

# THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL

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## A DAY IN PATTI'S CASTLE

By Florence Wilson



If Adelina Patti ever has her Boswell the world will get a glimpse of a very different woman from the petted songstress they have been reading about in the newspapers all these years. It is undoubtedly true that no one is more to blame than Patti herself for much of the absurd gossip printed about her. She has allowed, without troubling to contradict it, masseurs and complexion specialists to describe her as reveling in a life of indolence and inactivity, surrounded with lavish luxury and splendor that is wildly Oriental. She has permitted inventors of physical training apparatus and patent medicine men to publish to the world that the perfection of her voice was solely due to the continuous use of their gymnastic machines or nostrums. Agents for concerts who could not make contracts with her, called her "mercenary." Because she took no notice of begging letters (and she gets on an average a dozen a day) disappointed people called her "stingy." On the other hand, some over-patronized friends delight in paraphrasing Patti as perfection itself, with none of the inherent frailties of womankind. But of Patti in her home we know little; and she is a woman who thoroughly believes in the wholesome influence of a good home, and in the duty of women to make their homes attractive and cheerful.

The house in which Patti lives is one of the most interesting of homes. "Craig-y-Nos Castle," as the songstress has christened it, is hidden away in the wild hills of the Swansea valley of Wales. It would be one of the most inaccessible spots imaginable were it not for a little railway which runs within four miles of it. In pleasant weather it would be difficult to find a prettier bit of landscape, but in wet and wintry weather, when storms sweep through the valley and transform the tumbling little Tawy River into a foaming torrent, it is a good place to keep away from. Patti's reason for choosing a home there was a good one. The peculiarly moist atmosphere of the place suited her voice better than any other locality she could find on the English side of Dover Straits. Having once determined where she would live, Patti began to build a home consistent with her ample ideas of comfort and luxury. The most remarkable thing about "Craig-y-Nos" is that such an establishment is to be found in such a remote part of the country. It is very much as though Jay Gould had built his Irvington palace in the heart of the Adirondacks, instead of on the slope of the Hudson River. In point of architectural beauty or extent of acreage it would be absurd to compare "Craig-y-Nos" with any of the great ancestral estates of the English aristocracy. Many rich men and women in America possess suburban estates superior to it. But as typifying Patti's peculiar ideas of what a comfortable home should be, and her indomitable energy, regardless of cost, in putting her ideas into execution, "Craig-y-Nos" is really a marvel.

The castle takes its name from a huge, ill-shaped hill called "Craig-of-the-Night." To get around this hill and make her house moderately accessible from the railway station, Patti spent \$20,000 in building a roadway. Then, in adding to the house already built on the estate, clearing woodland, laying out gardens, digging an artificial pond for breeding trout, and putting the interior of her home in comfortable condition she spent nearly half a million dollars more. She put up a glass winter garden big enough for two hundred people to wander about in comfortably, and stocked it with palms and ferns specially imported for her from the tropics. She wanted a private theater, so she spent \$30,000 in building one. In all the mechanical contrivances for the stage required in giving a private performance of an opera this little theatre is as well equipped as is the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. The guests lounge in roomy arm-chairs which may be moved about the auditorium at will. Patti had already constructed her private gas-works, when she wished to illuminate her winter garden and theater with electric lights; so she put up an engine and dynamo in a shed ad-

joining the stables, where the noise of the machinery cannot be heard in the castle. Viewed from a distance at night the theater and garden, brilliantly illuminated by electric lamps, look like a scene from fairyland. Patti is a thorough American in her fondness for iced drinks, so she put in machinery for making artificial ice and keeping her meat cellars cool. She has a telephone to the nearest telegraph office, eight miles away. In brief, there is nothing contributive to the creature comforts with which rich people in cities usually surround themselves, that Patti has not provided at her home in "Craig-y-Nos."

