REMINISCENCES

OF

FLORENCE ELIZABETH STATHAM NÉE DICKEN,

1857-1938
My first definite recollection of life was when I was just four years old. I have vague ideas of seeing a large white building with columns, which may have been some house in India, and I also think I had a little dog of which I was very fond, but these are only misty and dreamlike.

I was born at Patna in December 1856 and therefore I was only four or five months old when the Indian Mutiny broke out. I don't know what my father did, he may have had to join a Regiment, but my mother had to fly from Patna with me, her only English escort being an old gentleman who rode beside the palanquins in which my mother, an ayah and myself were travelling. On one of the halts my mother heard the natives saying that the old gentleman, the memsahib and the baby were all to be killed at a certain place. My mother sent for the old gentleman, told him what she had heard, and said that our route must be altered. I know no more than that - but we escaped. Later on the Prime Minister of Nepal, Jung Bahadur, sent a Regiment of Gurkhas to Lucknow to which my father was attached. After many years delay the Lucknow medal and clasp which had been awarded to my father for his services was sent to my mother. At the end of 1860 my mother left India with me. We came by
what was then called "the overland route", that is to say we crossed from Saden to Suez on camels and I had my fourth birthday in Egypt. I do not know where we landed in Europe, but we must have gone to Paris as my mother told me the cold was terrible there. My mother had travelled with a friend, Lady Montgomery, who had a little girl the same age as myself, and I think they may have shared a nurse, but that I am not sure of. I saw Lady Montgomery when I was staying at Torwood Rectory in 1921. She had been living in Torquay for some years; she was very pleased to see me and to hear all about my life. Her daughter had married a son of Dean Farrar, who wrote "A life of Christ", and one of her many sons was a Bishop. He has lately died (1935) and I see that a memorial is to be erected to his memory. I think he did great work in the Mission field.

I have no recollection of the journey from India, but I have a vivid picture of arriving at the house where my sisters and brother were living. It was winter and I believe a very severe winter. From the darkness and cold outside we came into a brightly lit large room or hall, where there were many people including my sisters and brother. It was very bewildering to me and I clung to my mother's skirts.
The house was at Hayes. I should think it was a large house and there was a garden with a stream running through it. How long I stayed there I can't say, but I know mother left me there whilst she went away. Whilst she was away I fell and cut my forehead very badly. I can well remember it being sewn up by the doctor and my mother's dismay when she returned to see my head bound up.

The next winter we spent in Cheltenham. My father died on 14th December, 1861, the same day (I think) as the Prince Consort. It must have been a terrible blow to my mother, as they were a devoted couple and he was only 57. She was left with a large family to educate and only a small income. However, we had a nice house and we all went to the Cheltenham Colleges. My brother George to the boys' College, and my sisters and I to the girls' college, lately started by Miss Beale, the pioneer of the higher education of women. There was also a Miss Buss who had another College. This rhyme was composed by a pupil of one of them:

"Miss Buss and Miss Beale
Cupid's darts do not feel
How different to us
Miss Beale and Miss Buss."

No one could fail to respect and admire Miss Beale:
She was a very fine character. I was a very little girl when I went to the College; I gave mother no peace till she let me go. There was no kindergarten in those days and I was the youngest in the College. I don't think we went away every summer as people do now. I can only remember one seaside place, that was Llandudno in Wales. There was no luggage van in the train, a little ladder was propped against the side of the carriage and porters carried up the boxes which were packed on the top of the carriage and covered with a large tarpaulin. I bathed in the sea from a machine with a kind of sunbonnet in front, and there was an enormous bathing woman in a very rough bathing dress to which I clung. I can feel that rough serge in my hands now.

We lived in Cheltenham until I was twelve. I went to the College all that time, the last few years by myself. My sister Fanny married John Spurway when I was nine years old. The first Christmas after her marriage, we all went to her home, Spring Grove Park, near Milverton in Somerset. After that I think I must have gone there every summer. The beauty of the country even in those early days seemed to sink into my soul. I loved the sound of the swish of the scythe in the early mornings and the
sound of the rooks cawing in the trees at the back of the house, where there was a rookery. Then there was the hay-
making, and the harvesting all done by hand; there were no machines then. We drove about in a big carriage with a pair of horses, and I can remember that a man had to get down and put on the drag when we went down hill, and what a great invention it was thought to be when the drag which the coachman worked with a handle was installed.

When I was sixteen I went to my first dance when I was staying at Spring Grove. The house was then miles from Spring Grove and we went in a carriage with a pair of horses. We must have taken a long time going up and down that hilly country. I was very sleepy by the time we got back.

