. June. 1858.

I have brought all my Judean and Cœlo-Syrian drawings back safe, and have gained in energy physical and moral, by this tour into the most

## Palestine, Corfu, and England

interesting land I have ever travelled over, besides filling my mind with scenes enough to last a longer life than mine is likely to be.

My own plans are not for an immediate going away from here unless European war should break out, when I shall come to England at once. Frank L[ushington] goes in a few weeks:—I need not say how I shall miss him:—whenever I have thought him less friendly than I have supposed he should have been, I have invariably found he was acting rightly and uprightly & that I myself had misinterpreted him now and then. He is one of the best unions of mind & principle I have known. I wish you knew him: Do try & do so when he gets to England:—there are few better worth knowing on every account.

Shall all of you come in again? For I don't believe the Derbyites will stand. I regret Lord S[tanley] ever having joined them.

*July 5th. CORFU. 1858.*

Those Jerusalem letters I never had, but I have written to have them sent here. Concerning that, as you justly call it, "ridiculous Bishopric,"<sup>1</sup> I hardly know to whom you can apply. Holman Hunt knows a good deal. Have you seen a pamphlet by Dr. Graham? ask for & get it. Holman Hunt can tell you

<sup>1</sup> The Jerusalem Bishopric was founded about 1841. Lear is referring to the difficulties that had arisen between the Consul and Bishop Gobat, head of the Mission.



## Letters of Edward Lear

where. I don't believe you can really understand the whole mess except by going there & finding out what each party says. You are right to enquire & work. (Did you see a passing observation on yourself in the Saty. mag. (or Leader?) week before last?) Work, work: so that the next turn of the wheel you may be only *one step* below Merivale, not *two* as you were last ministry.(!)

You will be sorry to hear I have had a bad eye, a sty, only more like an abscess: My brain is confused between cause & effect, & I don't know if my being a pig has produced the sty, or whether the sty makes me a pig. But I know I am a pig.

I will send you such a funny book, "The Tempest," Ἡ ΤΡΙΚΥΜΙΑ. It is extremely well translated, Caliban & Ariel are delightful. Isn't this pretty.

ὁ Ἄριελ τραγουδάει.

ἔδῶ 'ς τοὺς ἄμμοις φθάσετε  
κ' ἔδῶ χερσπιασθήτε.  
δῶστε φιλιὰ καὶ λάβετε  
(τὸ κῦμα ἀποκειμεῖται)  
κ' ἔδῶ πιδέξιο στήσετε  
'ς τὴν ἀμμοδιῶ, χορό.  
κ' ἀντιφωνῆστε πνεύματι  
γλυκὰ, σ' ὅτι λαλῶ.  
γεια, γεια, τοὺς ἀγροικῶ.

Ἄντιφ.

Μπάου, βγάου.

γαυγοῦν τὰ φυλακόσκυλα.



# Palestine, Corfù, and England

Αντιφ.

Μπάου, βγάου.

τὸν πέτειν ἀγροικᾶω  
μὲ κορδωμένο φέρσει  
λαλεῖ κουκουρουκοῦ.

τὰ μυστήρια τῆς κεφαλουίας.<sup>1</sup>

This place is wonderfully lovely. I wish you could see it ; if you came I could put you up beautifully, & feed you on Ginger-beer & claret & prawns & figs.

A. Tennyson has written two more poems, one I hear is a dialogue between a gent. & lady.

If I go to Jerusalem, I shall have to ask you a good deal about the matter, as I am inclined to be "impetuous" overmuch, & might start a periodical "The cursed City" as a title.

P.S.—The K. of Greece landed here 3 days ago : & went up to see Sir J. & Lady Y. He was received immensely by the Corfiotes, as you may suppose.

About the middle of August Lear left for England with Lushington, who was hurrying back in consequence of the death of his brother and niece. After the usual succession of visits to the Husey Hunts, the J. Crosses, the Hornbys, and others, he settled down in his London lodgings to execute the numerous orders received.


<sup>1</sup> Translation of "Come unto these yellow sands," &c.—Act I. sc. ii.

## Letters of Edward Lear

16. UPPER SEYMOUR STREET,  
PORTMAN SQUARE,  
13. Sept. 1858.

I forget what I told you of my doings: after Knowsley I went to Liverpool, & then to Manchester where the kind Sir John Potter<sup>1</sup> took me in. Coming back by Derby, I saw the "Corfu" in its place, & I passed my Sunday at W. Nevill's—the 7th house I have seen beadornamented by my own paws.

My dear boy,—I cannot go to Dudbrook.<sup>2</sup> My straight plan now, as soon as I get the pictures unpacked, is to WORK. I cannot work with my mind frittered by agreeable society. A painter must be a painter. If you are writing to Lady W. say I shall write: And both you & she may be sure that my not going is because I want to do her Pictures WELL, also Lord Clermonts.

You will be glad—not to say skipping to hear that Holman Hunt has seen the sketches both of Masada & her view of Jerusalem & is thoroughly pleased with both. It is the funniest thing to talk over all those places with him.—When you are coming to town let me know. I long to see you again. I keep in lodgings here, but shall paint elsewhere.—At present I am all upside down—nohow—bebothered—& can only write this much. Did I tell you  had written in all 5 new poems?

<sup>1</sup> The member for Manchester, and first Mayor of the City.

<sup>2</sup> In Essex. One of Lady Waldegrave's houses.



TAGGIA.

"Ice far up on a mountain head."

From "Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson, illustrated by Edward Lear" (Boston, H. A. Loomis & Co., 1889). By kind permission of Lord Tennyson.



# Palestine, Corfù, and England

I TOR VILLA.

CAMPDEN HILL

KENSINGTON.

Monday evening

[Before Nov. 1, 1858.]

I am exceedingly annoyed that I cannot come:—I have appointed Dr. Rimbault<sup>1</sup> to come & set down some of my songs<sup>2</sup> this evening—& he comes all the way from Camden Town, & it is the *first* night: moreover I have just been into town—to send off poor sister Ann,—but that would not matter if I could possibly otherwise manage it.

16. HUPPER SEEMORE STREET,

PORTMAN □. 18th Nov. /58.



Coming home at 11.30, from Mr. Stanley's, I find your Wusstusser noat.—Thank God I ain't to be rubbed by a beastly fiend

with a wet sheet:—<sup>3</sup> But I believe you will be all the better for it. Is Ward Braham rubbed rubbing rubbable or rubbabibbabubbapbimbubabebabblleee

<sup>1</sup> An indefatigable composer and writer on musical subjects. He rescued from oblivion and published, some of the best work of the early English composers.

<sup>2</sup> Lear set many of Tennyson's poems to music and sang them, though he had no knowledge of music, and had only what the French call a "filet de voix"; yet he rendered them with so much expression as to make tears start to the eyes of his hearers.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to a visit of Fortescue to Dr. Gully's establishment and cold water cure.



## Letters of Edward Lear

also?—<sup>1</sup> I wrote to you this morning:—but, how the deibble could your letter reach me to-night?

At Mrs. Stanley's there was Arthur,<sup>2</sup> (who is grown much more expansive & talkative & World-like than of old—though as good & kind as always :) Mr. Penrhyn<sup>3</sup> & Emmy ditto, always good. Mary Stanley of Scutari memories & twisted faith,—Walrond who is stilty & scholastic:—& one Adolphus, whose name savours of Dolphins. The conversation was not bad: mostly of Spain & Biarritz, with sparks of fun. Show'd all my sketches to Arthur S. & Walrus,—& was pleased by their praise of their fiddlediddlety of representation. But we don't agree about the beauty of Palestine:—I say that "there is beauty in everything" is a better principle than "look for conventional beauty, & failing that don't see any."

Returning here, I find varicose gnoats. One from Mr. Morier, containing ever so much good Greek. "μεθ' αὐριον θά ἐρχομαι πρὸς σὲ πρὶν ταῖς ἑνδεκα ὥραις, νὰ σὲ χαρεῖσιω κὴ νὰ ἴδῶ, θαυμάζων, τὰς τῆς Παραιστήνης ζωγραφίας σου. Φοβερα θὰ γένωνται τὰ ἀνακατάωματα τῆς Ἰώνικης θαλάσσης, τέτοια γαιδαρολίκια ποτὲ δὲν ἤκουσα."<sup>4</sup> He writes really good Romainic.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Waldegrave's youngest brother, who accompanied Fortescue.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, a close personal friend of Lear's, who is mentioned frequently in the letters, was the second son of the Bishop of Norwich. He was appointed Chaplain to the Prince Consort in 1854, and afterwards became Dean of Westminster. Mary Stanley, his sister, was in charge of fifty nurses in the Crimea during the war. <sup>3</sup> Brother-in-law of Lord Derby.

<sup>4</sup> To-morrow I am coming to you before eleven o'clock. Yea

## Palestine, Corfù, and England

O mi! how giddy I is!—Perhaps it is along of the cliff of Ain Giddi: perhaps of the glass of sherry & water close by—only I ain't drank it yet.

I wen tup two the Zoological Gardings, & drew a lot of Vulchers: also I saw the eagles & seagles & beagles & squeegles: leastwise the big bears & all the other vegetables.



also the little dragging, who is the Beast of the Revialations.

Miss Mackenzie is married this afternoon to Lord Ashburton, 34—60.

The cold is so great that my nose is frizz so hard that I use it as a paper cutter.

I have axed Lord Stanley for the Cadetship,<sup>1</sup> & have written to Lady Derby to know if she wants her usbing's hancester's picter.

To-morrow I go to Holman Hunts, to city, pay bills, & dine at Beadons.—Saturday Clowes comes

I shall greet you and shall see with admiration your pictures of Palestine. Fearful indeed did the up-and-down motions of the Ionian Sea become, what universal longings for *terra firma* have ever come to me.

<sup>1</sup> Probably for a nephew or young friend.

## Letters of Edward Lear

up: & I go to Cramers to arrange finally about the 5 songs. Poor dear Lady Bethell writes me a sad note: I fear now that she is really ill.

It is zis ted-bime.—Goodnight. My love to the water fiend.

PAVILION HOTEL, FOLXTON.

Novbr. 25/58.

Still one more line. Your's retched me here (spelling adaptable to circumstances,) this morning, on my coming over from my last visit to my old sister. I don't see any phun in the 2 coal'd pales of water on one's bak:—& I think your remarx on Water-worx generally are far from untrue. Seriously, I should conceive that the necessity of constant contemplation of one's health can't be good for the body or mind, & I don't see but that you are right to cease the trial.

This, I suppose will find you at L<sup>d</sup> Clarendon's:—of whose visit to the Montalembert-scruncher,<sup>1</sup> I hope you will *think* well,—

And hereabouts, my bilious and skrogfrodious temperament screws itself up to give you a rowing for what your enemies call a "desultory" & "dilettante" tone of life. The moral of this abrupt & angular

<sup>1</sup> The fiery debate which took place in Parliament in March on the subject of Lord Canning's Indian proclamation, was the occasion for the issue of the Comte de Montalembert's celebrated pamphlet "Un Débat sur l'Inde au Parlement Anglais," in which he contrasted the political freedom in England with the conditions prevailing in France. For this he was prosecuted by the French Government.

## Palestine, Corfu, and England

preachment is that neither *you* nor *nobody* else will do *no good* if you do things by *halves* and *squittles*.

My feeling is, Lord Stanley in political life, or Holman Hunt in painting are the best 2 coves to be imitated in 1858: alike in this, that what either do, they do *thoroughly & well*. As a set off to this beastly jerk of my temper, I *do* allow that you thought of me in sending Kingsley's book by post as you did, whereby I am cutting it & some toast at the present momenx.—also that in matters of friendship you are not a "dilettante" but a realist & præraphaelite.

Since I left town I have suffered less from Asthma daily—but yet a good deal. At Husey Hunts—(Lewes) I felt, as I alway do, their extreme kindness, greatly. Thence I went to Ann at Margate:—Sister No. 2 is coming home from New Zealand, (about April,) and I hope Ann will then live with her, as at 68, & in failing health I do not like her being so alone.—It is always a hard task to leave the poor dear old lady, & I have to act hard-hearted to keep her at all quiet.

Arrived here, I find a most good and kind letter from Lady Isabella Proby—on poor dear John Proby's death.<sup>1</sup> She says, "I send you these details of my brother John's death, because I know you loved him." And this was true: I did love him very much, and that fellow Bowen's coarse ridicule of him was one among many of my causes of dislike towards him.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Proby, heir to the Earldom of Carysfort, died at the age of 35. Lady Isabella was his sister.



## Letters of Edward Lear

But I myself was never kind to John Proby as I should have been, for which I suffer now, and some day shall perhaps suffer more.

Regarding money—Gibbs writes here that he has paid in 60 odd £s to Drummings,—& also Cramer & Beale have putchised my 5 new songs, & the copyrights of the old 4. So, if so be as you wants to get, (1) "Come not when I am dead" (2) "When thro' the land,"—(3) "The time draws near" (4) "Home they brought" <sup>1</sup>—(5) "O let the solid ground"—nows your time at Cramers 201, Regent Street. I could tell you a kind doing of Lord Stanley, but have no thyme now.

Goodbye once more : my dear Chichester Fortescue.

Lord Lyons' <sup>2</sup> death has just come to me also. You know I think that he saved my life when at Thebes 1848 <sup>3</sup> by sending promptly out two doctors in a coach & four :—had they not arrived I should not be writing to you now.

A pretty go this of the Montalembert decision in Paris.

<sup>1</sup> Twelve of Lear's songs from Tennyson were included in this series, and afterwards were published by Hutchins and Romer. The following extract from a letter of Lear's in 1882 on the death of Archbishop Tait will give some idea of Lear's singing : "The latter was always very kind to me, and once said in a big party when I had been singing 'Home they brought her warrior,' and people were crying : 'Sir, you ought to have half the Laureateship.' That was in '51, when he was Dean of Carlisle."

<sup>2</sup> At Arundel Castle when he held the post of Minister at Athens. He was practical commander of the Fleet throughout the Crimean War.

<sup>3</sup> See letter of July 19, 1848, from Athens, p. 10.



## CHAPTER V

December, 1858, to November, 1859

### ROME REVISITED

THE Ionian islands, which had been formed into a republic under the Protectorate of Great Britain after the Treaty of Vienna, had long been seething with discontent, as they very naturally disliked the foreign yoke, and desired union with Greece. Sir Edward Lytton, who had succeeded Lord Stanley as Secretary for the Colonies, decided to send an envoy to investigate the causes of dissatisfaction, and for this purpose he appointed Mr. Gladstone Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary to the islands in November, 1858. Mr. Gladstone's mission was not a success, as the people persisted in regarding him as the herald of freedom, and public opinion was so hostile in England that, after his return, a new Lord High Commis-

## Letters of Edward Lear

sioner was sent out to enforce the British rule with greater stringency. But the idea grew and gained ground that the cession of the islands to Greece was only a matter of time.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

ROME, 13. December. 1858.

I have just got your letter—2nd & 4th. If you knew how often I have worried myself about the letter I wrote to you, you would not have added coals to my head by writing so kindly. The very fact of my opinions having weight sufficient to draw forth an answer should make me more careful of the ways & manner in which I put them into words or on paper. There are times when I turn into bile and blackness, body & soul,—& in those phases of life I hate myself & through myself hate everybody, even those I like best. The general accusation of forgetfulness may have had some foundation as regards you, but I am sure I ought not to have written disgustingly—as I know I did, and, as I set out by saying, I have been thoroughly vexed by having done so ever since. Pray forget this ugly little parenthesis in our friend-life:—and believe that the irritation of an artist's life produces much which works its possessor bitterness, when that individual's brain has been so little guided in youth as mine was.—

I was at Margate with my old sister on the 25th. Novr. & Clowes joined me on the 26th. at Folke-



NINFA.

Woodcut from "*Illustrated Excursions in Italy*," by Edward Lear (*Thomas McLean*, 1866).



## Rome Revisited

stone—whence we crossed to Paris & remained there the 27th. & 28th.—What a splendid city that has become! I never saw anything like the Rue de Rivoli :—On Monday the 29th. we reached Marseilles, & that evening left for Italy, reaching Rome at midnight on Wednesday the 1st, and glad to get to bed in the Europa.—

The 12 days since then have been to me the most weary and sadly depressing I have passed for long years.—And so dismal has been the return here, that only the friendliness of ancient acquaintances, & the even temper and kindness of Clowes could have kept me above water :—2 or 3 times I have nearly resolved on going off straight to America. Day after day I have gone up & down stairs, but could find nothing to live in under any circumstances :—Every place of any sort I could paint in, furnished, & at Grosvenor-Square prices, fancy, for 3 stuffy pokey rooms, foul, & vile, & up 4 floors,—15£ a month! At last, having resolved that I *must* finish the pictures here—(which as yet are not heard of even as far as Leghorn) I determined on taking (& I could only get it for 2 years) a set of apartments in the New Palazzo Albertazzi ; I have got the 4th floor (half of it) & am furnishing it as fast as I can—: it is to cost 20£ per quarter, a sum I ought not to pay, & yet cannot avoid nailing myself to :—As yet I have only got carpets cut, besides a portable bed-stead, six chairs, a pair of bellows, & a pepper-box. Clowes has got a lodging at 31 P. di Spagna & we see much of each other.



## Letters of Edward Lear

But how can I tell you of the curious feelings which an absence of 11 years has occasioned on revisiting this place? It is impossible to do so. Moreover, I wish to send this off to-morrow, Robt. Hay,<sup>1</sup> the Knights,<sup>2</sup> the Bertie Mathews, Williams, & Gibson,<sup>3</sup> are here of old friends.

Dec. 14th. Here is a go! Poor Clowes riding with C. Knight yesterday—had a fall—(his horse stepped in a hole) & he has broken his collar bone. So there is enough for me to think of just now. Meanwhile, I can't get into my rooms yet at all, and am really nearly mad.

5. *January.* 1859.

9. VIA CONDOTTI. ROME.

It is all well that you did not come into the room, instead of the apparition of your letter :—if you had I should have had a fit & died. For I was so miserable that I had to put away my drawing & pace up & down the room, so that when your dear good kind letter came, I could not help the tears a busting out of my eyes incontinent, all the more as I read it :—a weakness I had to conceal from Giorgio, who has a theory that “*chi piange per altro che la morte di sua madre,*

<sup>1</sup> Robert Hay was the leading member of an archæological expedition to Egypt, 1826–32, and forty-nine volumes of his drawings were afterwards purchased by the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> The family of John Knight of Wolverley. The eldest daughter married the Duke of Sermoneta ; the second daughter, Isabella, was a hopeless invalid.

<sup>3</sup> John Gibson, the sculptor, who died in Rome 1866. He revived the use of colour in statuary.

## Rome Revisited

e sciocco,"<sup>1</sup> or as he words it usually—"ὁ ὁποῖος κλάιε χωρὶς διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τῆς μητρός του, εἶναι γαῖδαρος (i.e., an ass).<sup>2</sup>

I shall now dismiss my worries & reproaches about you, leastwise considering myself a mitigated beast, & I shall send this as soon as I can, hoping also you may soon write again, for the relief your letters & those of F. Lushington & others give me is not to be expressed. (Bye the bye—*do* try & know F. Lushington—at the Cosmopolite or elsewhere.)—I shall now look over your letter, & answer in comments—dividable by linear appearances.

Gladstone & Corfu are queer absurdities:—why didn't Dizzy let Lord Stratford—(who was on the spot)—settle things?—But still, though Gladstone was not a fit man to send,—the Govt. have shown that they mean to set a new system to work,—Gorgeous' going to wit as proof—*for he had no alternative*, tho' he vows he is going by choice.—I expect poor Sir J. will resign,<sup>3</sup> as he ought to have done earlier—& that he & all the Ionian suite will come here bye and bye.

I am very glad you have been enjoying yourself. It is not wonderful that anyone should like Stanley:—I envy those who see much of him, as I have a kind

<sup>1</sup> "Who weeps for aught but the death of his mother is foolish."

<sup>2</sup> Practically the same as the Italian translation, with Lear's addition.

<sup>3</sup> Sir J. Young did resign, and Sir Henry Storks was appointed in his place.

## Letters of Edward Lear

of mixed affection and interest and admiration for him I never felt united for anybody.

I need not say I was glad to know you saw more of Lady W.—(What a fuss I am in to-day about her pictures :—they are come but the d——d dogana will not let them pass—d—— brutes.)

My kindest respects to Mrs. Ruxton : I am glad the 1,000,000's sauce-pan is more to the purpose.

By jingo ! if you *were* to come at Easter ! Only, I might go crazy.

I have hung my show-room with white, & hope to get some drawings into it before long :—but I am dreadfully bothered by invitations, which I abhor. Dinners are natural and proper : but late mixed tea-parties foul & abhorrent to the intelligent mind.

Do you know I like Egerton H[arcourt]<sup>1</sup> better than I expected,—indeed very well and also Lady Frances.<sup>2</sup> I laughed at your note about “Jessie”<sup>3</sup> she is too powerful by half, yet somewhat jolly. I am asked there to-morrow night, but I'm hanged if I'll go. That's the end of my notes on your's—& now I shall shuffle on promisquis.

First for goodness sake say who is Richard Bright ?<sup>4</sup> who rather is Mrs. B. ? I have taken a liking to

<sup>1</sup> Youngest son of the Archbishop of York. George Harcourt, Lady Waldegrave's husband, was the eldest son.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of the fifth Earl of Oxford and widow of an elder brother of Egerton Harcourt.

<sup>3</sup> Second wife of Mr. Granville Vernon, another brother of Mr. George Harcourt. She was a daughter of the twenty-second Lord Dacre.

<sup>4</sup> He in Parliament. She a daughter of Admiral Wolley.

## Rome Revisited

R. B. because he knows & likes you :—also he knows others of my friends. So I dined there, last week, with S. W. Clowes—(who having broken his collar-bone is now out again,) & showed him a bit of the Campagna on Sunday. He seems a sensible fellow, & don't talk watering-place rot. At his house I met Gibbs <sup>1</sup> (former tutor to P[rince] of W[ales]) whom I liked—& W. Palmer of religious fervid search <sup>2</sup> & George Waldegrave <sup>3</sup> who seemed a nice fellow also. But, as all here, these people go squittering after sights, & are no more themselves seen.

The Stratford's <sup>4</sup> live a long way off—beyond the 4 Fontane. I have been asked to T., & have not gone but called : I doubt my seeing much of them.

Can you get, or write, & send me out—a letter of introduction to Odo Russell? <sup>5</sup> or to him to me—if that is the better way?—He is spoken of as well worth knowing, & I should like to know him if I could.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick W. Gibbs, Q.C., C.B, tutor to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, 1852–8.

<sup>2</sup> Palmer of Magdalen, author of many theological works. When Augustus Hare's mother and sister were left destitute in Rome in September, 1859, through the treachery of an absconding lawyer, the son relates how their old friend, Mr. William Palmer, came forward, and "out of his very small income pressed upon them a cheque for £150."

<sup>3</sup> Third son of the eighth Earl and cousin of Lady Waldegrave's husband, the seventh Earl.

<sup>4</sup> Lord and Lady Stratford de Redcliffe.

<sup>5</sup> The brilliant diplomatist, afterwards Ambassador at Berlin ; while nominally holding paid Attachéship at this time at Florence, was employed at Rome on special service. Having no credentials for the Vatican, his relations with Cardinal Antonelli and the resident diplomatic body, were thus of an informal nature.



## Letters of Edward Lear

The Knights live here much as ever, Isabella passing her 18th year in bed (I mean she has been in bed 18 years—) but bright & patient always. Margaret Dss. of Sermoneta fading slowly : but kinder & softer than most Knights are. All are just as friendly as ever to me. So indeed are all—Mr. Hay now nearly blind : & the Bertie Matthews, but these two last live in society & cliquerie.

The James Marshalls<sup>1</sup>— (she was a Spring Rice) with Aubrey de Vere<sup>2</sup> are gone to Naples. The Barrett Brownings also are here, but I know them not. Various Americans—Cushman (Miss<sup>3</sup>) Perkins,<sup>4</sup> & Storeys are pleasant & good but as yet I eschew general society, being wholly cross & bigongulous. My hopes are set on the Grand Duchess Maria Nicolowiena<sup>5</sup> of Russia, whom I hope to see here when I get my Athos paintings out—if they ever do come out. Your friend Lord Granville<sup>6</sup> is here on crutches.

The Holy Church outside the P. del Popolo, thrives : it is belarged and beorganed, & be-beautified :

<sup>1</sup> Third son of John Marshall of flax-spinning fame.

<sup>2</sup> Third son of the poet-baronet, and himself a poet.

<sup>3</sup> Charlotte Cushman, the great American tragic actress.

<sup>4</sup> Augustus Hare mentions meeting at Venice in 1892 a Mrs. Mary Ridge Perkins, a quaint old American lady, who had adopted thirty homeless children.

<sup>5</sup> Sister of the Czar Alexander II., widow of Maximilian, Duke of Leuchtenberg.

<sup>6</sup> The second Earl, President of the Council in Lord Palmerston's Ministry, 1852-8, when he resigned, but resumed the office in 1859.



## Rome Revisited

& the chaplain Woodward is a good earnest man & preaches most Abercrombically,<sup>1</sup> tho' he is a High Churchman. Everybody likes him, but the misery of the Sunday sittings on feeble chairs! Vast women in black velvet hoops utterly carry off & prostrate many delicate men as they struggle to their seats. Many men kneel on hoops & dresses, & a section of the congregation is all over-balanced in consequence.

The philosophical silent Suliot is of the greatest comfort to me. His remarks in Greek—by play—kill me. “*Ἀπέθαμενοι οὗτοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι,*”<sup>2</sup> he says of the Romans, who are so slow & odiously indifferent. And of their incessant begging, “*Αὐτοὶ εἶναι Ἄραβοι, μόνον ἔχουν περισσότερα ἐνδύματα.*”<sup>3</sup> It is hardly possible to be thankful enough for so good a servant. He says of Lushington that when he left, Giovanni (G.'s younger brother who was L.'s under-servant—) would not stay with the new Judge, but returned to his former trade of tailor, but, says G. he does nothing but talk of his old master instead of working. L. seems to have made himself beloved at Corfu as everywhere else.

Correct your toe & tête in what it ails.—It is a mistake to have toes at all: hoofs would have been simpler & less expensive, as precluding boots.

<sup>1</sup> A reference used often in Lear's letters, but I cannot discover the man or the origin of the expression.

<sup>2</sup> “These men are dead.”

<sup>3</sup> “These men are Arabs, but have more clothes on.”

## Letters of Edward Lear

9. VIA CONDOTTI. ROMA.

*Janry.* 24. 1859.

To-day has brought me yours of the 15th, which oily rejoiced me. I won't go to church to-day, like a good boy, & will write to you instead. I heard of you two days back when Lady Bethell wrote to me, & said she had been talking with "an extremely nice friend" of mine at Lord Palmerstons.

I seem to have a great deal to say, but am scatterry, & shan't write connectedly. I am not rejoiceful in Rome & cannot "set myself in any good way." I have no one with whom to sympathize at all closely. S. W. Clowes is the kindest hearted & best fellow possible, but he has no application to or taste for much I would always lean to, nor could I talk with him as I do with you on many subjects. I wish indeed you were here for a time, but I trust to see you in Ireland or England before next winter.—The mass of people here pass their lives in mere pleasure, a regular Bath & Brighton life—& I don't care to know them. Others are naturally using every moment in seeing sights & learning Rome. Others have jealousies & smallnesses & professional quirks from wh. I wholly stand aloof. O Lord! I wishes I was a beadle! <sup>1</sup>

All my smaller painting's here have been bought—

<sup>1</sup> The beadles who stand outside the palaces of the great Roman nobles are still objects of admiration. The magnificence of their traditional costume no doubt attracted both the artist and humourist in Lear.

## Rome Revisited

3 by a dear delightful chap—one Aubrey de Vere Beauclerk,<sup>1</sup> who lives somewhere near Belfast.

Lord Stratford was here for nearly two hours the other day & really delightful: he spoke of you in very nice terms. The Youngs & all the Palace party are coming here directly. Do you think Dizzy selected Sir H. Stork<sup>2</sup> on purpose that being called King Stork, his predecessor might for ever be dubbed *King Log*?

We have the Prince of Wales here, who seems a very nice looking & prepossessing lad.—

15th. Febry.—I think I shall send this off to-day. I hear a Colonel Dunn<sup>3</sup> is appointed in the room of G. F. B. Gladstone appears to be making a great mess. Do you know Spring rice-ious people? I dined with some to-day. I wish one could know if there is likely to be war or not: it would be a bore to be boxed up here in the middel of hennemies. Do you know Odo Russell our new envoy here? All the English fribble-world is irate about a Miss Cavendish, whom Mrs. Hare a pervert, (sister of Sir John Dean Paul,) has cajoled & bebaptismalized, unbeknown to

<sup>1</sup> Of Ardglass Castle, Co. Down.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry Storcks was appointed Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands in February, 1859, and remained there till the protectorate was resigned. He was afterwards Governor of Malta and Jamaica.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly Colonel F. P. Dunne, who was secretary and aide-de-camp at this time to Lord Eglinton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Henry Drummond Wolfe, was, however, appointed secretary in the place of Sir George Bowen.

## Letters of Edward Lear

her parents.<sup>1</sup> Manning<sup>2</sup> is preaching most atrocious sermons here, to which nevertheless, all heaps of fools go. A vile beastly rottenheaded foolbegotten brazenthroated pernicious piggish screaming, tearing, roaring, perplexing, splitmecrackle crashmecriggle insane ass of a woman is practising howling below-stairs with a brute of a singingmaster so horribly, that my head is nearly off.

P.S.—Has Cramer published my songs yet?

*Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

9. VIA CONDOTTI, ROMA.

26. March. 1859.

At last your two pictures are done, & will be out of my hands in two days from this, & before the first of May I trust they will be in Carlton Gardens. So far as admiration of them can please an artist I have certainly had a full share from the 7 or 800 people who have seen them in my study: but I shall nevertheless be very desirous to know how you are pleased with them. The Masada is the most striking: its sunset-colour, & excessive lonely character must always make it so. The Jerusalem is perhaps the most interesting; & I hope both will give you plea-

<sup>1</sup> A daughter of Admiral Cavendish. The "Mrs. Hare" here mentioned was the mother of Augustus J. C. Hare, "Italima" in the "Story of my Life," and in vol. ii. p. 97 he tells a story of his mother's earlier acquaintance with Miss Cavendish in August, 1858.

<sup>2</sup> The following year Cardinal Manning became domestic prelate to the Pope





LADY WALDEGRAVE.

*From a photograph taken in 1859.*

*One among a number taken in contemplation of a statuette  
executed later by Noble.*

*This one a special pose from one of the plays acted at Nuneham.*

*To face page 132.*





## Rome Revisited

sure for many years to come. At any time I should have finished these two pictures carefully for my own sake, & on account of the interest of the subjects, but I must tell you that I have been more than ordinarily attentive to your two commissions, in as much as they were given me in faith, and because the payment of one of them was an assistance to me in going to the Holy Land.

For the same reason I have taken as much pains as I could with Lord Clermont's picture too, which I believe I shall send off also next week. Neither picture of Jerusalem will I ever repeat, for the minute architecture has tried my sight a good deal, & moreover I hold that an Artist loses much of his originality by repetition of his works.

The war between France and Austria now broke out, but was over very quickly. The difficulties in Italy, however, were rather augmented than diminished, as the Italians found that Louis Napoleon had no intention of literally fulfilling his promise to free them from the yoke of Austria. The national movement against foreign supremacy and the temporal claims of the Pope, soon began to assume threatening proportions under the leadership of Garibaldi.

# Letters of Edward Lear

## *Lear to Fortescue.*

9. VIA CONDOTTI, ROMA.

May 1, 1859.

Here's a pretty kettle of fishes! ain't it? Everybody here is trying to get away, but they can't, for the roads thro' Tuscany are more or less uncertain, & no one chooses to risk horses being taken for troops. While, the same panic fills all the boats at Naples, & not a place is to be got at C. Vecchia, where several hundred English are staying,—on dit,—like to poor folk about the pool of Bethesda. The last 3 or 4 days are indeed very full of thunder clouds,—& no one knows what is to follow. (The P[rince] of W[ales] goes to-morrow).—As for myself, I do not know which way to turn. Should the war continue, or spread in new directions, it is clear that no strangers will come here, & the place will be utterly odious; yet I have taken expensive rooms for 2 years & a half, and have spent every farthing I have in fitting them up as a winter home. Possibly, if things grow much worse, I may come [to England], & publish some of my tours by subscription, living ob-skewerly & cheaply. In less than 10 days I hope to send off Baring's & the other pictures. Next to make the studies for Gibbs, Heywood,<sup>1</sup> & Stamford's pictures in the Campagna. This will bring me to June, by which time I must decide some way or other.

If I ever come to England I must see you at Red

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Heywood, of Stanley Hall, Yorks.

## Rome Revisited

House, but I should mainly have to poke about London, & therefore I had half as rather not come this year, all the more that the N.Z. sister comes over for 2 years—& at first family matters won't be happy, as there has been much bother of late, & I always keep out of these messes, though I have come down with £20 in the winter for the amiable relatives here and there, as is right & fit. My money affairs are, au plus bas: but I don't like giving up,—so I shall hold on.

I hope you have not been over-bothered by the Election<sup>1</sup>—but, do you know I rather like you to have to do the work, because it stirs you up, & your nature requires that, I take it now and then. Lord D[erby]'s speech about the Indian heroes was good:—but I don't think his Govt., or Lord S[tanley] in particular have acted well to Lord Canning, whose career has been one of the utmost difficulty, and needed no ungenerosity to embitter it further: the Earldom & the praise do not tally with the Ellenborough Stanley dispatches.<sup>2</sup>

Yes indeed, I do feel “sick of time” here. I am convinced of this more and more:—if you have a

<sup>1</sup> The defeat of Lord Derby's Government over Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill led to a Dissolution of Parliament in May.

<sup>2</sup> On March 3, 1858, Lord Canning, then Governor-General of India, issued his famous Proclamation practically confiscating the whole of Oude. This was condemned by Lord Derby's Government, and Lord Ellenborough, then President of the Board of Control, sent a despatch disapproving of it in the most violent terms. Lord Canning received an earldom on May 21, 1859.

## Letters of Edward Lear

wife, or are in love with a woman, (both phases of the same state of self division, the only real and proper state of life in this world) if I say such be your condition, ὦ ἄνθρωπε! <sup>1</sup> then you may stay in any place & in any circumstances: you are raised out of the necessity of contemplating the cursed nuisances of poverty or bores by sympathy:—but if you are absolutely alone in the world, & likely to be so, then move about continually & never stand still. I therefore think I shall be compelled & more especially by the appearance of things on the horizon,—to go to Japan & New York, or Paraguay, or anywhere before long.

LITTLEGREEN, PETERSFIELD, HANTS.

*June 2/59.*

You may suppose I was regularly delighted at hearing from Lady Waldegrave how much she liked the pictures. Out of the 6 paintings, my years work, 3 have given, & I trust will give, their proper share of knowledge & pleasure.

I should gladly see Millais's worx, but do not greatly expect to like them. I am quite aware of the qualities of his mind, which I do not apprehend are of the progressive nature, as are Holman Hunt's: but his power and technical go, I have no doubt are wonderful.