It is difficult to enlarge an old house placed on the brow of a hill, and have the arrangement of the interior as convenient as may be desired. The principal rooms in "Craig-y-Nos" open into a long hallway, much after the plan adopted in our big seaside hotels. The "company" rooms are furnished with all the lavish display that a London upholsterer given *carte blanche* could contrive. Her own apartments, in which Patti spends most of her time, are three—her bedroom, boudoir and library. These are filled with mementoes of her personal association with distinguished people, and trophies of popular regard brought home from her triumphal tours

all over the world. Few women have so many "interesting" things in their house as Patti has. All sorts and conditions of people in many nations have contributed to it. Kings, queens and emperors have given her autograph portraits. Sheets of the original scores of operas which Patti has made famous hang on the wall, presented by their composers. Jewels and ornaments, which society satellites in all countries have showered upon the stage from their boxes, have been gathered up and placed in a magnificently carved casket, which was presented by a humble musical society in Venice. The portrait of the grim old German Kaiser, grandfather of the present Emperor, is one of the most striking portraits on the walls of Patti's lovely little boudoir. The late King Kalakaua peers at you from an odd

little frame made of some rare wood which is to be found only in the Sandwich Islands. Patti especially values a miniature of the Princess of Wales, taken twenty years ago, before the diva's trouble with and divorce from the Marquis de Caux had brought her into disfavor with the royal family of England. This miniature is a splendid likeness of one of the loveliest women in the world, in the prime of her life. It may be no more than a coincidence that Patti has placed next to this picture of the Princess a portrait of the wife of ex-President Cleveland. Mrs. Cleveland and Patti took a great fancy to each other when they met in Washington.

Patti always likes to show you the portraits of her mother and father, which she has placed in solid gold frames. It is obvious from looking at them that Patti most resembles her father. Nicolini's portraits are, of course, *en evidence* all over the house; but the most interesting to the visitor, perhaps, are those of Patti herself, taken at different stages of her public career. Her curios received from public admirers include a golden model of the great bell in the Kremlin at Moscow—an exact imitation of it even to the tone. This was given to her in St. Petersburg, one night, when her horses were taken from her carriage and some young military officers dragged it home loaded with flowers and gifts. Then there is a silver and gold crown, which was handed to her over the footlights at the great opera house in Vienna. But there is no space to describe Patti's possessions of this nature. There are, for example, a half-dozen grand pianos made specially for her by the best manufacturers in the world.

Patti has two splendid billiard-rooms in her castle, one with a French table and one with an English. Patti handles a skillful cue with either game, but she prefers the French. One of the billiard-rooms contains a wonderful orchestration, which Patti had built purposely for her at Freiburg, costing twenty-five thousand dollars. It makes as much noise as an average brass band with twenty pieces. It is a really marvelous instrument in its way, capable of rolling out harmoniously the orchestration of a complete opera, or the more

familiar tunes in any opera, as may be desired. A cylinder capable of playing any new tune may be prepared for it at half an hour's notice. Patti's library is ample, but not over-stocked. She reads in French mostly, and keeps thoroughly abreast of all the modern literature of that nation. She does not care much for contemporaneous English novels, and of modern American writers she knows almost nothing.

Patti's own apartments, which few visitors are permitted to enter, are on the first floor of the house, with the windows looking out on the broad terrace which slopes down to the banks of the river Tawy. Her bedroom, dressing-room and bathroom are luxuriously furnished in satin-wood and sky-blue plush. The fur-

niture is massive and beautifully carved. The bedstead is of solid oxydized silver, with blue satin canopies to match the counterpane, which is embroidered with old lace. The toilet set, which consists of sixty pieces, embracing almost every object a woman could find use for, is of solid silver. But the most fascinating thing about the rooms to the eye of the visitor are the beautiful Persian



