

A NEW ALBANIAN IN EUROPE.

Through Denmark and Sweden – Copenhagen and Stockholm, and
How the Danes and Swedes Live – A Swedish Hotel Dinner.

Low Wages and Hard Living for the Poor and
a Norwegian Revolt Threatened.

Christine Nilsson's Girlhood Days in Stockholm and
How She Became a Great Opera Singer.

From Sweden to Holland – Amsterdam – Holland Canals – How the
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A Visit to the Field of Waterloo.

Correspondence of the LEDGER.

DRESDEN, SAXONY, May 10, 1884.

My last letter to you closed at Amsterdam, Holland, giving a brief account of our journey to Kiel, on the northwestern borders of Prussia. We left Kiel by steamer and in seven hours landed at Korsair, where we took cars and in four hours more reached Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. The country through which we pass is very fair farming land, producing all the small grains. The farm houses are small, but the barns are large, the very long and severe winters compelling people to house their stock. The towns generally are small but look clean and comfortable. I am told that the most rigid economy is practiced in living, people usually eating black bread, no butter and very little meat. The best butter we have seen in Europe we got in Denmark and Sweden. The people generally look healthy and comfortably clad.

Notwithstanding much wine and beer is drank in all countries in Europe, I have seen but two or three drunken persons since I left England, where (in London) I saw much drunkenness.

Copenhagen, with a population of 250,000, gradually increasing, is quite a city, and is situated on Cattegat Sound, which is navigable for the largest steamers one hundred and fifty miles from the North Sea and the Baltic. All vessels as far North as Stockholm, Sweden, going either to the North or Baltic Sea, must pass through the Sound, and generally stop at

Copenhagen. These in addition to their own vessels, make the city a large shipping point. I regret to say that I very seldom saw the stars and stripes at any of the seaports. There is evidence of some wealth in Copenhagen, many fine residences and large business houses, wide, clean streets and some nice parks in the city; in the suburbs several large and beautiful parks and lakes, which a little later in the season would show to better advantage. The drives around the city are very fine. The kingdom of Denmark contains a population of about 1,500,000. They lost Hamburg and Kiel in the war with Prussia and Austria in 1864. The country is Protestant, the Lutheran denomination being much the most numerous, the people very civil and polite. The name "American" has a good effect in all European countries.

Notwithstanding Denmark is a very small country, the King has three daughters married in high royal families; the Emperor of Russia married one, the Prince of Wales another, and his brother, the Duke of Cumberland, another. The king's son is king of Greece, having been chosen by the people. The citizens of Copenhagen are very proud of Thorwaldsen, the great sculptor, as this was his home. The king's palace is a plain building compared with many other palaces we have seen, but no doubt as good as his small country can afford. They have a museum, picture galleries, &c., but of course they do not compare with those of larger cities.

We now take leave of Denmark and proceed by steamer across Cattegat Sound to Mulmo, on the frontier of Sweden, and find that it is twenty-six hours travel thence to Stockholm; crossing the entire country of Sweden. For about twenty-five miles after leaving Mulmo the land is very good and thickly settled, giving evidence of prosperity, but from thence nearly the entire distance to Stockholm not one-fourth of the land could be cultivated, and much that is cultivated is miserable, rocky, hilly, poor land, the country very thinly settled, and why people will remain in a country where there is eight months winter, and attempt to make a living on such land, I can not understand, unless it be that they have not money enough to get away. But with all this we have seen no beggars since we left Russia.

We reach Stockholm about nine o'clock a.m., and as we have not breakfasted we proceed without delay to the Grand Hotel and enjoy the morning meal to the full. This is the first hotel I have ever known that has different prices for dinner at the same table. When we sat down to dinner at six o'clock, I remarked to the waiter that we wished to dine. He replied they had three prices - four, five and six crowns for dinner; a Swedish crown is about thirty cents of our money. I inquired of him what they furnished for four crowns. He answered soup, boiled fish, roast beef, and any other one kind of meat desired, with potatoes, salad, pudding, ice cream and preserved fruit. I told him we would try to make a dinner out

of what he mentioned and we succeeded. What they give additional to the five and six crown dinner I did not inquire.

Sweden has a population of near five million. Stockholm, its capital, 150,000 and increasing, is situated on what is called the North stream, which leads into the Baltic and the North Sea. It is a large seaport, has large porcelain, iron and copper manufactories. Oscar the II is King of Norway and Sweden, has a palace in both Stockholm and Christiania, but spends most of his time in Stockholm. The Norwegians are becoming very tired of a monarchical, and are clamoring for a republican form of government. Only a few months ago the Swedes compelled all the King's ministers residing in Norway to leave the country. A revolution is looked for soon, but the Norwegians cannot of themselves accomplish anything, unless the Swedes are willing they should "go in peace," as Norway has but about one and a half million of population. They talk much about and admire our republican government. An officer in the regular army of Norway was with us on the steamer from Christiania to Amsterdam, and he says that the Norwegians are not ready for a republican government, but a revolt is expected.

