

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

ALLERSEELN, 1922.

"Lay by my side your bunch of purple heather,
The last red asters of an Autumn day,
And let us sit and talk of Love together
As once in May.

Give me your hand, that I may press it gently
And if the others see what matter they?
Look in mine eyes with your sweet eyes intently
As once in May.

On every grave are flowers all red and golden,
In Death's dark valley this is *Holy Day*,
Come to my heart and let my arms enfold you
As once in May."

On one of those lovely mornings we sometimes get in November—it was in fact "Le jour des Morts," the second of the month—I was wandering around Passy when my footsteps led me to the cemetery, where often as a schoolgirl I spent many a quiet hour reading the beautiful epitaphs on the graves of those who have long since "passed over," but whose names are immortal. In this cemetery is the imposing Mausoleum of the lovely and talented young Russian Artist, Marie Baskirtseff, whose "Journal" no doubt many of you have laughed and wept over. Never once during those many visits did I find anyone near this tomb, unless it were some "foreigner" like myself; always the door was locked, until the day of which I write, when, to my surprise, I found it wide open. I had in my hands a large bunch of deep red chrysanthemums mixed with purple heather, and I thought: I will lay these on the *LONELIEST* grave where perhaps no friends or relatives are able to come, this for the sake of one most dear to me, who, many years ago, very shortly after singing the beautiful song "Allerseelen" died quite suddenly. Though her grave was far away in England I have never felt her *presence nearer* than on that day in Passy. The sun was glistening on all these "quiet resting-places," little birds were singing softly, and numerous groups of visitors were decorating their little sacred gardens—their "plot of land" in "God's acre"—with bright gay blossoms; and as I watched them there came to my mind many wonderful and comforting words: "The righteous shall blossom as a lily, they shall *bloom eternally* in the house of the Lord"; for: "There is no Death, what *seems* so is transition," for what is Death? "It is but *life renewed* and *purified*." Death? Why it is "the *Gate of Life*." And I *thought* and *thought* of many things, always the flowers still in my hands. Oh the sunshine, the brightness of that still November morning! Not a touch of sadness *anywhere*. So it *seemed* till I again drew near to Marie's tombeau. There at the open door stood an elderly woman in mourning garb, her dress turned up round her waist, a brush and dust-pan in her hands, and the tears rolling slowly down her cheeks, very sad, flushed and

tired with her work of sweeping and dusting the interior of the Mausoleum. She looked at me and at my flowers; then, in *French*: "You *knew* her perhaps, Mademoiselle? You have read her 'Journal'?" But you must not *believe it all*; for she was the *best* child in the world; but come in." And I passed into the "Chapelle" and down into the Crypt. "Now," she said, taking the flowers from my hands, "we will lay them on her heart, *je suis sa mere*, and my heart is broken. Oh, my dear little Marie, only twenty-four years you had, and you are *dead*, alas!"

This woman with the tears, the sweeping brush and dust-pan was the *Countess Bashkirtseff, la mère de Marie* the Artist. . . .

P.S.—To Nurses: My letter is a little late, but it is written in November, the month which since the War contains two days of "Remembrance" of those "we have loved long since and lost awhile."

I want you all, so much, to realise more than ever "there is *sweetness* in Remembrance," and that "Death is but a *Swing-door*." *Think* of it! They in the Unseen World are really not separated from us at *all*. *Believe* this, and you will feel your "dear dead" nearer to you than ever, for *they* have *passed* from Death to Life Eternal. And:

"Soon *our* task shall be completed—
Soon *THEIR* footsteps we shall FOLLOW,
To the islands of the Blessed,
To the Land that is Hereafter."

SISTER MARIE.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

A gift which is always sure to be acceptable is a box of high grade chocolates, and these are secured if those supplied by Messrs. Cadbury Bros., Ltd., Bournville, near Birmingham, are purchased. These chocolates are manufactured under clean and healthy conditions in the garden-village at Bournville, where every consideration is given to promote cleanliness, and the good health of the workers, conditions which contribute in no small degree to ideal productions.

Amongst the products of this famous firm are King George Chocolates, Prince of Wales Chocolates, and Carnival Chocolates put up in half-pound boxes, attractive, wholesome and delicious. More modest in size, but also attractively presented are the purple cases with gold lettering of Cadbury's Dairy Milk Chocolate Neapolitans, and the gay crimson cases, also with gold lettering of Bournville Chocolate, costing 6d. each.

More useful, but very welcome, is the Bournville Cocoa, the quarter-pound tins being very handy. A cup of well-made cocoa is excellent on returning home after a theatre or dance, especially if the Cocoa is "Bournville."

Do not forget that Ex-Service men in the streets sell Cadbury's specialities, and make your purchases from them, rather than from the various "Stores."

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