When I was twelve my mother gave up her house and we all dispersed. I fancy she could not afford to keep up everything. My brother Charlie had had to leave the Army as Mother was not able to give him the allowance which was necessary for a man in the Army and he went to Australia. Then my brother George, after leaving the College, also went to Australia where he joined Charlie, but he lived a very different life, as he hated office work and preferred an outdoor and roving life. Charlie got into Government Service and was eventually sent to England as Secretary to the Queensland Government, having married Emily Sherriden in Queensland.
On leaving Cheltenham I was sent to Reading where my sister Laura and her husband Nelson Barlow were living with their three children Ada (Mrs. Beatson), Emily (Mrs. Lee), and Coralie (Mrs. Coxe). I was there for six months. In the Autumn of 1869 we went to Boulogne. We were in a Pension there when a terrible gale came on. Our rooms were at the top of the house; I was sleeping in the room with Harriet (Kam). At about seven in the morning there was a fearful crash, and we both jumped out of bed and rushed into the passage where we saw that the roof had fallen in, and the passage was covered with bricks and stones and a great heap against the door of my mother's room. The door was locked, we shook and banged on it and shouted. The noise of the wind and the breaking of glass and falling of bricks was so great we could not hear mother, but she heard us, and she was afraid we should hamper the lock, and she would not be able to get out. However, she did get out, and then we learned what a wonderful escape she had had. When the storm was at its height she got out of bed and went to the window and looked out; at that moment the whole of the ceiling came in. There was a very high stone chimney on a flat roof. When the chimney fell, it brought in the whole of the roof. The weight of stones on
The bed was so great that one of the legs of the bed went through the floor into the room below. Mother had to drag away the stones and bricks which were piled up against the door before she could get it open. She was a good deal bruised but not otherwise hurt, but had she been in bed she must have been killed. After this we took rooms on the ground floor in a street off the Grande Rue. For many years after that I was very frightened when there was a gale. I went to a large French school, where I was the only English girl. I liked the school and should have become quite good at speaking French if I had stayed all the time we were at Boulogne; unfortunately one of the rules was that the pupils must have the mid day meal there. The food was not what I was accustomed to, and did not suit me, so I was taken away much to my regret, and I was sent to a little school kept by an English lady, where I can't remember that I learnt anything but the multiplication tables. There were some Irish people living in Boulogne, a Mrs. Costerton and her daughter, who had the curious nickname of "Straw." We were the same age and became great friends. We stayed at Boulogne until the summer and then went to Switzerland. I think we stayed for a few days at Lucerne and then went up into the mountains. The first place we went to was most primitive. There was no proper road to it, We lived in a chalet with big stones on the roof and an outside staircase. I don't think we can have stayed there long. The next place we went to was Les Diablerets, and there we were in a Hotel.
I believe my sister had for some time been trying to persuade mother to go abroad, but she was afraid of war. She had gone through so much during the Indian Mutiny, that she felt safer in England, and I imagine that the threat of war amongst the European countries was always in the air. Whilst we were in Switzerland war was declared between Germany and France. I believe there was a good deal of difficulty in knowing how to get to England. We had to return through Germany. I cannot remember all the places we stayed at, but Frankfort, Heidelberg, Cologne were some of them. We passed many trains conveying the wounded; once the train we were in was stopped and searched for any French. It all seemed very terrifying to me. After our return to England we went to Bath. An old friend of my mother's was living there, Mrs. Ogilvie. Her only daughter was about my age and for a year I went to the same school, where I was very happy. I remember gaining a prize for repeating without a mistake the two first chapters of Ephesians. How many times my mother had to hear it! I also got 1/- from my mother for playing Handel's Harmonious Blacksmith without a mistake. There were one or two places where I usually stumbled, much to my mother's annoyance. A shilling was a considerable sum to me in those days, so I must have made a great effort to earn it.
After I left school at the end of the summer term, my mother and I went to Torquay. We had rooms in Beacon Terrace. The Emperor Napoleon III and the Prince Imperial were staying at the Imperial Hotel close by, and we often saw them. I remember one day being quite indignant, as I described to my mother, at the way the Emperor watched me whilst I was bathing! There is a little cove close to Beacon Terrace where I used to bathe.

The next winter we all spent at Dawlish. I did not go to school, but had a governess every afternoon, a most uninteresting person; I don't think I learnt much from this lady, but she gave me one exercise to do every week which was to write out the sermon I heard on Sunday. A very good exercise I think, for it made me listen attentively. I am also very thankful that in my childhood I was made to learn the collect every Sunday and the catechism. This in my old age I can say almost all through, and as for the collects, many of them are my "constant companions." Aunt H. and I had lessons in music and harmony from a master who came from Exeter. In the spring I went with Mother to Trevarno, her old home in Cornwall. My aunt, Mrs. Popham, widow of mother's only brother, had decided to sell the property. She said she could not afford to keep it up. It was a sorrow to mother and she wished to see the place for the last time. To me it all seemed very delightful and beautiful. My cousin Mrs. St. Aubyn was living there, and she and I went to stay at
Trelowarren, where her uncle Sir Richard Vyvyan lived. Sir Richard Vyvyan was like someone out of a book to me. A fine courtly old gentleman, surrounded by state and ceremony. I was fascinated by the life. There was a chapel where daily prayers were said.

The Autumn of that year we went to Clifton where I went to school. The school was kept by four Miss Appletons. Two aunts and two nieces. It was a very good school and I liked being there. The head Miss Appleton was very particular about manners, and we had to go through much instruction in bowing and curtsying. I had my first lessons in singing. The master seemed to think I had a fine voice. I also learned German and had to take the part of Marie Stuart in Schillers play. There was plenty of work to be done at this school and I liked it all very much, and was sorry to leave. My cousin Clara Dicken had married a Mr. Truscott and her step daughter Katie was a pupil at this school; we have kept up our schoolfellow friendship into old age. The rooms we had were a long way from my school, there were no buses in those days and I had to walk each way. I remember a Mrs. Shuttleworth and her daughters, who lived in Clifton, called on my mother. I little thought that they were to become my cousins; Mrs. Shuttleworth was a Statham. Whilst we were living at Clifton my sister Lena went to India with my eldest sister. When my school term was over Kau and I went to Norton
Rectory, where my father's eldest brother Aldersey was rector. Edie and Florie were there. We were all very happy there. Uncle Aldersey was a dear old man, rather severe, but very kind to me. He did not understand young people and his two daughters had some difficulty in getting the money they wanted for their clothes etc. I don't think he was at all stingy, but he could not understand why they wanted things. After our visit to Norton was over, Kam and I met my mother at Cheltenham and we took a small house there. That Autumn Kam went out to India. That was my first sorrow. I missed her terribly. I was only sixteen and had no companions. I had adored both Lena and Kam, and I was very unhappy when they both went away. I was very fond of my mother, in fact I was devoted to her, but she hardly ever went out, and when she did go out she leant on my arm and I had to walk very slowly. It seems strange now in looking back to those days. Mother was only a little over 60 and I thought her a very old lady. Fortunately I got to know some charming Irish people called La Touche. There were three daughters, all older than I was, but I think they took pity on my loneliness and they allowed me to go to their house whenever I liked. Two of the daughters wrote, and I think published their stories. They were a most united family and very clever - There were three sons, all boys when I first knew them. The eldest went into a Bank in Dublin. The second
who was a most interesting boy, died quite suddenly and
the third became a clergyman. They were so different to
the fashionable Cheltenham people. I went to my first
ball in Cheltenham when I was 17. I loved dancing and the
public ball room in Cheltenham was a very fine room, with
a beautifully swung floor - Waltzing in this large room,
with a beautiful band and a good partner was a joy to me,
but three winters of this kind of gaiety was enough. I
felt that this kind of life would not satisfy me.