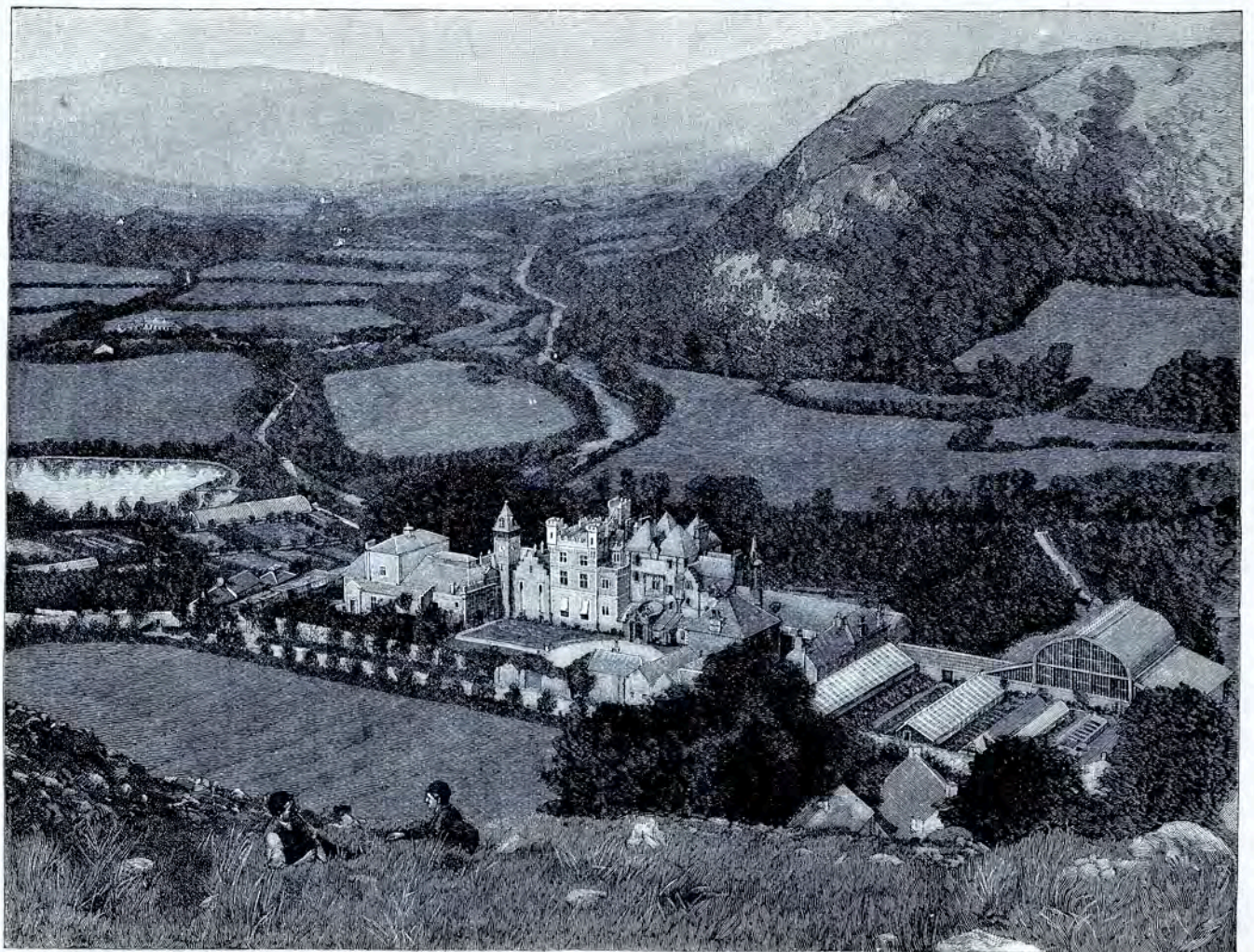
Madame Patti's Ponies

[From a "Kodak" picture personally taken for the JOURNAL by Madame Patti]



Madame Patti and Her Dog "Richi"

[Reproduced by special permission]



"Craig-y-Nos," the home of Madame Patti in the Swansea Valley, Wales

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Owing to the many unauthorized articles on Madame Patti, it is desired the fact be here stated that this article was prepared under her personal supervision. Madame Patti entertained the JOURNAL'S special representative at her castle, personally furnished all the facts given, and selected all the illustrations, the four "Kodak" views being taken by herself.

rugs, which Patti has brought home from her journeys in the East. She is also the owner of some magnificent skins of wild animals, which devoted English and French army officers, who have worshiped at her shrine, have brought home as trophies from their perilous journeys in the jungles of India and Africa. Half buried in the walls of the bedroom is a moderate-sized safe with a combination lock containing the famous Patti jewels, which make her sparkle with the radiance of the sun when she puts them on in "Traviata." No one but Patti and Caroline, her trusted maid, know the combination to this safe. It is probably not an exaggeration to estimate the value of Patti's jewels at half a million dollars. Nicolini, her husband, made her a present of one necklace which alone cost \$60,000.