Here, there is as much cheerfulness as so much sadness, the death of Lady Wilton<sup>2</sup> and Mrs. Hornby,

<sup>1</sup> "O man!"

<sup>2</sup> A daughter of the twelfth Earl of Derby and cousin of the Hornbys. She died December, 1858.



## Rome Revisited

& 2 children of Lady Denison,<sup>1</sup> & the sudden total blindness of the dear old Admiral, can allow. I go on writing quietly, 3 tours, Athos & Judaea & Albanian Zagorian, & am generally placid in mental & obese in physical conditions. Μόνον μὲ δυσαρέσκει ὄτι δὲν ἔμπορῶ να κάμω περισσοτέραν πρόοδον τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς σημερινῆς γλώσσης, ἥτος πάντοτε μὲ φαίνεται ὡς ἓν πρᾶγμα πῶν μὲ χρειάζεται κάθ' ἡμέρανόν.<sup>2</sup>

From here I go to, Alfred Tennyson's Esqre., Faringford, Freshwater, Isle of Wight, whence let me hear from you :—I shall be there about Tuesday next, the 7th.

I am on thorns for news about Italy :—what a time of events is it not ?

EAST WELLOW VICARAGE, ROMSEY.

12. June, 59.

Your's of yesterday week (posted later tho') I got at Tennyson's, which place I left yesterday morning, & after being in *12 vehicles* reached this unutterably quiet remoteness, whither I had come to see dear old Mrs. Empson, & poor Wil. Henry E. the vicar.

I have not been here for 13 years, since which two boys, 9 and 7 years old are di piu, & the kind mistress of the house is gone, & lies under a white grave, on which the Villagers put a fresh chaplet of roses every

<sup>1</sup> Littlegreen was the residence of Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby, K.C.B. Lady Denison was his second daughter and the wife of the Governor of Van Diemen's Land.

<sup>2</sup> "I am only annoyed that I cannot make more progress in modern Greek, which always seems the thing I need every day."

## Letters of Edward Lear

Sunday—a circumstance I never saw in England before.

Happily for me the Athanasian blasphemy was not read to-day & I fancy never is here: the living being in Nightingale of Emley's gift, who is not as you may know reputed over orthodox, perhaps because he is a truly good Xtian. They have 3 pictures of mine here, Licenza, Athos, & Corfù, & it is very odd how they bring me back past years. The fact is, time is all nonsense:—it is shorter & shorter & suppurates into nil.

My visit at Fairford was very delightful in many ways. I should think computing moderately, that 15 angels, several hundreds of ordinary women, many philosophers, a heap of truly wise and kind mothers, 3 or 4 minor prophets, and a lot of doctors and school-mistresses, might all be boiled down, and yet their combined essence fall short of what Emily Tennyson<sup>1</sup> really is. And the 2 boys are complete little darlings. Alfred T. went up to town Friday, & I hope the "Four Idylls of the King" will come out very soon. You will be more delighted with Elaine, & Guinevere than you can imagine.

A twitching regret bothers me at having left the place.

What does Urquhart<sup>2</sup> say to things in general as to Russia?<sup>3</sup> I cannot see any daylight of certainty, or

<sup>1</sup> Wife of the poet, and daughter of Henry Selwood.

<sup>2</sup> Husband of Fortescue's younger sister.

<sup>3</sup> "Mr. Urquhart was a very clever, self-opiniated, and often curiously wrong-headed man. He had seen much of the East

## Rome Revisited

any kind of comfort anywhere :—much as I disagree with Lord D[erby]'s party as guides of public progress, I cannot forget Lord P[almerston]'s Sicilian & Italian or French obliquities. In fact my dear 40scue I begin to think that public men are mainly alike : & the debates on the address read to me very like a personal set of quarrels carried thro' on polite technical principles. I still hope to be in town about the 25th or 27th., when I must set to work experimentalizing about photographs, or lithographs or gros-pigraphs for new publications. At present I am doing little, but dimly walking on along the dusty twilight lanes of incomprehensible life. I wish you were married. I wish I were an egg and was going to be hatched. Intanto, I shall go to sleep, for hang me if I'll go to church again to-day.

*Friday Knight.*

Come, continually come :—continually continue to come. The morer the betterest or bestestmost. But I must tell you that R. Cholmondeley<sup>1</sup> comes to brekfiss on Sunday morning—tho' that need not prevent your doing so—but it is phit I should tell you.

and had a knowledge of Eastern ways and Eastern history which few Englishmen could equal. But he was under the absolute dominion of a mania with regard to Russia, which distorted all his faculties" (McCarthy's "History of Our Own Times," vol. iii. p. 276).

<sup>1</sup> Probably Reginald Cholmondeley, of Condover Hall, Shropshire.


## Letters of Edward Lear

Mrs. Urquhart answered my letter, and David U. comes to-morrow. But, O Lord! They have sent beforehand a huge paper on Turkish Baths, and another on General poltiks, the which I can't and don't intend to read. My hope is that several other people will call at the same time—so that no discussion will enshoo. . . .

Did you ever meet a Baroness Blaise de Bury? Not that that that that that has anything to do with the subject except that I am going to sleep rapidgely, and have no more sense. . . .

13 UPPER SEYMOUR STREET,  
PORTMAN SQUARE,

*July, 1859.*

I had the message from the Attorney General<sup>1</sup>:—but I intended to have told you so, in a note I left on your table yesterday— doubled up so.

I read your speech this morning, & it seemed to me to read sensible & downright, & yet perlite & not cross.—I am very glad you have this additional scope for your talents & study, & hope you will be a continually a speaking. Please give me a “place” in New Zealand: then I shall be always in such a mess you will always be obliged to be a excusing of me.

I wish I'd a “place” to paint in, meanwhile.

I have worse accounts of my poor sister Harriett, this morning, but do not apprehend any immediate

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Bethell.



## Rome Revisited

danger. I fear I shan't go to Ireland this year.—  
How I wish I had some settled aboard, at least until  
the last narrow box.—

But if I settled myself I should go to Tobago the  
next day.

What Italian doings!

Yrs affly

that's my new assygram.

The following poem shows Lear had evidently been reading Clough's "Amour de Voyage." The metre is the same and the imitation of the style is clever. In Lear's letters, too, one meets the same Roman society that is described by Clough :—

15, STRATFORD PLACE,  
9 July.

DEAR F.—

Washing my rosecoloured flesh and brushing my  
beard with a hairbrush,—

—Breakfast of tea, bread, and butter, at nine o'clock  
in the morning,

Sending my carpet-bag onward I reached the Twicken-  
ham station,



## Letters of Edward Lear

(Thanks to the civil domestics of good Lady Wald'-  
grave's establishment,)

Just as the big buzzing brown booming bottlegreen  
bumblebizz boiler

Stood on the point of departing for Richmond and  
England's metropolis.

I say—(and if ever I said anything to the contrary I  
hereby retract it)—

I say—I took away altogether unconsciously your  
borrowed white fillagree handkerchief;

After the lapse of a week I will surely return it,

And then you may either devour it, or keep it, or  
burn it,—

Just as you please. But remember, I have not for-  
gotten,

After the 26th day of the month of the present July,  
That is the time I am booked for a visit to Nuneham.

Certain ideas have arisen and flourished within me,  
As to a possible visit to Ireland,—but nobody

Comes to a positive certainty all in a hurry :

If you are free and in London, next week shall we  
dine at the *Blue* Posts ?

Both Mrs. Clive and her husband have written most  
kindly

Saying the picture delights them (the Dead Sea)  
extremely

## Rome Revisited

Bother all painting! I wish I'd 200 per annum!  
Wouldn't I sell all my colours and brushes and  
damnable messes!  
Over the world I should rove, North, South, East and  
*West, I would*  
Marrying a black girl at last, and slowly preparing to  
walk into Paradise!



*the Bowl of Peace.*

A week or a month hence, I will find time to make a  
queer Alphabet,  
All with the letters beversed and be-aided with  
pictures,  
Which I shall give—(but don't tell him just yet) to  
Charles Braham's little one.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Just only look in the "Times" of to-day for accounts of the "Lebanon!"

Now I must stop this jaw, and write myself quite simultaneous,

Yours with a lot of affection—the Globular foolish Topographer.

E. L.

MONDAY AFTERNOON 18 *July*.

1859

I think I told you that my sister Harriett was ill, & not likely ultimately to recover. The last accounts however, were rather improved: until on Saturday Evening a telegraphic message came to my sister in Surrey, to say she was worse:—& on the following day a second message told that she had died in the course of the night.

In any case I should not have been able to go to Lady W.'s but as it is I am going off to-morrow morning, to get to her funeral on the following day:—a long journey, near Aberdeen.

There are only now 7 of us left living out of all the 21.—My eldest sister is staying in Sussex, & we are anxious about the effect this sudden news will have on her.

Is there any conceivable history known resembling this frightful Italian juggle?

And from St. Leonards-on-Sea, where he had taken some rooms in order to finish his work in quiet, he writes on the 28th:—

## Rome Revisited

My sister's death was so sudden at the last, that her nearer Scotch friends did not get to see her alive, poor thing. She however wrote a note to another of my sisters, only a few hours before her death,—merely in these words.—“Do not be grieved that I am alone : Christ is always with me :” & there is no doubt that she died in complete calm & happiness. What a dreary life hers has been ! & yet that of thousands & thousands. “There's something in the world amiss.”

Bye the bye, you have not told me of Guinevere yet, or perhaps have not had time to read it. Of course prudes are shocked. I should like to tell you some day or other of my argument with the Attorney General, who contends A. T. is a small poet.

I am inclined to think that it is not difference of opinion which makes me intolerant, so much as a certain injustice, or “force majeure” applied in lieu of bonâ fide argument.

31st. July. This week past, & the end of that preceding it, have gone in what I call absolute work ; & although the queer solitude in which I live & the displeasing mill-round of toil is not particularly joyful, yet apart from the thorough necessity of the daily life, (in order that I may be out of debt if possible before November,) I quite believe it is a better extreme for me than the lounging existence to which I can look back with no comfort, passed, since May 1. in doing nothing, & by expenses getting further into debt. I believe, well as I know how much good I derive from



## Letters of Edward Lear

friends & also, how often I give them pleasure, I shall not go into the houses of the rich for some long time to come, so painful to me is the retrospect (so far as regards myself,) of the time I pass with them. I except Red House, (& you know how regularly I worked there,) & my dear friends the Winwick Hornbys where I was always at work all day long.

This is what I do here :—rise at 5½, & after 6 or so am at work till 8, breakfast then work till 5—occasionally obliged to leave off on account of sight, or from utter weariness, when I do a line or two of Sophocles, or compose some new song music, & at 5 dinner—to 5¾ at most. Then to 7½ paint again, and by the time the brushes are washed it is nearly dark, & I potter out to the post with some notes I may have written, or puddle along the shingly beach till 9½—Then, half an hour Sophocles, & bed. This is unvaried, barring the Sundays, when I go to Hastings to dine with somebody or other—No “followers” or visits allowed in the week, nohow.

I believe if you go on working that you may & will be of great service to your country : but I could point out a more rapid course of usefulness, if you did not object to the summary sacrifice of yourself upon the halter of patriotism ; & that is instantly to squash Messrs. Cobden & Bright, by pistol, pison, or knife, as you think phit. You would assuredly & properly be hung for the offence, but then think how the state would gain !

Meanwhile, to me things look bitterly serious, as



## Rome Revisited

regards our own land, & Europe too. More especially of Italy,<sup>1</sup> whose Tuscany is at present a beautiful, but lonely beacon of hope—alas! who knows if fated to burn or die out?

You may imagine how interested I am in all that comes from Central Italy. Whether Garibaldi turns up in the Legations, is a wonderful problem for a week or two to solve.

Don't you delight in Bowyer & Macguire?<sup>2</sup> Reading some of the speeches, by them & others, I should feel if I had to hear them, "woe is me as I am constrained to dwell in these tents of Kedar!"

At present you all, Gladstone & Herbert & all, seem working famously together, & Lord John's speech is far beyond what I had expected.

Would it be possible that a subscription should be set on foot, for national defences? such as "steam-rams" &c., the existence of which cannot be construed as offensive?<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The news of the Treaty of Villafranca had just been received, which dashed the hopes of Italian patriots to the ground, as it practically reduced the results of the war to the expulsion of the Austrians from Lombardy for a time. The Tuscans issued a proclamation that they would never again submit to the yoke of Austria.

<sup>2</sup> They delivered speeches on our policy with regard to Italian affairs, the subject having been introduced in a lengthy explanation by Lord John Russell.

<sup>3</sup> The success of the French arms in Italy revived the invasion panic in England, and various schemes for defence were proposed.

# Letters of Edward Lear

119, MARINA,

ST. LEONARD'S ON SEA

Sept. 2nd 1859.

. . . All the little time I have away from painting goes in Greek. Would you believe it, ὁ πολυμόχθε,<sup>1</sup> Undersecretary for the Colonies, I am nearly half through Οἰδίπους ἐπὶ Κολόνοι<sup>2</sup>—yes, and understand it well too. I am almost thanking God that I was never educated, for it seems to me that 999 of those who are so, expensively and laboriously, have lost all before they arrive at my age—and remain like Swift's Stulbruggs—cut and dry for life, making no use of their earlier-gained treasures: whereas, I seem to be on the threshold of knowledge, and at least have a long way to the chilling certainty which most men methinks should have, that all labour for light is vain and time thrown away.

119, MARINA. ST. LEONARDS ON SEA.

Septbr. 2. 1859.

I feel a kind of placid sort of progress here, where no one hardly interrupts me,—a kind of feeling like a snails belly-crawling existence. F. Lushington came over one day & night, & that was a vast pleasure.

George Middleton,<sup>3</sup> Col. Leakes<sup>4</sup> nephew, came from Dover:—& my old friend Anthony Chester's daughter called to-day. The sisters of Sir John Potter live at Hastings, & I dine with them or at the Martineaux,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Much labouring."

<sup>2</sup> "Oedipus on Colonies."

<sup>3</sup> Son of Admiral R. G. Middleton.

<sup>4</sup> Colonel W. Martin-Leake.

<sup>5</sup> R. B. Martineau, the painter, a pupil of W. Holman Hunt's.

## Rome Revisited

on Sundays, at which latter house Holman Hunt is staying. And I suppose Fowler<sup>1</sup> may come tomorrow, & the Fortescue I hope in a week or two.

My life is this:—wake at 5½ & rise & work till 8: at which time Helen, a distant relation of Mrs. Menelaus, gets breakfast ready. I like Helen very much as a handy little housemaid. Then I work, writing a little Greek first, till 11 (ΕΙΤΕ) newspaper: & pretty interesting it is now-a-day's! after which work till two. Eat, (and if possible, digest,) a triangular bit of cake, & then work again till 6½. Then walk till 7½ when I return & dine, generally on a tabular & durable but not soft piece of beef, with a jug of table beer. (For a long time I fed on an immense leg of mutton, far, far larger than any leg of mutton I ever saw before or since. But one day I remembered that I had gone to the window to see a Circus Company go by, & attached to that there was an Elephant:—and then the horrid recollection that the Circus had long since returned, (I saw it pass by) but the elephant *never had*. From that moment I felt what that large leg of preposterous mutton really was, “e non mangiar avante”<sup>2</sup> & on the whole I do not recommend dead elephant as daily food.) After dinner I do Greek till ten & then go to bed. At meal times I read. And just now am reading a curious book which interests me a good deal, & in some things would you also; all the more that the first part of the life of the

<sup>1</sup> D. Fowler, a Canadian friend and artist.

<sup>2</sup> “And I did not eat any more.”

## Letters of Edward Lear

Authoress,<sup>1</sup> (a Galton & Gurney), passed at Great Barr Hall : F. Scotts. The Lady Scott is I suppose, Sir Francis' grandmother. This book "Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck," has many curious anecdotes of the people of the end of the last century, & to me is peculiarly amusing, as bringing back much of my early life. The amount of confused enthusiasm & splombonglified religion is twaddly at times, yet throws a light on some parts of the lives of a great mass of ones countrymen & women :—a sort of wide narrowness, so to speak : at least, Mrs. M. A. Skimmywiggle was as wide a Xtian as can be found in that lot of sectarians.—Besides this I read various other books : Volney to wit, which I have read before, & which I shall not send to my sister Ann certainly.

Of pictures the two for Mr. Potter (Athos & Corfu) are all but done :—& will be *when you come*. The 2 for Mr. Edwards—Corfu & Petra theatre, are far advanced, & look well : yet such is my nature, that at times I perceive them to be quite bad & useless & never to be completed, whenever ruin & debt arise in perspective & the bars of a prison instead of a familiar gridiron of cheapcooking. The other two, Campagna aqueducts (for Mr. Heywood) & a large Eastern Cliff of Petra for T. Fairbairn, are less advanced. The Judæa journal goes on, but as yet I see no way to its publication with illustrations.

<sup>1</sup> Hankin's "Life of Mrs. Schimmelpenninck" was published in 1858. She was a daughter of Samuel Galton of Birmingham, and after her marriage with a Dutchman, became a Moravian.



## Rome Revisited

I hope you will work, have worked, & are working & shall be about to have been working, colonially : I hope to see you Col. Sec. one of these days, if you work that is—not because you are on the steps of the ladder & should *therefore* gradually get to the top. But I shall hope to see you here—for you would also like this place. But let me have a day's notice that I may get you some Elephantine food and adamantine beef.

119. MARINA, ST. LEONARDS ON SEA.

7. Sept. 1859.

You are a blessing to your friends, & would be to your enemies if you had any, which I suppose you haven't. However, you will be still more laudable if you come down. I shall work horribly in the hope of seeing you on Saturday. You shall have some soles, a leg of mutton, & some varicose pudding of some sort. Will sing immensely. Mr. & Mrs. Fuller are gone, & you shall sleep in her bed, which is a much better one than can be got at a nin. I shan't ask Lord C. Hamilton<sup>1</sup> or the "Abercorns," or Lord Jocelyn,<sup>2</sup> who are here : because perhaps they would not come.

My dear boy :—I don't want any money & fresh borrowing would only distress me more. I am thought wrong by some for want of independence in ever borrowing at all, but, I am sure that is not a right

<sup>1</sup> Lord Claud Hamilton, M.P., brother of the Marquess of Abercorn, and brother-in-law of Lord Proby.

<sup>2</sup> The third Earl of Roden, Auditor-General of the Exchequer in Ireland, and Custos rotulorum of the County Louth.



## Letters of Edward Lear

view of things, for my whole life from 14 years has been independentissimo, & on the other hand, the man who will not put himself under obligation of any kind to even the friends who entirely sympathize with his progress—nourishes in my opinion, a selfish & icicle sort of pride. It is as much a pleasure to me to own that I have been helped by you, J. Cross, J. B. Harford,<sup>1</sup> S. Clowes, W. Neville, & B. H. Hunt, as it is to look back on the fact of my having repaid (in most cases, & to be so in all,) what was lent me in money; I have no wish whatever to shake off the moral acknowledgement of given assistance.

I see, in spite of Fibbenson Gorgias's offer, a certain Herbert<sup>2</sup> has been named Secretary. I see Storx has prorogued the Ionian parliament.

I had a nice letter from good merry Morier yesterday:—a cheerful & nice fellow: but I don't wonder he don't like Berlin *ὡσαύτῃ* Vienna.

What do you think of Rome? Macbean has gone or is going back, & takes Mrs. M.—saying that proves he considers quiet ahead. But if this Pesaro battle<sup>3</sup> fall out for the Italians, the Holy Fathers will certainly be uncomfortable.

<sup>1</sup> John Battersby Harford, afterwards of Blaise Castle, Gloucestershire, who married the third daughter of Baron de Bunsen.

<sup>2</sup> R. G. W. Herbert was appointed Colonial Secretary to Queensland.

<sup>3</sup> The pontifical army of mercenaries had made Pesaro their headquarters, and were said to be preparing for an attack upon Romagna.

## Rome Revisited

Is Newton <sup>1</sup> gone to Rome yet? I shall ask you for a letter to him if as how you knows him.

119. MARINA. ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA.

21. Octbr. 1859.

Returning from seeing my beloved parent, (Holman Hunt,) safe to the Railway, I find your letter, together with one from J. Harford, a highly friendly concatenation of correspondenx.

And being so cold just now I can't go to bed, & yet am only half awake, I shall endeavour to scrawl a line to thank you for your last, & to epopsimate the fangropunxious feelings of my buzzim.

To-day came a letter from my sister Ann, telling me of some from New Zealand. Sarah is on her way home:—& her leaving the Warepa seems to me a sort of signal of break-up in her family, added to by my nephew's wife's illness, one of increasing incurability it appears to me, and which I suppose has very much altered their views & plans. It seems that they have let their so increasingly prosperous farm, & that my nephew has got a situation of £200 a year at Dunedin, "under Government," is all they (or rather my sister Ann,) mention:—while the other sister and her husband leave N. Zealand altogether. This does not seem to me a grand conclusion to the 7 years stay there of the Street family, but I suppose

<sup>1</sup> Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Newton the archæologist, of British Museum-fame. He had just been appointed Consul at Rome.

## Letters of Edward Lear

the departure of my energetic sister, & the illness of my nephew's wife, have brought it about.

As for poor Mary & her unpleasant husband, they have gone to Melbourne, & I hope will get a letter sent by a brother of his, well to do, in St. Louis, asking them to go to America:—where I think poor Mary would be at rest, for her brother-in-law married one of her earlier friends. Mary writes of Sarah,<sup>1</sup> “It was very strange to see how Sarah did *all* the work of the house & farm after Sophy was taken ill:—for 4 months she did really every actual thing except the washing:—bread daily made for all 7 in number, butter-making, cooking, & all the cleaning up, besides always hearing the little girl's lessons: and yet she was always dressed at 4 o'clock, & had the evening for writing reading or music.” To which sister Ann adds, “my dear, Sarah is a wonderful woman!” And she ain't far wrong, as to energies at 66.

I have sent you a long scrawl of family talk, but I know it won't bore you. You are a very queer Secretary of State, who don't get altered by your conditions & positions, as far as I can see, nohow.

My kind respects to Mrs. Ruxton: also remembrances at Ravensdale. Quite distinct from all these give my love to Dr. Cullen,<sup>2</sup> if you see him, and to Dr. Cumming<sup>3</sup> also:—I take it, two nasty yet

<sup>1</sup> Sarah was Mrs. Street, and Sophy the daughter-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> The Archbishop of Dublin, a Roman Catholic of the extreme party.

<sup>3</sup> A minister of the National Scottish Church, noted as a prominent controversialist.

## Rome Revisited

approximate extremes. O dear me! there is a good deal to say about my picture of Bassæ<sup>1</sup> & many more mompophlious matters: but the dim lamp wanes: the dark sea moans & roars, and it is time that I should go to bed. Good-night.

These are the most bestest lodgings I've been in for a long time.

15, STRATFORD PLACE, OXFORD STREET,  
*4th November*

O! Mumber for the County Louth  
Residing at Ardee!  
Whom I, before I wander South  
Partik'lar wish to see:—

I send you this.—That you may know  
I've left the Sussex shore,  
And coming here two days ago  
Do cough for evermore.

Or gasping hard for breath do sit  
Upon a brutal chair,  
For to lie down in Asthma fit  
Is what I cannot bear.

Or sometimes sneeze: and always blow  
My well-developed nose.  
And altogether never know  
No comfort nor repose.

All through next week I shall be here,  
To work as best I may,  
On my last picture, which is near-  
-er finished every day.

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<sup>1</sup> A great picture of this subject by Lear is in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, subscribed for and presented by his friends.

## Letters of Edward Lear

But after the thirteenth—(that's Sunday)  
I must—if able—start  
(Or on the Tuesday if not Monday,)  
For England's Northern part.

And thence I only come again  
Just to pack up and run  
Somewhere where life may less be pain,  
And somewhere where there's sun.

So then I hope to hear your ways  
Are bent on English moves  
For that I trust once more to gaze  
Upon the friend I loves.

(Alas! Blue Posts I shall not dare  
To visit ere I go—  
Being compelled to take such care  
Of all the winds as blow.)

But if you are not coming now  
Just write a line to say so—  
And I shall still consider how  
Ajoskyboskybayso.

No more my pen: no more my ink:  
No more my rhyme is clear.  
So I shall leave off here I think—  
Yours ever,

EDWARD LEAR.



## CHAPTER VI

December, 1859, to March, 1861

ROME AND A WINTER IN ENGLAND

THE Treaty of Villafranca was signed at Zurich on the 11th of November, 1859, and it was proposed to hold a Congress of European Powers to settle the affairs of Central Italy. This, however, was rendered impossible by the publication of the famous pamphlet, "Le Pape et le Congrès," which was inspired directly by the Emperor himself, advocating the abandonment by the Pope of all his temporal possessions except Rome. Austria was so offended that she refused to attend the Congress unless the French Government disclaimed the views put forward in the brochure; but this they refused to do.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

HOTEL BRISTOL, MARSEILLE.

26. Decbr. 1859.

I shall write a scribblebible from here, so that you may feel it borne in upon you that you are

## Letters of Edward Lear

a letter in my debt, & so that I may the sooner hear from you in the Holy City, where, selon the *Times*, we are all to "pray, & dig in the ruins, and contemplate, & study art, and pray over again." Which reminds one that the "Brochure" (of course you have read it by this time,) is making a sensation in all France not to be conceived. The whole railway libraries are full of copies, & every tenth person seems to buy one. And the eagerness with which the Reviews of it are read is wonderful. It seems to be quite understood as the Emperor's policy or will made public, & I have heard from some who have known a good deal from being with his train all through the Lombard battles, that it is believed that he has fully decided on throwing over the Clerical party, & leaning on the Military only. The tightest screw is put on the press organs of the former, so this does not seem improbable. Surely the Cardinal A.<sup>1</sup> will hardly have a pleasant voyage, "knowing all his own mischance, with a seasick countenance," & perhaps reading the "Brochure" between vomitings.

My own doings hereto have been most fortunate: Thackeray was on board the Folkestone steamer, and the weather was propishous. The great man was very amiable & gave me No. 1. of his new magazine, "The Cornhill." Also I heard, the night I got to Folkestone, & saw in the papers that Mrs. S. G. had eloped with her fuliginous footman & was to be on board next day, a report which

<sup>1</sup> Antonelli, the Cardinal Secretary of the Papal Government.

## Rome and a Winter in England

shocked me, as I know the S. Gs. I was therefore pleased on the 23rd. to find that the lady was Mrs. J. G.—which I did not care about & which her footman was white & she carried a small spaniel in her faithless arms. At Paris I went to the Hotel du Grand Louvre, & never was so comfortable in Paris before, which the service & the beds & the cooking were all good. At 8 on the 24th. P.M., I set off hither, & arrived here before 4 yesterday, this being also a most good little Hotel & new to me. Lo! on the dinner table there was *roast beef, turkey* & a *plumpudding*. There are some vulgarry people here going to Rome, & a capital military doctor from India, who I wish was going but aint.

In the rail yesterday was an intelligent man going to Cannes, I do not know who. He told me some things that interested me, viz.—that the successor of Saunders,<sup>1</sup> a *first-rate* consul for so many years in Albania, is one Cathcart;<sup>2</sup> whom he describes as a man of family & interest, but speaking no language but his own, & looking on Prevesa as an exile and thereby still lingering in London. I could not but agree with him that the neglect of our consulships is a far more dangerous evil to the English name & commonwealth than is cared to be considered, & that the opposite system with our neighbours here is one

<sup>1</sup> Sidney Smith Saunders (knighted in 1873) was appointed Consul-General in the Ionian Islands on their cession to Greece in 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Major Andrew Cathcart.

## Letters of Edward Lear

of their greatest implements in that success no one can deny them as daily increasing all over the world. I know it would be said that a public school for language competition & consular qualities would not be tolerated in England, as being ostentatiously conducive to the spread of foreign convictions as to our wish for "overrunning the world" &c. &c. But surely something like a better system might gradually be attained to if it were fixed that 2 or more secretaries should be attached to each consul generalship, with a view to education in the lingo & manners of the countries, so as that the head being removed, one of the secretaries should succeed!

Thus, Wood,<sup>1</sup> undeniably the complete Consul-general in all points, being sent to Tunis from Damascus, after years of perfection in Arabic, in knowledge of the country & its people, & in general influence,—why should the place of such a man be filled by an excellent old man from Erzeroum, 70 years of age, & not knowing a syllable of Arabic? Or that Saunders, the beau ideal of activity & zeal, & knowing Greek & Turkish for years, should not be followed by at least one who has some portion of his mantle! I grant that Wood is good for Tunis, & that Saunders is good for Alexandria, but why fill up their posts by haphazard, & thus undo all that has been done for years. Both in Damascus and Albania now, a good French Consul could prevent our position

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Wood was Consul-General at Tunis from 1855 to 1879.



## Rome and a Winter in England

in trade & influence from ever becoming what it has been. (Moreover, if you want illustrations of the blind fool-system, I do happen to know that the Gov. offered Saunders the Consulship of a place in S. America! so fit to bring out the talents used for 30 years in the Levant!)

I do not think anyone Gov. is chargeable with these defects, but the whole system should be changed & revised. Could you not set about such a plan, by a pamphlet or private influence, calling public or Government interest to the subject, which I think you would agree with me, is one of very great importance. I suppose however, you have but little time yourself, but you might tread on Lord John's toes or bully Lord P[almerston].

Let me hear from you as often as you can. I am in horrible misery just now, remembering a brutal letter I wrote you just a year ago. My sins are always like chronic fever, which return at stated intervals, or rather like pains in amputated feet, which are felt after the limb is long removed.

9. VIA CONDOTTI. ROMA.

6. Janry. 1860.

(10th. Janry.)

In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird, which means obscurely that this sheet was begun to be written on directly I got your's of the 28th. Dec., but although that blank paper has laid on the table ever since, the bird has never settled on it. All

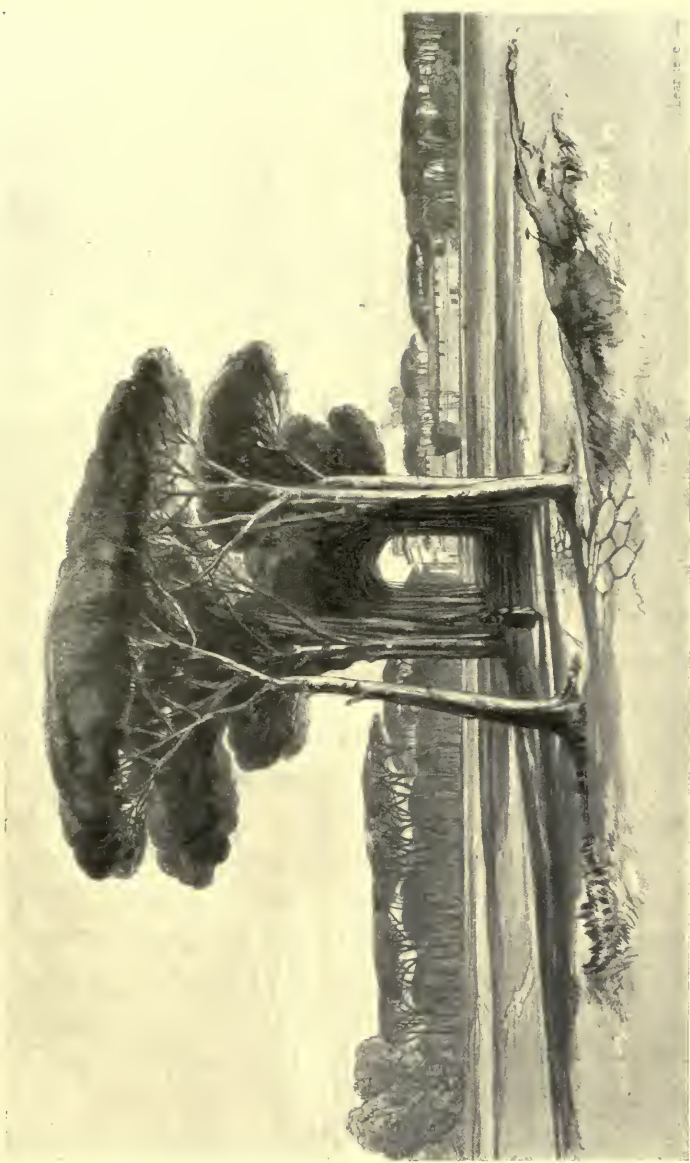


## Letters of Edward Lear

things go on as before the fathers fell asleep. But O Lord! wouldn't the fathers or anyone else fall asleep here now! You never saw such a desert! there are only 200 or 250 English here par example, instead of 1800 or 2000:—& the streets are literally empty.

The whole atmosphere of social & moral life is indeed a painful mess of bad, and doubt. Yet I can give you no light as to future—nor could anyone. Things are so much more equally balanced here than in any other part of Italy that it is more than doubtful what might happen here even if the French troops were withdrawn. For you can imagine, fools & empty as they are, all the Roman nobles are so linked by blood and interest with the present Government that they certainly would not join any attempt at a new system of things,—and again, the middle classes are also, thro' centuries, partly tied up in the same boat: and the whole mass is such a stagnation of pride & ignorance & superstition that I believe, if God Almighty were to come down Himself, they wouldn't have a single benefit from Him if He were not a "Roman." On the other hand, I hear from some who know how things are, that a great portion of educated men—advocates etc:—would raise a new standard, and would depend on external aid. This may be: I cannot tell; & I never enquire or politicalize a bit, for that wouldn't do here at all.

One thing is sure, the violence of the clerical or



CASTEL FUSANO.

From "Illustrated Excursions in Italy," by Edward Lear (Thomas McLean, 1846).



## Rome and a Winter in England

extreme Tory party is intense, which looks as if they feared a good deal. And the way in which the high Church idiots here curse the revolutionary folk & weep for the P[ope] is a thing to laugh at or be disgusted with. Intanto a complete constraint & gloom pervades all the city—&, inasmuch as I hated it last year, I do so now a thousandfold more for its odious false anti-human reason atmosphere. Giorgio says,—“almeno in Gerusalemme si poteva vedere un camelo morte e qualchi Arabi :—ma qui non c'e nulla.” — Fortunately for me, Dr. Kennedy<sup>1</sup> of Shrewsbury school, Tyrwhitt<sup>2</sup> of C. Church, Oxford, & one or more are here, & Newton the new Consul also, who seems a nice fellow. If he has force enough to set up this consulate on a new basis he will do no little good to his countrymen :—but, for many causes he has no easy task.

(O dear me ! what a odd hurried boshy life it is ! all fuss & so little rest ! “still from one trouble to another thrown.”)

The Ross's of Bladensburg<sup>3</sup> are here :—I hear they are very Papal—but on a queer scent, viz : Urquhartism—& considering that L[ouis] N[apoleon] is acting always under the Emperor of Russia !

<sup>1</sup> Headmaster of Shrewsbury and the greatest classical teacher of his day.

<sup>2</sup> Richard St. John Tyrwhitt, known chiefly by his writings on art.

<sup>3</sup> David Ross of Bladensburg, of Rosstrevor, Co. Down, and his wife, a sister of Viscount Massereene and Ferrard.