The two following summers I went to Norton. I think
mother and I must have often gone to Spring drove Park
in those days as I used to ride there, and I used also to
ride at Norton, though there were only two rather poor
mounts, one an old horse and one an old pony. We used to
drive to all the country houses in the neighbourhood for
garden parties in a shabby old carriage and the old horse,
but no one seemed to think the less of us, for every one
respected Uncle Aldersey, and Edie and Florie were beloved
wherever they went. My last visit to Norton was paid when
I was 18, and it was then I met Heathcote Statham. Before
going to Norton for the last time I had my first "London
Season". Mr. & Mrs. Young who had known my parents in India
very kindly invited me to spend a fortnight with them in
their large house in S. Kensington. The younger daughter was
a few years older than I was. Mr. & Mrs. Young were very
kind and as they had known my father in India and had a great
affection and admiration for him it was a great pleasure for me to be with them. In those days it was the correct thing to wear a bonnet in London, and though I was only 18 and had only worn hats I went to London with my first bonnet. I can't remember exactly what it was like but I think it had a kind of "crown" in front and I think there were pink rosebuds and some blue ribbon - I had a delightful visit. I was taken to the theatre to see the great Italian actor Salvini as Othello. He was a wonderful actor. Whether it was that I had seen hardly any good acting or whether he really was a remarkable actor I cannot say, but he stands out in my recollection as something entirely apart from the acting I have since seen. The other great treat I had whilst in London was a Ball at the Goldsmith's Hall - that was indeed exciting! and the gold plate on the summer table was stupendous. I can remember the drive home from the city in the early summer morning. I think the Embankment had just been completed and we drove along it and it was rather beautiful.

When my visit was over, I went to stay with my Uncle, Mr. Ogle. He had a house in the Upper Richmond Road, Putney. He had two daughters, Agnes and , and one or two sons who all lived there. This was a very different visit to the other. When we went to London, instead of driving in a carriage we went in an omnibus. The buses of those days were not like the present day buses. They were dirty and
had straw at the bottom, and men thought nothing of spitting, and one stepped out hoping one would not be seen. However, I had had my great treat in London and I was quite content, and from there I went to Norton for the last time.

That summer my cousin Florie had decided to accept George Statham. He had asked her to marry him before, but she had refused. That summer she decided to accept him, and she told me about it when she met me at the station. George had been curate to Uncle Aldersey for some time; he did not live at Norton. He was a master at Bury St Edmunds School, and used to go to Norton on Sundays to take the service as Uncle Aldersey was getting very old and infirm - I suppose George must have ridden or driven in a pony cart, as there was no railway within miles of Norton.

That summer at Norton my fate was decided as I met my husband. Heathcote came to Norton several times with George and I suppose "fell in love" with me, at any rate he took a great deal of notice of me, and when he left he sent me two water colour sketches, one of Norton church and one of Lond Melford church, in both of which I appeared wearing a little black coat. I am very sorry those sketches have gone. That was a very happy summer, the last I spent at Norton. Uncle Aldersey retired, I suppose he resigned the living as he was too old to carry on, and they all went to Bournemouth, where he lived until his death.

After my visit to Norton I returned to Cheltenham and
Heathcote who was then living in London came to see us two or three times. I did not wish to encourage him, as though he interested me more than anyone I had ever met, he was so different to all the other men I was accustomed to meet that I think I was puzzled and afraid of getting to like him; so the last time he came I said I had a cold and would not see him and allowed mother to write a rather cool letter to him, and that was the end. The next year Florie and George were married at Bournemouth and Florie asked me to be bridesmaid, but I refused as I knew I should meet Heathcote there - That next winter when I was 19 and 20, I had plenty of dances and balls and gaieties and felt I had had enough.