Stockholm has a large Swedish and Norwegian collection of every kind of household furniture and farming implements, which are very interesting to examine; and also, in wax, life size, representations of Ulan women and children, all said to be dressed as the peasants of those countries; but I have traveled through both countries and have never seen a man or woman in either country dressed in the grotesque manner represented. All that I have seen were dressed very much the same as people in the same walks of life in our own country, except that the poorer classes generally wear wooden shoes.

The men are as a general thing good looking, but the women are mostly very plain. The women of both countries do all kinds of men's heavy work. Wages both for men and women are very low. Women for house work get from 75 cents to one dollar per week, and much hard work is expected of them. Men get from 40 to 50 cents a day and board themselves, and not steady work then. There were quite a number of deck passengers on the steamer from Christiania to Amsterdam, whence they were to sail for New York. In talking to some of them they said wages were so low they could not make a living.

I think I forgot to mention in a former letter our visit to a lace manufactory in Venice, Italy. Our guide had two daughters working there, both grown women, whom we saw, and bright looking girls they were. He told me their pay was half a franc per day, which is ten cents of our money, and they boarded with him. This is the lowest rate of wages I have met with.

I would remark that living is more expensive in most of the countries of Europe than with us. Clothing such as laboring men and women wear, is fully as expensive as with us, but silks and satins, velvets, and fine clothing for men is cheaper than in our country. The only article that I have found any particular advantage in buying in Europe is kid gloves; they are not half the price we pay for them in America. I think the man or woman is greatly blessed whose home is in America. This has been a digression from our journey.

Sweden has an immense number of lakes, some of them very large, and abounding with fish, which are used largely in place of meat. It may not be generally known that Stockholm is the home of Christine Nilsson, the great vocalist. When a child she accompanied an organ grinder through the streets and sang to his music. A lady of wealth hearing her sing was so much pleased with her voice that she took charge of and educated her and made her what she is. Stockholm is very proud of her, and also proud of the fact that Sweden is the land of Jenny Lind.

We now take leave of Stockholm and start for Christiana, Norway, twenty hours, or about four hundred American miles distant. Almost the entire country is very much the same as Sweden – poor, hilly, rocky and thinly populated; not many towns and they small. I was told there were sections of both Sweden and Norway where the land was better than that through which the railroad passes.

Christiana is situated on Skager Rock sound, which is navigable for the largest steamers and leads into the North Sea, about two hundred miles distant. It does a large shipping business and is gradually increasing in population, which is now claimed to be 120,000. The public buildings are very good. The King's palace is a handsome marble structure, certainly as good as so small a country should furnish. No doubt your readers are aware that Christiana is very far north, and this season of the year has very little night. Next month, for several days, they will have sufficient light to read by all the time. When we were there they told me that their days were increasing ten minutes daily – five minutes in the morning and five in the evening. In the winter for a month they have very little daylight.

We now leave that cold region and take steamer across the North Seas to Holland, decidedly a more southern clime, distance about seven hundred miles. The old sea treated us kindly and we arrived in Amsterdam in about two and a half days. The contrast between the two countries is great. When we left Norway there was no evidence of spring in any shape; when we arrived in Holland we found the fields green, flowers in abundance and everything looking bright and cheerful. Holland is full of canals in every direction. When we leave the North sea we enter the Grand Canal twelve miles from Amsterdam built about twelve years ago at an expense of five million dollars. All the lands along

the lines of the canal previous to the building of it were under water, but the canal has drained them and they are among the best lands in Holland, cultivated in the best manner and well improved in houses, barns, and other comforts. The canal is much higher than the surrounding ground, and from the deck of a steamer the view is a grand one.

We arrive at Amsterdam all right, and find it quite an active city of 370,000 population; the houses of peculiar form, most of them four to seven stories high, with very steep and pointed roofs. Canals run through every part of the city, and most of the houses have a canal at the rear; therefore, such a thing as front or back yards are not known. The houses are all built on piles, and many of them after standing fifty years have given way so much that the houses lean out at the top a foot or more. I inquired if they were not afraid of the houses falling, and they said no, that not one had ever fallen. You would be surprised to see the kind of work women do in this country, in truth in Europe generally. Many women are employed on the canal boats. I saw a woman with a big pole on one side of a boat and a large man on the other side, the woman with the pole against her shoulder doing just the same work as the man. This is considered as hard work as men do.

The diamond cutting is quite a curiosity. We were in one establishment that employs about two thousand hands. The process is very singular. The citizens claim that their zoological garden is to be one of the best in the world; it is very large and attractive.

We saw a beautiful sight out about fifty miles at sea. There are said to be thousands of fishing vessels in that region, sent there by London companies. These vessels are ranged on each side of the channel through which vessels come in, and most of course have their lights for safety. It gives very much the appearance of a city on the sea. I am told that steamers from London visit the fishing vessels every morning, take their fish, pack them in ice and take them to London. When they call to get the fish they supply the fishing vessels with what they need, so the fishing vessels rarely come to shore.