## Letters of Edward Lear

They deny the Perugia affair,<sup>1</sup> I am told, wholly. L<sup>d</sup>. Rendlesham<sup>2</sup> is the *only* peer & Lord Pollington,<sup>3</sup> a peer's son; no markisses, nor dukes, nor baronets, nor nothing. Most of the Hotels are more or less shut up, & the lodging houses also. The beggars are ravenous & demonstrative to a fearful degree. Says I to myself, glad I shall be, when I am free, O Rome from thee, & over the sea, high diddledydee. I must go to bed & finish this blessed epissel tomorrow. Goodnight. E. L. . . .

Jan. 11. The class or caste of Artistes here have always been in a queer position, with the exception of one or two, I for one don't choose to go to swell houses & stand against a doorpost & be stared at if I speak, as used to be the case in some places:—which modes of life I have long given over. Your Lady W[aldegrave], is after all the finest specimen of a real woman in a swell place one knows of, & I wish to goodness she was here, though you don't. There would be talk enough for us two here for weeks, & I wish horribly you could run over, but the parliament won't let you, besides the Colonies.

Card. Wiseman is here, & *such* a nest of Bishops

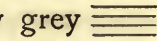
<sup>1</sup> In July, 1859, the people of Perugia expelled the Papal legate, whereupon the Pope despatched a body of Swiss mercenaries, who sacked and pillaged the place. There was a great outcry, and a commission was held to inquire into the matter.

<sup>2</sup> The fifth Baron, at this time a young man of nineteen.

<sup>3</sup> Eldest son of the third Earl of Mexborough. Succeeded to the title the following year.

## Rome and a Winter in England

& Irish R.C.'s! (Dundalk Bowyer,<sup>1</sup> among the rest, whom I might meet if I liked, but I hate the lot, & go near none of them). Yesterdays talk is all about the intemperate anger of the "Άγιος Πατήρ,<sup>2</sup> who absolutely blew up & bullied the Jews, on their annual visit of congratulation, he being very sore just now about the Mortara boy.<sup>3</sup> He is known to have laughed & said "What! you are still hoping to get back the boy?" &c. &c. Cheer up, as the limpet said to the weeping willow :—& forgive me for not writing before.

Give my kindest regards, or however you may word them, to Lady Waldegrave. In the depths of my misery on board the Marseilles boat, when I lost my head from excess of illness, I for a time, continually saw the Punch & Judy at Strawberry Hill, with the little children laughing, & Lady W. in that brownish grey  striped dress & little hat. Moral :—people as does kindnesses to others does

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Bowyer, M.P. for Dundalk, joined the Church of Rome in 1850, and became chamberlain to Pope Pius IX. He built the church of St. John of Jerusalem, Great Ormonde Street, Bloomsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Holy Father.

<sup>3</sup> In June, 1858, a Jewish boy, Edgar Mortara, was forcibly seized from his parents by order of Cardinal Viale Preta, Archbishop of Bologna and Legate of Pope Pius IX., because it was alleged that he had been baptized when an infant by a Roman Catholic maidservant. Intense feeling was aroused throughout Europe by the refusal of the Court of Rome to restore the boy, in spite of representations from the French Government and a monster petition of Jews and of British Christians, headed by the signatures of the Archbishops of Canterbury, Dublin, and York.

## Letters of Edward Lear

more than they think for to them as they knows nothing about doing them for particular.

I wrote to ask A. Tennyson to come here, but hardly think he will turn up:—it would be the very quietest year he could ever come in, & there will be no row while the French are here. I had hopes of coming to see somewhat of Newton the new Consul, (of whom be it said he is a clever & sensible fellow, & is putting the B.M's consulate already into a respectable position, which it never has been before in my time,) but he is collapsed into business, or daily society, so that I have lost sight of him. The New Zealand sister is expected in England every week. Ann is for the present staying at my widow-sister's, & I much wish that that arrangement may prosper & abide, as I find that my brother-in-law left his property all to his wife & uncontrolled. Are my four Idylls songs published at Cramer's yet? Dear me! I think life is a great bore: particularly when the chimney smokes, & one has a cold in the head.

Your Government seems pretty serene altogether, & I greatly hope will stand fast. I thought Lord P[almerston]'s speech<sup>1</sup> very good. The priest party here take the Q's speech mention of Italy as all on their side: which is amusing: "I will not interfere to prevent the Italians shaking off the tyranny of

<sup>1</sup> A speech in answer to Mr. Disraeli, stating that the Commercial treaty with France had been signed, and justifying its provisions. Also vindicating England's policy of non-interference with regard to Italy



## Rome and a Winter in England

rebels" they say it means. I saw a letter in the "Times" of the 27th (strictly suppressed here in public of course) which was certainly strong, but true enough. It was written by Gallenga, who was sent off by the police with a 3 days notice.

The most interesting person here is a Major Reynolds, which was occupied in Bundelcund a catching Thugs. His description of Thuggee is vast. Also his sister is quite apart from the crew of fools: seeing she reads Sophocles & Plato. Do you see my dear old friend Colonel Leake is dead? This distressed me a good deal.

9. V. CONDOTTI. ROMA.

22. March. 1860.

I am rather beshamed that I have not written to you for so long:—& you are a cheerful cherub to send me the nice letter—date 13th., which has just been brought in by George, who says also "ἐτεχειώθη ἡ ἐπανάστασις,"<sup>1</sup> alluding to what happened the night before last, of which anon.—You in truth go on with wonderful "Abercombiness" & regularity, & the day will come when you will be as 43 giants.

The "Echo" story is good.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The revolution has been worked."

<sup>2</sup> "Have you ever heard the story of the Echo of Villafranca? Here it is. After their peace the two Emperors, riding together, came to a place among the hills where there is a famous echo. France said 'Que chacun de nous appelle sa femme'—to try the echo. So they did. L. Nap. called 'Eugénie!' The echo answered 'Génie!' Austria called 'Elisabeth!' The echo answered 'Bête!'" (Letter from Fortescue to Lear, March 13, 1860.)

## Letters of Edward Lear

To pass to a public appointment which (for once, you'll say,) is really creditable, the new Consul here, C. Newton is a good and active man of business—a fine scholar,—a gentleman, & of a kind disposition; he has already gone far to put the British name, into a train of respectable repute. I never can believe that dirty knives can be used to cut clean good bread,—& the bread not be thereby injured. For years the R. C.'s have said, the English consular agent is a fit & apt representation of a base & bad nation:—Now they are obliged to alter their voice on the subject, & acknowledge that the Q. is represented by a worthy & clever man.

Mrs. Ross is still here, befussing herself about politics.

We are all here in very disagreeable excitement,—& on Monday night that occurred which is not yet wound up. It was G[aribaldi]'s birthday, & a fêta besides—so that a considerable crowd walked in the Corso—4 & 4 smoking,—for this kind of demonstration is the thing now a days. The police (armed) late in the day arrested two men who displayed nose-gays of 3 colours, but, (this was in the Piazza Colonna,) some F[rench] officers interfered, & the two men were let loose. On which the Papal police retired “green with rage.” The Corso was full of people, just at Avemaria, when they sallied out furiously, in all about 60, & ran a muck the whole length of the street to the P.del Popolo, cutting down & beating



## Rome and a Winter in England

with buttend of pistols right & left. *You will hear all this denied by Lords Derby & Normanby, but as I know those who know the names of 35 seriously wounded now in Doctors hands, & as the poor fruiterer opposite my friend's died of his sword wound yesterday, & as it is well known that altogether 70 or 80 were more or less hurt, you will excuse my believing the aristocratic defenders of Italy as it is, rather than my own senses.* Among the wounded were also a sergeant, & 2 French soldiers, & one officer, son-in-law to one of the Generals. It is impossible to give you an idea of the state the people are in. But as many as 10 patrols in a body are placed at every other street end all down the Corso, so no movement is possible. Meanwhile Gen. Goyon<sup>1</sup> has publicly praised the police "for obeying orders" but a great mass of F[rench] Officers (it is said) have declared that they "gave no orders." What is to happen next chi sa?

Embrace Lord John. He is a duck.<sup>2</sup> What I wish now is that V[ictor] E[mmanuel] may, with all Italy, split from the old P[ope]. A few months must decide now.

I met Odo Russell at Miss Cushman's at dinner lately, a very extremely nice fellow. Browning was there also, & told me a story of Carlyle which I shall send you. C. on going abroad for the first time saw a

<sup>1</sup> The General commanding the French troops in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> On the 12th of March Lord John Russell entered into a full explanation of the Savoy question.

## Letters of Edward Lear

crucifix, & said calmly "Ah! poor fellow I thought we had had enough of him!"

As for me I am at work on a heap of pictures 20 in all: 2 of the <sup>100</sup> Campagna, a <sup>200</sup> Beyrout, <sup>200</sup> Damascus, & <sup>100</sup> Interlaken, will be striking topograffic scenes, & I



hope to sell them on my return to wise & wealthy virtuous wights—for 700£ if possible. If things get more ojus here, I must leave earlier. The New Zealand sister has arrived, after just 7 years absence. I am very glad for the sake of poor dear Ann. Is H. Hunt's picture yet wizzabel? A jew, a jew, my friend. I have become so fat for want of exercise that you would not know me, so I attach a portrait.

Do you wear knickerbockers? Don't you like Tithonus? Have you seen F. Lushington? Do you go to the Blue posts? I must leave off like a deleterious donkey as I am.—

Yours affly,

EDWARD LEAR.

The American Consul narrowly escaped a sword cut, & one Mr. Arkworth or Akworth also. Ugh! The converts deny the whole thing with the most impudent lying. Manning is preaching here, furious

## Rome and a Winter in England

as a bear. He predicts the utter fall & decay of England & the rise & triumph of Ireland, which he says is the holiest country of modern days—a fact, you though a cussed heretic will be pleased to hear.

Concerning the waste of money involved in going away, there were once two people who had each a leg of mutton for dinner, but both were invited out. One gave away his leg of mutton, but the other said “that is waste,” & ate it all up, whereby he was sick for a week. Now you see I don’t mean to eat up my leg of mutton upon this principle.

It has been anything but an Abercromby winter to me though :—so much time thrown away by asthma, & lethargy, for I cannot, *HORRIBLE to RELATE*, rise before 7½ here. But I’ll make up for lost time, as the Tadpole said when he lost his tail & found he could jump about.

We know less than nothing here : for they suppress the papers now. What will happen it is wholly impossible to guess : though it is thought that General L’s mission<sup>1</sup> is rather in the interest of France than Sardinia, that of the P[ope] being the ostensible cause.

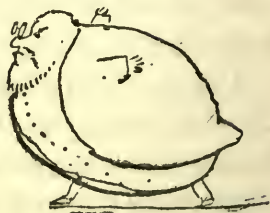
V[ictor] Emm. of Turin will have a difficult task yet to keep straight : & I can’t but wonder at some of Cavour’s doings. I wish I had a chance of seeing you in Ardee, but I shall trust to doing so often

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of April General Lamoricière, who had been a celebrated leader of the Zouaves, but who had been expelled from France after the troubles of 1848, arrived in Rome to take over the command of the Papal army.

## Letters of Edward Lear

in Town. I wish the D. of N[ewcastle] had had the sense to put F. Lushington into Merivale's place.<sup>1</sup> I am surprised at M's going away.

I am grown horribly fat from want of exercise—like this—



At the beginning of May Lear left Rome for good, and set out for England, having been disappointed in his original idea of revisiting Palestine and getting fresh subjects for his pictures. Want of ready money, from which he always suffered and to which he constantly alludes in his letters, was probably the cause of this alteration in his plans. In connection with this I may mention, that he was for ever making elaborate plans for travel, which were constantly doomed to failure for the aforesaid reason.

One of his first visits was to Nuneham, Mr. Harcourt's place in Oxfordshire, to execute a commission for two landscapes.

### *Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

*Thursday, July, 1860?*

DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,—I have just sent off two boxes and a Neasel which are to go by the next goods

<sup>1</sup> Merivale, permanent Under Secretary of the Colonies, had just accepted the Under Secretaryship of the India Office.



## Rome and a Winter in England

train and to be left at Culham Station as addressed. The foolish topographer will follow tomorrow by the 4.50 express. . . .

I am going to ask you if I may divest myself of the duty of breakfast in the morning (save Sunday), because, as I begin early, and the effect of light and shade ceases at  $11\frac{1}{2}$ , the interruption of cleaning and feeding at 10, will just cut up the best part of my morning. Also, when in a state of application, or incubation as it were, I am more or less necessarily disagreeable and absent, and should certainly answer "Elm trees and bridges," if they asked me whether I would "take tea or coffee!"

Directly after I finish my morning work, I should willingly devour a sandwich, and go across to the Church view, which I shall be able now to see very well, as I can place my canvas on a lofty easel, I myself standing on the green seat, thus:—



# Letters of Edward Lear

15. STRATFORD PLACE, W.,

5. Sept. 1860.

I find, (since I saw the Fortescue yesterday,) that my Sussex & Hampshire visits will keep me out of London till the 21st—On the 22nd. therefore may I come down to Dudbrooke & stay with you over the Sunday?—

As for me I am working at all kinds of places, Damascus & Beyrout, Masada & the Cedars of Lebanon principally—besides Bethlehem, Interlaken, Philæ, & the Roman Campagna.—Identifying oneself with all this various topography naturally makes one less sane than usual, but at present my feelings are tried more than commonly because I am at work in a large room lent me by my landlord who is a portrait painter, & his room is full of faces. The Rev. Jabesh Bunting & Lady Mulgrave sit upon the walls of Masada, Sir Fenwick Williams & Mr. Spurgeon peer among the branches of my Cedars—Mr. & Mrs. Cunard of New York abound in the ruins of Philæ, & the Bishop of Gloucester is dominant in Interlaken. So that I have a horrid fear that I shall hash all these people up together in all my foregrounds.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

OATLANDS PARK HOTEL.

WALTON ON THAMES.

SURREY.

Sept. 30. 1860.

I really hope you will be able to come for Sunday the 14th., for you would enjoy this place, if weather

## Rome and a Winter in England

gets better, & by that time my Cedars will have advanced a bit, I trust.

Yesterday only the big case arrived, but thanks to the assiduous friendliness of one Mr. Lyle who has built a huge house in the centre of Cedardom,—I am able to get the canvas set up alright, & actually worked at it a good bit :—The next neighbour to Mr. Lyle also, a Mr. Hewitson who possesses the finest collection of Butterflies existing,<sup>1</sup> pervades the place with assistance & brings water-jugs &c. &c. freely.—I have hired a small boy, his name is “ Norval ” (on the Grampian Hills his father feeds &c.) for sixpence a day, wages to be raised to ninepence if good,—who carries folios, brushes &c., from the Hotel, for this Hotel is only 5 minutes from where I go to paint, so I hope all next week to get a-head.—

But I will describe my life generally. The Hotel then is a large & sumptuously commodious place, in a part of the old Oatlands Park—with nice broad terrace walks, & a wonderfully lovely view over the river Temms & the surroundiant landskip.—Them as likes private rooms, can have them. But, I & some 20 more live in public. I have a large light bedroom, delightful to behold, & wanting for nought.—Here I rise, (to begin the day,) at 6, & by 6.30 or 6.45 am at work on one of the seven drawings. At 8 I go down-stairs, & from that to 9. breakfast audibly in the public coughy-room, which is first-rate in every particular. The Times, (oh how my stomach

<sup>1</sup> This collection is now in the Natural History Museum.

## Letters of Edward Lear

aches for Garibaldi!—) & letters arrive also at that hour.

Immejately after these facts, I go out to work,—(Friday it poured with rain, so I worked indoors,) & by 6. I am back again. Dinner happens at 6.45. & is well arranged & good: & what pleases me I can get plain food. One pint of sherry, & one ditto of beer is my liquor,—& these are extras,—all other board, lodging, & service costing 4.4 a week. The company is not bad, & rather amusing:—some is permanent, some changeful.—Among the latter I trust are the parents of a beastly little child, whom seeing playing about, I spoke to simply as being attracted to all nice-looking little children. Whereon the imp thus accosted me:—

“O my! *what* an ugly chap you are! “And *what* ugly shoes you wear! “You must be a nasty ugly old Scotchman!”—It is unnecessary to relate that I turned away with ill disguised disgust from this offensive infant, who cannot fail to bring his father’s gray airs to an untimely hend.

The only other person who has gone is a large old lady, who the first night (Thursday,) I was here, came slowly across the large reading-room, steadily looking at me. When she had advanced within 3 feet of my chair, I could bear it no longer, for I knew she would do one of two things, either embrace me, or charge me with a religious tract,—so I rose up in terror. On which she said in a loud voice, “Sit down Sir! I only came across the room to see if you was anyone I



## Rome and a Winter in England

knew.”—To return to the Dining table, there is a young Hussar who has been in French service,—& later all through the Indian Mutiny: rather a nice fellow, Irish, & knows the “Bellews”: A very well informed & clever man, I conclude a physician: his wife wears spectacles & seems literary.—A grand dark man, who says Hay?—if ever I speak to him, (so I have left off doing so):—& various other characters. The head waiter is a praiseworthy individual, & his efforts to make a goose go round 18 diners were remarkable yesterday, as well as his placid firmness when there was only one bit left,—& 4 persons yet unserved. “Who’s this for?” said an agitated buttony boy,—foreseeing the invidiousness of the task set him. “HENNYBODDY!” said the waiter in a decided tone,—& then coming to the three gooseless persons, of whom I was one,

(Three were in such fortune cast—

Of whom myself was left the last,)

he said in a conscientious & pained under-voice—  
“Gentlemen—I am really sorry this has happened!—  
but I declare to you that there shall be another goose to-morrow!”

At 9. I go to my room, much to the disgust of the community who having found out that I am musical, consider my “seclusion” unpleasant. And so they sent up a députation 2 nights ago to ask me to come down to them—but I remained where I was. For one hour, I translate Ἡ Πολιτεία, of my daily old Plato: & for one more hour I pen out some remaining Athos

## Letters of Edward Lear

drawings. And at 11. I go to bed. There's a pretty good history of life at the Oatlands Park Hotel.

### STORY.

Scene, Railway Station, North of Scotland.

Persons: Old Scotchwoman and Railway Clerk.

Old Woman. "A Tucket."

Railway Clerk. "Whar till?"

O.W. (with more emphasis). "A *Tucket!*"

R.C. (louder). "Whar till?"

O.W. (fiercely). "A *Tucket*, I say!"

R.C. (angrily). "Whar till then?"

O.W. "You are a nasty speering body! What is't to you whar I am ganging to?"

(Train draws up—party of Old Woman's friends call out "Jeanie! Jeanie! You'll be too late: have you na got your tucket?")

O.W. "Na! and I winna tell the old fellow whar I am going! What is it to him!" (Train goes on.)

### *Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

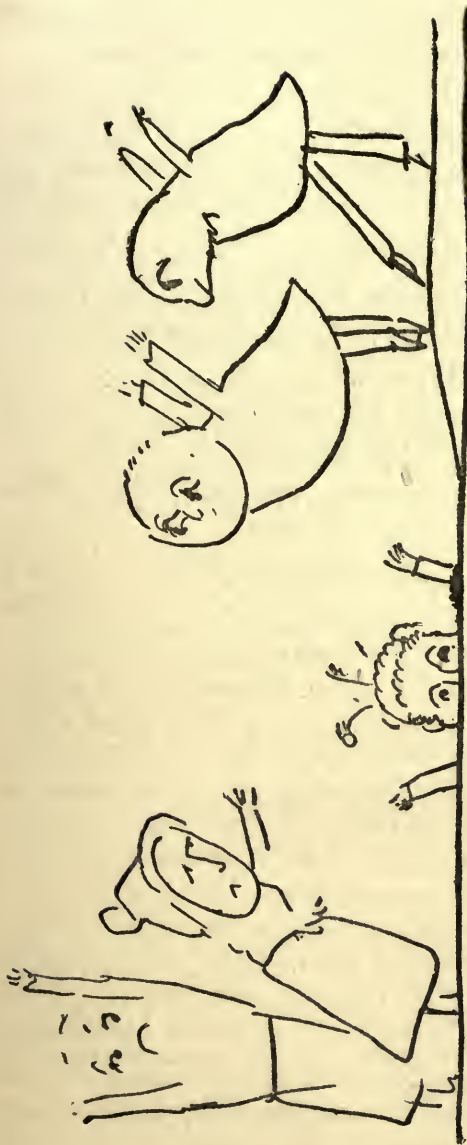
STRATTON,

MICHELDEVER.

October 23/60.

Since I was at Dudbrooke that exceedingly nice youth the Count de Paris with his brother & the Prince de Joinville<sup>1</sup> came to my studio & looked over

<sup>1</sup> The Comte de Paris was the eldest grandson of Louis Philippe. At the Revolution of 1848 his mother brought him to England, and he grew up at York House, Twickenham, with his brother, the Duc de Chartres. The following year he went to



There was a young person of Chertsey  
Who made a remarkable Curtesy

She turned round around, *File the bank underground*  
Which bewildered the people of Chertsey.

## Letters of Edward Lear

lots of Nilatic drawings. They were pleased with the drawings, & I with them—for the two young men particularly are really intelligent & unaffected.

I hope to send your two Nunehams<sup>1</sup> to Strawberry very early next week—I hope extremely that you will like them.

I have been & am still painting Cedars at Oatlands Hotel—& I return there on November 1st., for the soil is so dry that at present I have neither Asthma nor roomatizism when I am there—On the contrary I have been making some new nonsenses in my old age—“still in our ashes” &c., (see overleaf).

Please remember me to Mr. Harcourt.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

THE OATLANDS PARK HOTEL.  
NEAR WALTON-ON-THAMES.  
SURREY.

7 day of Dec. 1860.

MY DEAR FORTSCUE,—Λαβόντος τὴν τῆς ἀγγῆς τῆν ἐπιστολήν σου, (οὔσας τὲ τῆς ἀγγῆς τοῦ πρώτου μέρους τῆς ἡμέρας,) καὶ τῆς θήκης σου καλῶς εὐρισκομένη, ἐχαίρεσα πολὺν. Ἄλλὰ δὲ μάλλον θαυμασοῖεν τινα μὴ εἰς οἰκίαν εὐρίσκοντος τὸν Κώμην τῆς Παρισαίας, κάκιστος ὁ καιρὸς, καὶ, (οὕτως ἐπεῖν,) προσείπω αὐτὸν ὅτε γνωρίζειν ωαλὰ τὸν Ναυχηγὸν Σήμωρ, πεζῆ πρότερον μακρῶς συμπεριπατοῦντων ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς Ρώμης ἔξοχὴν, ἐκείνον τότε (ἦτον πολλὰ ἔτη) ζωγραφείων βουνῶν καὶ κατακλωμῶν

America to serve in the Civil War, with his brother and the Prince de Joinville, his uncle.

<sup>1</sup> Two pictures painted in the grounds of Nuneham, Mr. Harcourt's house in Oxfordshire. The pictures are now in the possession of Lord Waldegrave.



## Rome and a Winter in England

ἐργάζεσθαι, πόλις οὔσης ἢ Ρώμα τοιαῦτα μὲ κατάσταςεις ἐντὸς μωροῦ περικόκλου, ἀλλὰ δὲ τοῦ Μιχέλου Σήμωρ ὄντος εἰς τὸν Ἄγγελόν ἢ Ἀρχάγγελον πόποτε συγγενέως οὔτε ξεβαιῶν, οὔτε ὡς ψευδὰς λέγων δύναμαι : τῆς συζογοῦ του, ἀλλὰ εἶδησις εἶναι ὅτι τοῦ Ἰατροῦ Σίρ. Ὡ. Νάιτονου, (ὅστις ὁ βᾶσιλευς ὁ τῶριος ὁ τέσσαρτος τῆς Ἀγγλίας ἐξεραπέυθη μερικῶν νόσων λέγει ἢ φημὶ) οὔσης θυγατρὸς.<sup>1</sup>

I had your letter this morning, (now the morning is the first or earliest part of the day.) That you did not find the Count de Paris at home was more surprising that the weather was so wet, &, so to speak, I may add that I myself also once knew Admiral Seymour<sup>2</sup> very well, having made at one time long excursions on the Campagna of Rome with him,—he there occupying himself with drawing views of mountains & vallies :—for Rome is a city abounding with objects of that sort within a small circle, but that this Michael Seymour was anyway related to the angel or Archangel I can neither certainly state nor yet positively deny : although it is well known that his wife was a daughter of the Physician Sir W. Knighton by whom report says George the 4th, King of England, was successfully treated.

<sup>1</sup> "When I received your sunrise letter (sunrise is what the Greeks call the morning) and found your enclosure all right, I was very glad." Lear has translated the whole letter in the paragraph following, so with the exception of the first sentence no further translation is required.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Michael Seymour won special distinction in the troubles with China in 1857, when he destroyed the Chinese junk fleet and captured Canton. In 1858 he forced his way up to Tientsing, and a treaty was signed.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Bother Thucydides.

A letter from Rome this morning brings me a "quittance" from the "Fratelli Spillman," my late landlord, putting an end to my lodging treaty,—The compliments they pay to my "high & renowned qualities" & to my "superior nature" have made my stomach ache:—tho' I am very glad the Roman affair is done with.

I wish I could hear from poor Giorgio.

Write soon. And don't get in the way of those odious Donaghue maniacs<sup>1</sup>:—I said little about them, for I hate the whole lot so much I can't keep my temper on the subject.

Don't forget my messages to Mrs. Ruxton, & Chi, & all who know me—"a blessed privilege" as Mrs. H. says.

I do not think the picture (Bassæ) is to be presented by the subscribers, as they say that won't do for a precedent, but by a certain lot of Trinity Coll. fellows.

15. STRATFORD PLACE.

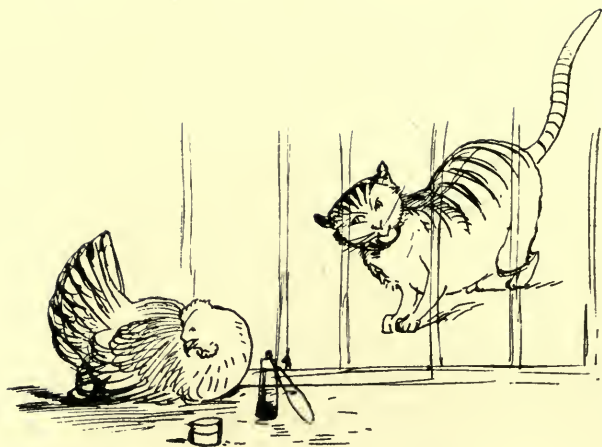
OXFORD STREET.

*Thursday 7. March. 1861.*

You will be sorry to hear that my dear sister Ann is extremely ill.—Although she was here last week,—as I told you on Sunday,—she has had a relapse of her internal complaint & some alarming symptoms are showing themselves. Besides this the poor dear has a

<sup>1</sup> The O'Donaghue, the member for Tipperary, was one of the leaders of the extreme section of the Roman Catholic party in Ireland, and an ardent supporter of the Papal claims.





Ὀρνίς ἀσθ' ἠουέριος Τῆ δὲ ἀποσκίψας  
 ἄρ' αὖτος εἶπε " Πῶς εἶπες; Πῶς ἔσπες;  
 Ἐγὼ παρὲν πάντα σοι μόνον σὺ ζῆς "  
 Ἢ δὲ - " Ἐὰν ἀπέλθῃς, εἶπεν, " οὐκ ἀποδύησθαι. "

"Once upon a time a bird was ill, and a cat, bending down to it, said, 'How are you, and what do you want? I will give you everything, only get well.' And the bird replied, 'If you go away I shan't die.'"



## Rome and a Winter in England

dreadful swelling in the back of the neck, which continually increases, & which the Doctor fears may turn to Carbuncle. The two illnesses together will I dread, be more than at her age she can rally from, nor do I quite think she would undergo any operation, which the Doctors hint may be expedient. Her medical man sent for me last night, & I have seen her. Poor dear creature, her sufferings are very sad, yet she is *absolutely* cheerful & tranquil, & speaks of dying as a change about to bring such great delight that she only checks herself for thinking of it too much. She has always been indeed as near Heaven as it was possible to be.

I have written for both my sisters:—the widow comes to-day.

You may suppose I am greatly distressed at this, tho' at present I do not fully realize the whole.

I heard from Lord Clermont to-day. I had thought it right as I had before written about the Civitella,—to tell him it was sold,—Sir Francis Goldsmid<sup>1</sup> purchased it on Monday:—for 150 guineas, which you also will be glad to hear.

Penrhyn<sup>2</sup> died yesterday morning. Leycester P. wrote to me yesterday—but, altho' I wish to go to the funeral, my sister's state of health may prevent me.

<sup>1</sup> The first Jew called to the English Bar, and the first Jewish Q.C. and Bencher. President of the Senate of University College, London.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Leycester took the name of Penrhyn in accordance with the will of his cousin, Lady Penrhyn, whose property he inherited. He married in 1823 Lady Charlotte Stanley, eldest daughter of the thirteenth Earl of Derby.

## Letters of Edward Lear

The death of his sister on 11th March, 1861, was a great blow to him.

ANGEL HOTEL, LYMINGTON.

18. *March.* 1861.

MY DEAR CHICHESTER,—I write this, more to thank you for your's than for ought else.

I went to Oatlands after the funeral;—but have come to-day to this place, hoping to get to A. Tennyson, but there was no steamer.

I am all at sea & do not know my way an hour ahead.

I shall be so terribly alone.

Wandering about a little may do some good perhaps.

Yours affectionately,

EDWARD LEAR

## CHAPTER VII

1861

### ITALY AND SWITZERLAND

THE death of his eldest sister, who had been like a mother to him for so many years, and to whom he had always been deeply devoted, affected Lear's health and spirits to so great an extent, that he welcomed the opportunity given him by Lady Waldegrave of going to Italy, in order to execute her commission to paint a picture of the view from the celebrated Villa Petraja of Florence. Stopping at Turin on his way there, he mentions that he

waited thro' Sunday for the fete,—well worth the delay—and I saw V[ictor] E[mmanuel] quite closely, as well as all the milingtary specktickle. We all of us, however, little thought then that the merry days would be so soon clouded by Cavour's death.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The news of Cavour's death on the 6th of June plunged all Italy into mourning.

## Letters of Edward Lear

On June 8, 1861, he reached Florence, whence he writes:—

There has been a row of a small kind here,—the people being angry that some reactionists appeared on C[avour]'s death being known—with Austrian orders, etc. The mob tore the orders off, and Corsini had to run for it into the Duomo till the N. Guard came. Moreover, in the Corpus Domini, the Priests turn away the Host from the soldiers, who kneel. The priest party seem as blind as such fools usually are!

And on the 24th—

Things are very unsatisfactory in many ways. Certain people are *positive* that the I[sland] of S[ardinia] will be given up shortly—to follow N[ice] and S[avoy].<sup>1</sup>

It does not seem clear to me that there may be a reaction strong enough to bring back the K[ing] of N[aples]<sup>2</sup>—and perhaps the G[rand] D[uke], but if anything is *clearer* it is this,—that their return would end, as in the case of the Stuart restoration, in more distinct revolution, and more absolute exile.

Meanwhile he set to work in earnest on the Petraja picture, though still far from well either

<sup>1</sup> In March, 1860, Savoy and Nice were ceded to France in return for her services in helping to free Italy.

<sup>2</sup> In September of the previous year Francis II. of Naples, a ruler as bad as his father, had been driven out of his kingdom by Garibaldi.



## Italy and Switzerland

bodily or mentally, for he was suffering from a severe internal sprain, and had just received the news of his sister Mary's death at sea, on the voyage back from New Zealand

Early in July he started on a tour northward through Italy to Switzerland, visiting Lucca, Pisa, Via Reggio (where he made a drawing of Shelley's burial-place), Pietrasanta, Massa, Carrara, and Sargano, reaching Spezzia on the 14th. Thence he went to Genoa on his way back to Turin, where he says:—

I have been trying to draw the Alps, but they, like Sarah in Abraham's tent, have hidden themselves. So I took a fit of Protestant enthusiasm and rushed off to the Vaudois vallies, which are very interesting.

And with regard to the political situation—

The Turinese have been a-saluting the Swedish Ambassador with a serenade, and cheering him immensely. I fancy the other side are by no means giving up hopes of upsetting matters yet—but with Cialdini at Naples<sup>1</sup> they will find themselves sold. "One struggle more and we are free," as the song says. But that the Priesthood can ever be where

<sup>1</sup> On the 13th of February General Cialdini, head of the Piedmontese army, took the fortress of Gaeta, the last stronghold of King Francis II., and then went to Naples as Lieut.-Governor for the civil administration of the country.

## Letters of Edward Lear

and what it was only very shortsighted folk can suppose. I wish I had heard Ricasoli's<sup>1</sup> speech on Sunday, at the Inauguration of C. Alberti's statue.

From Turin he went to Courmayeur and then to Aosta. Crossing the St. Bernard to Martiny, he proceeded to Vevey

which is Paradise, and I don't see how the people there and at Lausanne can have the impudence to suppose that they can go to Heaven after death.

After visiting Ferney, Geneva, Chamounix, and many other places, and filling his portfolio with drawings, he returned to England at the end of August.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

AOSTA. 28. July. 1861.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—Je vois, (dans le Temps) que vous vous portez en Irlande, e cessez d'etre Sectre. pour les Colonies.<sup>2</sup> Faites moi savoir de vos nouvelles—a

<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister of the Government of the new Italian kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> A leader in the *Times* of July 22nd stated that Mr. Chichester Fortescue was to succeed to the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland, vacated by Mr. Cardwell, who was to be promoted to the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster; but this information was incorrect, as Sir Robert Peel was appointed Chief Secretary on the 25th, and Mr. Fortescue continued at the Colonial Office.

## Italy and Switzerland

Genève—Je vous prie—ou je dois me trouver le 8ieme. Août au plus tard. Est ce que vous serez deja parti avant que je suis de retour, c'est a dire le 25, de ce mois ci?

Votre affly,

EDWARD LEAR.

119 MARINA, ST. LEONARD'S-ON-SEA.

SUSSEX.

29th. August 1861.

At present I am at work ferociously on the Petraja, & I must say it promises well. I worked on the large lemon trees in pots all yesterday, & to-day must fidget over the houses all the long hours. No life is more *shocking* to me than the sitting motionless like a petrified gorilla as to my body & limbs hour after hour—my hand meanwhile, reck peck pecking at billions of little dots & lines, while my mind is fretting & fuming through every moment of the weary days work.

Do you see the charge against Thirlwall<sup>1</sup> in the Westminster? T. having been attacked about his part of persecution in the Essays & Reviews,<sup>2</sup> & being asked how he could be so bitter when he himself had written Schleirmachers Luke—says in reply “No! not I, but a lawyer Thirwall *wrote* that—not the priest.” (This it seems is true but it was not

<sup>1</sup> Bishop of St. David's.

<sup>2</sup> A Liberal work published in 1860, by various authors. It caused some commotion in the English Church because of the alleged heresy of the views expressed. Professor Jowett was one of the contributors.

## Letters of Edward Lear

published till 4 years after T. was ordained :—which little bit of Jesuitry they now display to the orthodox Bishop.)

Your remark on Ardee interested me much :—It is indeed a different life for you. The prayers—just as they are—you are quite right to read daily : dear old Mrs. Ruxton means nothing but good,—even when she says the Athanasian Creed : It is not the individual peculiarity of worship that grates on us, so much as the public recognition of a hateful exclusion principle.