In May that year my sister Lena, who had been married to Alex MacLean, came home with her husband and they came at once to Cheltenham to see us. It had been arranged that I was to go to them in London and be presented and have a London season. I felt this was very delightful, but alas! it did not come off, as Lena contracted typhoid fever on the Continent on their way home from India and was very ill. A doctor friend in London took her into his own house and there she was nursed and stayed until she was well enough to go to Ardgour. In the summer mother and I went to Ardgour. The journey was a much more complicated affair than it is now. We went to Glasgow and stayed at a Hotel. The next morning we left by steamer which took us to the Crinan Canal; there we got into the Canal steamer and from this one we finally got
into the steamer which took us up Loch Linnhe to Ardgour.
I shall never forget that first journey, it was a glorious
summer evening with the sun setting behind the hills. We
seemed to be sailing into another world of mystery and beauty.
At one of the landing places old Mrs. MacLean came on board;
She had come to meet us. The Captain brought her to me and
I suppose he thought I must necessarily know who this
important individual must be, but I was not sure - was it
Mrs. MacLean, or was she a trusted Housekeeper sent in her
place? I was much exercised in mind and mother was vexed
that I had not made a proper introduction. It was not till
she spoke of "Lina" that I knew who she was. Mrs. MacLean
was an alarming old lady, large and stout with a harsh
voice and domineering manner - still she had her good
points. No one, however, was of much account unless they
belonged to Highland families, or the aristocracy - very
different from her son, Lena's husband, who was broad-minded
and simple, though a very clever man. A carriage met us
at the pier and we drove to the big house. Lena came running
down the stairs as we entered, looking so pretty, dressed
in white muslin with numbers of little flounces edged with
narrow black lace. Then we were taken to our rooms. My
room was next to Mrs. MacLean's. In the mornings before I
was up, I used to hear the housekeeper, Alder, talking to
Mrs. MacLean in a rather high-pitched voice. I thought she
must be crying, but I learnt that she was only receiving the
orders for the day. Everything was very well ordered, there were numbers of servants, clean towels in every room every day; clean table napkins at every meal - when one went out the crofters curtsied - strange to think of it all, now sixty years after. When I think of my first Sunday there, I am ashamed. The chapel is the same that was there then, but was different inside. In those days the Maclean family came in by a side door which opened on to a raised platform with a railing round, rather like a stage with chairs where one faced the rest of the congregation. I had never been to a Scotch service before. In those days there was no harmonium. The Minister gave out the hymn or paraphrase and then the most unearthly sound emanated from the throat and nose of a man; such a sound I had never heard before. It was too much for me. I sank down on to a chair and tried to hide my laughter; this was made more difficult by Lena stooping down and saying "Can't you sing" - I had no idea this was meant for singing. I thought this remarkable noise was part of the ritual of the kirk. I am thankful to say this very shocking behaviour never occurred again; I was prepared for it another Sunday. After leaving Ardgour mother and I went to Bournemouth to Uncle Aldersey, who had a house there. Betty and Rowland were there. Then we went to Spring Grove Park, Fanny's place. As there were horses there I generally had some riding. In the Autumn we returned to Cheltenham. Sir Erasmus and Lady Borrowes were staying there and we saw a good deal of them. Lady Borrowes was connected
with us by marriage. She was a Miss Hutchison, her brother
Captain Hutchison was one of my dancing partners. One of
Lady Borrowes's aunts had married my old Uncle, Captain Henry
Dicken, R.N, but she had died long before this. Sir Erasmus
was an Irish Baronet, one of the oldest of the Irish Baronets;
they lived at Barretstown Castle in County Kildare. They had
four children, a son, who was in the army and two daughters,
and a boy at the Cheltenham College. The elder daughter, Clara,
had lately married Captain Matheson who owned one of the
Shetland Isles. The younger daughter was about my age. Lady
Borrowes asked me to stay with them for six weeks during the
winter. This delighted me; I did not look forward with any
pleasure to a round of balls and dances in Cheltenham. I had
had three winters of it, and found it very unsatisfying. I
really wanted some definite work to do and some object in life,
in fact I was before my time, and was not content to just do
nothing like so many girls at that time. I had a few singing
lessons and for a short time I went to the Art School for
drawing but the teaching was poor, and I felt I was just "killing
the time".

It was arranged that I should travel with Eustace Borrowes
(who was at the Cheltenham College) when he went to Ireland for
his Christmas holidays. He was a very nice boy of about fifteen
or sixteen. I was very glad to have him as escort as I knew
nothing about the journey to Ireland. We crossed from Holyhead
to Dublin by night and from Dublin we went by train to a little
place "Naas" in County Kildare, and there the carriage met
us and we drove to Barretstown Castle. Parts of the Castle are really old. There is an old tower and the Dining room which is in the tower has a wall about 5 or 6 feet thick through which one enters; and exactly opposite on the other side of the room is a recumbant stone effigy of a man. Whether he was buried there or not I don’t know. The modern part was built on to the Tower, a large hall with a gallery all round and rooms opening off it. I enjoyed my stay there very much. Sir Erasmus was a hunting man, but his wife and daughters did not hunt; however, it was very interesting to drive to the meets and follow as much as possible on the roads. We went to luncheons and dances in the neighbourhood and once we went for the night to a country house some distance away, where there was a ball. The family went away for a couple of nights once, and I was left alone. I felt it very eerie going up to bed carrying a candle which made great shadows of the armour and strange things hanging on the wall, and having to sleep in that part of the house alone. The servants were all in the Tower, and could not have heard me, however much I called.

Ireland in those days was in a disturbed state with Fenians. Whilst I was staying at Barretstown the eldest son, Kildare, returned from India. Lady Borrowes thought she had arranged my visit so nicely, that it would end before Kildare’s return. She did not want him to fall in love with the first girl he met on his return to England, and a penniless girl too. Fortunately he did not. Many years after he married a rich woman, but they had no children, the family has now come to an end and Barretstown
Castle is sold and passed into other hands — I met Sir Gustave at Belstone two years ago (1935) with his second wife. I told him that the last time I saw him he was a boy of fifteen, when we had travelled together to Barretstown. His only son had been killed in the war. He inherited the title after the death of his brother Kildare. His father, Sir Erasmus, married a second time and had a son who was killed in the war, and so the family will die out.

After my visit to Ireland came to an end I went to Edinburgh to stay with Lena. I went to Dublin and there took a steamer for Scotland. I was the only lady on board and was treated with great respect and politeness by the men whom I met at meals. We left Dublin some time in the afternoon and arrived at Glasgow about 10 or 11 the next morning, Alex MacLean met me and we went to Edinburgh. A few days after my arrival he left for India. Lena had a flat in Charlotte Square, above one which old Mrs. MacLean had. The house was an ordinary house not built for flats; there was no bath room, but that was not surprising as bath rooms were almost unknown in those days. The lavatories on each floor were merely cupboards with no ventilation. We have certainly progressed since then!

I had a very gay time in Edinburgh, Dinners and balls and country house visiting. I stayed twice at Pindie with Lady Hope, a relation of the MacLeans. The house was supposed to be haunted. I never saw or heard anything, but I was rather excited at being told there was a secret staircase in my room. This I could not find and it was not till I was taken all over the house and then into the room I was occupying, that a trap door
was opened in a hanging closet, and I peered down into a kind of underground place where steps led into darkness. There was a room at the top of the house which was invisible from the outside. The air came through an opening into a chimney, and it was supposed that the secret staircase led to the secret room. Lady Hope took me into the room where Charles Edward had slept (The "Pretender") when he was hiding. On my second visit to Pinkie I went to a military ball, I don't know where, but it was some distance from Pinkie, and I remember how lovely it was returning in the summer dawn and hearing the birds sing as I went to bed.

