

what hard. Many of the women wore deep mourning and wept, and one felt their great grief through the whole service. A solo was finely rendered by a voice behind the altar, and the monks made a collection.

In the beautiful church, which has just been built in the new town, belonging to the French Franciscan monks, the Archbishop, a venerable old man, with a long, white beard, celebrated the requiem mass, and the ceremony was full of the pomp of the Roman Church. A catafalque, covered by a pall, bearing a large, white cross and wreaths and green mimosa branches, stood in the middle of the church. In the choir, an artisan with a fine voice led the music, a priest and a monk assisting in an exquisite way. The people in these churches were of quite a different type. In the old one the poor, and here the well-to-do and the nuns with their pupils—one of the features of the Italian places near the French border. Driven from France they easily found a shelter there, and constantly have to enlarge their homes to make room for all the young French girls sent to them to educate. Most of the nuns look very sweet. I often saw some of them in the free library, and when I talked to one whom I met with the children on the beach, in order to find out something about their institution, I found her very kind and clever. The children look very gay and happy, more so perhaps in the summer, in their white dresses. In winter they wear black, and black and red ribbons on their hats, if they are not in mourning. Of course, a good many are orphans who have just lost their homes, and I found, when I spoke about the large number of people I saw with crêpe on their arms, that mourning is worn for very distant relations.

Lately I have seen some of the victims of the earthquake. You wrote about Miss Hanbury's Home. I heard of it through different people who visited the poor people there, and so one day I went with an American gentleman and his Italian wife to see them.

It is an old hotel, which, after April 15th, will be utilised as an institution by nurses, and till that time it was given to the emigrants, 54 of whom were there. Many had had amputations performed and were very ill. We were not allowed to see them, as there was influenza in the wards. A nun is taking charge of them, and two do the housekeeping. A Russian lady, married to an Italian, is the Directress, and she says the same as Miss Turton, that the scum of the Messina people have survived. But I saw some very nice people, too. An old music-teacher, who lay six days under a beam, close to the decomposing corpse of his wife. He had been quite apathetic at first, but afterwards was a little roused by the joy of having children round him. There were many of them, and my friends took them dolls and toys and oranges. We took some frocks and clothing also, and were taken to a young wife with two small children that we might give them to them. She lost her husband, brother, and two children—one died at Bordighera from scarlatina, and a third is coming. One felt the whole heartrending

burden of the disaster, seeing these poor people, but, as the whole world has tried to help them, one must at least hope that they will be well cared for.

I think Italy is always a revelation to anyone coming from the North. Though this winter has been unusually cold and dreary, with snow on the mountains since the week before Christmas, where it never stays for more than a few days as a rule in other years, and sometimes there has been real ice on the water buckets in the garden, yet the colour of the sky when the sun is shining, and the wonderful colours of the sea, from blue to green, brown and opal, make one forget at once that without the sun the landscape is rather melancholy in this time of the year. In December the roses were in bloom, but faded almost a fortnight before their time from the cold. Many flowers and most of the splendid mimosa trees were kept back in bloom by the cold, and as there were always two or three—and once five—days in every week without sun, and there was often rain, one missed the colour in the vegetation very much. Almost all the trees look grey-green or blue-grey—the palm and olive trees, the eucalyptus and agave. As all the winters latterly have been rather cold, frail people should not come before April or May. For tired people who are fairly strong, the earlier months are very bracing, and it is much quieter than later on, when there is an influx of foreigners. In one way you can never find a better place for overworked people who are used to a very busy life and do not know how to be lazy than Italy. To see the leisure of the people makes you feel it is quite right never to be in a hurry, and to do simply nothing except loiter round and drink the beauty of the world into your soul.

AGNES KARLL.

WANTED GOOD MOTHERS.

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ISABEL McISAAC.

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