Bye the bye this reminds me of Emily Miss Beaufort's 2 volumes<sup>1</sup>—which I think your Aunt would like : the Miss Bs must be plucky singular women,—but there is too much enthusiasm & religious zeal in Miss Emily for my taste, so far as I have got in her book. Yet if she could help me at the Mount of Olives in my large view of Jerusalem ! Think of laying your head, my head I mean, after long long hours of weary outline drawing—not on the hard bolster of the tent bed, but on an intelligent female's buzzim ! I declare to you that the invitation to meet them so near here at the Goldsmid's for 2 days sorely puzzles me, tho' I believe I shall stick to my work here & go nowhere even for the small chance of future female buzzims & intelligent aid in outline.

<sup>1</sup> "Egyptian Sepulchres and Syrian Shrines, including some stay in the Lebanon, at Palmyra, and in Western Turkey," 1861, by Emily Beaufort, the daughter of the distinguished geographer.



## Italy and Switzerland

Let me hear what news you have of Lady W. I believe she & Mr. H. have gone on a political errand to Vienna, as his cousin to Perth. Ought not Roebuck to be hooted, intanto, anent his Sardinian Declaration?<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, I have very few letters here as yet & mainly from my sister Ellinor, who has other letters from America, all wretched enough. I am trying to send money to Frederick's family, but Drummond says it is not to be done, all the more that P[resident] Lincoln has now prohibited all intercourse between the two sides. Fredk's only son has joined the Southern army: Henry's 4 sons have joined the North side, but it seems to me that Henry from New York, looks as gloomily on the Northern prospects as F. does from Springfield. I suppose all my 5 nephews were in the last battle, a curious state of unpleasant domestic romance.<sup>2</sup>

From the Hornby's & Cross I have not heard, & imagine they are at Dover, where not improbably Lady Denison would go, as her sister-in-law Mrs. Phillimore<sup>3</sup> would be there, & the whole Palmerstonian

<sup>1</sup> At a banquet at Sheffield on August 21st Mr. Roebuck announced that he knew for a fact that a compact had been entered into between the King of Italy and the Emperor of the French, that the latter should have the Island of Sardinia so soon as he withdrew his troops from Rome. This was afterwards contradicted most emphatically by the French Press, as well as by Baron Ricasoli.

<sup>2</sup> The American Civil War broke out early in the year.

<sup>3</sup> Sister of Sir William Denison and Evelyn Denison, Speaker of the House of Commons. She married Mr. R. J. Phillimore

## Letters of Edward Lear

spectacle<sup>1</sup> worth seeing & being part of. Nor does Clowes write,—perhaps in Norway: nor James Edwards—perhaps in the sulx.

My own life is—I rise at six or 6.30.—& work a short hour before breakfast at 8. Bkft as slight as possible—2 cups of tea, 2 bits of dry toast, 2 ditto bacon, work till 11—: newspaper. Work again till 2. small bit of cake.—work till 4. Dine. simple sole & beneficial beer: work again till 7. wash brushes & swear till 7.30. Prowl in the dark along the melancholy sea till 8.45. Bed at 9.30. For I am too sad & tired by that time to work again. Bed extremely uncomfortable—like a plum pie turned into stone. Lie awake & have the cramp & the side-ache till morning. Then the “break, break, break,” of the sea gets me to sleep. I have a piano, but seldom play. Housemaid vexatious &, a goose,—wears crinolines. Your *Palgrave book*<sup>2</sup> is very delightful: every piece seems well chosen.

I must stop now. I am grieved at not coming myself, but besides all the fuss aforesaid, I am not well enough for a stay anywhere:—the other day you saw me in a lively fit from meeting you so apropos—but generally I am restless & glumy. I think I shall take to drinking as a change.

(created a baronet in 1881), at this time Judge of the Cinque Ports.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Palmerston was instituted Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports at Dover on the 28th of August.

<sup>2</sup> F. T. Palgrave had just published his “Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics.”

## Italy and Switzerland

Little Browning—(7 or 8 years old) said to Lady Normanby one day “I write poetry as Papa & Mama do”—“Oh!” said Lady N. “I thought you seemed a very odd little boy—but now I see—there are 3 incomprehensibles, not one incomprehensible.”

5. *Sept.* 1861.

I fully intended to have written to you on Sunday—being in a fretful state of mind at having disappointed you by not coming, & myself by not going to Ireland:—but when I had written 24 letters, I became like unto a spawned salmon, & was exhausted, & could work no more.

Concerning the buzzim of intelligence, I am displeased, (since I wrote,) with some of Miss Emily Beaufort's<sup>1</sup> writing. She wonders forsooth, that there is a traditional terror of the Cross or “anything shaped like a cross” among the poor “ignorant Jews” at Jerusalem!—Has Emily then never heard of the Crusades, of the Spanish persecutions & Inquisition, of St. Bartholomew, of all the Popes, not to speak of Lord Chelmsford<sup>2</sup> & Mr. Spooner?<sup>3</sup> If she has not, the Jews have, she may take her davy.

<sup>1</sup> Regarding this lady, Fortescue writes on the 3rd September: “I wonder whether you want after all to meet the Beauforts. My impression is that intelligent females who write books are often disappointing. You can tell me whether my conclusion is correct.”

<sup>2</sup> Lord Chancellor in Lord Derby's Ministry.

<sup>3</sup> Leader of the Anti-Maynooth party in the House of Commons.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Yes—: I certainly *do* hate the act of painting : & although day after day I go steadily on, it is like grinding my nose off. The elder Morier has written me a beautiful letter : he is so pleased with R.'s <sup>1</sup> engagement :—"der dikke" <sup>2</sup>—albeit, is laid up with gout : the 26th. is, it seems, the wedding day. The elder Edwards wrote, asking for a succinct as to size, age, place &c., account of the Cedars, which I sent : some days later comes a Liverpool paper, giving a notice of the private view of the Exhibition, "The Cedars," being the great Lion & praised to the skies—the concluding paragraph being—"Mr. Lear has in this great picture not only achieved a professional success, but he has also conferred an obligation of the highest order on the whole Christian world" (!!!!!—After that take care how you speak or write to me.)

I have letters also from America :—terrible altogether. All chances are now shut up of farther communication from Missouri, & even the 5£ I have sent in a letter will probably never reach its destination.

Bye the bye, some who know, or profess to know Italy, declare that representative Govt. never will succeed there, because they say it will become a representation of advocates, & military only—the ingredient of Landed interest not being encouraged

<sup>1</sup> Robert Morier, at this time attaché at Berlin, married Alice, the daughter of Lieut.-Gen. the Rt. Hon. J. and Lady Alice Peel. Fortescue was his best man.

<sup>2</sup> "The Stout."



## Italy and Switzerland

or possible. Lever told me this, & said it was Bulwer Lytton's opinion: (which perhaps made it his, for Mrs. Lever is a relative.)

I wish I could see you all at Rostrevor. You are right to go & see the Flower-show, delilahs high-derangers & what not. Do not be relaxed by the climate if possible, leastways take some tonic: dear me! what good beef & beer there used to be at Red House—(not to speak of sherry).

21. Sept. 1861.

You are a kind good fellow to think of coming down here on Thursday after Morier's wedding, & I should be an "oomboog" if I said it wouldn't please me. Only I wish you could have made the journey on your way out of England, so as not to have so long a giro to make on purpose to see the dirty Landscape-painter.

The New Zealand news is interesting: (I can't make out if Sir J. Grey is arrived there yet.) Christianity will extirpate the other race eventually, (but then their souls may have been saved you know,) as in the battle of races has ever occurred, when there is greater power on one side than on the other; and I don't see much use in blinking the fact. I had a long letter from Rome yesterday: among other matters it appears curious to me that Pentini is about to be made a Cardinal,—(he is an upright & liberal Catholic,) & it seems to me an indication that the Holy See, perceiving that they must go

## Letters of Edward Lear

with the stream, are about to make it easy (very gradually) by allowing more of the liberal ingredient to enter into the Conclave.—But I do not think anything very sudden will occur, as L[ouis] N[apoleon] would abhor any general shudder in his own empire. Grammont's recall is however considered as pointing to a change. My informant, a very reserved person, yet one who knows intimately all that goes on,—says “Of all the brigandage and reaction you hear of, *nothing* occurs that does not *directly* emanate from here.”—She speaks also of the Ex Q. of N. as “the fastest of all young women, not to say Queens.”

V. Emmanuel at Florence is very interesting to me, as I have now made the view from Villa Petraja all but a reality, it seems as I sit hour after hour at work, as if I could hear the vivas from the distance.

Holman Hunt writes very amusingly from Oxford, near which he is painting in a field, but has been discovered:—& people send him out luncheons—five or six parties, & troops of ladies trudge across fields with Albums for his Autograph.

The weather has often been lovely here, but is now cold, & only fit for beetles & hogs.

15. STRATFORD PLACE.  
OXFORD STREET.  
LONDON.

11 Oct. 1861.

I had your letter this morning, which was pleasant, coming as it did with two other pleasant letters;—

## Italy and Switzerland

one from Emily Tennyson, on their return from the Pyrenees;—the other from Franklin Lushington, which his Aunt Lady Murray<sup>1</sup> being dead, tin has descended to him. But if you expect me to write well or much you will find yourself disappointed: for at this particular juncture when every hour is full of worry, daylight shortening, fogs unceasing, & pictures unfinished—at this inconvenient time I say—two Danish friends, & 5 Canadian cousins have simultaneously & inopportunately turned up, to destroy my peace of mind & call forth the innate amiable qualities of my nature. For if I say “I am particularly engaged just now” that would only seem a general excuse for showing a cold shoulder to foreigners & interruptors:—so that I have made up my mind to go to Windsor with the Danes, & Leatherhead<sup>2</sup> with the cousins—2 sublime sacrificial acts which in themselves are somewhat, but beyond themselves involve seeking tickets & arrangement by notes to no end of botheration. I am glad you are enjoying yourself. I ain't. And as for content, that is a loathsome slimy humbug—fit only for potatoes, very fat hogs,—& fools generally. Let us pray fervently that we may never become such asses as to be contented. Nevertheless I was sorry my last letter followed you, as I dare-say it was disagreeable: which most things are: & myself especially. But did you ever have a beastly bore of a brother-in-law who perse-

<sup>1</sup> Wife of the distinguished Judge.

<sup>2</sup> Where “Sister Newsom” lived.

## Letters of Edward Lear

cuted you for tin? If not you cannot enter into my feelings just now.

Meanwhile I left St. Leonard's on the 30th. Sept. & went to Sir F. Goldsmid's for 3 days. Such a nice house & pleasant people! Such a distracting Miss G. with such a face, like Mary Squeen of Cotts!—So then I came back here, & am involved in fog & very cursed filth. Yet to me London is not hempty. Holman Hunt, Beadons, Bruce, Digby Wyatt,<sup>1</sup> Bergmanns, Alfred Seymour, Terrick Hamilton,<sup>2</sup> Fairbairn,<sup>3</sup> Col., Hornby, & my 2 Godson's families<sup>4</sup>—are among those I see. And, very possibly, the small dinners of highly intelligent or scientific middle class friends are about the really best society going, though you might not think so, as Diamonds & Marchionesses hardly ever enter into these more vulgar Kingdoms of Heaven, nor are Duchesses or Princes frequent.

Bye the bye, there is a new spadmodic poet, by name Swinburne who seems to amaze small circles.

The religious world bubbles & frizzes, & it is now said that the Athanasian Creed is to be repeated always before dinner in all Godly houses—& sometimes afterwards also. One of the Hyænas at the Zoological Gardens is dead, & one of the Giraffes

<sup>1</sup> The architect, knighted in 1869. He was secretary to the Executive Committee of the Great Exhibition, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Of Charters, Berks. Became M.P. for Salisbury, 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Fairbairn, whom Lear often mentions in his letters, was the eldest son of Sir William Fairbairn, the great engineer.

<sup>4</sup> Combes' and Crosses'.







There was an old man  
When he wore a pale  
When they said —  
He cried —

who felt pert  
rosecoloured shirt.  
"Is it pleasant?"  
"Not at present —

"It's a rectle too short — is my shirt!"

## Italy and Switzerland

has brought forth a puppy, I mean a calf, that is a giraffino. And the Hippopotamice, have, (I regret to say) attempted to reproduce ineffectually more than once. A large & not pleasantly-odorous dead black cat has adorned our door steps for 5 days, but that is not wonderful, only sad. Thomas Woolner the Sculptor<sup>1</sup> has taken a house in Welbeck St. & Palgrave the poet has gone to live with him. The wick of the lamp wanes, & I stop.

*12th October.*

I can't add much now:—The Petrajä is finished, & will be sealed up in its new frame on Monday.

This morning brings me one more dreadful letter from Missouri, shocking to read, & preventing my thinking of anything besides its ugly subject.

If you are really here by the 1st. Nov., I most probably shall see you.

*28th Oct. 1861.*

*All* the nonsense book, with 42 additional illustrations are completed as woodcuts, & negotiations commence with a Publisher next week. Maclean also is to do a small work on the Ionian Isles—so peace and harmony prevail.

My elth is better: & I am, (at this moment,) not quite so sleepy or savage as I was when I wrote last.

(Arthur Stanley who visited Athos with W. G.

<sup>1</sup> One of the seven original members of the Præ-Raphaelite brotherhood.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Clark, writes on a card "Athos beautiful & curious : not classical enough for W. G. C., not ecclesiastical enough for A. P. S.")

The buzzimless have been here for 4 hours:— I don't "cotton" to them. Patent, shiny, lacquer, pimmy-puny, tic tic tic tic. They are however ladylike, & plucky as travelleresses. I shall be immensely delighted if Lady W. likes the "Petraja" even half as well as some do. The garrulous gardener however did not observe that I "sat" on a "spot" to colour my plain & distance, but that I "stood" on another "spot" to draw the whole. Can the Hithihopian go for to change his spots?— Yea, but I am not an Ethiopian. O Lord! cousins! Canadian cousins! Danish friends!

You will see Sir J. Graham<sup>1</sup> is dead: & Lord Lansdowne<sup>2</sup> very ill. I think I shall stop now: it's rather an amiable letter for me.

TRIESTE.

HOTEL DE LA VILLE

Sat. 16. Nov. 1861. 10. a.m.

I shall employ my last hours on earth,—*i.e.* before I embark on the oshun, in writing to you—this spot, a dry attic in the Hotel de Ville, being perhaps better adapted for writing than Adriatic waves would be.

<sup>1</sup> The eminent statesman, who sat in eleven Parliaments, and filled many great offices of state. From his *début* in 1818 till his death in 1861, he was one of the most important figures in English political life.

<sup>2</sup> The fourth Marquess.



## Italy and Switzerland

Not but the day is as perfect & brilliant as any poet might presume to be the perfection of perennial Paradise.

All the traffic of Trieste is like gold & silver set in lapis lazuli & emerald, & the air is as lovely as the wision & spectacles .I shall however, some of the details concerning my sometimes but seldom disagreeable, generally extremely pleasant, & always filled with eventually tumbling down upon my legs circumstances, journey from Folkestone to this place to relate proceed.<sup>1</sup>

First my voyage over to Boulogne was remarkable as the only one out of some score made, which was quite calm, & on which & of which I was not sick. Moreover it was a pleasure to see that wonderful old man Lord Brougham<sup>2</sup> who was also passing over; not but that he is greatly aged in appearance, yet he is a wonder of a man. There was the Hearl of Arrowby<sup>3</sup> also. But what was more to the point, was a young couple, Plumers, going out to Injy with two delightful children; said Plumers having a letter from the Hornbys to the Denisons, & being old friends of the Crakes & Penrhyns. At Boulogne, where Lord B. examined all the Restaurant & toddled about continual,—the Plumers, speaking no French, were bothered—& I gladly helped them

<sup>1</sup> Written on the principle of a German sentence intentionally.

<sup>2</sup> He died at Cannes, seven years afterwards, where he had a villa. At this time he was eighty-three years of age.

<sup>3</sup> An eminent Conservative statesman.

## Letters of Edward Lear

to a carriage, where jointly we all talked & nursed the childer to Paris. There, not a bit of luggage was opened, & at 1 p.m. I got to the Louvre. Next day 9th. I met with T. Wyatt,<sup>1</sup> my friend the Architect, & appointed to do & see various things. I went also to see one Chichester 40scue supposing he might be ill, but was glad to find he was better. Wyatt & I dined sumptuously together, & by 8.30 next day, 10th I was on my way to Strasbourg, where I slept, as that train stops.

On the 11th, Monday, at Kehl by 8—luggage being all registered to Vienna. In the carriage was a very lady-like elderly woman, who very amiably assisted me in German :—we however, talked French, & for all the long journey I shall always thank the good old lady—who was one of the best informed, most clever,—largeminded, & charming individuals I have met with of late. Eventually I came to know that her son is Ambassador or Minister either at Vienna or Paris. (his name being Wimppfen):—I suppose from some Court such as Wirtembg. or Munich. Please tell me if you know.

At Brucksal Madme. W. & I fraternized & dined together. Beyond that our converse was disturbed by a Servian Countess with an unruly boy—whom I took to task : the Countess had a suite of 5 persons—whom it seemed to me she snubbed. At Stuttgart, some ladies of the Queen were sent to see Mdme. W. who had to speak of the K. & Q.

<sup>1</sup> Brother of Digby Wyatt

## Italy and Switzerland

&c—whereon the Countess who understood all tongues, thought fit to take her legs off the seat & bully her boy into decent quiet, & to favour Mdme. & me by several items of notice. Later when Madame W. & I were talking of Corfu, she suddenly calmly asked me if I knew a “famiglia princepsca, chiamata Roma?—la figlia maritata al Governatore di India, uno Sir George Bowen—tutti parenti della principessa de Monte N.?”<sup>1</sup>

By 10 we arrived at Munich, & the day having been fine, it was great fun to see the country as well as to be so well off for company. Tuesday—12th. I was on my legs *all day*. I had no idea of the curiosity and interest of Munich—much as I had heard of it. That a single man, (Louis,<sup>2</sup>) should have made such a capital is very extraordinary. At the table d’hote—6. P.M. there were two Italians, who, by my talking to some others, took me for a Florentine—but when the other lot went away,—hearing me speak English, asked me what country I was of, & on my saying English, became very communicative. I found that the man knew every part of the South of Italy—& he must have been puzzled by my knowledge of all the families of the Abruzzi & Calabria. I found he went to get my name afterwards—though that could not have

<sup>1</sup> A princely family called Roma? the daughter married to the Governor of India, one Sir George Bowen—all relations of the Princess of Montenegro?

<sup>2</sup> King Louis I. of Bavaria, who was compelled to abdicate in 1848.

## Letters of Edward Lear

enlightened him much :—but I did the same towards him, & discovered he was F[rancis] 2d's minister to Bavaria,—only just arrived!

At 10. P.M. off by rail : the dear old Wimpfennious lady, a Phanariote Gk, & myself getting a Coupé—: the Servian Countess & suite another carriage. Conversation in the coupé was carried on in English, French, German, Italian, & Greek, & was very amusing all night, especially a dissertation on religion of which we 3 represented 3 forms—I, in the middle, acting as “buffer” to the 2 extremes Orthodox & Schismatic.

At Salzburg—(3. A.M. 13th.) Austrian frontier : luggage all gone on, no bother. Servian boy fell ill— & all the party had to stop. Perhaps I was hard on the Countess, but she struck me as vulgar & a spy.—At Vienna by noon : an ugly noisy place which I hate. I got all my luggage safely, and was not bothered a bit : the *one* drawing of Jerusalem acting on the feelings of the whole Douane.

On Thursday 14th—off at 8.30—by alas—a slow train, for the quick trains now only go twice weekly—meantime there was more leisure to see the wonderful Lemmeriz Alp well. Was horribly starved for 23 hours—as the brutal train only stops once, & then for 15 minutes in the most awful crowd—impossible for a blind man to penetrate.—So at 7.30. yesterday Friday 15th, I came to this excellent Hotel : & I have since walked all about Trieste, written letters to Dickinson & my sister Ellen—



## Italy and Switzerland

& a long one to my Godson's brother—full of advice worthy of Lord Chesterfield, Elijah, or Kingsley: besides this to you. Which I pray you reply to—addressing to me at Corfû. I will write also as soon as I get there.

But ah! (the Landscape painter said,)  
A brutal fly walks on my head  
And my bald skin doth tickle;  
And so I stop distracted quite,  
(With itching skin for who can write?)  
In most disgusting pickle—

& merely sign myself

Yours affectionately.

Tell me when you have seen the new Book of Nonsense. Routledge & Warne, 2 Farringdon St., will publish it, but it will make it more known to advise it to be purchased at other booksellers. Please recommend it all you can. I will write to Lady W. soon.

## CHAPTER VIII

1861-1862

CORFU

*Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. Dec. 1st 1861.

MY DEAR FORTESCUE, I have wished to write before, but could not get settled enough to do so. After I left Trieste, I had an abominable passage hither: once we were on the point of putting back, but finally we got here 20 hours after our time—on the 19th.

Everybody was overwhelmingly hospitable, from the Palace downwards:—but as the balls, & small monotonous whist or tea-parties are wholly out of my line in this very very very small tittletattle place, & as moreover night walks from this side of the City to the other don't suit me, not to speak of late hours & a multitude of new & uninteresting acquaintance, I decline all visiting on the plea of health & antiquity or what not. The Woolfe's<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. (afterwards Sir) Henry Drummond Wolfe was appointed Secretary to Sir Henry Storks, the Lord High Commissioner, in May, 1860, after the departure of Sir George Bowen.

## Corfu

have very amiably asked me several times:—they seem very & justly popular;—but the only point at which Greeks, Germans, French, Italians, & English in such a place as this, can amalgamate being balls & the smallest of gossip—this tone of social life bores me even more than total loneliness—tho' that is very bad for me I know:—only the alternative is wusser. The Sargents<sup>1</sup> seem nice people, but they live remote. The Colquhouns<sup>2</sup> are remote & less nice—by report. The Palace is dull: no lady—: the dinner there of 12 was as all dinners are. The General is going, & what I am sorry for, Lady B[uller], she being one of the nicest women here.

What I find queer here is the extreme Toryism of all parties, except Sir C. Sargent. (You will remember that the swells here are so by a Tory ministry.) Yet it sounds queer to hear the revolution in Italy spoken of sometimes with horror, sometimes as merely an absurd phase of politics soon to pass by; though on consideration, you can easily suppose that any such a word as “nationality” must be odious to the ears of all Govt. parties—and you can easily conceive that the R. C.s—native & English have a tower of strength in the P[ope]s consul—& that they believe in the speedy extinction

<sup>1</sup> Sir Chas. Sargent, member of the Supreme Council of Justice of the Ionian Isles, 1860, in the place of Sir J. Reid.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Patrick M'Chombaich Colquhoun, Chief Justice of the Ionian Isles, 1861, in the place of F. Lushington.

## Letters of Edward Lear

of V[ictor] E[mmanuel,] & the restoration of the Roman States to Pio IX. There is a movement among the Jews also—for “representation” (! ! ! ! !) at which both Greeks & R. C.’s foam & scoff.—

Meanwhile the society is far less amalgamated than in former years, when such old resident & reputed families as the Reids—Gisbornes—Cortazzis & others, made a nucleus of social life, or when so intellectual a man as F. Lushington had a table & house. And so, the aspect spiritual of this little piggywiggy island is much as a very little village in Ireland would be—peopled by Orangemen & papists—& having all the extra fuss & ill-will produced by a Court & small officials—more or less with or against a resident crowded Garrison.

The aspect material meanwhile—(with which I have most to do—tho’ unhappily no man can be quite independent of the others,) is—so far as climate & country goes, lovelier than ever. Yet seeing it has never rained since April last, & that it is now daily perfectly clear & fine—the wise anticipate 3 months rain at once & continual. For myself I must get through this winter as well as I can, the loss of my dear Ann, & also of Lushington as a resident here, being a great weight to bear.

Many things here amuse me to hear, but there is no time to write now: nor could all the Gladstone-Young details be written down if I had. One of Henry Bowen’s brothers commands one of the Regiments—but he & the Govt. are not on “terms”



## Corfu

—Morier's brother-in-law Major Peel,<sup>1</sup> is an A.D.C. Old Lady (Heber) Valsamachi, still lives lingeringly. The whole affair of "Ionianism" appears to me absurd & ill-conditioned:—an impossible end tried for by impracticable means. Clark, the good chaplain is still here:—but I shan't go regularly to church,—& if he sees the "Essays & Reviews" on my table—*me voilà fini*. Aubrey de Vere has just arrived—which if I had to see him, would be a bore: but isn't. O! if I could but come back to London, bringing with me the gold & blue & lilac & pink of the air, sun, hills & snow with me! How is Mrs. Ruxton? The prison has been revolting lately & Lady Emily K[ozziris]<sup>2</sup> greatly disturbed. K. seems to be agreed on by all hands as more incompetent than ever.

CORFU. 17 Dec. 1861.

I was highly pleased to get your two letters yesterday,—the Lord High C. having sent them to me promptly. Before now you will have received mine of the 3rd. I trust, though I don't think it was a very lively one. The present ephusion of my pen will be written in better sperrits, because I have got to work, & am working hard:—moreover I got letters from Frank Lushington yesterday—& also from the

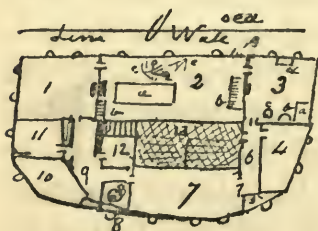
<sup>1</sup> John Peel, fourth son of Lieut.-Gen. the Right Hon. J. Peel. He had served throughout the Crimean War, and was appointed Assistant Military Secretary at Malta in 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Her husband, Giovanni Kozziris, was Keeper of the Prison.

## Letters of Edward Lear

printer of the "Book of Nonsense"—who tells me that Routledge & Warne have brought it out & that over 500 copies have been already sold. Please do what you can to encrease the sail by axing and talking about it.

The room I have to paint in is A No. 1—looking out on Salvador & Seagulls:—25 feet long & made by me my total living room. This is a plan



of the house, a rummy one enough as to shape. (∞∞. means windies. ■■■. means greats or fry places. = means doors.) . . . . The only great annoyance to the house is, that like as in all

Corfu houses you hear all the noises of every other inmate besides yourself: & the people over me, —(Col. Maude,) tho' very amiable folk, are awfully noisy. . . . One of the best comforts of this place to me is the greater amount of daylight both in quality, and in number of ours. Fancy drawing out of doors till 5.5. P.M. as I did yesterday! as for the weather it is Paradise multiplied by 10:—tho' of course a flood of rain must needs come bye & bye.

I like the Lord High—who has asked me to dine twice, & once walked back from the One Gun with the landscape painter—What I like in him is that he has a will besides brains,—& has a soldierly & straight-forward manner quite trustworthy, & withal a proper setting forth of dignity. The Court is called dull—but

## Corfu

at least it is not like that of the Young Dynasty—which was wholly a Dilettante affair—& one always felt that the whole set were there for Lady Y.'s "amusement," & G.'s benefit. Sir John's vacillating manner & softness—mustard & mulberries in a hash, are well replaced by the present Governor's qualities as far as a "worm" can judge, & I think he is well looked on by all—certainly as a man of business there is but one opinion of him. . . .

Meanwhile I am really delighted at the Petraja pleasing her [Lady Waldegrave] so much: & she could not have made me understand her liking of it more than by the comparison of it to my singing. You do not say if Mr. Harcourt's fall<sup>1</sup> was a fit or a mere slip of the foot.

I had not heard of Lady Canning's<sup>2</sup> death, & I am on account of those who survive her, most sorry for it. It seems to me most especially sad, that after such a terrible trial as her Indian residence has been, neither Lord C. nor poor Lady Waterford,<sup>3</sup> nor Lady S. de Rothesay should be permitted to benefit by her return home—an event till now so nearly in view. To me, either in Rome many many years ago, or at Osborne

<sup>1</sup> On his return with Lady Waldegrave from their continental trip, Mr. Harcourt had a serious fall at Folkestone, which shortly afterwards resulted in his death.

<sup>2</sup> Wife of the first Viceroy of India. She was the eldest daughter of Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

<sup>3</sup> A sister of Lady Canning's. Her husband, the third Marquess, was killed in a hunting accident in 1859. Her gifts as an artist were of a very high order.

## Letters of Edward Lear

House,—or afterwards again at Rome, or after that in London, Lady Canning was always exactly the same kindly consistent, & pleasant woman :—unspoiled, tho' having enough admiration for 20 fine ladies, & full of taste and intelligence & unostentatious goodness. With the worldliness & humbug of the L.s & the vulgarity of the G.s she was to my feeling most vividly contrasted : & I should think few persons would be more truly mourned. If you hear any particulars of her death let me know them.

One thing is needful that Henry Grenfell sends me the dye-mentions of his picture of Philæ<sup>1</sup> :—I wish particularly to have time to paint it here, where the sunsets are capital :—so please ask him to write the feat a niches in the next letter you send, which please the pigs may be soon.

What my letters are to you I can't say, for I never read them over, but I believe they would be quite as fit to read 100 years hence as anybody elses naughty biography, specially when written off hand as mine are.

I wish I had more time for Greek : if I had my way & wor an axiom maker & Lawgiver, I would cause it to be understood that Greek is (or a knowledge of it) the first of virtues : cleanliness the 2nd., and Godliness—as held up by parsons generally—the 3rd., O mi hi !—here is a noo table—sicks feet too—by 3 feet hate ! I shall dine at one end of it—write at the other, & “pen out” in the middle. For gracious goodness

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue's of the same subject was painted earlier, but Grenfell's was, I believe, when finished, considered the better.



## Corfu

sake write! & don't forget Grenfell's measure:—nor to thank Lady W. for her message: nor not to cease adjuring people, especially Lord Shaftesbury & the Bp of Oxford—to buy the Book of Nonsense:—& O Lord! I forgot this horrid American war—but I think more than enough of it.

P.S.—A. Tennyson has written an im: & also a small pome.

The next letter from Fortescue announced the death of Mr. Harcourt.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. 29th December 1861

Your letter of the 20th., came yesterday—you may suppose with what interest I read it. So many deaths had occurred that no fresh one surprises me. So Nuneham is at an end: & Carlton Gardens for the present. What a conflict of thoughts must you have just now. The very best thing for poor Lady W. will be *quiet* & rest from the whirl of world at present. & do you—in as far as you can—promote that I wished to say so often during last season of theatres &c., but I did not, knowing that you felt all I could say without my saying it, & also that circumstances almost force certain conditions of life & cannot easily be changed.

Now however, I do hope she will be quieter, for enough *friends* of the first order both of rank & mind as well as of heart, she is certain to have:—and a long list of acquaintance leaves no after pleasure when they

## Letters of Edward Lear

flit away. I shall be very anxious to hear of her, knowing well her vivid feeling of all that affects her singular life. Pray give her my kindest remembrance if you think it right to do so. I had begun a letter to her full of nonsense, but nonsense is not the order of the day, so it is torn up.

Prince Albert's death is shocking.<sup>1</sup> Poor Queen! If stability of thrones is for the benefit of peoples, & if the good life of Sovereigns conduces to the stability of thrones, then Prince Albert's death is to be mourned most deeply.

Recalling past sayings reminds me that after I was at Osborne<sup>2</sup> I wrote down all the details of my stay there, & one was, that Prince Albert showed me all the model of the House, (then being built only,) & particularly a Terrace, saying—“This is what I like to think of—because *when we are old*, we shall hope to walk up & down this Terrace with our children grown up into men & women.”

Dr. William's trial by Dr. Lushington<sup>3</sup> interests me—I do not think I shall write more now—but go to

<sup>1</sup> He died quite suddenly on the 14th December, before the nation had time to realise that he was ill.

<sup>2</sup> This must have been when Lear was giving drawing lessons to the Queen.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Rowland Williams, the Vicar of Broad Chalke with Bower Chalke and Alvedistone, near Salisbury, was one of the contributors to “Essays and Reviews.” He was prosecuted by the Bishop of Salisbury for heterodoxy and tried before the Arches Court of Canterbury, December 19, 1861, to January 16, 1862. By judgment delivered in June, sentence of suspension for one year was passed; but this judgment was reversed in 1864.

## Corfu

Church & assist at the worship of false gods, (beside your's & mine.)

*Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

CORFU. 5th., January 1862.

MY DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,—I had begun a letter to you, which I am now most glad I never finished & sent before I received one from C. Fortescue, dated the 20th. & 21st.,—for in that he told me of what had then just happened,—the death of Mr. Harcourt,—the day after I had written to F. making enquiries as to his health since his fall at Folkestone. I now take another sheet to write to you, since it seems to me that any sympathy may be welcome to you just now, for I feel certain that not only the loss of Mr. Harcourt must have greatly agitated you, but that you will feel it deeply for a long time. Even to me, the news came as a surprise, for I thought he might have lived many more years, & I at once remembered how, at Nuneham, on his last birthday but one when I had wished him “many happy returns of the day”—he had said,—“When you make those congratulations to one of my age, you should leave out the word *many*.” And it appears to me that this sudden breaking of a close tie must have affected you particularly :—for in spite of the difference of age & of your natural dispositions, death, after a union of many years, must assuredly keenly affect the survivor of two, when, as I know to be the case with your's, the nature of the one left is full of warmth &

## Letters of Edward Lear

truth.—So,—I shall be very glad to hear that your health is good, & that by a time of quiet, you are gradually feeling this sudden shock less,—I cannot but think too that it is a great thing for you to be able to look back on the last years of Mr. Harcourt's life as happier than those earlier—(at least they seemed so to me even since I knew him,) and in the last journey of this Autumn, C. F. told me Mr. H. had repeatedly said he had never enjoyed himself so much. Moreover, the feelings which many of his family have for you, must alone be a source of comfort.

For Mr. Harcourt was always personally more than usually kind to me, & at present I can call up numerous recollections of him at all 4 houses, & none but pleasant ones. How pleased I am now that you have the two Nuneham pictures! As well as that of Petraja where you so lately were together. (And bye the bye I ought to thank you about the payment for that, & to tell you how extremely pleased I was to know you liked it so much.) It seems to me that in converting memories into tangible facts, recollections & past time as it were into pictures, lies the chief use & charm of a painter's life. (I'm sure if it isn't, I don't know where it is, for technical study & manipulation will always be a bore to me.) . . .

I know you will not be displeased at my writing this letter the like of which you must have many of just now : & you need not read it, if you have—(as I dare say you have,) much to do & think of:—so long as



## Corfu

you consider it to be written from a friendly motive & forgive its want of etiquette—that is all I care about.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. *Janry.*, 8, 1862.

I could not help sending a line, knowing well how she [Lady Waldegrave] feels the death,—& I hope & believe—she will take it for what it is intended to be—As you say, (& as I think I have nearly said,) despite difference of age & nature, they lived so long & closely united that it must be a very different heart from Lady Waldegraves that would not feel the sudden breaking of the tie most keenly. I imagined she would go to Dudbrook<sup>1</sup>—& almost wished she had not, *only* because the clay soil & damp is so chilling & trying in winter. I shall gladly hear how she is, as soon as you can tell me. All you have said of her in this last, is extremely interesting. She did all possible to make his (Mr. Harcourt's) life a happy one, & it certainly *was* happier as he grew older. She cannot have any retrospections of neglect or want of affection for him, but on the contrary many consolations arising from having singularly done a wife's duties,—always looking at their different tempers & other circumstances of life. Mrs. Malcolm is a duck.