I stayed with Lena till shortly before Helen was born and then I returned to Cheltenham. My friends the Costertons had been persuading my mother to go abroad. They were constantly travelling on the Continent and they suggested that we should all go to Switzerland the next winter. I don't suppose mother really wanted to do this. I expect she would much rather have stayed quietly in her own house, so it was very good of her to have consented. How little the young realise the feelings of the old. I can't remember my mother making any complaints, so the house was given up, the furniture warehoused and the cat and dog put on board wages.

Some time in July we went to Scotland staying a few nights with Lena in Edinburgh, and then on to Ardgour. Old Mrs. MacLean was there, and there was a large gathering of tenants and others to celebrate the arrival of the baby.
When we left Ardgour, mother and I went to St. Andrews. Whilst in Edinburgh I had made friends with the Mitchell Innes, very charming people. Mrs. Mitchell Innes was one of the Golf Champions and, therefore a very important person at St. Andrews where there was a kind of competition and Gala Festival going on. I used to go round the course with the players. The Campbells, cousins of the Mitchell Innes were also staying there, we were a happy party of young people. There was a ball, and Mary Campbell reminded me a few years ago that I had had white heather sent from Ardgour with which to trim my dress. The Miss Campbells have a house at Torquay, at which I have stayed, we correspond and whenever I go to Torquay, at which I have stayed, we correspond and whenever I go to Torquay I see them and we talk of days long ago. Some time that Autumn Lena and the baby went to India and then mother and I and the Costertons went abroad. We first went to Paris for one or two weeks, I can't remember where we stayed. I know that Paris was very cold and grey. "Straw" and I used to go about together. We went to the Magasins de Louvre and for the first time saw electric light. It was rather amusing the way in which we looked at each other and commented on our ghastly looks. In the early days of electric lighting the light was very harsh and white and made people look ghostly.

There were some interesting people in the Pension, a Miss Marshall who had come to Paris to study medicine in order to be a Doctor - she told us that there was such opposition in England that it was almost impossible to go through the training
in England, and so she had come to Paris in order to get her teaching. I knew nothing about this effort that women were making to enter the Professions in those days, and I was thrilled by what Miss Marshall told me. Mrs. Garrett Anderson must have been fighting for the same thing about this time and Florence Nightingale struggling to bring in her reforms. One evening at the Pension there was a dance. I can only remember one man with whom I danced, a Pole, a very good dancer. I suppose he thought me also a good dancer as he kept on saying "This is enchanting, this is enchanting -"

From Paris we went to Lausanne. We had rooms in the Hotel Richemont, a large Hotel with a garden and beautiful views over the lake and mountains. There were many very pleasant people staying there, English and Irish besides foreigners, who were all very friendly, and the winter we spent there was a very happy one. I had music lessons from a Conservatoire teacher: up to this time my music had consisted in playing brilliant arrangements of opera airs and that sort of thing, and as I had no difficulty in playing runs and scales, I was much puzzled when my teacher introduced me to classical music and found it much more difficult. I think mother was disappointed to hear me labouring through some of the Leider Ohne Worte, or bits of Bach, instead of the brilliant runs and shakes she had been accustomed to. We young people in the Hotel used to have dances in the evenings sometimes, and occasionally made expeditions by train to some place in the Jura where we skated. The snow in Lausanne was deep, lying for a long time on the
roofs and looking lovely in the sunshine. The people in the Hotel were very much surprised at my determination to go out in all weathers. The Hotel was heated and all the rooms had double windows, and I felt a desire for fresh air. Often I would open both windows in my room and would feel very guilty when someone would say that there must have been an open window somewhere.

When the spring came the visitors began to disperse. I don't know where the Costertons went. Mother and I with some others went to a little village, Bex, in the Rhone valley. The flowers were lovely and there were beautiful walks. The longest walk I took was twenty miles. We started on a very hot August morning wearing the lightest clothing; when we arrived at the end of our walk which was up in the mountains, it was snowing.

When it became too hot to remain in the valley we went to Villars. I suppose how it is a very fashionable and crowded place. When we were there, there were only some chalets and two hotels, the smaller of which we were in. I was to have made one mountain expedition, starting before sunrise, but my mother was not well when I went in to see her before I left, so I could not go. She thought it was just as well, for it was a very strenuous and tiring climb and might have been too much for me. I always felt I was in charge of mother and it would not do for me to become incapacitated.

I saw a strange sight one morning, a thunder storm going on in the valley below. I saw the thunder clouds rushing together
and the lightning flashing, and I was above it, and seemed to see how it was being done.

We found several pleasant visitors in the Hotel, among them an American lady, Mrs. Anthon. She had travelled in Italy a great deal and she suggested that we should go together to the Italian lakes. There was a Mr. Waters, a geologist who also wanted to go to Italy, so we decided to join forces and hire a carriage to take us across the Simplon Pass. I think the village where we hired our vehicle was Brig. I knew nothing about the charges, and should have paid whatever was asked, but Mr. Waters was an experienced traveller and knew that it was necessary to bargain. Mr. Waters, Mrs. Anthon and I spent the afternoon walking about asking the drivers what they would charge to take us to Italy. I knew the first request was for 200 francs, but by degrees it came down to 100 francs and a pons boire of 10 francs.

We spent a night at this place and started the next morning for our long drive over the Simplon Pass. We spent the night at the Hotel on the highest point. The next morning I thought I should enjoy beginning the day with a walk, as Mrs. Waters suggested that it would be possible to join the carriage lower down the pass by taking short cuts. We started off, but I had not realised that we should have to wade through deep grass heavily laden with dew. When we joined the carriage my shoes and stockings were as wet as if I had been walking through water and I had to keep them on in that condition all day. It was quite exciting to get my first
view of Italy, but also a little disappointing to see the olive
gardens. I don't know what I had expected, but I suppose
that I had imagined that olives were great forest trees, and when
I first saw the stunted, sometimes misshapen grey trees I received
rather a shock—After one has lived amongst the olive trees for
some time, their fascination grows upon one. Their silvery
greyness is very beautiful in some lights, though they can look
very gloomy sometimes, and there is something strangely weird about
the tortured shapes of the old trees.