We now take leave of old Amsterdam, after spending two days very pleasantly, and proceed to the Hague, a very beautiful little city of about one hundred and twenty thousand people, situated about thirty miles from Rotterdam. This later place is called the capital of Holland, has a king's palace, and the king spends a portion of his time there; but the Hague is really the capital; the King spends much more of his time there, the house of parliament meets there, the government offices and all the machinery of government are there. The Hague is much more modern in appearance, being very handsomely built and improved in every particular. There is but little business done compared with either Amsterdam or Rotterdam. It has no water privileges except its canals, being situated about three miles from the north sea. Men of wealth who

wish to retire from active business settle there and beautify the place. The drives and parks are splendid. I think the drive to the Queen's palace, which is about two miles from the city, the most beautiful. The Queen, who occupied the palace, died a few years ago, but everything is kept just as she left it. The internal arrangements and decorations are very beautiful. The present King, who was her husband, is William III. They did not live happily, therefore she remained at her palace in the country and he at his palace in the city. He is about seventy years of age, but recently married a stout, hearty looking Dutch girl of twenty-five, which act did not give satisfaction to his family. The streets are wide and kept very clean. The canals in all the cities of Holland run through the better as well as the poorer parts. In the better portions of the cities the streets are very wide, the canal running through the center, giving streets on each side. Trees are generally planted on each side of the canal and this gives it a very handsome appearance. Some of the finest houses in the cities face the canals.

The old prison at Hague, built in the 13th century by the Spanish Inquisition, when Spain held Holland, is still standing, being taken care of and shown to strangers, with its dungeons, and axes with which men were beheaded, racks on which their bones were broken, branding irons, and other instruments of torture in great variety. It caused a shudder to pass over our party, and we were glad to get out.

The gallery of paintings contains many celebrated works of art; by the best artists of the day in which they were painted, some of them as far back as the 13th century. The one that I enjoyed most was Paul Potter's celebrated Bull and Cow, and Ewe and her Lamb. They are of the 15th century, are world renowned and painted to perfection.

The Protestant religion is the faith of most Hollanders. There are some very old and large churches in all these cities, but I have written of so many that I suppose your readers do not care to hear of any more. I am really tired of looking at them. Also museums and that kind of thing generally.

I witnessed a sight at the Hague that I never heard of or saw in any other place, and that was a man leading several jennets, I believe that is the name or to make it plainer the mother of a Donkey, and milking them in front of houses and selling the milk. I was told the milk was very highly prized. Feeding horses in Holland with coarse black bread is very common, and the horses eat it with a relish. The work horses of Holland fully equal for size and strength any I have seen. The only part of the world that I have ever seen cows protected in the open field was in Holland; the covering of each appears to be a heavy coarse article, so securely fastened that it stays in its place.

We will now bid adieu to the beautiful Hague and proceed to Rotterdam, distance twelve miles from the North Sea. The largest steamers come up to Rotterdam, and as a shipping point it fully equals Amsterdam. There is also a large general business done here. The population is 170,000. This city is not so attractive as The Hague, the business houses and residences partaking more of the Dutch style of Amsterdam. Rotterdam has its picture gallery, museum, &c., &c.

One thing I must say, that I hear as little complaint of hard times in Holland as in any country I have visited. The Hollanders are increasing in wealth slowly but surely. Another thing is, although Holland is a level plain – scarcely a hill in it – yet the scenery is very beautiful. The varied shades of green, far as your eye can reach, the farm houses, cattle and sheep in great number, all go to make up a beautiful and pleasing view.

I have been much surprised in every part of Europe to see men smoking at the dinner table, and in Russia I saw women doing the same.

We now leave Holland for Belgium. The change and difference in appearance of the face of the country is very perceptible, before you have crossed the frontier ten miles. The country becomes somewhat broken and hilly, wood lands in abundance, not any canals on the line of railroad. The first city of importance after entering Belgium is Antwerp, a flourishing and beautiful city of about 200,000, noted for its large Cathedral with a chime of 90 bells, streets handsomely laid out, and houses well built. The Cathedral contains Rubens' great picture of the Descent of Christ from the Cross, and many other paintings of great merit.

Belgium is Catholic. Brussels, its capital, said to have a population of 400,000, is certainly one of the handsomest cities. It is an improvement of Paris, on a small scale. You scarcely see a plain or common looking residence or business house in the city; the streets are wide and kept in perfect order, and there is the finest system of parks in and around the city that I have seen. They have a boulevard two hundred feet wide about the center of the city and completely encircling it, the whole distance set out in beautiful trees; as fine a carriage road on each side as can be made, and a beautiful walk in the center for pedestrians.

Brussels is noted for its lace manufactories. We were in one and saw them making round point lace, which is the most expensive made. I enquired about the pay of the operatives and was told that they were paid in proportion to what they could accomplish; that the best could make two francs, not quite forty cents, a day and board themselves. Brussels carpets and many other articles are also manufactured here.

We visited the field of Waterloo and saw the marks of the bullets in some brick walls that are yet standing. Belgium has built a very large and high mound in the center of the battle-field, surmounted with a Lion weighing eighty thousand pounds, said to be made from the guns captured from Napoleon.

We leave for Cologne, whence we start up the Rhine, the grandest trip in the world an account of which I will give you in my next.

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