As for you, my distinct opinion is that you have much contributed to the happiness of both Mr. H. & Lady W. in many ways; as to producing more regulation of her mind by prompting cultivation, & as to that

<sup>1</sup> Her house in Essex.

## Letters of Edward Lear

reflecting again on his life. I can well enter into all your feelings—& how your mind is full of memory-images of all these years. Try your utmost now to prevent her ever embarking again full sail in a London fashion-life—million-cardy surface existence: as I said before, she will always have enough first rate intimates to create more than sufficient society, & may be an A. No. 1. leader without the need of a multitude of followers. I shall long to hear more.

I don't see why Lord C[arlisle] should regret you not being Chief Secry. Does he Lord C., wear his trousers buttoned *over* his waistcoat as H. B. used to draw him? However, he is a very good man really. (I did not expect you to have seen the "Nonsense," which poor book has come into a world of sadness: but you may buy & give a copy to Arbp. Cullen,<sup>1</sup> one to Sir Thingummy the M.P. for Dundalk<sup>2</sup>—& one to the O'Donaghue.)<sup>3</sup>



### *Fortescue to Lear.*

RED HOUSE,  
11th January, 1862.

. . . I have been hearing constantly from Dudbrook from Ward Braham, and two or three times from my Lady herself. She has been and is very wretched—her spirits completely broken, and missing him who

<sup>1</sup> The Archbishop of Dublin. In July he founded the Catholic University of Ireland at Drumcondra.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Geo. Bowyer. See footnote, p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> M.P. for Tipperary. (All three zealous Roman Catholics.)

## Corfu

has been her companion for the last fourteen years extremely—far more so than other people would believe.

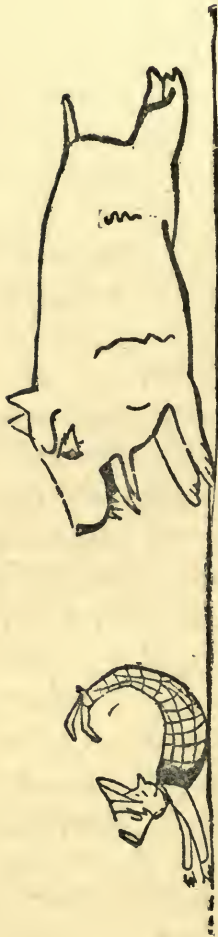
. . . Before I end this, I must ask you a serious question, which no other living human being can answer except yourself, and I much doubt that you can. I do it at the request of a first cousin of mine, a certain Mrs. Tisdall, whose children have been feasting upon the "Book of Nonsense," viz. :—"Did the lady in the *last* picture fall—or will she fall—on her face, or her back?" The latter way of falling is supposed to be the most ladylike—but my fair cousin doesn't say so.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU, 21. January, 1862.

In reply to your question about the Lady of Clare—I will ask Dr. Phillimore or some one of deep thought for I do not myself know what that curly burly woman ended in:—but I was disgusted at the Saturday Review Dec. 21. talking of the Nonsense verses being "anonymous, & a reprint of old nursery rhymes," tho' they gave "Mr. Lear credit for a persistent absurdity." I wish I could have all the credit due to me, small as that may be.

I wrote to you on the 9th., & to Lady W. also. All you tell me of her is very interesting, & will become of course more so. It is a period of your life immensely pivotty & absorbing.—Yesterday Capt. Vernon called, an apparently nice fellow rather, tho' with somewhat of the semi-ungainliness & hardness of that branch of the family. He spoke of Lady Selina



There was a Young Lady of Clare, who was sadly pursued by a bear ;  
When she found she was tired, she abruptly expired,  
That unfortunate Lady of Clare.



## Corfu

[Vernon],<sup>1</sup> & of Lady W.—of the latter in a way which pleased me very much—& was an antidote partly to a letter I had had 2 days before, in which Lady W. was spoken of so as to put me in a rage—only I knew exactly from whom the illnatured nonsense was derived. It is enough that Mrs. Malcolm<sup>2</sup> & Lady Selina, of those who saw Lady W. most intimately, are the best friends in speaking of her—: the others may all go & be bothered.

Franklin Lushington is married to-day.<sup>3</sup> Of my 10

1. W. Nevill.
2. Bernard Husey Hunt.
3. Robert Hornby.
4. Battersby Harford.
5. John Cross.
6. S. W. Clowes.
7. Charles M. Church.
8. C. Fortescue.
9. F. Lushington.
10. W. Holman Hunt.

original friends—(No. 3 being dead)—only numbers 8 & 10 remain single. Nos. 1 & 6 being viddies. *Didn't* I read Fitzstephen's speech :—I am on thorns for Dr. L's[ushington's] judgement, & I see they are bringing another suit against another author.<sup>4</sup>

Quem Deus—these priests will be swept away.

Next week Miss Goldsmid<sup>5</sup> comes—what the fine & pious world will say to a live Jewess remains to

<sup>1</sup> Widow of his eldest brother and daughter of the third Earl of Clanwilliam.

<sup>2</sup> Sister of Mr. Harcourt, Lady Waldegrave's husband.

<sup>3</sup> To Miss K. M. Morgan.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to the prosecution of contributors to the "Essays and Reviews."

<sup>5</sup> Daughter of Sir Francis Goldsmid. See footnote, p. 183.

## Letters of Edward Lear

be seen; what does it matter that she is good, sensible, accomplished, & handsome? If she don't believe in the supernatural attributes—birth, &c., &c.,—of course she must go to 'L.—

Col. Maudes people, over me, are amiable, the Decies—(she a Miss Prescott<sup>1</sup>)—are very nice.—The Sargents & Woolffs I go to at times. One Luard—which I made drawings when I was 16 for his grandfather who was very kind to me—I am delighted to find here, as he is a superior youth, & polyarchaiotopochromsgraphical in his tastes: so I axes him to dine—& “pen out” all the evening.

(The woes of painters: just now I looked out of window at the time the 2nd were marching by—I having a full palate & brushes in my hand: whereat Col. Bruce saw me & saluted; & not liking to make a formillier nod in presence of the hole harmy, I put up my hand to salute,—& thereby transfered all my colours into my hair & whiskers—which I must now wash in Turpentine or shave off.)

Why don't Grenfell write? If you are asked ever about that Book of Nonsense, remember I made *all* the verses: except two lines of two of them—Abruzzi & Nile. I wish someone would review it properly & funnily.

I have no fresh Americain news: from Otago, where my nephew, C. H. Street is Sub-treasurer at 350£ per annum, my sister writes gold is making immense

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of W. G. Prescott, the banker of Threadneedle Street, I believe.

## Corfu

changes. C. S. will I suppose make his fortune. I was much distressed by next door people who had twin babies & played the violin : : but one of the twins died, & the other has eaten the fiddle—so all is peace. General Buller goes in a week. Sir John Inglis comes. I will stop for a time & finish this if a tall—tomorrow.—E. L.

23<sup>rd</sup>., I heard yesterday from my sister Ellinor, who has heard from St. Louis. My brother Fred K. is “on General Prices staff” whatever that may mean—: his only son Frank a Lieut. in the same army—which is “surrounded by the Federal Army”—the writer—Frederick’s wife’s sister, writes in dreadful terror & sadness. They have however received two batches of money I have sent in letters—in notes :—Were the correspondence good, much might be learned of Missouri &c., but they write “religiously” & frantically.—I beg you will endeavour to abolish sham religion when you are a Minister.

2<sup>nd</sup> Feb., 1862.

I want to hear more of Lady W. I hope she did not dislike the letter I wrote. I heard abroad that she wished to marry the C[omte] de P[aris] to the daughter of the Parma people<sup>1</sup>—& that she was a great friend to all the B[ourbons] : & the A[umales] will gladly enlist her interest & house as a help to them. That they should be friends is natural & right but that she should in anyway assist that effete & bad

<sup>1</sup> Princess Marguerite, daughter of Charles III. of Bourbon, Duke of Parma, who died 1854.

## Letters of Edward Lear

lot—as a sovereign family—to future power would be vexatious to all who know & like her. A year & a half ago I told her she had been wrongly informed as to the state of Naples (Kingdom): she however was sure that the B.'s were well looked on in the province. Yet Garibaldi's march from Reggio to the Capital must have settled that question.

The P[rince] of W[ales] is to be here in two or three weeks—I suppose only passing:—Arthur P. Stanley I see by the papers is to be with him—who, though no courtier, is exactly the man for such a place: & his nomination to it greatly pleases me.<sup>1</sup> Alas! for my visit to Jerusalem! shall I ever get there? (I should not like to go with the Royal party tho'—nine league boots—& all restraint.)

Sir H. S. Storks is particularly kind to me. He is a *well-bred* man & fitted in all respects for his place it seems to me. I discover by degrees why the military don't like him—he is only a Colonel in the Army—ergo Generals & Colonels don't like to be under him:—But, so far as I can learn, their small provocations have been only necessarily interfered with by him. I never saw society so disjointed and dishevelled as this is nowadays.

Miss Julia Goldsmid has come—with a friend—

<sup>1</sup> The Prince of Wales went on a tour to Egypt and the East from February to June, 1862, and Arthur Stanley, at this time examining chaplain to the Bishop of London, accompanied him.



## Corfu

Mrs. Naylor. (I got them rooms in a new Hotel,—the other part of which is taken by Kozziri & Lady Emily.) Miss G. had determined I find, not to go to the Synagogue here,—& had she not done so, I should have deterred her if possible from going there. For as the Jews here are all of the lowest orders, the advent of a Lady might have brought “Confusion on the little Isle.” O Lord! I must take Mrs. Naylor to church this afternoon:—

I dine at Woolffs today which may or may not be “a bore.” Mrs. W. is a clever little woman—*very*:—(I remember you used often to bully me for being “easily bored” by people: but when one reflects—you yourself are most singularly hedged in & unapproachable by all but a very limited set & class:—(no fault of yours—I only wish I could be so too:)) “Moral”—you, avoiding various disagreeables in men & things cannot justly blow me up for disgust at *not* being able to avoid said disagreeables.) (As a point of illustration, Lord E. B. is here—deaf, & to *me* a frightful bore. But to the unsensitive, he, being a Lord, & “affable & talks so much!” is “a delightful man”!)

I am on thorns for Dr. Lushington’s decision about Williams. Should Williams be condemned, I think you will not be surprised by my openly becoming a Unitarian some day—: for if Popes & Parsons are to sit on our brains, it behoves them as has any to stir, & show they have not succumbed to the chains of Priesthood altogether. Do you read the National

## Letters of Edward Lear

Review?—Do you not think that there will be war with Yankeedom even yet? Mrs. Tennyson's letters are a great pleasure to me. My old friend W. Neville (of Gresham St.) has taken Sir T. Laurences house in Russell Square—: I always used to wish for that myself. At present my only wish is that these accursed Rats were away, & that Col. Maude wouldn't bump his chair over my head so. The old General<sup>1</sup> is going to leave Corfu, & the new, Sir J. Inglis,<sup>2</sup> is just a-coming. Count G. Henchel von Donnersmarck—his name is not quite long enough—has come back: he is the delight of most—as he talks unceasingly & in a completely monotonous voice: to me he is the deadliest of bores, tho' not bad as a man I daresay. Is not perpetual talk—idealess prattle—the utmost of bore?

I am feeling to begin to wish *not* to come to England this year: but two months will decide. Keeping up rooms in London & two long journeys are certain expenses, pitted against what are very uncertain gains. There is a man in a boat here under the window—who catches fish all & every day with a long 5 pronged fork: a waistcoat & drawers being his dress. Why should I not do the same?

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Buller, K.C.B., served in the Kaffir War 1846-7, and commanded a brigade at the battles of the Alma and Inkermann, and continued to serve at the siege of Sevastopol, 1855.

<sup>2</sup> Major-General Sir John E. R. Inglis, K.C.B., Colonel of the 32nd Foot. He earned lasting renown by his gallant defence of Lucknow in the Indian Mutiny, 1857.

## Corfu

CORFU, 16 Feby. 1862.

I am *much pleased* that Lady W. liked my letter : to have given her a mite of pleasure is something.<sup>1</sup> As you say, such phases of life are "not meant to be banished as dreams, but to influence life & character for *good*." And again, I agree with you that no conceivable position of life ought to be blotted from memory—if it could be.

I delight in the knowledge of Lord & Lady Clermont constantly enjoying my pictures:—they are a placid duck-like couple, & I like to hear of their life.

Bye the bye looking into last years journal (I generally compare years,) I find on Sunday, Feb. 10th., 1861 "40scue breakfasted with me, & staid 2½ hours. His society is always, I think invariably a great comfort to me, & even my boreability & fastidious worry can hardly ever find any vexation therefrom, which I think I cannot say of that of any other living man."—There Sir! I fear that's what you can't say of me tho'! My journal will be funny enough 100 years hence—tho' I only write down what is shortest & most personal.

Twice I have walked out with Miss Goldsmid & her friend Mrs. Naylor:—Miss G. has all the talent of her race, & is very amiable. But Lord! Lord! how slow they walk—whereby I freeze & sneeze. Once I have dined there—yea—twice; & the even-

<sup>1</sup> Of this letter Lady Waldegrave said: "He writes just the right things to me, but a man who sings like that must understand other people's feelings."

## Letters of Edward Lear

ings were pleasant—apart from Garrison gossip, & full of intelligence & agreableness. On Saturday the 8th., salutes announced the New General's arrival, Sir J. & Lady Inglis<sup>1</sup> & family—not to speak of endless furniture, & on the same day more salutes recorded the departure of Sir G. & Lady Buller—"so the old order giveth place to new"—I am sorry not to see Lady B. again, as I liked her. On the 10th. came the Capt. Geoffry Hornby<sup>2</sup>—suddenly—his ship the Neptune having come from Malta. An odd rush of other day memories came to me on seeing & hearing him:—but unless he dines at Major de Veres<sup>3</sup> today I am not likely to see or hear him much.

Letters have been aboundigle:—Mrs. Tennyson sends me those truly beautiful & grand lines of Alfred, as the dedication of the Idylls to P. Albert's memory: I hardly ever read anything lovelier. That duck also sent me an immense account of Frank L.'s wedding. Meanwhile the Osborne has gone past here for the P. of Wales whom they expect on Thursday the 20th., (I am sorry to hear A. P. Stanley does not come with him.) no one seems to know how long he stays. I do not think I shall put myself forward at all—for you know Artists, unless R.As., never go to Royal Levees in England.

<sup>1</sup> A daughter of the first Lord Chelmsford.

<sup>2</sup> Second son of Lear's old friend, Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby, of Littlegreen.

<sup>3</sup> Major F. H. De Vere, fifth son of Sir Aubrey De Vere.



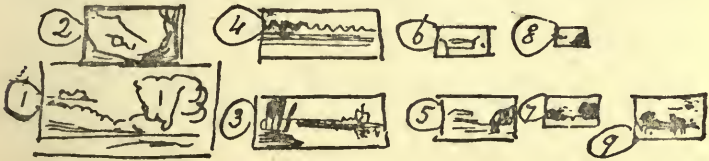
## Corfu

So E. B. is to marry Lord S. :—I wish he would present her with my Masada, as she went up to the castle.

There are a Mr. Lair, a Mr. Luard, a Mr. Layer, & a Mrs. Lien, here :—may they meet with the reward due to having names so beastly like mine !

The Elections are over, of which you will probably know more than I.

My new Gallery contains—(tho' none are complete & tho No 9 is not there at all yet,) No 1 a large Corfu—begun in 1856—No 5 a smaller. 7 ditto—8 ditto : (respectively 200, 100, 50 & 30 guineas)



The last is I think sold to a Major Reynolds: the first a wealthy Mrs. Fort seems to desire. 2 Mt. Athos for Sir F. Goldsmid. 3. Florence for F. Fairbairn. 4. Turin & the Halps. 6 Lake of Butmito—(also is in possible way of sale for 50 guineas.)

I have been looking carefully over all A. Tennyson's poems, & noting out all the Landscape-subjects once more—which in all amount to 250. Sometimes I think I shall make the last effort of my life to illustrate the whole of these by degrees—& finally, having constructed a gallery near London, receive shillings for the sight of my pictures, & expire myself gradually—

## Letters of Edward Lear

in the middle of my own works, wheeling or being wheeled in a Narmchair. Intanto do you see the Book of Nonsense on all Railway Bookstalls? I shut up.

The reference to Miss B—— is explained in a letter of Fortescue's dated the 21st of February, in which he says :

Are you aware that one Miss B—— is gone—turned into Lady S——? Of course you are. Do you know *how* it happened? The B—— book was severely handled in the Athenæum. Miss B. wrote to the Editor, requesting to know the author of the critique, that she might convince him of his injustice, etc. Soon after, Lord S., whom she had never seen before, walked into her room, announced himself as her assailant, came again, etc., etc. Let us charitably hope that he has since done her justice in every way.

Lear must have been misinformed about Arthur Stanley's movements, for Fortescue also says :

. . . I saw Arthur Stanley in this room . . . the day before he started to join the Prince at Alexandria.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU, 6 April, 1862.

I am not able to write well—being far behind with many letters, and having been seriously incon-



MAR SABBAS, SYRIA.

"Girt round with blackness."—*The Palace of Art.*

From "Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson, illustrated by Edward Lear" (Boston, Van Eaton & Co., 1889). By kind permission of Lord Tennyson.





## Corfu

venienced in many ways—by the act of moving upstairs into the third floor of this house (at length I have got some quiet!) and by having been obliged to inhabit a small room for a week, out of good nature—because the paint in another house was not dry, and the parson, living where I now do, did not like to budge. . . .

I have had an *extremely nice* letter from Ly. W. Please thank her. Some rhinoceros beetle had told her I thought Dudbrook unhealthy. Of course I hear enough of her marriage—and by some am pumped sufficiently: at present I hear either Marquis of *Bath* or Duke of *Devonshire* are the favoured chances!! I believe myself that things will all go rightly—but shall nevertheless hear gladly if anything occurs, as at times I fuss. . . .

Possibly the Cedars may sell—whereby joy will arise in the Landscapepainter's buzzim. . . .

A letter from H. Hunt is sad—telling me of poor Egg's<sup>1</sup> house being burned.

14 April, 1862.

W[olff] knows as little of me as may be, beyond that he and Mrs. W. have been very good in asking me there, and that I have not gone. You can well guess that sudden intimacies with a crowd is not *al mio gusto*. He is a good enough little fellow, but too *répandu* and superficial to please me greatly, though not more so than is just the thing for his place here,

<sup>1</sup> Augustus Leopold Egg, the painter.

## Letters of Edward Lear

and they are very properly highly popular. He cannot do without society—and it is not easy to find out at first how much men like you who ask odious and vulgar people just as they do oneself—more by way of having someone to break the life of monotony here than from really esteeming one. After a while however, they asked me in a different way, and were really very friendly, but he is right in saying that I have not been in good spirits. The occupation of my life—a daily journal to my sister Ann, is gone: and constant losses of friends do not enliven (bye the bye, Mrs. Stanley is gone,<sup>1</sup> and now, poor dear Mr. F. Beadon<sup>2</sup>:— well if George Clive recovers.<sup>3</sup> . . .

—So far written, Peel comes to say goodbye Mrs. R. Morier's brother.—And so I sit down again, but my thread of thought is broken as the spider said to the housemaid. Sir H. K. S. has been particularly amiable to me—always, and all through. I wish you *had* come to Malta and up here!!—only I am in a constant fever to hear more of Ly. W. I am glad she is going to C. Harcourt's, and am sure she will see much of some of that family always—Mrs. M., &c., &c. No one shred of work having been purchased here, I have come to the end of my money. . . . Fairbairn's, Sir H. Goldsmid's, and Grenfell's pictures *must* therefore be finished—being

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Stanley's mother.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Frederick Beadon, Rector of North Stoneham, Hants.

<sup>3</sup> G. Clive had had a seizure of a paralytic nature.

## Corfu

sent on to England—and I must work there to finish Turin and other pictures, hoping to sell them. The worry of being so without ready money bores me continually. I go to Paleocastrizza tomorrow for a week—but the weather is quite peculiar—dull heavy scirocco always—and I am all weary of my life. Whether I shall ever brighten up I can't tell—probably not, as I am 50 next May.

Here's a bit of news to wind up with. After I had written the letter which encloses this, I heard a great noise, and saw 4 carts full of furniture, all being brought into this house—proceeding which disturbed me with fears of being less quiet—seeing that a 6th added to the 5 families in this house, would not add to my peace. So I asked a servant going upstairs—(G. being out) what the row was. “It comes from Kozziris,” says the man. “Mrs. K. is going to leave him and come and live here.” I said nothing, but did not believe it: the Lord forbid such a thing should happen. But when George came, says he—“these things are to be sold by auction, for Sig. Kozziris is going to leave his “Posto” as keeper of the prison, and they are going to England, where they say Signora Kozziris is of a familia grande e ricca assai—and will keep him.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that Lady Emily Kozziris was a daughter of the second Earl of Clancarty.

# Letters of Edward Lear

PALAEOKASTRIZZA,

EASTER SUNDAY. *April 20, 1862.*

I wish you were here for a day, at least today :—only that you are at “Red House,” which is properer and Abercrombier. I have been wondering if on the whole the being influenced to an extreme by everything in natural or physical life, *i.e.*, atmosphere, light, shadow, and all the varieties of day and night,—is a blessing or the contrary—and the end of my speculations has been that “things must be as they may,” and the best is to make the best of what happens.

I should however have added “quiet and repose” to my list of influences, for at this beautiful place there is just now perfect quiet, excepting only a dim hum of myriad ripples 500 feet below me, all round the giant rocks which rise perpendicularly from the sea :—which sea, perfectly calm and blue stretches right out westward unbrokenly to the sky, cloudless that, save a streak of lilac cloud on the horizon. On my left is the convent of Paleokastrizza, and happily, as the monkery had functions at 2 a.m. they are all fast asleep now and to my left is one of the many peacock-tail-hued bays here, reflecting the vast red cliffs and their crowning roofs of Lentish Prinari, myrtle and sage—far above them—higher and higher, the immense rock of St. Angelo rising into the air, on whose summit the old castle still is seen a ruin, just 1,400 feet above the water. It half seems to me that such life as this must be wholly another from the drumbeating bothery frivolity of the town of Corfù.



## Corfu

and I seem to grow a year younger every hour. Not that it will last. Accursed picnic parties with miserable scores of asses male and female are coming tomorrow, and peace flies—as I shall too. . . .

Enough of myself for the present, only as one wants one's friends to write about *themselves*, one goes and does likewise. I shall be anxious now every letter to hear something of your destinies—though perhaps they must rather be talked of than written.

A great drawback to these Islands is the once a week post : there is a tension and a vacuum for six days—and a horrid smash of disappointment if the 7th brings nothing.

I hope this summer we may get a quiet two or three days together, for I take it after a short time you, the last of the Mohicans, will cease also to be single, at least I hope so, though the fact of your doubling yourself would cut you off more from my intercourse. . . . In your old age I suppose you will be a minister, and won't go near Ireland,—or I might settle to die at Flurrybridge or Dundalk (!!), and get good studies at Newcastle and Ravensdale. But I shall—or should—have a chapel of my own. Belfast Protestantism, Athanasian creeds, and all kinds of moony miracles should have no entrance there : but a plain worship of God, and a perpetual endeavour at progress. (Which reminds me of Tennyson's little poem of "Will," which I have been trying to translate, and part of which I send you.

One thing, under all circumstances I have quite

## Letters of Edward Lear

decided on—ἀποφάσισα ἀκριβῶς<sup>1</sup>—when I go to heaven “if indeed I go”—and am surrounded by thousands of polite angels,—I shall say courteously “please leave me alone!—you are doubtless all delightful, but I do not wish to become acquainted with you:—let me have a park and a beautiful view of sea and hill, mountain and river, valley and plain, with no end of tropical foliage:—a few well-behaved small cherubs to cook and keep the place clean—and—after I am quite established—say for a million or two of years—an angel of a wife. Above all, let there be no hens! No, not one! I give up eggs and roast chicken for ever!”—which rhapsody arises from a cursed infernal hen having just laid an egg under my window, and she screeches! O Lord! how she screeches and will screech for an hour! Wherefore, Goodbye. No more, dear friend, for at a screech I stop.

### Θέλησις.

Ω εὐτυχῆς αὐτὸς τοῦ ὀπίου ἢ θελεσις εἶναι δυνατὰ!  
 Ὑποφέρει, ἀλλὰ δὲν θὰ ὑποφέρει πολὺ,  
 Ὑποφέρει, ἀλλὰ δὲν ἐμπορεῖ νὰ ὑποφέρει ἀδικῶς,  
 Διότι, τὸ? περίπαιγμα τοῦ βαρυφώνου κόσμου δὲν τὸν κίνει,  
 Μήτε ὄλα τὰ μέγιστα κύματα τῆς δυστυχίας τὸν ταραττοῦν:  
 Ὅποιος φαίνεται ἀκρωτήριον πέτρας,  
 Ποῦ, περιγυρισμένον μὲ θορυβώδες ἄκουσμα,  
 Μέσ' εἰς τὸν πέλαγον δέχεται τὴν κυματιζούσαν συγκρουσιν,  
 Τρικυμίας-κτυπημένον, ἀκρόπολις-στεφανωμένον.  
 Δυστυχῆς δ' ἄλλ' αὐτὸν, ποῦ, δὲν καλητερεύων μὲ χρόνον,  
 Φθεῖρε τὴν δύναμιν οὐρανοῦ-καταβαίνοντος-θελέσεως,

<sup>1</sup> I unconditionally refuse.

## Corfu

Καὶ πάντοτε γένοι ἀσθενέστερος διὰ πραττωμένον ἔγκλημα,  
'Η, σφᾶλμα ποῦ φαίνεται χαριέν καὶ συγγνωστὸν,  
'Επανερχόμενον καὶ ὀποβάλλον αἰεὶ,—  
Αὐτὸς φαίνεται ὡς ἓνα τοῦ ὁποιοῦ τὰ σημεῖα στέκονται  
Πόνοντα εἰς ἄμετρον ἄμμον,  
Καὶ παρὰ τίνα κοπιασμένην καυσώδην γῆν,  
Πολομακρὰν, κατὰ φλογισμένον θόλον,—ἰδοῦ!—  
'Η πόγισ σπινθερίζει ὡσὰν σίτος ἄλατος  
Σπειρασμενὴ εἰς μίαν ρύτιν τοῦ ὑπερβολικοῦ ξουνοῦ.

It is needles to observe that I have not attempted to render the original (it is at the end of the volume of "Maud") in verse, which if I had done, it would have been worse. Also, the first verse has been corrected by Sir C. Sargent: the second is still in its virgin absurdity. . . . I vote you do not destroy my longer letters, leastwise till you get another of them, because if I died they would amuse you. Considering that little more than 6 years ago I didn't know a letter of the Greek alphabet, I think I might translate A. T.'s poems in some 10 or 20 or 50 years more.

*April 27.*

I returned here on the 22nd—much the better for my stay εἰς τὲν ἔξοχὴν.<sup>1</sup>

. . . I wish I was married to a clever good nice fat little Greek girl—and had 25 olive trees, some goats and a house. But the above girl, happily for herself, likes somebody else.

<sup>1</sup> My stay in the country.

## Letters of Edward Lear

CASA Παραμυθιόρτι, LINE WALL, CORFÚ,  
May 7, 1862.

At first I was rather alarmed about the "medium" <sup>1</sup> affair, for the mere going to those impostors and the attraction of continued conversation about them does a deal of harm, when those who go to see and return to talk are people of position whose example is sheepily followed by thousands of fools—from Belgravian fools downward. But if you, Kinglake,<sup>2</sup> Woolff and others speak as plainly as you write to me, then I believe good may come of these people being visited. That they are gross impostors, "trading" (as a good letter in the "Times" said some weeks ago) "on the affections and credulity of mankind"—I have no doubt: yet many do not think so; and it should be the part of those who are wise, and who can suffer fools gladly—(which I never can) to enlighten the Assy=masses who can't help themselves—God not having willed them much brains, and priests having muddled the little they have. . . .

A more gritty vexation is that I have done so little in Greek or in Greek topography this winter. Nevertheless I shall bring away the most part of this Island I fancy. . . . Tomorrow I go out again to Lefchimo, and by the time I return thence I trust to hear how

<sup>1</sup> All London at this time was flocking to the séances of the medium Forster, so much so that the *Times* devoted a leading article to the matter.

<sup>2</sup> Author of the celebrated history of the Crimean War.



## Corfu

my pictures look at the Gt. International Ex<sup>n</sup> 1—seeing that 2 R. Academicians had the hanging of them, I should tremble for their fate, were not one of the Commissioners—Fairbairn—my friend.

May 17. . . . On the 13th, (being half a century old the night previous) I came away—and staid a day at Κλομῶ,<sup>2</sup> whence perhaps is the finest Channel and mountain view of all in Corfū. But I could not stay for certain reasons, and came in again on the 14 to Corfū. Alas! there I learned a dismal fact, and one much interfering with my plans. The two last (bother them) Liverpool steamers have gone by here without touching!!!—so that my boxes are still here, and I do not know now if they can be sent off before July. What to do I know not, as I wholly depended on their being completed by that time in London, and on my having the money for them. I am for the present bewildered : and can only send £5 to the subscription for the Lancashire poor spinners, on the principle that he that hath nothing is to give up what he hath. I am *absolutely* uncertain when I leave—or what to do—or why : or which : or whizzlepops. . . .

Both Holman Hunt and yourself have kindly written about my pictures—both saying the same as to their being hung so high. Two R.A.'s having had to decide their destiny it is a great thing they were hung at all. . . . I am in such an infernal rage about these pictures that I can't write any more. I fancy I shall give up Stratford Place this year. Do the Japanese

<sup>1</sup> Opened at South Kensington on May 1st.

<sup>2</sup> Klomo.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Ambassadors<sup>1</sup> want a Topographic Artist? I'll go back with them, and perform the "Happy Dispatch" if I draw badly. . . . We perceive the ancient Wolff<sup>2</sup> is dead. Mrs. W. goes to England soon. She is a *very clever* little woman. With her is a nice Greek girl. When we meet ἀς θὰ ὁμιλήσωμεν πολὺ.<sup>3</sup>

19th May

I find the "Marathon" goes to-morrow, so I certainly can't go thereby. After all, 20 days at sea is a horrid loss of time. She takes to England (besides my pictures) old Lady Valsamachi—Heber's widow—to die there, I should think.

Yesterday I went to church. Lord! Lord! what an idiotic sermon did good Craven preach about the next world, as how "many excellent men believed that we should not recognise anyone in the future state, *because*, if we were to do so, we should *also* perceive our friends—alas! great numbers of them! tortured in the gulf of fire below—as it is plain from Dives twigging" (he did not say "twig") "Lazarus in heaven above." Why are men allowed to talk such nonsense unscolded in a wooden desk, who would be scolded in an ordinary room?

<sup>1</sup> The first Embassy ever sent by Japan to Europe came over this year to visit the Great International Exhibition.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Joseph Wolff, father of H. Drummond Wolff, of Hebrew origin, was the first modern missionary to preach to the Jews at Jerusalem. He styled himself "Apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ for Palestine, Persia, Bokhara and Balkh."

<sup>3</sup> I hope we shall meet often.

## Corfu

The afternoon and evening I passed pleasantly with Col. and Mrs. Wynne; he is a cousin of the Wynne who married Lady Clermont's sister, and she is a granddaughter of *old* Lady Clancarty—whereby Lady E. Kozziris is her fust cuzzing. She told me a good story of that old lady—tho' I fear you must know it. At the Clancarty hospitable dwelling vast numbers were gathered: and one rude fast youth who did not know the Lady of the house personally, dragged a portmanteau roughly upstairs and threw sticks &c. &c. about in the hall, saying—"Why, this house is just like a hotel!—just like Betty Cuffe's!" "But Sir," said the dignified and outraged Lady C.—advancing to him "you do not seem aware that Betty Cuffe has a great advantage over the mistress of this mansion: she is not compelled to associate with those who come under her roof!" (Cubby collapsed).

I beg to say, the weather is one continual, I say again, contimmuel and never ending scirocco—not a mountain visible for days past—nor like to be till rain comes. I think therefore I shall start by the Ancona boat on the 5th, and risk the Italian fêtes. The Thursday's debates ought to come today.

20th. They *did* come, and I was delighted with Lord P[almerston]'s speech. A more wretchedly factious-crooked maunder than Dizzy's display would be found with difficulty. It does not even read as if it had been well spoken, whereas P.'s is all straightforward bluff truth, and, I should fancy, must have been greatly worth hearing.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Wonderful to relate, I have packed up, and decided to go by the Liverpool steamer Marathon, which is expected to-day or to-morrow—by Zante and Malta—and to England about the 10th or 12th I suppose. . . . So here's for the Island valley of Avilion : and therefore don't write again.







GOZO, MALTA?

*From an unnamed photograph of a picture by Edward Lear.*

## CHAPTER IX

May to November, 1862

MALTA AND ENGLAND

*Lear to Fortescue.*

IMPERIAL HOTEL, VALETTA.

29 May 1862.

HERE I am—still on my way Englandwards. But how it comes that I turned out of the Liverpool steamer “Marathon” and have been here since Sunday—I will now defulge.

I went on board the “Marathon” on Tuesday the 20th, believing she would start *directly*—and go *directly* to Liverpool. But she didn’t start till Wednesday, and then, arriving at Zante she staid two whole days there: and so, by degrees I heard it said that she would do ditto here,—and at Messina, and at Palermo,—and *might* reach England on the 10th or 12th of June. Witch fax I only came at granulously as it were—grain by grain, as the pigeon said when he picked up the bushel of corn slowly. Whereon—said I to myself—if so be as I can get my fare back again, I will even go ashore at Malta—and see that much be-

## Letters of Edward Lear

loved place—and wait for a Marseilles boat—thereby hoping to reach England before the 8th—(and at a more convenient end, to wit, Newhaven or Dover), and meanwhile resting my weary limbs on beds of hashphodil, and moreover escaping the chance of bad weather in the Bay of Biscuits and the Irish Channel.

And to the honour and glory and pleasure of the Marathon be it said, they gave me back my fare cheerfully—and have since gone on their way with the great lieutenant whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein. The ship was a good ship: amazingly comfortable and thoroughly well-conducted: active and intelligent stewards pervaded the scene: enormous and globular stewardesses permeated behind the scenes: the food was good and plentiful: the officers friendly and pleasant. *But*, if the ship encountered a sea—o! wouldn't she roll!! being in form like a caterpillar, or right line—length without breadth. The company was select and rather quaint. Besides the Landscapepainter, was the Lady of Sir Demetrius Valsamachi—once the wife of Bp. Regd. Heber—poor old lady! she was really very amiable and pleasant when awake or well enough to talk—but I am not up to talking much aboard ship.

. . . [Here] I only find Legh of the old faces—but Col. Curzon<sup>†</sup> of the Rifles has amiably found me out,

<sup>†</sup> Leicester Curzon, seventh son of Earl Howe, was A.D.C. to Lord Raglan in the Crimea. He was promoted to the rank of Lieut.-Colonel on bringing home the despatch announcing the capture of Sevastopol.