We had a delightful time on the Italian lakes, at Baveno and
Cadenabbia and walking and boating. The boatmen were very
picturesque in white blouses and broad crimson sashes. One
afternoon a party of us from the Hotel had sailed across the
lakes. On returning one of the sudden storms came on and we had
some difficulty in getting back. Mother was at the landing place
when we arrived, and in thankfulness and gratitude for my safe
return she gave a most generous present to the boatmen, with the
result that for several days he brought us a basket of the
delicious Italian figs. After staying some weeks on the lakes,
we made our way to Mentone. We stayed at a small Hotel; not on
the front, but a little way up the Vallee de Monton. The Hotel was
in a garden with orange trees, and there for the first time I saw
oranges and orange blossom on the same tree. We had a wonderful
winter of warmth and sunshine. For six weeks there was not a cloud
in the sky, and one began to long for a grey day and a little rain.
We went once to Monte Carlo, a wonderful place. The flowers and
grass (so noticeable in Italy where there is very little grass)
and the beautiful buildings, all made as seductive as possible to induce people to stay there and gamble. I had been much impressed by a sermon in the church, to which we went, when the clergyman said that everyone who went into the gambling room might be influencing others, without knowing it; and he begged the members of the congregation not to go in, even though it was merely out of curiosity. I think mother thought me foolish not to go in, but I could not forget the sermon I saw enough of the harm done by gambling in the case of one of the visitors in our Hotel. She was a young girl apparently living alone, at least she did not seem to have any relations, she constantly went to Monte Carlo and one could tell whether she had won or lost when she returned; her worn and haggard face showed only too plainly. It was a sad sight.

We left Mentone in the spring and went to Bordighera. We were in a small Hotel close to the shore. The Mediterranean is very beautiful, but after living by it for some time one seems to miss the incoming and outgoing tides of the sea round one coast: the beach seems to get rather dirty unless there is a storm, when of course the waves dash up and wash away the rubbish.

There was a pretty little English church with roses growing over it. George MacDonald the writer lived at Bordighera. I believe it was a curious household, as in addition to his own family he sheltered adopted waifs and strays. I don't know if this was true, it was only what one heard. He was a very picturesque man, with a cloak or plaid
flung round him, and it was delightful to hear him read
the lessons in church.

We stayed at Bordighera till everyone had gone, and
there was only one man in the Hotel to attend to us. It
was hot and the food got very bad and the flies swarmed, so
we felt it was time to go to higher regions. I suppose we
took the train to some place at the foot of the St. Gothard
Pass and then took the diligence over the Pass. We stayed
at a place on the German side, Hospenthal. The air of
course was beautifully fresh and bracing, but I thought the
place was rather bare and not as beautiful as the Simplon
Pass. After staying there for a few weeks we recrossed the
summit and returned to the Italian side and stayed for some
time at Faido, a very pretty place. The St. Gothard tunnel
was being made and we often heard the sound of blasting and
I think it was whilst we were there that the workmen met
in the centre of the mountain, a marvellous piece of
calculation and engineering and a thrilling moment when they
heard the men from the other side speak to them. (I think it
was Sir Francis Fox who had a great deal to do with the
tunnelling of the St. Gothard. Many years after when we were
living at Wimbledon, I was in his study and he showed me some
photographs of the foundations of St. Pauls. I was
astonished and horrified to see the great fissures - when I
exclaimed, Sir Francis said he did not think the public would
dare to go in if they saw the photographs. It was Sir Francis
who invented the process, which I think is called "grouting" -
liquid concrete is driven into the fissures by hydraulic pressure until every cavity is filled in and becomes solid.

When we left Faido, I had engaged three seats in the diligence which only held four people. Just before we started a miner got in, he had a great pair of boots which he carried in his arms and a bundle done up in a cloth containing his clothes I suppose. The boots he rested on mother's knees whilst he fitted himself into the fourth seat. Mother rather objected and asked me to find out from the driver if we could not have the coach to ourselves, but he said no, that the man had paid for his seat and was entitled to it, so there was nothing to be done. The boots were removed and the miner proved to be quite a pleasant companion, even handing his snuff box to all of us.

We next went to the Italian lakes and stayed for some weeks at Luino. It was a lovely place. The Hotel was close to the lake and there was a garden at the back, where the fire flies lit up every brick at night. Whilst we were there I went over a silk factory. The manager who took us over the factory gave me two cocoons which I laid on the table in my room, one day I came in and found a butterfly sitting on each cocoon. They had eaten their way through and, of course, in so doing had cut through the silk. In the factory the cocoons are put into boiling water and the silk wound off. The silk is so fine, I forget how many strands it takes to equal the thickness of a human hair. Poor little silk worms one can only hope they are quickly killed in the water. In the evenings it was very interesting to see the
workers from the factory kneeling on the steps of the chapel which was near the Hotel, saying their evening prayers. What would be thought of English people who did such a thing?

Whilst we were at Luino, we received a letter from my brother Charlie, who had gone to Australia when I was a little child, that he and his wife were shortly to arrive in England, as he had been appointed Secretary to the Queensland Government in London. This decided mother that we must return to England.