## Malta and England

and Major Burke (Burke of Australian death-memory's<sup>1</sup> brother) is also pleasant to know—leastwise his sister is. And there is an Armenian traveller in the hotel; and I draw constantly on the Barracca point—meaning to paint a picture thereof one day; and I wander up and down the beautiful streets of Valetta and Senglea; and rejoice in the delightful heat and the blue sky; and watch the thousand little boats skimming across the harbour at sunset, and admire the activity and industry of the Maltese; and am amazed that their priests should consider that a constant ringing of bells should be any sort of pleasure to the Deity;—and I drink very admirable small beer plenteously from pewter pipkinious pots: and I have gone to church once, and have heard—or rather couldn't hear—a 40 minute sermon from a detestable shrugging and howling impostor; and on the whole I may say with truth I am far happier than I might be or probably should be if still at sea. Remains the future; 3 days and 3 nights to Marseilles, and the long 20 hours of rail to Paris,—and thence to Dieppe and Newhaven—and the oious unpacking of boxes—whether to be well or ill accomplished is in the buzzim of the fewcher. . . .

What a fuss I see in the papers about Woolner and Palgrave and J. Omnium!<sup>2</sup> . . . Says I to myself I

<sup>1</sup> R. O. Burke, who set out from Melbourne in 1860 at the head of an expedition. He succeeded in crossing the continent of Australia, but on the return journey was starved to death in June, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> A violent correspondence in the *Times* about the Art Handbook of the International Exhibition, by F. T. Palgrave, in which

## Letters of Edward Lear

don't want no public praise nor blame nor nuffin : life is too short for such a lot of ugly anger.



General appearance of a distinguished Landscape painter at Malta—his hair having taken to a violent excess of growth of late.

LEWES. 5 June 1862.

DEAR 4OSCUE. I got here last night, having left Malta on Saturday May 31—I shall come to Stratford Place on Saturday the 7th. . . . A monetary crisis has enseeded : inasmuch as I lost £7 on board the steamer, and when I got to Newhaven had only one shilling left, whereby a cousin of Cornwall Simeon's—one Major Webber Smith—lent me two pouns. . . . But

he expressed his individual opinions very freely. His excessive praise of Thomas Woolner, the sculptor, was attacked on the grounds that they were close personal friends. His criticisms made the exhibitors so angry that he finally withdrew his handbook, to the great relief of the Committee of the Exhibition.

## Malta and England

your Irish "Agrarian murders"<sup>1</sup> are what worry *me* more than anything just now, tho' I do not know that you and your brother are in anywise endangered.

In September, 1862, Fortescue's engagement to Lady Waldegrave took place, but it was received with some opposition on the part of certain members of his family. The announcement was not made for some little time, but he wrote to Lear the very next day as follows:—

*Fortescue to Lear.*

DUDBROOK,  
19. Sept. 1862.

You have the advantage of hearing today from the happiest man in Her Majesty's Dominions, including Heligoland and all the Colonies. Be it known unto you, oh friend, that I have acted upon G. Vernon's advice, except that I found it easier to ask the question on which my fate depended by writing than by speaking—so wrote before I left Red House, and asked leave to come for the answer. Yesterday I arrived—very soon discovered that I was the luckiest dog in the world, and have been half seas over with happiness ever since.

<sup>1</sup> The year 1862 was a time of severe distress in Ireland owing to the failure of the fuel and potato crops, and agitation against the landlords was rife in many parts of the country. The number of horrible murders and outrages that were committed in April and May, necessitated the holding of a Special Commission to try the cases.

# Letters of Edward Lear

## *Lear to Fortescue.*

BURTON PARK. PETWORTH.

21 September 1862.

I am *not* surprised, but am at least easy on your account. I felt indeed quite as sure of what the issue would be as one could be of anything mortal. . .

I will take care to be silent about the subject. It is, however, *very much* talked of by those who know the "parties"—and I, as a friend of one, am probed and pumped. My reply has been all along—"my own impression is that she is more likely to marry C. F. than the D. of N[ewcastle]"—but no more.

What an odd thing it is that you are officially acting under him.<sup>1</sup> . . . Well, you know better than I can tell you how pleased I am, and how much happiness I wish you. If you think proper you may give my love to the Lady; but anyhow my very kindest regards. . . .

In the lanes and hedges here Bishops are frequent—Oxford, Cape Town—and the deuce knows what.

SUSSEX HOTEL, EASTBOURNE,

October 3rd, 1862.

I am here—working out Henry Riversdale Grenfell<sup>2</sup> M.P.'s picture. The "Beachy Head" is a vastly fine subject, though it is painful to walk 5 miles over

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Newcastle was Secretary of State for the Colonies.

<sup>2</sup> Another of Lear's friends and patrons, Member for Stoke-upon-Trent. Afterwards a governor of the Bank of England. One of Fortescue's greatest friends.



## Malta and England

loose stones to get at it. There are however two alternatives. 1. to walk through the water ankle deep, amid limpets & periwinkles—which scheme I tried once, but did not wholly like—2ly. to climb for one hour to the top of the Beachy Head & return by the Downs—a scheme I also once carried through, and my trouble was so far rewarded that I made a sketch at the top, a fatty man in black standing on the horizon's edge serving as a "figure" in my drawing. Bye & bye the fatty man drew near, & admired my work—suggesting that I had possibly been abroad, & asking me if I had read Mr. Lear's Albanian travels; and on my saying yes, declared himself to be Sir Walter James's Butler, & that he had seen me in Whitehall Gardens, & concluded by offering me some porter & bread & cheese; whereon I adjourned to the place he & his wife had selected, & enjoyed this improvised picnic very considerably. As you observe (not injudiciously) I am always finding acquaintances and friends a-doing me good.

Write soon. Now that the big event of your life is decided, I can fancy you say—what is there to write about? Write upon prawns, rheumatism, Armstrong guns, Birds of Paradise or raspberry jam,—so you write.

HASTINGS.

*4th October, 1862.*

What to do with the Cedars I do not know: probably make a great coat of them. To a philosopher, the fate of a picture so well thought of and

## Letters of Edward Lear

containing such high qualities, is funny enough:—for the act of two Royal Academicians in hanging it high,<sup>1</sup> condemn it first,—and 2ndly the coldblooded criticism of Tom Taylor in the “Times,” quasi-approving of its position, stamps the poor canvass into oblivion still more, without remedy. . . .

15, STRATFORD PLACE, OXFORD ST.

17, Oct. 1862.

Your party at Dudbrook seems a pleasant one—bar the Royalties, which are always a bore to me more or less. . . . I daresay it seems odd to you, but it is a part of my nature to grow tired of the “flâner” life very soon. Three days of it weary me: on the fourth, the senseless chick-chack of billiard balls makes me sick. The beaver, the Ant, the Bee, and suchlike brutes are my model communities. . . .

Apropos of Grenfell, he has not as yet distinctly pledged himself to bring in the “Total Extinction of Irishmen” Bill, but we have been ‘in communication about it. You would do well, (if you have time) to read a letter signed “an English R. Catholic”<sup>2</sup> in today’s “Times,” as also the account of the Riots at Birkenhead.<sup>3</sup> Punch should bring out a portrait of

<sup>1</sup> At the Great International Exhibition.

<sup>2</sup> Condemning Sir George Bowyer’s letter to the *Times* of the 16th, in which he practically upheld the conduct of the Irish Roman Catholics in the Popish riots in Hyde Park.

<sup>3</sup> Some violent quasi-religious riots took place during this month, not only at Birkenhead but also in Hyde Park, between English Protestants and Irish Roman Catholics, the pretext being the meetings of the former to express their sympathy

## Malta and England

old Wiseman exhorting the dear children "in the name of him who said 'they who use the sword shall perish by the sword'"—and in the background the Vicar of Christ paying Lamorcière and the cut-throats of Naples and Spoleto.

The new book by the Bishop of Natal <sup>1</sup> will make an awful fuss among the Pharisees, and the resignation of Mr. Neville <sup>2</sup> is a step in the right direction. . . .

Apropos of Corfu—don't expect you have heard the last about the Judgeships: <sup>3</sup> the Wolffs said little new, but I hear from other quarters that the manner of removal has been looked on as the most insulting and brutal,—tho' I do *not* know if all said about the way it was carried out can be true—indeed it hardly seems possible. Some tell me that the "great majority" *are* pleased, for, say they "any injustice and any stupidity on the part of our government is

with Garibaldi, whom the Catholics looked upon as the emblem of hostility to the Pope.

<sup>1</sup> Part i. of "The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined," by Bishop Colenso, which gave rise to such fierce criticism that he was publicly excommunicated in Maritzburg Cathedral in 1866.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. C. Nevile resigned his incumbencies in the diocese of Lincoln, stating in a letter to the Bishop, that he found it quite impossible to subscribe to everything in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, such as the Athanasian Creed, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Corfu was seething with indignation at this time over the removal of Marcoran and Xidian, the two Ionian members of the Supreme Council of Justice by Sir Henry Storks, a step of which Lear afterwards acknowledged the wisdom.

## Letters of Edward Lear

naturally a Godsend and a political capital to their party.”

I am glad you have good accounts from Ireland, and are happy yourself. If you can—and gradually—initiate a life of regular solid occupation and progress—for your future conditions of life. It will make you far happier in the present and far more so also when you look back on that present after it has become Past,—than any amount of whizzy pleasure can ever do. Don't turn up your nose.<sup>1</sup> I am 50 years old, and see a many men and lives, and ends and chains of lives—which you don't and didn't and can't. If it pleased God to send you twins I should be easy.

TUESDAY, 21 Oct. 1862.

. . . I still maintain that Blasphemy and lying are the Prerogatives of Priestcraft; or they would not say that the Almighty damns the greater part of his creatures. So far I agree with you—that which they *should* preach (them there practical truths you elude to) is worthy of all love and veneration,—but since as a body they have ever given the lie to such preaching by their dogmas and lives—cui bono the preaching? Whereby—though I sincerely like and respect many individually, I object to the whole biling.

The Chancellor<sup>2</sup>—(I was there Saturday and Sunday) was delightful: such an abundance of

<sup>1</sup> “NOTE.—I was hard at work at the Colonial Office.—C. F.”

<sup>2</sup> Lord Westbury (Sir Richard Bethell).



## Malta and England

excellent conversation—with a circle or with me only—one seldom has the luck of getting.

He—Speaking of “undique sequaces”—“sequax, —and saying “let us remember the line and go and look for the translation,” quoth the Landscape painter in a fit of absurdity,

“My Lord I can remember it easily by thinking of wild ducks.”

“How of wild ducks Lear?” said the Lord C.—  
“Because they are *sea-quacks*” said I.

“Lear,” said his Lordship, “I abominate the forcible introduction of ridiculous images calculated to distract the mind from what it is contemplating.”

The painter chuckled inwardly—having from beforehand calculated on the exact result of his speech.

About Dudbrook—*ἄς ὀμλήσωμεν αὔριον, ὤμογευματίστοντες.*<sup>1</sup>

24th October, 1862.

. . . I have written to Lady W. to say I cannot come to Dudbrook: it is no use trying on a plan which may—by rain wind or cold—turn out abortive—by making me disagreeable to myself and my fellow creatures.

I have also written to Lady W. to say, that all things considered, I give up the Chantilly:—in November, in Paris, the chances are quite against my being able to draw out of doors at all. . . . I write also to give up the Prescott's at Roehampton<sup>2</sup> from simmiler cawziz.

<sup>1</sup> Until we meet to-morrow to eat raw flesh.

<sup>2</sup> W. G. Prescott, a wealthy banker, of Clarence Villa, Roehampton, committed suicide 1865.

## Letters of Edward Lear

I wish you would send me one line, just to say if I may send the Thermopylæ to 45, St. James' Place. I do not see why you should not have the benefit of it for the 2 or 3 months you are there. Only don't leave it on chairs or sofas or broomstix: that proceeding always *warp*s and strains canvas. . . . For



on going away, I want to leave everything here in a pumptiliously exactual condition in case of death overtaking me abroad :—and so I clear my rooms as far as I can.

### *Lady Waldegrave to Lear.*

DUDBROOK,  
Oct. 26th.

. . . I will postpone the Chantilly commission to another year, but I will go to you on Monday the 3rd of November before one o'clock, to see if I can find any small picture which would suit the Duke

## Malta and England

d'Aumale.<sup>1</sup> I will tell you de vive voix, that I am quite as happy as another of your *warm* friends.

*Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

4th November, 1862,  
15, STRATFORD PLACE.

. . . Admiral Robinson<sup>2</sup> who came when I was out, —(he is a really good draughtsman himself,) says he thinks 40scue's Thermopylæ the best picture he has seen of Greece or any other place. . . .

Many thanks for your kind wishes. It is not probable however that my Ashmer will decrease, but rather the contrary until I go out with a puff.

I went into the city today, to put the £125 I got for the "Book of Nonsense" into the funds. It is doubtless a very unusual thing for an artist to put by money, for the whole way from Temple Bar to the Bank was *crowded* with carriages and people,—so immense a sensation did this occurrence make. And all the way back it was the same, which was very gratifying.

<sup>1</sup> The fourth son of Louis Philippe, resident at Orleans House, Twickenham. He retired to England after the Revolution of 1848.

<sup>2</sup> Admiral Spencer Robinson, at this time Controller of the Navy. Afterward Sir Spencer Robinson.

## CHAPTER X

November, 1862, to March, 1863

CORFU

### *Lear to Fortescue*

Κασα Παραμυθιάτι: τὰ Τεῖχε. Κέρκραν.<sup>1</sup>  
30 Nov., 1862.

I ONLY got your ancient and fishlike letter dated 10th inst. 3 days ago, I myself having only arrived here on the 23rd. . . . I *didn't* "go pretty straight to Corfu"—au contraire, the road being broken up by torrents near Nice, I was obliged to go in a steamer to Genoa. (There was such a fat Cardinal on board, and didn't I get likenesses of him under the table!). Then I went to Ancona, but the Italian boats were postponed for a month, and so I had to wait for the small Trieste boat, which, coming, could not start for bad weather. . . .

The interregnum of five days at nasty Ancona, was however, it behoves me to confess, made agreeable by the company of a really delightful party of officers, of which Gen<sup>l</sup>. Casanova who took the city with Cialdini

<sup>1</sup> Casa Paramuthiati, The Fort, Corfù.



## Corfu

and Fanti<sup>1</sup> was head. The progress which all Italy is making astonishes even me, and I am often more and more confirmed in my opinion that L[ouis] N[apoleon] is right in keeping his troops at Rome. If you have a bad sore, needs must be that the body is more regularly ordered to keep it in health; and the general organization of the peninsula goes on so a head, that the swallowing up of the papal power is, so it seems to me, only a question of more or fewer years. At Ancona, too, the De Vere's arrived—on their way to Corfù. (He is a nephew of Ld. Mont-eagle's<sup>2</sup>—she a sister of Burke the Australian explorer) and this was a blessing—as they are the people I know here now most intimately. I never saw a face of more mental health and beauty—as well as brightness though not perfectly regular features than hers—and little Mary De Vere was a real Godsend to us all on board—with her merriment and prattle. . . . I have also been going on with my long projected illustrations of Tennyson. . . .

I can't write consecutively for phits of coffin. . . .

A new General—Sir R. Garrett<sup>3</sup>—replaces Sir J. Inglis: he looks above 4,000 years old, tho' perhaps is not. Woodcox are expensive at present. In Cephalonia I hear that the sun of Xidian—one of the removed Judges—is elected by a great majority over

<sup>1</sup> Ancona was taken in 1860.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Monteaule's only sister Mary married Sir Aubrey de Vere.

<sup>3</sup> He commanded the 4th Division before Sevastopol.

## Letters of Edward Lear

the Government candidate. The whole thing is simply considered a clever intrigue on the part of Braila and Damaschinò—forced upon Storx in a Gladstonian sense (G. corresponds with the Brailas).<sup>1</sup> And thus no one cares for it much, except that all parties seem to consider the *manner* of the act wholly unjustifiable. Poor old Sir George Marcorã bears it very well and with dignity: nevertheless to some friends he said, with tears in his eyes—"I do not say—replace me. I only ask for one valid reason for so gross a torto being used to an old public servant in whom no fault is named." But as I said—every mind just now is full of the Greek affair. . . . Sometimes I think the titles here are really very absurd:—take a list—

Sir Henry Storks

Sir Robert Garrett

Sir Henry and Lady Wolff

Sir Patrick and Lady Colquhoun

Sir Charles and Lady Sargent

Sir Gregory and Lady Caruso

Sir Philotheos and Lady Damaschinò

Sir Themistocles and Lady Zambelli

Sir Aristides and Lady Braila

Sir Demetrius and Lady Valsimachi

Sir Demetrius and Lady Curcumell

Sir Plato and Lady Platides

<sup>1</sup> Braila was the secretary to the Senate at the time of Mr. Gladstone's visit, and a supporter of British interests.

## Corfu

Sir Karalambos and Lady Flamburiani,  
Sir Christopheros and Lady Kalikopolos Biletti  
Bizi.

after which last nothing but Sir Agrios and Lady Polugorillóforos is to be expected. But this same list sets forth a love of title in these people—which indeed they are vain. . . .

. . . Bye and bye I am going to ask you a quaps-  
fillious question : I mean to have the Cedars put into  
the ground floor room of 15 Stratford Place, and if so,  
do you think Lord Lansdowne might be asked to go  
and see it—*i.e.* if you or someone could go with him  
—and so that he could not speak of it to any R.  
Academician first,—or they would—not content with  
having placed it so ill—prevent his buying it. The  
only drawback might be that the foolish landscape-  
painters Creswick and Redgrave might bust of rage  
which I should be sorry for—brutes.

All Greece seems voting for *Ἀλφρέδος*<sup>1</sup>—and could  
that happen—the very best salve and guarantee for  
future peace and former ills would happen : but I  
fear it can't. Only I suggest—let Prince Alfred rush  
here and be suddenly crowned—(Your Government

<sup>1</sup> In October the whole of Greece rose in rebellion and  
deposed their incompetent German King Otho. Prince Alfred of  
England was chosen as their new sovereign by an overwhelming  
majority, but international reasons prevented his acceptance of  
the dignity. The choice then fell upon a Prince of Denmark,  
brother of our present Queen. It was at this time that propo-  
sals were first definitely made for the cession of the Ionian  
Isles to Greece.

## Letters of Edward Lear

disowning it like the Nice and Savoy affair) and who can alter it? Thereafter too, guarantees might then be giv to Turkey for behaviour, etc: I half suspect it will end so.

Of society—more another thyme. Of balls—of moons—of fish and other vegetables—and of all future and past events as things may be. I have got a piano. Also a carpet. Also a tame redbreast: also a hearthrug and two doormats.

Dec. 1. . . . Here is a letter from Mrs. Clive: G. C.<sup>1</sup> has resigned—and H. A. Bruce<sup>2</sup> is in his place. I *hope* B.'s health will serve him. Here we hear, that should P. Alfred finally be elected, and then be refused by England—Gladstone is likely to be the next favourite!!!! Fancy Mrs. G. Queen of Greece!

I shall write to Mr. G. and ask him to make me *Πρῶτος Ζωγράφος*,<sup>3</sup> and Grand Peripatetic Ass and Boshproducing Luminary—forthwith.

### *Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

CORFU. *January 1, 1863.*

Do you know anything of a young man called Chichester Fortescue? I wrote to him a month ago, but have heard nothing of him at all at all, and my belief is that he is either full of business, or over head and ears in love,—possibly both. If you should happen to meet him, please tell him to send me a line

<sup>1</sup> George Clive, Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, resigned in November, on account of his health.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Austin Bruce, created Baron Aberdare, 1873.

<sup>3</sup> Painter Laureate.



## Corfu

some day—and you can also wish him a happy new year from me. I write this more particularly to wish you the same—and that this may be the forerunner of many such. And for my own part I think you have a great and goodly prospect of happiness, please God that C. F. and yourself have good health : for I have never known anyone with more qualities to ensure happiness in his companions than Fortescue. I am, however, getting anxious to know when events are to come to pass, which news I suppose patience will tell me if I wait long enough.

I should like to hear how the Duke D'Aumale liked the little picture of Philæ. For the present I have done with oil-painting and have collapsed into degradation and small 10 and 12 guinea drawings calculated to attract the attention of small capitalists. . . . I have very little to grumble at, saving that I grow so fat, which is horrible to think of and makes me miserable.

11th January. The pighearted has written. And I have just been writing a long letter to him. He writes a capital letter, full of substance. His strong feeling for poetry, his natural good taste, his classical knowledge and wide reading are all portions of his character vastly interesting. But I am disposed to think that by constant attention he may also eventually attain a very high position as a Minister. As a speaker—(tho' I never heard him) I do not imagine he would ever be in the first ranks—but as a thinker, I believe he will. All that is going on now about Greece is immensely interesting to me ; and if there

## Letters of Edward Lear

were a fixed and good government at Athens, I should probably ultimately live there entirely:—winter in England never more I shall, and the double journey is getting too onerous for so old a cove as I am becoming. I wish that you and F. would come out here for a few weeks: it would greatly delight you, and in April would be charming. In midwinter the weather is too uncertain to allow the chance of a fortnight's visit—nay, or a month's—being satisfactory, for it rains poodles and pineapples at times.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. 11th January, 1863.

O my eyes and little convolvuluses! If here isn't a letter sent by the Lord High a come from you, (a ninivation to dinner following).

My dear Fortescue,—I didn't write before, knowing how busy you must be, but I began to be in a fidget about the Irish side of the question, nor until Mrs. R[uxton] has seen Lady W[aldegrave] shall I be quite easy—unless indeed the Aunt perceives by your altered health and manner that such improvement can only be caused by happiness. . . . Your 6 pages are all very nice—and I will just glance them over, and then, as Craven said in his sermon just now “proceed to continue to state to improve”—(Should not—in a parenthesis—impudence and ignorance be represented in white ties? Why should Craven—preaching from a text about Moses, “your sins will find you out”—declare that not taking the

## Corfu

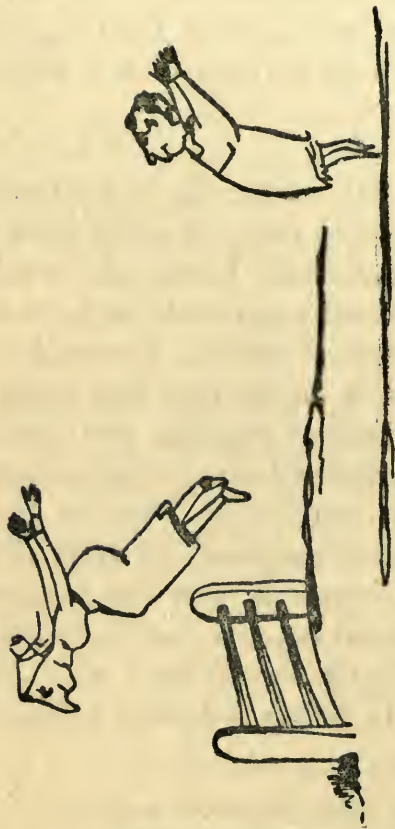
Holy Sacrament would *certainly* make a man miserable here, and *probably* hereafter? Yet poor Craven, though a sad goose is a good and laborious man:—which his wife resembles the mother of the Milky herd and produces an ecclesiastical baby regularly every ten months. I shall ask him to dine with me on Thursday next.)

To return to your letter. I can quite fancy the library at Strawberry Hill under the circumstances: I wonder if that glass globe stays out all the winter<sup>1</sup>: if ever I grow childish or insane I shall ask Lady W. to let me have that globe to play with, for never any fool was more taken with an object. Bye the bye—talking of fools—there is an old man here partly so by nature—partly by drink—a seafaring man who has formerly been in the Balearic Isles. He has taken a kind of monomaniac fancy to my Nonsense Book, and declares that he *knew personally* the Aunt of the Girl of Majorca!! I hear it is more than humanity can bear to hear him point out how exactly like she is—and how she used to jump the walls in Majorca with flying leaps!!!!!! Bother this letter it won't go on straight.

There was a young girl of Majorca,  
Whose aunt was a very fast walker,  
She walked seventy miles,  
And leaped fifteen stiles,  
Which astonished that girl of Majorca.

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<sup>1</sup> A silvered glass globe on a pedestal in the garden, which specially attracted the admiration of Mr. Lear.



There was a Young Girl of Majorca, whose aunt was a very fast walker,  
She walked seventy miles, and leaped fifteen stiles,  
Which astonished that Girl of Majorca.

*(From "The Book of Nonsense," 1861.)*



## Corfu

You vast owly Mortle! Why haven't you said on what day the marriage of yourself and Lady W. is to be. Confound it,—nor where it is to take place. I guess—Twickenham or Brompton. By what you write it seems to me you have announced it yourself to dear old Mrs. Ruxton—or she has seen it in print. Do tell me, when you have been to Red House, how she takes it. . . .

Your remark “prayed *at*” reminds me of an angry governess, to whom, being a R.C. a violent Protestant lady said—“The God of Mercy turn your heart! I pray for you morning noon and night!”—“Croyez vous donc, Madame,” said the governess—“que ce grand bon Dieu n'a pas quoi s'occuper, qu'il doit écouter vos bêtises même trois fois par jour? Allez donc! je vous prie de ne lui pas fatiguer plus pour moi!”

I can fancy the Russ's<sup>1</sup> sensations. I think he will have photographs of you all over the house, busts on the bannisters, and a statue on the door-steps. . . . The reason of servants being unsatisfactory 9 times out of 10 is that their hirers consider them as chairs or tables—and take no interest in them as human beings. Your lady knows that well enough, for she is kind to them individually. For myself, the only three I ever had, Hansen, Giorgio and T. Cooper, would all do anything to oblige me—and I don't believe that is chance—but the effect of

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue's landlord in St. James's Place, where F. had lived for many years.

## Letters of Edward Lear

caring for them in some way to improve them or their families. . . .

. . . Concerning the concession of the Isles—I do not see that it could be done till there be a certainty of a solid and strong government in Greece—which amounts to saying it can't be done now. Yet it seems to me, that could the English Government get the other powers to agree that such definite arrangement should be made whenever the proper time arrives,—a positive statement of this sort may do much to make governing here more easy,—the principal cause of their botheration being thus removed. Surely they might govern them without a parliament here at all, on the grounds that the fate of the Islands would be settled—and only a question of time as to when carried to an ultimatum or τέλος. Wolff is not yet come. Μὲ φάινεται,<sup>1</sup> a secretary who is away 9 months out of 12 is a not very requisite functionary. In fact Storx is more a ruler than any I have known here,—and the manner of the judges dismissal is, as far as I can see, the only error of his sway of 3 or 4 years. I hope to goodness your ministry won't be turned out: but I have “reason to think” that a big man in the Upper House has been getting at any kind of information about that Judge affair. Possibly your reverence may remember that Talbot<sup>2</sup> was governor of Cephalonia for a time. verbum sap.

<sup>1</sup> It appears to me.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Talbot was private secretary to the Earl of Derby when he was Prime Minister in 1852.

## Corfu

. . . I rejoice to state that these views I am doing—10 and 12 guinea ones—seem much liked, and that the young Duke of St. Albans<sup>1</sup> bought 5 a few days ago. Nevertheless, reddy tin is scarce, and bills abound. . . . Nonsense issues from me at times—to make a new book next year. The weather is at present lovely and the views over the harbour are of the most clipfombious and ompsiquillious nature. . . . Here's somebod a nokking at the dolorous door. I must stop.

February 1st, 1863.

On the 30th ult. (which don't mean ultramarine but ultimo) came yours of the 19th. . . . I have since read that the marriage *did* take place,<sup>2</sup> and Sir H. Storks, whom I me tout walking yesterday, said, "if he is as happy as his friends wish him, he will be extremely so." Being a Lord High Commissioner, I did not slap him on the shoulder and say "Well done! old cove!" tho' I wished to do so. I suppose you to be walking about on your head, or at least turning over and over starfish fashion. Some ill-natured ass put that account of the marriage into my paper—the "Daily Telegraph"—in order that it might be followed by "Blue Mantle's" letter next day on keeping or changing names.<sup>3</sup> When did

<sup>1</sup> The tenth Duke.

<sup>2</sup> On the 20th of January, 1863, at Old Brompton Church, only relations and connections being invited to the wedding.

<sup>3</sup> Referring to a letter in the paper objecting to Lady Waldegrave still calling herself "Countess Waldegrave," signed

## Letters of Edward Lear

Lady W. ever call herself Countess W. and not Frances Countess W.? Or, if she had, do not the Duchesses of St. Albans and Roxburgh keep their titles? Not to speak of Lady Farquhar and Lady Pigott, etc : etc : It is delightful to know that Mrs. Ruxton is happy. Has Russ bust his heart?

. . . Meanwhile my dear boy I wish you and "Mrs. Fortescue" as the "Telegraph" will have her to be, every happiness and as long a lease of it as may be. And live as quietly as you can—rank and position permitting; for, as you know I think,—in inward quietness lies greatest happiness.

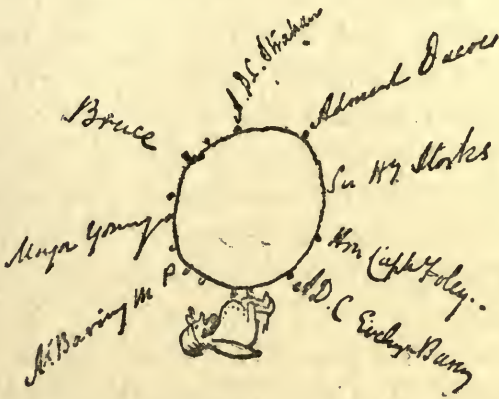
As for me, I may say thankfully that no month of January in all my life has gone by so happily as this. . . . The winter seems all gone for the present—though the Equal-noxious gales will doubtless come in disgustable force. . . . As far as my wits go, it seems to me that the present move is to enforce public recognition of a distinct principle, viz. : that *when* Greece is established, the end of our control here is at hand. But that it should cease yet—or until a firm government can be put in our place, seems to me very improbable. . . . I still lead the same quiet life, dining at the De Vere's or Palace on Sundays, and on Tuesdays somewhere or other : one or another of the garrison officers dining with me on

"Blue Mantle," and to which the real "Blue Mantle" replied, showing that the precedent was a perfectly correct one. Lady Waldegrave never called herself anything but "Frances Countess Waldegrave."



## Corfu

Thursdays. . . . Here is the paradigmatical illustration of last Sunday's dinner.<sup>1</sup>



O child! write! I can't any more. (Bye the bye I am glad to see 2 letters in today's papers in answer to that ass "Bluemantle"). Nevertheless give my love to "Mrs. Fortescue." I am collapsing with laughter and must go and bounce chords on the Piano.

8 February, 1863.

Your letter of the 30th delighted me extremely—you seem so thund'ring happy. . . . Bother the "Daily Telegraph"—I see the real "Blue Mantle" has been writing in answer to the malicious ijt who goes on with his "Mrs. C. S. F."<sup>2</sup> What delights me as much as anything is to hear that you and my Lady are going to Red House at Easter. . . .

I'm glad she makes you get up early and take oss exersize. The plan of the 12 o'clock breakfast

<sup>1</sup> On Mr. Lear's right will be noticed the name Evelyn Baring. This is the present Earl Cromer. <sup>2</sup> Another initial of Fortescue's

## Letters of Edward Lear

seems good—only take some coffee early or something—a nemptystummuk is a bad thing. (Old Chevalier Kestner<sup>1</sup> once said—calling out in the street—“Come and breakfast with me tomorrow: not a teapot but a forked collation.”) I was however much amused when I read that bit of your letter, because the evening before a man, after growling at all “Greeks” with the contemptuous annoyance of an Anglo-Saxon—spoke as bitterly as he could of a nice young Englishman—an officer—married to a really nice Greek girl—“he was ceasing to be English entirely—and becoming Greek altogether.” “But how” said I. And after obliging my man to confess that Captain —— was as good tempered, as attentive to his duties—as fond of exercises—as regular at church, etc: etc: etc: as before he married—he began to get cross, and at last grumbled out—“Well then! I’ll tell you what he does! he breakfasts à la fourchette at 11 or 12—and if you can say a man is an Englishman who does that—the devil’s in it.”

Thank you for sending the £66 to Drummond’s: I have only got sixpence and 2 farthings left here . . .

We are all becoming convinced that we are a-going to go—but when—we wot not. On Friday, perhaps the last ball giv by the last Lord High came off—and I *ought* to have gone but didn’t. (Lord! how I hate the bustle and lights and fuss of “society”—social in reality as is my nature—not

<sup>1</sup> A well-known figure in Roman society of the forties and fifties.

## Corfu

gregarious. Geese, swine, gnats, etc., are gregarious). Have you heard anything of Bowen of late? It is reported here that he and Lady B. have parted . . . it is said the Queensland papers were full of it—yet here one never knows what to believe.

I see you are going to have a Royal Academy Commission: it will do nothing at all I fear. I wish the whole thing were abolished—for as it is now it is disgraceful. 30 men self-declared as the 30 greatest painters of England—yet having in their body—Witheringtons—Frosts—Coopers—C. Landseers—and other unheard of nonentities, while Watts—Linnel—Hunt—Maddox Brown—Anthony—and many more are condemned to official extinction. My sister Ellinor writes: “One of my eldest brother’s sons has been badly wounded in the last battle.”

My watercolour drawings are all done but two—a really remarkable spot of energy: tho’, by reason of sitting still and poking to see them—my neck has grown longer and my body fatter, and I am like to this—



. . . My plans are still unsettled . . . I think I shall pantechnichize for a good long time—and go about wandering as it were like a tailless baboon. Athens does not appear to me to be a bad place to stick in . . . I can’t tell yet—but I think this year will see a change in my life, if so be I live—for I don’t look to do that very long . . . I wish you both as much happiness as you can gobble, and am greatly rejoiced at your condition.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Yours absquoxiously and full of blomphious and umpsidixious congratulations.

EDWARD LEAR.

*February 9th.* Today's mail has brought me no letters—and only a single paper. But that tells me of Lord Lansdowne's<sup>1</sup> death—a great loss to many, and a lesson in life, for he was a truly noble good fine man. Yet at 82—and with so good and long a life—his death seems to come all-expected. Not so what the same newspaper also tells me—of the death of poor William Harcourt's<sup>2</sup> wife!—what a dreadful blank and blow for him! It seems but the other day I met her in Pall Mall, so gay—just going to church!

Yesterday—after I wrote the first part of this letter, Wolff and Sargent called, and the amount of questioning and pumping was fearful—but I withstood all. Howbeit I have my own ideas of good-breeding. A German Count who was here last year said “I take one walk with Sir C. Sargent and Mr. Wolff—and when I come back I feel no more one man, but one catechism book that all may ask questions out from.” In the evening I dined at the Wolff's. Lady W. has some of the delicate, intangible, not to be expressed, refined qualities of woman—in as great a degree as I ever knew in any female. She is, in somma, a talented Italian—with a great dash of English firm

<sup>1</sup> The third Marquis, who was offered the Premiership in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Sir William Harcourt. He married in 1859 Miss Lister, a daughter of the well-known Lady Theresa Lewis by her first marriage, with Mr. Lister.



## Corfu

good sense. This evening I had hoped for quiet, but there came "Masks" and bored me to death, and later a heap of people. Bother, said I, and came away.

*22nd February 1863*

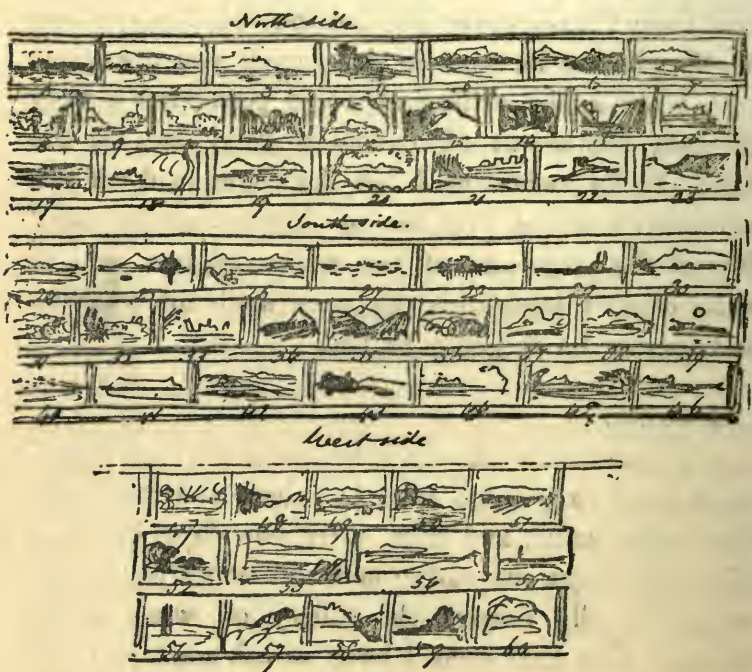
. . . I should certainly like to have a peep at you and Lady Waldegrave in Carlton Gardens—where Wolff tells me he sees in the papers you are gone. . . . I am again writing at 10.30 p.m. after a very pleasant dinner—at all events a good one—at the Lord High's—who—as I left the room, said "if you write to Fortescue, give him my kind remembrances." But of the day—and of the weeks bygone, and of many other things—this deponent saith nil, whereby and forwhy he is going to bed.

*March 1.*

About the 20th I finished the last of 60 drawings—all of 10 or 12 guineas each in price—and last week the frames came, and then, after two days' insertion of the drawings, measuring and nail knocking, I have made a really remarkable gallery of water colour works. This next week I have to ask some 70 or 80 sets of people to see this same gallery—but I doubt my success in selling the drawings. Cheap photographs are the order of the day now. . . . Among those who most enjoy seeing what I have done, Sir H. Storks is eminent. His delight in looking over the drawings was very marked—and at once he bought one of Jerusalem and one of Corfù. Lady

## Letters of Edward Lear

Wolff also examines everything minutely and with an eye evidently used to look at nature heartily. Others will irritate me—Sir C. Sargent to wit—who saw all 60 drawings in 19 minutes, calling over the names of each and saying “£700! why you must give a ball!” Fool! As yet I have sold £120



worth—but have not received one farthing—for great people generally suppose that artists gnaw their colours and brushes for food. . . . Overleaf I will give you a sort of picture of my gallery. There's a proof that an old cove of 50 has some energy still!

Sir H. S. has been *most particularly* amiable—asking me perpetually to Sunday dinners. He is

## Corfu

doubtless one of the most agreeable men socially—and in his public character I perceive that he is always consistent—never for a moment forgetting that he is the Q.'s Lord H. Commissioner.

Of the swells—next to those Palatial—the ancient general seems a jovial amiable man. But there is no one here I can walk with comfortably, and I miss Lushington horribly at times. Last Sunday I insisted—(as Sir C. Sargent and Wolff wanted me to walk) on *not* pottering to the one-gun-battery—which is like walking up and down Rotten Row—so we walked round Potamo; it was one of the most lovely of afternoons, and the colour and scenery were enough to delight a dead man. These two live ones however *never once* looked at or spoke of it: their talk was of money and politics only, and made me sick for the three hours. Lady Wolff is a singularly clever woman. A Professor Ansted<sup>1</sup> is here—a very intellectual and pleasant man. Sir H. Storcks sent him to me from my knowing the island well, and I took him to Peleca and got him to dine with me. There is also a very curious young man—Lord Seymour<sup>2</sup>—here: his ways are ways of wonder, but it seems to me I should or shall like him.

*Lear to Lady Waldegrave.*

15 March 1863.

Your letter of the 23rd February gave me a great deal of pleasure; it is delightful to know from your-

<sup>1</sup> The well-known geologist.    <sup>2</sup> Son of the Duke of Somerset.



## Letters of Edward Lear

self that you and Chichester are so happy, though I knew very well that you would be so. The Pig-hearted has an abundance of good qualities, which are not observable even upon long knowledge of his character.

I am glad I was not doomed to hear Mr. J.'s sermon. I begin to be vastly weary of hearing people talk nonsense—unanswered,—not because they are unanswerable, but because they talk in pulpits. That same morning I heard a “discourse” on Lot's wife and other unpleasant legends, being—as I find in my journal, the 23rd I have heard on the same subject. Are not the priests of the age blind indeed not to discern that, though from the unassailable vantage ground of custom they may oppress the human intellect for a long long while, yet that some day the hour will come for them to go the way of all other priesthoods?

The battle about Colenso interests me immensely: I perceive that Hampden<sup>1</sup> and Thirlwall are the only two of all the silly Bishops who have not signed the Memorial to “Natal.” In the nature of things it was not to be supposed that the Bps were to forward Colenso's views, but they might have done another thing—to wit, let him alone. A broader creed,—a better form of worship—the cessation of nonsense and curses—and the recognition of a new state of matters brought about by centuries, science, destiny or what

<sup>1</sup> Bishop of Hereford, whose election in 1847 was opposed by thirteen bishops and the Dean of Hereford.



## Corfu

not—will assuredly be demanded and come to pass whether Bishops and priests welcome the changes or resist them. Not those who believe that God the Creator is greater than a Book, and that millions unborn are to look up to higher thoughts than those stereotyped by ancient legends, gross ignorance, and hideous bigotry—not those are the Infidels,—but these same screamey ganders of the church, who put darkness forward and insist that it is light.

Meanwhile I hear that a measure is to be brought forward in the Legislature, to simplify the creed of religious England, and thus by the shortest catechism to abolish all infidel doctrines. The Bishops of all dioceses are to prevent the clergy from allowing any person to attend church who does not answer 2 simple questions in the affirmative.

1st. Do you believe in Balaam's ass, Jonah's whale, Elisha's bears, and Lot's wife?

2nd. Do you believe that all mankind who do not believe in these creatures will be burned in everlasting fire, wholly without respect to their wisdom, charity or any other good quality?

. . . My life here has gone on very sklombionbiously on the whole—though I go out very little, not being, as you know, of a gregarious nature. . . . Sir Henry Storks very often asks me to dine on Sunday, and I find the evening there very agreeable:—he is so full of anecdote and information that you would suppose he had had nothing to do but flâner all his life—instead of being soldier, governor, and

## Letters of Edward Lear

what not. To me he seems most excellently fitted for his post here, being always the same consistent man in public life and private.

Heaps of Gonfiati<sup>1</sup> continue to rush about here at intervals: a surprising duchess came to my rooms 2 days ago—(M——)—though I don't think she looked at anything very much. But the people whose acquaintance has most delighted me are the Shelley's<sup>2</sup>—who are here in a yott. Think of my music to "O world, O life, O time!"—Shelley's words—being put down in notes by Shelley's own son! Then there is Lord Seymour, who seems to me as if he had dreamed a dream and was continually a-dreaming of having dreamed it: quâ a Duke's eldest sun, certainly an odd mortal, though there is somewhat of interest about him. Also there was Smith O'Brien,<sup>3</sup> who has sail'd off to Athens, I really believe, upon some hubbly bubbly errand of stuff. The Duke of St. Alban's was here too, which his Duchess mother I like more nor the Duchess just gone. . . .

At the present moment I have pulled down my Eggzibission—and shall send some to England possibly,—one is for C. F.'s wedding present bye the bye

<sup>1</sup> Swells.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Percy Florence Shelley, only son of the poet, succeeded his grandfather as third baronet in 1844. He married the widow of the Hon. C. R. St. John.

<sup>3</sup> The famous Irish revolutionary, who was tried for High Treason in 1848 and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. He was, however, only transported to Tasmania, receiving a pardon in 1854.

## Corfu

—but my principal effort just now is towards the production of 24 views to illustrate the Ionian Islands. . . . My love to Χοιροκαρδιάς Choirokardias (which is the Pighearted).

Please let C. F. have the disclosed note.

*Lear to Fortescue.*

23 March 1863

The sklimjimfiousness of the situation increases: Sir H. Drummond Wolff has been and gone and bought 2 of my drawings—and Captain Stocker is to buy another, so that I shall have enough tin to pay rent and shut up house for 8 weeks or thereabouts. Whereupon, I shall first make some studies of what Lady Young used to call “Awnge trees” and then I shall go to Paxo.

There was an old person of Paxo  
Which complained when the fleas bit his back so,  
But they gave him a chair  
And impelled him to swear,  
Which relieved that old person of Paxo.

Just as I had written this bosh, came a nokkat the daw—and lo! a letter of yours sent by the L.H.C. . . . I heard Wolff say yesterday that the “Judge Affair” was postponed by Ld. D[erby]’s govt. I hope your govt. won’t suffer. I suppose something must be unbeknown as yet to the public about the judicials removed: anyhow Sir H. S.’s general public conduct has been—as far as I am able to see—so

## Letters of Edward Lear

sensible, that I cannot but give him credit for having more and stronger motives for the change of the official dignitaries than his adversaries allow.

I go hence—as I said—on the 4th April—and return towards the end of May, but I will write to you from Sta Maura. . . . My gallery is nearly dismantled, and must be put up—what remains of it—in Stratford Place, where by June 15 I hope to see you

“but never more, O! never we—  
Shall meet to eggs and toast and T!”

Never mind. I don't grumble at the less I see of friends—so they gain by it. . . . Ford writes—the “Cedars” are just now put up again in Stratford Place: please, if you have time, see them and tell me how they look—poor brutes.

The account of the wedding<sup>1</sup> was delightful: poor dear Queen. We are going to abluminate tonight—the day being fine. Giorgio has bought 96 little earthen pots for lights. . . . I wonder if you had a new coat when you married.

Another Nok at the Dore—Sir Percy and Lady Shelley and little Florence—and to say “goodbye”—which I hate. Lady S. is out and out and out a stunner of a delightful woman. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.



## CHAPTER XI

June to December, 1863

### ENGLAND

#### *Lear to Fortescue.*

ANCONA. 7 a.m. 8 June, 1863.

YOU see I am on my way so far, and I suppose I may be in England on Friday and in town on Saturday. So that I shall hope to see you and Lady Waldegrave on Sunday.

I have wearied awfully of the sea voyage—and do so more and more. Perhaps the whole stagnation of a week or more—besides the actual physical nuisance, makes me determined to put an end to this double “journey of life.” But where I must live, so as to live *only* in one place I can’t yet decide.

. . . The farther I go from Corfu—the more I look back to the delight its beautiful quiet has so long given me, and I am by no means approaching the filth and horror and noise of London life with a becoming spirit.

Sitting next to the Captain of an Austrian Frigate

## Letters of Edward Lear

at Sir H. Stork's on Thursday evening—the German officer said to a subaltern—(the conversation was about the good looks of women)—“I do think the Englishwoman conserve her aperiens Galship longer than all the women : even as far as her Antics.”

The subaltern withered with confusion till I ventured to explain,

“The Englishwoman preserves her appearance of youth longer than all women—even if she be old.”

TURIN. *Wednesday 17 June, 1863.*

You will be sorry to know from this that I have been lying here very ill—this is the 9th day. I think I wrote to you from Ancona on the 8th when I landed from Corfu—intending to come on at once to Paris and London. But as yet V. Emmanuel's govt. has not been able to put a stop to all the old remains of Papal torture, one of which was—to examine the goods of travellers in the middle of the road on leaving Ancona—(Ancona being a free town). So I had to undergo this at noon, and having no servant and heavy boxes to unstrap, half an hour in the great heat knocked me up with a sunstroke.

I came on here, but grew worse and worse : and I did not think I should live. I believe now however that I may get over the attack tho' I cannot tell when I shall be able to travel.

You may suppose my plans for London season are all gone to the winds. I often thank God that although he has given me a nature easily worried by

## England

small matters, yet in cases such as this I go on day after day quite calmly, only thankful that I do not suffer more.

It is an odd full stop to my triumphant 8 weeks' success in the Island tour. . . .

Aug. 5, 1863.

I met Ld. Kirkwall yesterday afternoon in Pall Mall. He was going to harangue about Sir H. S. when I said, "I saw much more of Sir Henry than in the year you were in Corfu—and I not only like him very much, but think him an A. No. 1 Governor" whereat he dropped my hand and collapsed.

A moth has crossed my paper, so I must go and kill him.



*Lear to Fortescue.*

HASTINGS,

Aug. 9, 1863.

I had thought of writing out my 6 island journal here, but I am so ill at ease that I shall do neither that nor anything else I believe. . . .

## Letters of Edward Lear

My plan was to bring out a work consisting of 20 Ionian views. . . .

This collection would, you see, have given the beastly public all that was most characteristic of the Islands : and, being *well done*, if at all, would keep up my prestige as a draftsman of Mediterranean scenery—and would, moreover, hold up or pave a way to my more general smallersized Topography of Greece, to be one day printed with my Journals. But, as above related, everything is in Noobibus as yet,—and I, as you may guess, grow more and more vexed perpetual.

This place, or rather this part of it, is also growing more and more odious. Since a huge hotel has been built, I assure you to walk in the evening is precisely like going into Regent St. or Piccadilly—nay, rather Cheapside. Nothing like “*the country*” do I enjoy in England nowadays. London is introduced and ground into every life far or near. It seems to me therefore . . . that I shall . . . betake myself back to London until I go southward :—first however, taking some 6 or 8 views of this once lovely place as of one I shall not easily come to again. . . .

Society here is rabid with bigotry & bother ; & moreover is altogether oppressed with W—— & passonic tendencies. Everybody thinks as old Lady Waldegrave<sup>1</sup> chooses—except those exactly antagon-

<sup>1</sup> Sarah, widow of Edward Milward, of Hastings, and daughter of the Rev. W. Whitear, Prebendary of Chichester, married as his second wife the eighth Earl Waldegrave, uncle and successor of Frances Countess Waldegrave's husband, the seventh Earl.



## England

istic, such as High Church & R. Catholics, concerning which latter there is the devil of a fuss. For the Dow<sup>ger</sup> Duchess of Leeds has come to live here in the Convent, (where Cardinal W. also comes at times) and is buying land "all over the place" to the rage & horror of the Hastings folk. I can't help laughing at the last thing she has done—viz:—to purchase a large house *just opposite* old Lady W.'s. & *next door* to the raging Low Church Lady W.'s particular preserve—for a Jesuit Seminary!!!! Between Colenso & the Duchess of L. all Hastings is all but gone frantic. . . . The people of the lodgings have nevertheless conceived a favourable idea of my piety by seeing "La vie de Jesus" on my table (by the bye—I beg you will read it carefully), little conceiving the opposition of that volume to their views & their topics of faith. Ernest Renan is assuredly "a Clayver man. . . ."

Squiggs. Beetles. Bother. Bullfrogs. Butter-cups. Let us change the subject.

14, August, 1863.

I was erjoiced to get your letter today. . . . I tookarookarook this paper to write a decent letter—but can't go on—candles kill me, and I have no lamp.

Only—thanks for the Ionian Judges their papers.<sup>1</sup> Winkins! Xidian<sup>2</sup> is a one-er he is!—& spite of

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence and papers relative to the summary removal of the Ionian Judges by Sir Henry Storks.

<sup>2</sup> One of the removed Judges.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Count Metaxa's<sup>1</sup> friendship, he ought to have been suspended long ago if a twentieth part of what Καρούσο<sup>2</sup> says is true. A small bird however had told me that enormities were to be expected, so it wasn't surprised I was. To my thinking Sir H. S. has simply done a very evident public duty courageously. Sargent and Colquhoun I imagine won't delight in their descriptions. Καρούσο has always been described to me as a man of great character and firmness—and so meseems he is—by token of these papers.

16 August.

I am all at sea, bother. These rooms are let to a family with 497 children, and I have to turn out on Tuesday. . . . English country house visiting is well for the idle and rich. I'll no more of it.

As soon as I get back to town, I either resolve on and set to work on this Lithograph volume—or I don't, and go abroad. If the former, I *don't stir out of London till it's DONE—DONE—DONE*—so don't ask me.

Concentrate your ideas if you want to do anything well, and don't run about, as the Tortoise said to the Armadillo.

Ξιδιάν<sup>3</sup> and case is certainly amazing. "Save me from my friends!" well may he say to Lord Derby and the "Saturday Review."

<sup>1</sup> Count Jean-Baptiste Metaxa, a member of one of the most powerful families in the Ionian Isles, became a naturalised Englishman in 1846.

<sup>2</sup> Caruso.

<sup>3</sup> Xidian.

## England

Edward Wilson<sup>1</sup> has been staying here, and I saw a good deal of him : a singular man. He showed me the Petition<sup>2</sup> which came down here for him to sign, and you have doubtless seen another "Times" letter of his. I saw the replies you mention. Not understanding these things fully—it appears to me that it would be better for the Imperial Govt. to disgust *one* Colony by not giving it convicts, than to disgust *all* the other Colonies in Australia by the opposite line. If the transportation of convicts "must cease" before many years—why not try to legislate for that fact now. However, E. Wilson and I don't agree on many points, as you may suppose when he says *I* am a *Tory*. His energy is instructive. We went to see mills and farms and bulls and hydraulic botherations—drains and other statistic beastlinesses, here ; and now he is off for cattle to Alderney : to inspect oyster beds at St. Malo : some mines at Vichy : some agricultural inventions near Montpellier : a garden of acclimatization at Stuttgard—and something else at Rotterdam before he returns to sail from Liverpool early in October.

. . . By yesterday's Gazette I see Miss Lascelles<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He emigrated to Melbourne in 1842, and took a prominent part in public life in Australia. He strongly opposed the influx of convicts from Tasmania, which led to the Convict Prevention Act.

<sup>2</sup> Protesting against all our worst criminals being sent to Western Australia, as had just been advocated in the Report of the Commissioners on Penal Discipline.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Emma Lascelles, who married in 1865 Lord Edward Cavendish, the third son of the Duke of Devonshire.

## Letters of Edward Lear

is Maid of Honour “vice” Honble Adelaide Caven-  
dish resigned. Now, you don't see how that interests  
me—you don't, you don't, you don't! But it does—  
werry—and one day you'll see why—you will, you  
will, you will.

I expect to hear Xidian and Marcoran and Caruso  
will all murder each other promiscuous. How are the  
elections going on there, I wonder.<sup>1</sup> . . .

What would Neptune say if they deprived him of  
the sea?

“I haven't a n/otion!”



<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Storks dissolved the Ionian Parliament on the  
6th of August, and summoned a new one, in order to ascertain  
in a formal manner the wishes of the people regarding the  
cession to Greece, the Great Powers having already signified  
their assent to this proposition at a Conference held in London  
in June.



## England

I asked the girl here (having a friend to dine, and wishing to have the wine cool) for some ice. But she thought I said, "I want some *mice!*" and was seized with great fear forthwith.

15, STRATFORD PLACE, OXFORD ST.

6 September 1863.

I want you to write to Lord Palmerston to ask him to ask the Queen to ask the King of Greece<sup>1</sup> to give me a "place." As I never asked anything of you before, I think I may rely on your doing this for me. I wish the place to be created a-purpos for me, and the title to be *ὁ Ἀρχάνοησιαφλβαρίαποιός*,<sup>2</sup> with permission to wear a fool's cap (or mitre)—3 pounds of butter yearly and a little pig,—and a small donkey to ride on. Please don't forget all this, as I have set my heart on it.

I see by the "Observer" of today that the King of Greece is to come to Windsor or Balmoral about the 15th,—and that the vote of the I[onian] Parliament cannot be taken before the 2nd or 3rd week in October—after which he is to go to Athens. If I hear before that, that we (the English in the 7 islands) are likely to clear out before Christmas, it will make a great difference to me—for I then should not take out drawings or copies of my new work. So let me know, as far as you may with propriety.

I finished my third view yesterday, 17 now remain-

<sup>1</sup> Prince George of Denmark was proclaimed King of Greece at Athens on the 30th of March.

<sup>2</sup> Lord High bosh and nonsense producer.

## Letters of Edward Lear

ing : and I should have begun the 4th if a brute of an Irishman (the member for Louth it was) hadn't interrupted me. I was however consoled for this by his bringing me photographs of two of my friends, both of which (*i.e.* the photographs) I like better the more I see of them. Yours however is not altogether right, but my lady's is very exact. Only I could feel inclined to cut the head of it into a vignette. The large dresses of the day never look well photographed, for in themselves they are so monstrous that only the movement of a live woman can make them approximate to a human figure at all, and that movement of course can't be given in photography or art, so that the portrait of a sitting lady in a crinoline always looks as if she were a dwarf walking. I shall therefore make a vignette : the face is the very best I have seen photographed for a long time—but the white feather catches the eye and should be toned down a bit *selon moi*.

I go on reading C. Lever stujously : he's a wonderful fellow. No novels have interested me so much since my early days of devouring W. Scott's. To enter into a great part of the delights of his descriptions however, one must have lived a good deal abroad—and also it behoves one to appreciate Irish character completely, which, perhaps thanks to my Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.grandfather Usher—I can do.

The "Knight of Wynne" is delightful, and now I am reading "The Daltons." Mrs. Ricketts is a picture from life.—so well drawn as to keep me in a scream of



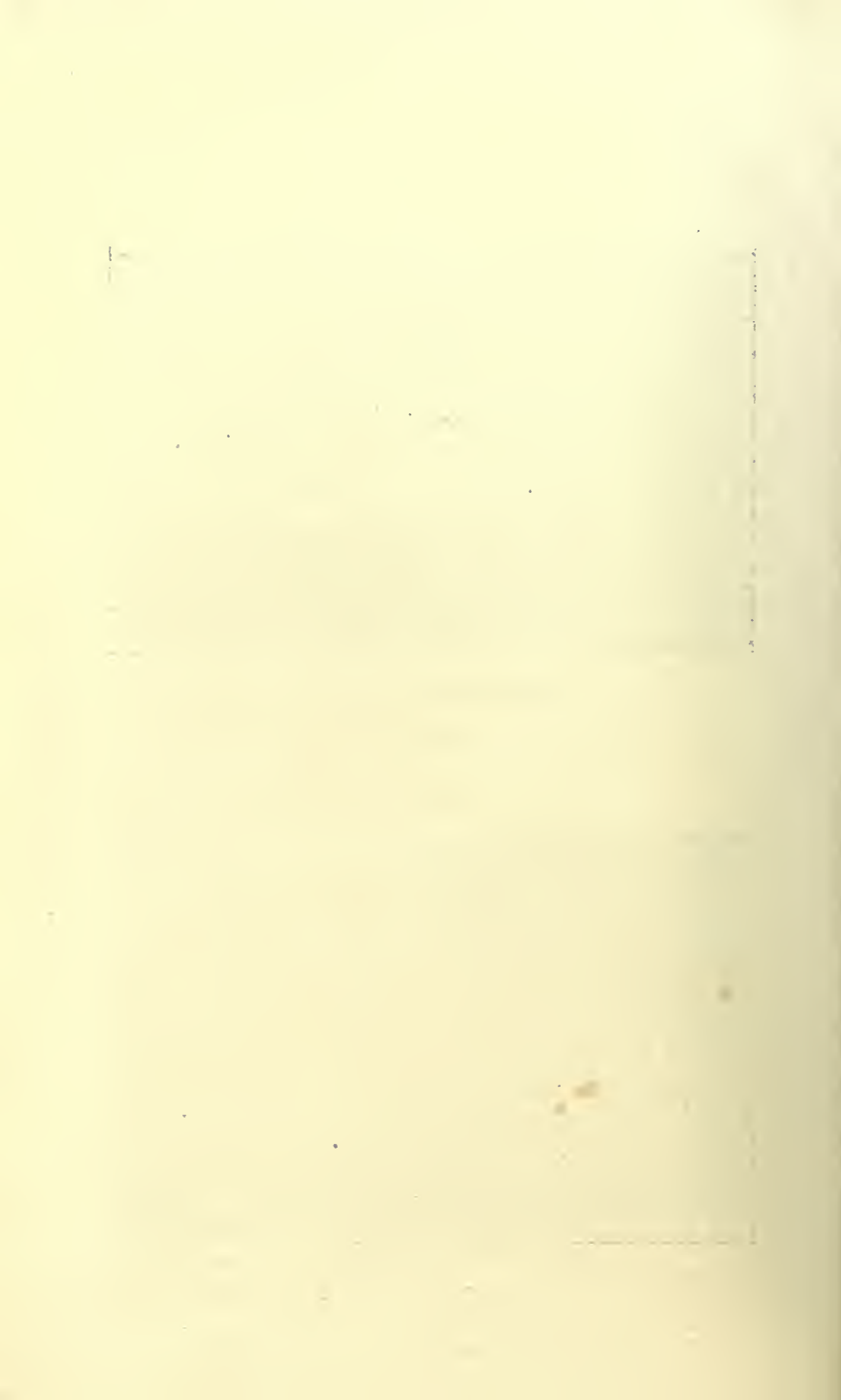
FRANCES COUNTESS WALDEGRAVE

*From a photograph taken June 1883.*



CHICHESTER FORTESCUE.

*From a photograph taken June 1883.*





## England

laughter. I think you knew her or saw her—Mrs. S—— of L——. Purvis is one of her set. She was a horrid animal and deserved even worse showing up.

How do you think I am going to pass my Sunday? In a long walk up to Highgate, where I shall go and look at my dear sister's grave, which I always mean to do. The greatest blessing that ever happened to me was being here when she died. . . .

No more thyme.

P.S.—I perceive that Septembers are variously passed in this life. Sept. 1861 I painted all day—lived upon soles and whittings, and read Greek morning and evening.

Sept. 1862. I dawdled all day at people's houses, lived upon luxuries, and made a book of nonsense, morning and evening.

Sept. 1863. I lithograph all day: live upon cold mutton and read Lever.

15, STRATFORD PLACE, OXFORD STREET,  
14 Sept., 1863.

I fear the New Zealand bothers<sup>1</sup> are recommencing and no mistake. The Southern islanders are happy to be out of all that confusion. I have had 2 letters "North" and "South" sent me by my sisters this last week, both shocking enough.

Bye the bye, one of the oddest feelings I can remember to have encountered came to me by a

<sup>1</sup> This year saw the commencement of a little war with the Maoris, arising out of the question of the English appropriation of waste lands.

## Letters of Edward Lear

circumstance last Monday. On the Sunday, I had gone to Highgate Cemetery to see about my dear sister Ann's grave, and returning, perceived afar, that the old House I was born in, (its gardens and paddocks were long ago destroyed by new roads and buildings,) was advertised for sale as building materials, 4 houses to be raised on its site. So the following day I went up there, and all over it: and I can assure you, the annihilation of time which seeing such early-known localities produced was curious, and made me afterwards thoughtful enough. As I stood in various parts of the large empty rooms, I could absolutely hear and see voices and persons, and could—(had I had a pen and ink paper and time,) have written out months and years of life nearly 50 years ago, exactly and positively. (The old woman who shewed the house seemed horribly puzzled at my knowing all the odd closets and doors etc: and received 2/6 with a mixture of pleasure and fear.). . . .

I must go and finish the 7th lithograph—wo is me. . . . This work is so filthy too. I shall never be clean again. When it is done, I shall sit 10 days in a warm water pot, covered with a covering—and receive my friends—thus



Bye the bye—when I left Corfù, Sir H. S. asked me if I would take some dispatches—“Would you *like* to take some dispatches, Mr. Lear?” I remember saying—“No Sir”—in a tone like “God forbid Sir!”—but what should I have said?

## England

### *Fortescue to Lear.*

*Sep. 15th, 1863.*

LITHOGRAPHIC LEAR,—How do you get on? I hope you have found “sermons in stones and good in everything.” . . . Come to us then, Lithographic Lear, upon the Mosaic Sabbath, and pass here the Sabbath of Shaftesbury.

*Sept. 16, 1863.*

DEAR 4OSCUE,—Gracious grease pots! I’ve just done the 8th lithograph, and have put the tracing on for the 9th, so, while that is drying, I’ve run up here to write a line.

Do you see you are a rattlesnakist? Leastwise your chief is. In the “Times” of today E. Wilson compares the Convicts to a rattlesnake, and the Duke <sup>1</sup> to them as throws them into a babby’s bed. The reptile is to be chopped up—but the thrower is to be worse dealt with. I wish though seriously, you could find some new place for the convicts. What a bore they are. What a bore everything is—particularly lithography.

I disclose a proof of my first prospectus.<sup>2</sup> . . . I’ve got 4 subscribers to begin with meanwhile, which is something on the way to 600. Never mind. Percy-weer.

Goodbye, von Louth . . . in a nurry.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

<sup>2</sup> “Views of the Seven Ionian Islands,” published 1863.

## Letters of Edward Lear

Sept., 1863.

I came to "leave a card" on you, as you ax'd me to the dinner yesterday—so here it is—



I was disgusted at being aperiently so rude to Lady Waldegrave—but I was not well from the East winds, and so completely uncertain whether I had any voice or not, that I thought it better not to sing, than to go to the piano and be obliged to quit it. I felt like a cow who has swallowed a glass bottle—or a boiled weasel—and should probably have made a noise like a dyspeptic mouse in a fit.

But I passed a very pleasant evening, and was delighted with Lady Waldegrave's perfectly natural and kind manner. I should have liked to sit next to you, but I couldn't resist moving up to my next neighbour. I came out purposing to leave cards at Carlton Gardens—so I shall do so, though I know the Lady is out, for I nearly ran under the veils of her Chariot just now, whereby she made me a bough.

I must add that I think your room looks extremely



## England

pretty—and the Pigchr is stunning as it hangs now. How nicely you have had the “Morn broadens” done as to frame.



There was an old man who said, “How,  
Shall I flee from this terrible cow ?

I will sit on this stile

And continue to smile—

Which may soften the heart of that cow.”

What’s the difference between the Czar and the “Times” paper? One is the type of Despotism: the other the despotism of Type.

What is the difference between a hen and a kitchen-maid? One is a domestic fowl, the other a foul domestic.

Why need you not starve in the Desert? Because

## Letters of Edward Lear

you might eat all the Sand which is there. Why *are* the Sandwiches there? Because there the family of *Ham* was bread and mustard.

### *Fortescue to Lear.*

DUDBROOK,  
BRENTWOOD,  
22 November, 1863.

I saw the Duke of N. (who is in very bad health) in London, and asked him about Corfu. He says all will go well, in spite of the usual ill-conditioned childishness of the Assembly—but that the settlement of the Treaty with Greece will take time—that between the Great Powers is signed already. Lord Russell says that the troops will not be away before April.

### *Lear to Fortescue.*

Jan. 1, 1864.

The woes of life.—I am off unexpectedly . . . an acquaintance (Wade-Brown of the Guards,) goes tomorrow all the way to Corfu, so I decided on flitting. Hard work packing, etc: etc: in a day! but it was harder and sadder to write, write, write, to the remaining 50 of my subscribers, who naturally think 3 guineas can be nothing, forgetting that 150 guineas are much.

You will be happy to hear that I have put by £300, and therefore am entitled annually to £9 all my life. I would not go through what I have again for £9000 a year. But having seen fit to begin a work, I went through with it. . . .

## CHAPTER XII

January to April, 1864

### LAST VISIT TO CORFU

#### *Lear to Fortescue.*

CORFU. 10th January 1864.

I CAME here yesterday at noon . . . the passage to Calais was dreadful, nor could we pass the bar until too late to catch the afternoon train to Paris. Hence 13 hours of an at-every-station-stopping train, and consequent obligation to sleep at Paris all the following day till noon. Paris was cold too,—but that fact gave me an opportunity of seeing the Prince Imperial,<sup>1</sup> who, in a carriage and four, stopped to gaze at the swans in the Tuileries gardens, ice-begirt and crumb-desiring. Lots of little gamins stopped also and inspected the imperial child as he did the swans. . . .

George Cocali was all ready for me, and today everything is so regular and matter of-course that I don't seem to have been absent an hour. The

<sup>1</sup> Napoléon Eugéne Louis, only son of Napoleon III., born 1856, killed in Zululand June 1, 1879.

## Letters of Edward Lear

odd pounds extra, purchase comfort in home and service very cheaply. . . . The domestic intelligence I have heard is that Colquhoun still holds off the Palace—but the Sargents have had a formal reconciliation with the Lord High—Lady S. not being, I should imagine, either able or inclined to forfeit any amount of social position. . . .

Monday, 11th. I dined at the Palace yesterday. . . . Sir Henry was as ever absolutely amiable and gentlemanlike, or as some one here says, he “never forgets that he is the representative of the Queen for one moment.”

Alas! as for Corfu I can say little yet: all the less that 10 shillings worth of letters have just come full of Post Office Orders and cheques from “silly swells” who *couldn't* pay their subscriptions 3 weeks ago—however I entreated them to do so.

But there is not only great excitement here,—great sorrow and perplexity also, and discomfort. And, it seems to me, unless you governing folk shew a little less hard redtapism to these islands—verily, their cession will be a millstone about the neck of the liberal party for long days to come. It is however so very difficult to gather or sift untruth from truth, and we are all so in the dark as to what is to take place, that it is simply folly to talk or write. Yet it is the first time I have ever seen a community so singularly and uncomfortably placed. . . . (Sir H. S. takes 10 copies of my book, which is highly brick-like). . . .



## Last Visit to Corfu

15 January 1864.

Feby. 7. The good intents of the above date never bore fruit—an unprolific datetree. . . . On Friday evening the Lord High sent me your letters of the 17th and 26th, so I shall write today instead of going to church, relaxing my labour from time to time by snatches of the “Daily Telegraph,” Renan’s Jesus, Miss Rowan’s Meditations on Death, Newman’s Phases of Faith, Froude’s Elizabeth, and Colenso’s 4th part. And the better my beloved brethren to set forth the varied subjects which I shall bring under your consideration, I shall first proceed to look through your letter, and reply more or less to the heads thereof.

My flight it seems was by no means too soon . . . yet after 7 months of darkness and filth you will all as usual talk about the “climate of England” as the “best in the world.” So God tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb : so the Esquimaux believes that train oil is before all food the most excellent.

Your account of the gaieties at Strawberry Hill are a pleasant contrast to the misery and bitter cold one reads of all over the kingdom. . . . The dance must have looked well. . . . (Talking of dances, the *last* —ὁ ἐσχάτος χορὸς—) was given by Sir H. S. on Friday night. I was not well enough to go, or I could have well liked to see the latest sparks of Anglo-Corfiote gaiety ere all goes out in darkness. . . .