I cannot remember much of our journey, but I remember driving in a cab on our arrival in London to Charlie's office at the end of Whitehall and his coming down and greeting us, this unknown brother, whom I had last seen when I was a little girl in Cheltenham. Mother and I stayed in a Guest House in Kensington where Charlie and his wife were staying. Emmie was very pretty and beautifully dressed. This was her first experience of England, but she was not in the least "colonial" in her speech or manner, a most finished and dainty person; it is sad to think of her condition now. Before leaving Italy our American friend Mrs. Anthon had suggested that I should spend a winter with her at Florence which she knew well. I was very anxious to do so, but I felt I could not ask my mother for the money for the journey. Living in those days was very cheap in Italy as the English £ went a long way and I knew that it would not cost my mother any more to keep me in Italy than in England. I found out that the journey to Florence would cost £7.2. I plucked up my courage and wrote to my eldest brother Willie who was in India and asked him if he would send me £7, which he did.
When it was decided that I should go abroad for the winter, arrangements had to be made for mother as she could not be left alone. My sister Fanny had married, as her second husband, Mr. Spencer, and they were living at Wedmore in Somersetshire. They had a large house and it was quite easy for mother to stay there. I saw her comfortably settled and then journeyed to Italy with our American friend Mrs. Anthon—on arriving in Florence we had to look for a Pension, and after a day or two we found one on Lungarno Guicciardini kept by some delightful Irish ladies, an old mother Mrs. Godkin and two unmarried daughters. The daughters were cultivated women and there were interesting people staying in the Pension. The Pension was a flat at the top of an enormous house belonging to an Italian Count, and was called the Palazzo Leonitti. I cannot remember the number of stone steps we had to climb up, every time we had been out. The rooms were large though there was no nice outlook from the bedrooms. From the sitting room there was a view of the Arno and the city and the beggars, who had pitches just opposite the house on the Ponte Santa Trinita. There was one man who used to clip the poodles. They looked very smart and fashionable with rosettes of hair dotted about them. In those days it was impossible for an English girl to go out alone, so I had to depend on Mrs. Anthon or someone else to give me exercise. I believe Mussolini has altered all that and a girl can go about alone in the Italian cities, as she can in England. Thieves abounded and would seize purse or handbag in broad daylight, and run off with it. One day Mrs. Anthon and I were walking on the Lung Arno when a man ran down a side street clutched Mrs. Anthon's
hand and tried to get her purse, but she clung on to it, and waved her umbrella in his face, shouting "Go away you wretch". She made such a noise that he went. One Sunday we were going to church walking a short distance behind Miss Godkin. A man passed me dressed like a man in an opera, with a great cloak flung round him and a slouch hat. As he passed Miss Godkin he must have picked her pocket for she found her purse was not there; quite accustomed to this kind of thing she ran after him, caught him by his cloak and said "Give me back my purse", whereupon he swept off his hat, made a grand bow and handed it to her. We told this to an Italian gentleman who lunched with us not long after, and he said "See how polite even our thieves are". I loved Florence and was well coached in the history by Mrs. Anthon. When I went there I knew nothing of Dante or Savonarola, Fra Angelico and the other painters, the architects and sculptors. The whole place is full of interest. I am glad I saw it before buses or trams were there. I cannot imagine what those narrow streets must be like now with motor cars and all the modern traffic rushing through them. I had Italian lessons from an Italian lady, and singing lessons from an English man, Albert Hall. The best singing master was an Italian, Signor Varucini. His fees were too much for me, but Mrs. Hall was a pupil of his and his method was the same. Mrs. Hall seemed to be much impressed by my voice, and said that I should be thoroughly trained.

I did not make many expeditions outside Florence. Once we went to Pisa and saw the leaning tower and the cathedral.
Mrs. Anthon suggested that we should go to Venice and I longed to go, but I could not ask mother for any more money, so at the end of the six months I went back to England.

Mother and I spent some time in rooms in London, not very far from where Charlie and Emmie were living. In the summer we went for a short time to West Bridgeford Rectory. My father's youngest sister Caroline had married Mr. Waters who was Rector of West Bridgeford near Nottingham. It was a quiet little village then; now I believe it is part of Nottingham. In the Autumn we went to Clevedon in Somerset. Mrs. Anthon joined us and we had rooms for the winter. On Sundays we walked to the church where Tennyson's friend Hullam was buried. A very pretty little place. That spring when we were at Clevedon Kam returned home from India. That summer we went about to different places and stayed for a short time at Reading with the Barlows. My brother-in-law Nelson was home on leave and Coralie was grown up and was to go out to India with her parents in the Autumn. After a great deal of consultation and asking of advice I decided to spend the £200 which my old aunts had left me on having my voice trained. Several years previously the last of my father's unmarried sisters died and left Kam and me each £200. These two old aunts, tiny little ladies, lived in a little house at Tiverton. I fancy they had lived there ever since their brother had been Head Master of Blundell's School.