The poor Duke of Newcastle! I extracted the lines you wrote about him, and sent what I had copied to Sir Henry, who wrote back a few words :

## Letters of Edward Lear

he is much distressed about the Duke's health. I had supposed Lord Wodehouse<sup>1</sup> would succeed him. Who would be—if any—the House of Commons possible Colonial Secretary?<sup>2</sup> I hope whoever he may be in the Peers, that you will keep your place: the labor which that involves during a part of the year is in my humble opinion compensated for by other good. I should have been glad to see you a Cabinet minister, because I have always believed you would do good as such. What does my lady say? I wish she had a more decided turn for colonial politics, for in spite of H.I.M. Nap. 3's assertion that it is the mission of woman to think of God and not of the world, I believe that women of talent do and can do—and have done, a vast amount of good in the political atmosphere. (They also do a devilish deal of harm, as I should think the said Emperor knows well.) However, let me know what you do. Most probably you will be saved any decision before long, by a Derby govt. coming in for a time: tho' after that, Gladstone is the coming man (*διὰ τὸ κατ' ἐμὲ*).<sup>3</sup>

You ask about the state of public feeling here, a question not easy to answer. The decree about the non-destruction of the forts of course was soothing, but—(I judge only by Lady W.'s talk, as she seems to me ever to hold a brief of hatred for the Greeks), they say “no thanks to the English for that: you

<sup>1</sup> Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1859–61.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Newcastle resigned in March for reasons of health, and Mr. Cardwell succeeded him. <sup>3</sup> According to me.



PHILATES, ALBANIA.

*From a pen and ink sketch in a letter.*





## Last Visit to Corfu

*wished* to leave the place in ruin, but the K. of Greece threatened to go if you did, and you were *forced* to give way,"—which I suppose is bosh. Lady W. denies we have ever done *any* good here—but when I stop this nonsense by saying, "Well, well, at all events then if we have been as bad as you say, the ground will soon be cleared of us"—she instantly turns round and says "but nobody wants you to go—your going will occasion great misery etc : etc :"—"Then why did the Ionian Parliament continually vote for annexation?" "Parliament indeed!" she answers—"do you call 42 or 50 democrats public opinion?" "Then why," say I, "if that is so trifling,—why did not the Ionians prevent its eternal repetition by electing other deputati?" On which she says "but do take some coffee," and twists the converse all awry.

Meanwhile the cannon are all taken down from the Fort Neuf etc : etc : and as soon as the 6th go (under orders for Jamaica), Vido will be emptied and blown up—or down. There are however many who have *no belief* at all in our ultimate departure. The Turk Albanian Beys opposite go into strong convulsions of laughter at the idea, (so officers tell me who come from Parga, Delvino etc :) and a mass of the lower orders here also do not credit it, but believe some dodges will turn up and keep us in the islands,—or at all events in this island. On the other hand, dismay and distress pervade whole classes. Domestic servants, yachtsmen, innkeepers, small shops etc : etc : see before them simply blank new beginnings of life—how or where

## Letters of Edward Lear

they know not. My man's whole family think of migrating to Patras, or the Piræus. The warlike Danish-German news of the last few days<sup>1</sup> complicates matters still more. It will be funny if war with Austria arises, and a fleet come down from Cattaro and chaw us up suddenly, when the guns are gone.

As for poor Sir Henry Storcks, you say well, he *will* be glad to go indeed. I know of no position much sadder than his—for nearly five years working hard always, with a self-negation and conscientiousness not to be surpassed. Yet it may be truly said that he lives a life of most painful loneliness, all the more dreary that his efforts to do right as a public man have been met with such small appreciation by the British fool,—not to say by abuse from those who should have known better than to make grave matters of right and wrong, handles for mere party violence. The 2 A.D.C.s (Baring<sup>2</sup> and Strahan<sup>3</sup>) are valuable to Sir H. S., but, tho' very clever, they are young. *I think that any letter you write to him now he will be pleased with*: the Duke's illness affects him, and he seems to me to feel any kindness coming from

<sup>1</sup> The dispute about the Schleswig-Holstein succession, plunged Denmark into war with Germany and Austria in the spring of this year, and for a time there was a fear that England might also be involved.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lord Cromer, whose later history has been the history of Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Governor of Tasmania, the Windwards Isles, &c., &c.

## Last Visit to Corfu

England; and I think too that much which has been said and written of him by people—or with the knowledge of people who were once his friends, has hurt him at times a good deal. So, q.e.d.—as you say—Storks *will* be glad to get away. . . .

My life here (barring blowing my nose and lying in bed ill,) has been of the most regular order,—and it is a grim fact that never more when I go hence can I look for similar—“there is no joy but calm.” . . . Having “put by” £300—£9 a year for life is the result of my labor—but quâ ready money, and the necessity of getting it by work, things are as they were before the fathers fell asleep. . . .

The new Italian Consul's wife or sister plays in the most beanlike and beneficial manner. By April or May at furthest, I shall hope to be fixed as to fixing or unfixing: perhaps I may go about in an unfixed mode continually and evermore. What's the odds? . . . The two or three months of hard writing before I left England have sickened me of pen and ink, and I shall henceforth write MUCH LESS than formerly. *Please to accept this as a nintimation or warning.* Have you read Abbé Michaud's “Maudit”? Burton's Abeokuta? Speke's Nile? Froude's Elizabeth? Kingsley's Water babies? I aive. . . . Catch then o catch the transient owr, improve each momient as it flies, man's a short summer life's a flower, he dize alas! how soon e dize. Goodbye.

P.S.—I will go to church this afternoon to pray that your toes may not be frozen off, and that it

## Letters of Edward Lear

may please God to shew you the sun once or twice in the next 4 months.

*March 31. 1864 (6 a.m.)*

Your letter of the 24th came yesterday, and I communicated its sad contents to Sir Henry. Poor Duke of Newcastle! A life of no great joy has his been:—I am all the more interested about him just now that I have been reading Kinglake's *Crimea*.<sup>1</sup> But who would be Under-Secretary if Cardwell<sup>2</sup> is C. O. Secy? I had fancied at times that in that case you might be "called to the Upper House," and keep your place. However, as at no very great distance there must be still greater changes, you would turn up I suppose in some fresh formation of a Ministry. I somehow don't like your sitting down at 41 into private life—the more that your last speech—as I read it in the "Times" on Gregory's motion, was about the best I think you ever made.

I don't ever wonder at your not writing. I only wonder anybody ever writes at all. For myself I have had such a dreadful dose of it last year about that book, and am still hopelessly endeavouring to get in subscriptions, that I abhor the sight of a pen, and if I were an angel I would immediately moult all my quills for fear of their being used in calligraphy. . . .

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Newcastle undertook the charge of the War Department when the Crimean War broke out.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. Forster and Sir F. L. Rogers were the Under-Secretaries when Mr. Cardwell was at the head of the Colonial Office.



## Last Visit to Corfu

My beautiful rooms are already taken by others,—so there is an end of Corfu life, and this is the last letter you will most probably ever receive from the Island.

I am not yet certain if I shall go straight to Athens and then . . . return to Syra and so to Crete. . . . After some 6 or 7 weeks in Crete, I should in any case return to Athens, and there look about for a possible winter home. . . . To make a future winter settlement nearer England is difficult. Nice is crowded and Anglo-vulgar: Rome and its priests, as well as its forced art-quackery atmosphere I detest. . . . You see therefore that as the little fish said in the Pacific,—I am at sea:—nor will much more be assured till I have been to visit the owls of Minerva.

And indeed glad shall I be to go. The place is all altered and sad—and there is no pleasure to me in seeing the daily explosions and ruins of fine masonry and picturesque lines. Moreover the angry and violent feeling against everything English is disagreeable, tho' it is not so general as it seems. You know I dare say that the Bishop (always the prime agitator for the Union,) is now the head of a very ferocious Club,—who are publishing a paper of the utmost virulence against us,—calculated to stir up all the idle and intriguing in our disfavour. Such "facts" as the open insulting of "Greek" women on the Esplanade by "parties of brutal English sailors" might excite your astonishment, as they do mine:—

## Letters of Edward Lear

but in the present state of things the assertion of good old Basilia Kokali (my servant's mother,) that in 50 years of English rule she has never known one female insulted by soldiers or sailors, goes for nothing.

The truth seems to me this: A great party, naturally regretting the English going—and moreover, another party who desired it but yet justly appreciated our actions,—would all have united to make public demonstrations of respect and friendliness etc: on our leaving the island. This I know to be the case from various people who declare they are grieved that they cannot now make any manifestation in our favour. The handle given by the Fortress dismantling to the democratic party, is therefore one I believe they are delighted to get. It is of course of great importance to the annexation party that no demonstration in an opposite sense, or such as could by any possibility be construed—should be made:—and now I do not expect any one will dare openly wish us “Godspeed.”

For myself I avoid as much as I can speaking on the subject at all, but I cannot avoid making allowances for those who are constantly having the irritating sight of the forts being blown up—now for many weeks the almost daily object—nor can I wonder at their vexation when they hear of parties going over “to see the beautiful blow up,” etc: etc: When I am forced into talking, I do all I can—(as Mr. Gregory didn't) to show them how far better

## Last Visit to Corfu

it would be to weigh this fortress Wrong—if wrong it be—against the benefits England has given them,—a useless task however, in their present mood. “Do you think” said one to me, “that if you give me a thousand pounds, and then box my ears, that the last act would not outweigh the first—although in itself the last is trifling.” But the very addition to this which a second speaker instantly gave, convinced me that I am right in believing the “Fortress Question” is a godsend to the violent party. The speaker was an amiable man and desirous of softening down his friend’s observations. “In somma,” said he, “la politica esige che si alza la voce contro l’Inghilterra.”<sup>1</sup> It is, I think, much to be regretted that this “alzando la voce” was so supplied them by ourselves.

Meanwhile the mass of the people behave quite well, and individually nothing uncourteous is said or done to anyone. Sir Henry walks about everywhere, and is treated with the same respect as ever. He is a splendid fellow, and has a most difficult part to play—for C. and others nameless, who should work with him—are against him. I suppose you will make him a “Barnet” as Lady Young used to say, or a Peer if he goes to any higher post. If ever he goes to Ceylon I will certainly then go out to India. . . . The reports here of all possible sorts are endless ; Woodhouse, Taylor Sanders, are named

<sup>1</sup> “In short politics exact, that our voices should be raised against England.”

## Letters of Edward Lear

as to be the consul. "The church is to be turned into a theatre as a mark of disprezzo" etc: So you see, the place is all breaking up and blowing up and bebothered and boshed.

. . . Poor Christo Kokali, my man's brother, ill of consumption for four years, has now it seems really taken to die. And George has therefore a double journey to his mother's daily, and to sit up all night—besides the lots of rough extra work all this "exodus" begets. Thunderstorms and violent squalls make life disgusting: add also that a gas company has turned up all the streets for pipes, and as I fall into the beastly trenches, I can say truly "you have piped unto me, but I have not danced." . . . Goodbye, my last furniture is going. I shall sit upon an eggcup and eat my breakfast with a pen. . . .

HOTEL DE LA COURONNE. ATHENS.

*April 8 1864.*

I hope you got a letter from me just before I left Corfu,—of which place I am now cut adrift, though I cannot write the name without a sort of pang. Nothing could be sadder or more painful and vexing than the latter days I passed there. Everyone either miserable for going away—or miserable at being left: while angry passions and suppressed violence were abundant. The brutal old Dandolo<sup>1</sup> put forth—three days before I came off—the foulest pamphlet

<sup>1</sup> One of the leaders of the extreme Radicals and Anglophobes in the Ionian Parliament.



## Last Visit to Corfu

against England a man could read, (dated *of course* prior to the explanatory discussion in the House though he knew very well doubtless that he was writing lies) You may judge of the tone of this letter (to Lord Russell), when I tell you—besides that it touched on all the crimes, real and imputed, which have been considered English for centuries of history—that its last words are—“we Ionians thank you that you have left us our hands and tongues; with the one to write your infamy—with the other to utter threefold curses on your head.” Poor Lord John! I hope he will survive that.

*April 24, 1864. KHALIFA, NEAR KHANIA, CRETE.*

I was not able to finish this letter before I left Athens. . . . Before I left Corfu I was quite sure that a great—the greatest part—of the ill-feeling against us was brought out by the insidious ways of certain people. No governor of a province has ever had a harder task than Sir H. Storks, whose conduct has been in all respects A. No. 1 as Lord High Commissioner,—and I shall always remember his kindness to me gratefully.

THE END.



## APPENDIX

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The following is an incomplete list, for several pictures painted for my uncle and aunt, Lord Clermont, and Sir Spencer Robinson are not included, and probably many others of which I do not know, are also missing. This list, I believe, was drawn up by Mr. Lear at San Remo for circulation among his friends and others, partly by way of advertisement, and partly to give an idea of the work he had executed and the patronage he had received. At this present time very few, if any, of those named survive, but I have wished to reproduce this list exactly from the original, made in 1877, by Mr. Lear.

### PICTURES PAINTED, 1840-1877.

(1840)

	Painted for, or Purchased by
1. Rome, from the Lateran ... ..	The late R. A. Hornby, Esq.
2. Valmontone ... ..	The late Lord Charles Bertie Percy.
3. Rome. Borghese Gardens ... ..	Mrs. Pitney Martin.
4. Rome. Arco Oscuro ... ..	Mrs. Pitney Martin.
5. Civitella di Subiaco ... ..	Edward, Thirteenth Earl of Derby.
6. Olévano ... ..	Edward, Thirteenth Earl of Derby.

(1841)

7. Rome, from the Lateran ... ..	Lord Crewe.
8. Rome. Gardens of St. Buonaventura ... ..	Lord Crewe.
9. Rome. Tomb on the Campagna ... ..	Lord Crewe.
10. ... ..	Lord Crewe.
11. ... ..	Lord Crewe.
12. ... ..	Lord Crewe.
13. Rome. Tomb near Porta Pia ... ..	Thomas Tatton, Esq.
14. Rome. View from Monte Mario ... ..	Thomas Tatton, Esq.
15. Olévano ... ..	T. Bonham Carter, Esq.
16. St. Peter's, from D. Pamfili Gardens ... ..	The late Lord Wenlock.
17. Licenza ... ..	Rev. W. H. Empson.

# Letters of Edward Lear

(1842)

Painted for, or Purchased by

18.	Rome.	Via Appià ...	...	...	Mrs. Hudson.
19.	Rome.	Claudian Acqueduct	...	...	Ralph Barnes, Esq.
20.	Rome.	Cecilia Metella ...	...	...	The late Lady Hornby.
21.	Rome.	Tor di Schiavi ...	...	...	The late Lady Hornby.
22.	Rome.	Tor di Schiavi ...	...	...	The late T. G. Fonnereau, Esq.
23.	Naples	... ..	...	...	The late George Cartwright, Esq.
24.	Amalfi	... ..	...	...	The late George Cartwright, Esq.
25.	Amalfi	... ..	...	...	The late George Cartwright, Esq.
26.	Cefalù.	Sicily ...	...	...	The late Colonel C. Hornby.
27.	Rome.	Campagna ...	...	...	W. Hives, Esq.
28.	Rome.	Tomb near Porta Pia	...	...	Rev. E. Goddard.
29.	Rome.	View from Monte Mario	...	...	Rev. E. Goddard.

(1843)

30.	Civitella di Subiaco	...	...	...	The late Rev. James J. Hornby.
31.	Civita Castellana	...	...	...	The late Rev. James J. Hornby.
32.	Lake of Albano	...	...	...	The late George Cartwright, Esq.
33.	Lake of Albano	...	...	...	The late George Cartwright, Esq.
34.	Lake of Fucino, Abruzzi	...	...	...	The late M. J. Higgins, Esq.
35.	Rome.	Claudian Acqueduct	...	...	The late M. J. Higgins, Esq.
36.	Isola di Monte Corno, Abruzzi	...	...	...	Miss Westcomb.
37.	Nemi ...	... ..	...	...	Miss Westcomb.
38.	San Pelino.	Abruzzi ...	...	...	Lord Wenlock.

(1844)

39.	Celano.	Abruzzi ...	...	...	Lord Wenlock.
40.	Monreale.	Sicily ...	...	...	The late Mrs. Huskisson.
41.	Partenigo.	Sicily ...	...	...	The late Mrs. Huskisson.
42.	Quarries of Syracuse	...	...	...	The late Mrs. Huskisson.
43.	Valmontone	... ..	...	...	The late C. Scrace Dickens, Esq.
44.	San Vito	... ..	...	...	The late C. Scrace Dickens, Esq.
45.	Frascati	... ..	...	...	Miss Sarah Markham.
46.	Pergolata, or Vine Terrace...	...	...	...	Mrs. Palmes.

(1845)

47.	Valmontone	... ..	...	...	Hon. Mrs. Greville-Howard.
48.	Rome.	La Madonna del Sorbo	...	...	Hon. Mrs. Greville-Howard.
49.	Rome.	Claudian Acqueducts	...	...	Samuel Gurney, Esq.
50.	Rome.	Tiber and Via Salara	...	...	The late John Battersby Harford, Esq.
51.	Rome.	Veii ...	...	...	The late Earl Canning.
52.	Naples	... ..	...	...	Earl of Dudley.

(1846)

53.	Tivoli	... ..	...	...	E. Carleton Holmes, Esq.
54.	Caprarola	... ..	...	...	Thomas Bell, Esq.
55.	Rome.	Tor Sant'Eusebio...	...	...	The late General Rawdon.



# Appendix

Painted for, or Purchased by

- |        |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 56.    | Girgenti.                | Sicily                         | ... | ... | ... | The late John S. Harford, Esq.         |
| 57.    | Antrodoco.               | Abruzzi                        | ... | ... | ... | The late Dowager Marchioness Ormonde.  |
| 58.    | Pescina.                 | Abruzzi                        | ... | ... | ... | T. Gambier Parry, Esq.                 |
| (1847) |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
| 59.    | Palermo.                 | Sicily                         | ... | ... | ... | The late Peter F. André, Esq.          |
| 60.    | Lake of Nemi             | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | The late Mrs. Huskisson.               |
| 61.    | Cerbara di Subiaco       | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | The late Mrs. Huskisson.               |
| 62.    | Rome.                    | Madonna di Divin' Amore        | ... | ... | ... | The late Baroness Windsor.             |
| 63.    | Rome.                    | Via Tiburtina                  | ... | ... | ... | Charles Henry, Esq.                    |
| 64.    | Rome.                    | Claudian Acqueducts            | ... | ... | ... | Charles Henry, Esq.                    |
| 65.    | Arundel                  | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Henry Willett, Esq.                    |
| 66.    | Tivoli.                  | Villa d'Este                   | ... | ... | ... | Mrs. R. Markham.                       |
| 67.    | Civitella di Subiaco     | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart., M.P.   |
| 68.    | Rome.                    | Via Cassia                     | ... | ... | ... | The late William Earle, Esq.           |
| 69.    | Tivoli                   | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Mrs. Hornby.                           |
| 70.    | Rome.                    | Veii                           | ... | ... | ... | J. Ridgway, Esq.                       |
| 71.    | Rome.                    | Via Cassia                     | ... | ... | ... | J. Ridgway, Esq.                       |
| (1849) |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
| 72.    | Mount Sinai              | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Rev. John E. Cross.                    |
| 73.    | Rome.                    | Claudian Acqueducts            | ... | ... | ... | John G. Blencowe, Esq.                 |
| 74.    | Rome.                    | Claudian Acqueducts            | ... | ... | ... | The late Miss Duckworth.               |
| 75.    | Akhrida.                 | Albania                        | ... | ... | ... | The late Miss Duckworth.               |
| 76.    | Karytena.                | Greece                         | ... | ... | ... | Thomas Bell, Esq.                      |
| (1850) |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
| 77.    | Athens.                  | The Acropolis                  | ... | ... | ... | Edward, Thirteenth Earl of Derby.      |
| 78.    | Corfù                    | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Lord Wenlock.                          |
| (1851) |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
| 79.    | Athens                   | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Lord Wenlock.                          |
| 80.    | Sparta                   | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Lord Wenlock.                          |
| 81.    | Girgenti.                | Sicily                         | ... | ... | ... | Thomas H. Wyatt, Esq.                  |
| 82.    | Monastery of Meteora     | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Henry Willett, Esq.                    |
| 83.    | Pentedátelo.             | Calabria                       | ... | ... | ... | Sybilla, Lady Lyttelton.               |
| 84.    | Parnassus                | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | The late Richard, First Lord Westbury. |
| 85.    | Rome.                    | Via Appia                      | ... | ... | ... | William Langton, Esq.                  |
| 86.    | Mount Tomòhr.            | Albania                        | ... | ... | ... | Louisa, Lady Ashburton.                |
| (1852) |                          |                                |     |     |     |  |
| 87.    | Rome, near Ponte Mammolo | ...                            | ... | ... | ... | Lady Caroline Legge.                   |
| 88.    | Rome.                    | Crescenza, or Poussin's Castle | ... | ... | ... | Mrs. E. Blackmore.                     |
| 89.    | Taormina.                | Sicily                         | ... | ... | ... | The Hon. Mrs. Greville-Howard.         |
| 90.    | Venosa.                  | Apulia                         | ... | ... | ... | The late Mrs. Empson.                  |

# Letters of Edward Lear

Painted for, or Purchased by

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 91. Reggio. Calabria ... ..                                   | Mrs. William Rawson.                         |
| 92. Thermopylæ. Greece ... ..                                 | The late William F. Beadon, Esq.             |
| 93. Athens ... ..   | The late G. R. Smith, Esq.                   |
| 94. Argostóli. Kephalaria ... ..                              | Rev. H. P. Wright.                           |
| 95. Marathon. Greece ... ..                                   | Mrs. George Clive.                           |
| 96. Quarries of Syracuse, Sicily ... ..                       | Alfred Tennyson, Esq., Poet Laureate,<br>&c. |
| 97. Quarries of Syracuse, Sicily. (Art Union<br>Prize) ... .. | Earl of Beauchamp.                           |

(1853)

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 98. Mount Sinai ... ..                         | T. Gambier Parry, Esq.            |
| 99. Civitella di Subiaco, looking South ... .. | Lord Carlingford.                 |
| 100. Windsor Castle ... ..                     | Edward, Fourteenth Earl of Derby. |
| 101. Nile, Philæ, looking South ... ..         | Alfred Seymour, Esq.              |
| 102. Nile, Kom Ombos ... ..                    | Earl of Northbrook.               |

(1854)

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 103. On the Nile ... ..              | S. W. Clowes, Esq., M.P.             |
| 104. On the Nile ... ..              | S. W. Clowes, Esq., M.P.             |
| 105. The Jungfrau, Interlaken ... .. | S. W. Clowes, Esq., M.P.             |
| 106. El Koorneh—Thebes ... ..        | Mrs. George Scrivens.                |
| 107. Pyramids of Ghizeh ... ..       | The late Frederick North, Esq., M.P. |
| 108. Pyramids of Ghizeh ... ..       | The late Frederick North, Esq., M.P. |
| 109. Monastir. Macedonia ... ..      | S. W. Clowes, Esq., M.P.             |
| 110. Licenza ... ..                  | Lord Aberdare.                       |
| 111. Rome. Via Nomentana ... ..      | S. W. Clowes, Esq., M.P.             |
| 112. Temple of Bassæ. Greece ... ..  | Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.       |

(1855)

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 113. The Matterhorn ... ..                      | Bernard Husey-Hunt, Esq.       |
| 114. Nile. Philæ, Morning, looking South ... .. | The late Sir John Potter, M.P. |
| 115. Nile. Philæ, Morning, looking South ... .. | Mrs. George Scrivens.          |
| 116. Nile. Philæ, looking North ... ..          | The late William Nevill, Esq.  |
| 117. Civitella di Subiaco, Sunrise ... ..       | The late William Nevill, Esq.  |

(1856)

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 118. Nile. Philæ, looking West ... ..           | Henry F. Walter, Esq.                 |
| 119. Nile. Philæ, Morning, looking South ... .. | George Clive, Esq., M.P.              |
| 120. Parnassus ... ..                           | Franklin Lushington, Esq.             |
| 121. Nile. Philæ, Sunset, looking South ... ..  | Franklin Lushington, Esq.             |
| 122. Nile. Philæ, Sunset, looking South ... ..  | The late Lord Lisgar.                 |
| 123. Nile. Philæ, Sunset, looking South ... ..  | Lord Carlingford.                     |
| 124. Nile. Kasr es Saâd ... ..                  | The late Sir John Simeon, Bart., M.P. |
| 125. Corfû, from Kastrades ... ..               | Robert D. Drewitt, Esq.               |

# Appendix

				Painted for, or Purchased by
126.	Corfù, from Ascension.	Morning	...	Lady Reid.
127.	Corfù, from Gastouri	...	...	The late General Mackintosh.
128.	Corfù, from Gastouri	...	...	The late General Mackintosh.

(1857)

129.	Corfù, from Ascension, Evening	...	...	T. William Evans, Esq., M.P.
130.	Corfù, from below Ascension	...	...	Alfred Seymour, Esq.
131.	Mount Athos	...	...	The late Frederick North, Esq., M.P.
132.	Corfù, from Gastouri	...	...	Henry F. Walter, Esq.
133.	Mount Athos	...	...	The late John Battersby Harford, Esq.
134.	Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	The late John Battersby Harford, Esq.
135.	Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	The late Mrs. Empson.
136.	Mount Athos. Stavronikites	...	...	The late Mrs. Empson.
137.	Philce, Sunset, looking South	...	...	Edgar A. Drummond, Esq.

(1858)

138.	Zagori, Albania	...	...	Julian Goldsmid, Esq., M.P.
139.	Philiates, Albania	...	...	Thomas H. Wyatt, Esq.
140.	Constantinople	...	...	A. De Vere Beauclerk, Esq.
141.	Mount Athos. St. Paul	...	...	A. De Vere Beauclerk, Esq.
142.	Mount Athos, Iviron	...	...	A. De Vere Beauclerk, Esq.
143.	Nile. Philce, Sunset, looking South	...	...	Augustus Chetwode, Esq.
144.	Corfù, from Garuna	...	...	Edward Baring, Esq.
145.	Corfù, from Kastrádes	...	...	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
146.	Corfù, from below Ascension	...	...	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
147.	Joánnina. Albania	...	...	The late Sir John Simeon, Bart., M.P.
148.	Jerusalem, Sunrise	...	...	The late Sir James Reid.
149.	Jerusalem, Sunset	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
150.	Masada, on the Dead Sea, Sunset	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
151.	Nile. Philce, looking South, Sunset	...	...	The late Captain Huish.
152.	Jerusalem, Sunset	...	...	Bernard Husey-Hunt, Esq.
153.	Bethlehem	...	...	Bernard Husey-Hunt, Esq.
154.	Jerusalem	...	...	Lord Clermont.

(1859)

155.	Mount Athos	...	...	Lord Clermont.
156.	Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	T. Bailey Potter, Esq., M.P.
157.	Mount Athos. Pantokratora	...	...	T. Bailey Potter, Esq., M.P.
158.	Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	The late S. Price Edwards, Esq.
159.	Petra. The Theatre	...	...	The late S. Price Edwards, Esq.
160.	Rome. Claudian Acqueducts	...	...	Arthur Heywood, Esq.
161.	Petra. The Great Cliff	...	...	Sir Thomas Fairbairn, Bart.
162.	Parnassus	...	...	Earl of Northbrook.
163.	Ioánnina. Albania	...	...	Miss Yates
164.	Rome. Via Appia...	...	...	Captain R. O'B. Jameson.
165.	Palermo	...	...	Lord Carlingford.

# Letters of Edward Lear

(1860)

Painted for, or Purchased by

166. Palermo	...	...	...	...	William R. Sandbach, Esq.
167. Palermo	...	...	...	...	T. Bailey Potter, Esq., M.P.
168. Mar Sabbas	...	...	...	...	The late Captain Huish.
169. Rome. Quarries of Cerbara	...	...	...	...	F. Waymouth Gibbs, Esq.
170. The Dead Sea	...	...	...	...	George Clive, Esq., M.P.
171. Parnassus	...	...	...	...	Harvie Farquhar, Esq.
172. Parnassus	...	...	...	...	Lord Clermont.
173. Parnassus	...	...	...	...	Lord Aberdare.
174. Rome. Alexandrian Acqueducts	...	...	...	...	Henry R. Stansfeld, Esq.
175. Rome. The Tiber at Ponte Molle	...	...	...	...	Henry R. Stansfeld, Esq.
176. Rome. Quarries of Cerbara	...	...	...	...	Richard Bright, Esq., M.P.
177. Rome. The Tiber at Ponte Molle	...	...	...	...	S. F. Widdington, Esq.
178. Nuneham Park, Oxford	...	...	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
179. Nuneham Park, Oxford	...	...	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.

(1861)

180. Bethlehem	...	...	...	...	S. Price Edwards, Esq.
181. Interlaken	...	...	...	...	T. William Evans, Esq., M.P.
182. Beirut	...	...	...	...	Edgar A. Drummond, Esq.
183. Damascus	...	...	...	...	The late Humphrey Mildmay, Esq., M.P.
184. Masada, on the Dead Sea, Sunrise	...	...	...	...	Sybill, Lady Lyttelton.
185. Cedars of Lebanon...	...	...	...	...	Louisa, Lady Ashburton.
186. Villa Petraja, Florence	...	...	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
187. Schloss Elz. Moselle	...	...	...	...	Mrs. Scrivens.
188. Mount Athos	...	...	...	...	Mrs. Scrivens.
189. The Plain of Thebes	...	...	...	...	The late W. Whitmore, Esq.
190. The Plain of Thebes	...	...	...	...	George Clive, Esq., M.P.
191. The Dead Sea	...	...	...	...	Lord Clermont.
192. The Matterhorn	...	...	...	...	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
193. Ioännina. Albania	...	...	...	...	Capt. R. O'B. Jameson.

(1862)

194. Florence	...	...	...	...	Sir Thomas Fairbairn, Bart.
195. Mount Athos. S. Dionisio	...	...	...	...	Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart.
196. Nile. Philæ, Sunset, looking South	...	...	...	...	Henry R. Grenfell, Esq.
197. Turin	...	...	...	...	The late S. Price Edwards, Esq.
198. Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	...	...	Admiral Sir R. Spencer Robinson.
199. Lake of Butrinto. Albania	...	...	...	...	Dowager Viscountess Downe.
200. Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	...	...	A. H. Novelli, Esq.
201. Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	...	...	The late Miss Julia Goldsmid.
202. Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	...	...	Major P. A. Reynolds.
203. Ioännina. Albania	...	...	...	...	Sir Thomas Fairbairn, Bart.
204. Nile. Philæ, Sunset, looking West	...	...	...	...	H.R.H. Duc d'Aumale.
205. Mount Olympus. Thessaly	...	...	...	...	Edgar A. Drummond, Esq.
206. Corfù, from Gastouri	...	...	...	...	Mrs. W. Prescott.
207. Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	...	...	Mrs. W. Prescott.



# Appendix

				Painted for, or Purchased by
208.	Corfù, from below Ascension	...	...	Rev. John E. Cross.
209.	Corfù, from Psorarùs	...	...	Admiral Sir Spencer Robinson.
210.	Corfù, from Santa Dekka	...	...	Rev. John E. Cross.
211.	Mont Blanc. Pont Pellissar	...	...	Charles S. Roundell, Esq.
212.	The Dead Sea	...	...	Charles S. Roundell, Esq.
213.	Porto Tre Scoglié. Albania	...	...	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
214.	Beachy Head	...	...	Henry R. Grenfell, Esq.
215.	Argostolí. Kephalaria	...	...	Lord Aberdare.
216.	Campagna di Roma, Via Prenestina	...	...	Sir Walter James, Bart.
217.	Campagna di Roma, Tor de 'Schiavi	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
218.	Jerusalem, from Mount Scopus	...	...	The late S. Price Edwards, Esq.
219.	Venice	...	...	Frances, Countess Waldegrave.
220.	Venice, Sunset	...	...	Henry Willett, Esq.
221.	Beirùt	...	...	Rev. J. Lomax Gibbs.
222.	Beirùt	...	...	Rev. John E. Cross.
223.	Cliffs of Cenc, Gozo	...	...	Charles S. Roundell, Esq.
224.	Campagna di Roma	...	...	Sybilla, Lady Lyttelton.
225.	Campagna di Roma	...	...	Sybilla, Lady Lyttelton.
226.	Cedars of Lebanon...	...	...	Charles S. Roundell, Esq.

(1869)

227.	Piana Rocks, Corsica	...	...	Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart., M.P.
228.	Bavella, Corsica	...	...	Sir Francis H. Goldsmid, Bart., M.P.
229.	Valdoniello, Corsica	...	...	George S. Venables, Esq., M.P.
230.	Bonifazio, Corsica	...	...	Edward, Fifteenth Earl of Derby.
231.	Nile. Sheikh Abadeh	...	...	Lady Robinson.
232.	Nile. Kasr es Saàd	...	...	George Brightwen, Esq.

(1871)

233.	Nile. Negadeh	...	...	Miss Ewart.
234.	Nile. Bab el Kalabshe	...	...	Miss C. Macdonald Lockhart.
235.	Nile. El Luxor	...	...	Rev. Walter Clay.
236.	Citadel of Corfù	...	...	Walter Evans, Esq.

(1872)

237.	Nile Boat, before Sunrise	...	...	Mr. Hooper.
238.	Nile Boat, Mid-day	...	...	George Drummond, Esq.
239.	Corfù, from Ascension	...	...	Edward, Fifteenth Earl of Derby.
240.	Campagna di Roma. Quarries of Cerbara	...	...	Walter Congreve, Esq.
241.	Campagna di Roma. Quarries of Cerbara	...	...	Walter Congreve, Esq.
242.	Marathon. Greece	...	...	Right Honourable W. E. Forster, M.P.
243.	Thermopylæ. Greece	...	...	Augustus Harcourt, Esq.
244.	Corfù Citadel	...	...	Henry Kneeshaw, Esq.
245.	Florence	...	...	Mrs. Ramsay.
246.	Mount Sinai...	...	...	C. Allanson Knight, Esq.
247.	Damascus	...	...	Duke of Argyll.
248.	Beirùt	...	...	Mrs. William Rawson.

# Letters of Edward Lear

	Painted for, or Purchased by
249. Ravenna Forest ... ..	Charles S. Roundell, Esq.
250. Vintimigliá ... ..	George Nicholl, Esq.
251. Nile. Kasr es Saàd ... ..	Captain Alfred M. Drummond.
252. Nile. Ibream ... ..	T. William Evans, Esq., M.P.
253. Nile. Sunset. First Cataract ... ..	Ernest Noel, Esq., M.P.
254. Palermo ... ..	Edgar A. Drummond, Esq.
255. Nile. Shadoofs ... ..	Thomas Seeley, Esq., M.P.
256. Nile. Sakkias ... ..	Thomas Seeley, Esq., M.P.
257. Nile. Kasr es Saàd ... ..	Louisa, Lady Ashburton.
258. Coast of Albania ... ..	
259. Cortù ... ..	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
260. Corfù ... ..	Franklin Lushington, Esq.
261. Megaspelion. Greece ... ..	Thomas Hanbury, Esq.
262. Bethlehem ... ..	C. Allanson Knight, Esq.
263. Nile. Approach to Philœ ... ..	Miss C. Macdonald Lockhart.
264. Nile. Sunset, near Philœ ... ..	Captain Alfred M. Drummond.
265. Valdoniello ... ..	
266. Bethlehem ... ..	
267. Bavella ... ..	
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Of his series of "Nonsense," many editions have appeared since their first publication by Messrs. Warne & Co. in 1861, and I may mention that a further one is now being printed by them.





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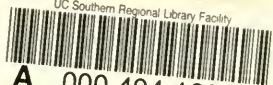
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