I made arrangements with my cousin Mary Jack (she was Mary Shortt daughter of my aunt Caroline) to stay with them
in London and pay £1. a week. The Jacks had a large house near Earls Court. In those days they were quite comfortably off, but later on they came upon very bad times and had to move into a smaller house, in the suburbs. I had very vague ideas about my training as I did not know any musical people, only one lady I knew who said that Manuel Garcia was the very best teacher of singing. For private lessons he charged a guinea a lesson. I knew that I could not afford that in addition to my payment to the Jacks, so I decided to enter the London Academy of Music where his fees were much lower. This Academy was at the back of St. George's Hall in Portland Place and the concerts were in the Hall. I took piano and harmony in addition to singing and I worked very hard. The voice training required any amount of patience; week after week only doing sustained notes and then more and more difficult exercises. Later on I had some private lessons from Garcia in his own house. He was a very nice old man. I think he was over 80, when I had lessons from him. He lived to celebrate his 100th birthday and was received at Buckingham Palace. There was also a public dinner, of which I received a notice as one of his pupils. I was much tempted to go, but the cost was a guinea and I felt it was not right to spend that on myself, when so much was wanted for the children. I had the delightful experience when at the Academy of singing with an orchestra. I used to sing at concerts for charities and entertainments and once I sang in some kind of opera, when I wore a kind of Turkish dress.
During all the years since I was eighteen and had met Heathcote, I had thought of him and had constantly looked in the marriage announcements in the Times wondering if I should see his name. Soon after I went to the Jacks, I heard from George Statham. He and Florie were in London for a few days and had been given seats in a box at the Albert Hall to hear "The Creation" and asked if I would go with them. The seats were given them by Heathcote, who was then giving Sunday afternoon recitals on the organ. I was delighted thinking that I should meet Heathcote again — my disappointment was great when I found he was not there. However, as the Jacks often asked people to dinner, I suggested to Mary that as Florie's brother-in-law was living in London she might like to ask him, which she did. I think we were both very happy to meet. I know I was, and I suppose Heathcote must have showed his pleasure, as Mary's sister, who knew nothing about our previous acquaintance, remarked to Mary, "that Mr. Statham is in love with Florie". We had a very nice evening, he playing and I singing to his accompaniment. After that we met occasionally, but not very often; he was very busy and I was working very hard. Mother and Kam were living in rooms at Tunbridge Wells and I went there often for the week ends. Life went on like this for some time, then something went wrong with Mr. Jack's business, and they were obliged to give up their house in London and take a house at Upper Norwood. I was with them for some time there, and then mother also took a small house near them and I lived with her and Kam. That was in 1884.
In the spring of 1885 Heathcote and I became engaged and very soon after Kam became engaged to Mr. Hogg. They had a very short engagement as he had to return to India in the autumn. They were married on 12th August at St. George's, Hanover Square, and I think they went to India in October, taking his daughter Nellie with them. Nellie married Captain (or Major) Gordon. Fred was knighted and they returned home in the spring of 1889 with Esmond.

Heathcote had been made Editor of the Builder and, therefore, was in a position to marry, but I was faced with the problem of leaving my mother alone. She depended entirely on me. I dressed her when she went out. I put her to bed; she leant on my arm if she went out. I did all the packing and arranging if we travelled. I could not see how I was to leave her, so it went on. At the end of 1886, mother had to have a slight operation, then when she had recovered I decided that this uncertainty must end, and with a great struggle I made up my mind I must leave her, as I felt it was not right to keep Heathcote waiting any longer. For many months he had been looking for a house; sometimes I had been with him. I rather wanted to get one on Campden Hill, but he wanted Bloomsbury as it was nearer his office, and I think it was a wise choice as he was able to have a walk twice a day instead of having to go by train. At last after seeing many houses we decided on 40 Gower St. How different was my first view of it to what it became after. It was a gloomy day and the dining room looked particularly dismal, as the caretaker and
her family were encamped in it, but it grew up into a pleasant house and a happy home. Heathcote had only the furniture which had been in his office in Queen Anne's Gate; that was enough for his study. The rest of the furniture I was able to get with the marriage money £150, which the India Office gave me. Heathcote went into the house in the Autumn of 1886. He found a protegee of the Barnets, I think, a Miss Wolfe, who did for him, and who remained for some time after our marriage.

Our wedding day was fixed for Feb. 17th. I had a white silk wedding dress, but as there was no one to arrange anything, I felt I could not get into a white dress. It was not a very cheerful day. There was a fog, my mother was very sad, my widowed sister Laura Barlow was staying with us, and she did not help to make things more cheerful. However, we were married by George Statham, and the Jack children threw real rose leaves on the path as we left the church and my spirits rose, and after lunch or refreshments, we drove away in a carriage and pair to Clapham Junction and journeyed to the Isle of Wight. I felt as if I were going into a new world as I stood on the deck of the steamer which seemed to be sailing into the setting sun. We had very pleasant rooms in a house at Ventnor, high up on the hill, and with a view of the sea. We had a very happy time there, going for walks, sitting on the beach when warm enough. Heathcote obtained permission to play the organ in a church and I used to sit in the church and listen. In the evenings Heathcote read "Emma" aloud. We stayed a fortnight at Ventnor, and then went to the Shuttleworth's at Clifton. Heathcote and I had both
stayed there before when we were engaged. Harriett and Emily were his cousins, as their mother was his father's sister. They were very kind and hospitable. We were there a week and then went to my sister Fanny. She had married, as her second husband, Mr. Spencer. They were living in a country house in Timsbury, a village a few miles from Bath. We completed our honeymoon and then went to Gower St.

Life now became very busy. Many people called and we were asked to dinner parties and I was able to wear my wedding dress. I constantly went to see mother, who was now alone as Laura had left. I had always wanted to do some social work, visiting the poor or sick, but mother had not liked me to do anything of that kind, so now I thought my opportunity had come, and I suggested to Heathcote that I should do some work in the East End, but he did not approve of it. I fancy he thought that "slumming" was just a fashion, and I think very likely it was; certainly there was quite a craze for it amongst fashionable people. The East End scheme not being possible, I went to the Vicar of St. Giles, Canon Nestit, and said I should like to have a small district where I could visit. I told him that I was very inexperienced, and should like only a few houses and not in a very bad part. He gave me what he called a very good street with ten houses. The conditions seemed to me terrible. There were several families in every house and there was overcrowding and immorality. It made me very unhappy to see all this wretchedness, but I felt that, as I had asked for the work, I could not give it up.

However, Mrs. Anthon who came to see me one day took the matter
in hand and went to see Mrs. Nesbit and said that I ought not to go on visiting in these houses, and so that came to an end. Canon Nesbit was a canon of Norwich and there is a tablet to his memory in the Cathedral, and Mrs. Nesbit was a sister of Lady Hope with whom I had stayed at Pinkie.

In the summer of that year we went to Overstrand. We had rooms over the one little shop. Mrs. Anthon and her niece who had come from America, also had rooms in the same house. It was a primitive place then, just a row of fishermen's cottages and the one little shop. I think we must have done a good deal to bring it to the notice of the public. Heathcote wrote an article in the Builder describing it and praising it, and I think he made some illustrations of old silver in our lodgings; at any rate I believe the Railway Company bought 500 copies of the paper with the Overstrand article. In the Autumn we spent a few days at Horne Mill Court with the Roscoes.