In every well-regulated English country house you will find rooms which are called "Royal rooms," whether royalty ever visits them or not. In furnishing royal apartments people go on the principle of the old lady who kept a black silk dress in her bureau drawer so that she might be prepared in case of a funeral. In certain seasons of the year British royalty—carrying in its wake any number of aristocratic people, whose names figure well in the society columns of the newspapers—is pleased to accept invitations to various "country houses." There is the fiercest kind of a struggle among the "who's who" for precedence. Patti is hardly an exception to the rule in her weakness for royal favor. But there are certain things which, following the inexorable law of the royal court, British aristocracy fights shy of—and prominent among them is divorced people. The divorced woman, and even the woman who has obtained a divorce from a man who treated her cruelly, is never allowed to forget the fact if she attempts to enter the social domain which is regulated by British royalty. Things may be different when the Prince of Wales comes to the throne, but while the Queen reigns—never! Nevertheless Patti, when she rebuilt and furnished "Craig-y-Nos," followed the usual custom in setting apart "royal apartments." They are very close to her own, and are luxuriantly furnished in olive wood and blue satin damask.

Patti has named these rooms after the Prince and Princess of Wales, although His Royal Highness and his lovely consort have never occupied them. Still, now that Patti is really married to Nicolini, looks after his children as though they were her own, and is living the conventional English country house life, it is possible that she will soon be put on the same plane with Albani in receiving the Queen's personal patronage. It is a common thing to read in the English newspapers of Albani being summoned to Balmoral or to Osborne to sing before the Queen. But not so with Patti; at least not yet. It looks, however, like breaking the ice when the Queen allows Prince Henry of Battenburg (the husband of her favorite daughter, Beatrice) to go to "Craig-y-Nos" for the festivities attending the opening of Patti's new theatre. True, he did not take his wife with him, but he wrote Patti a lovely little letter afterward, enclosing a photograph, in which he said that he hoped one day to give his wife the opportunity of visiting her home. Considering the "dead set" made against Patti in high social circles a few years ago, and the untiring efforts of professional rivals to keep it alive, the visit of Prince Henry of Battenburg to the castle was a distinct triumph.

But, royalty aside, you will always find a great number of distinguished people at Patti's house, many of them with titles which command respect and esteem all over Europe; but they are all foreigners. However, the people Patti best likes to gather about her are the clever, cultivated set of London's upper Bohemia—musicians, painters and writers—from whom she can get the brightest ideas and the most accurate knowledge of what is going on in the world. Patti always appears at her best when she is surrounded by people who are thoroughly in touch with her, and where she is not obliged to be too conventional. Patti is not a dissembler. If she does not like you she does not ask you to her house, and only people whom she really does like are made to feel that it is worth the long journey to "Craig-y-Nos" for a visit there. Once inside the doors of the castle all restraint is thrown aside and you see Patti as she is—a bright, vivacious and lovable little woman, devoid of all affectation or false pride; a charming hostess, and withal a thorough business manager, quite awake to her responsibilities of landlord, since she owns one thousand acres of land and arbitrates the disputes of a colony of tenants.

Patti literally begins the business of the day in her bed. So soon as she is fairly awake her maid Caroline comes into the room with coffee and correspondence. Patti seldom opens a letter or newspaper herself, unless it is from some intimate friend. All correspondence is sent to her secretary, who forwards what he sees fit to Patti, with side-note suggestions about the disposal of it. When any letters are sent up for her to personally dispose of she usually answers them in bed. She even signs her checks in bed. Coffee and correspondence disposed of, Patti rises for her bath. A great deal of romantic nonsense has been written about Patti's natatorial habits. She

has been described as splashing around as blithely as a water nymph in a little palace of rosewood and costly porcelain, in which the heated air is artificially perfumed. This is ridiculous. Patti is obliged to take a massage bath almost every morning for rheumatism. Her bathroom, while in thorough keeping with the rest of her establishment, is certainly not unusually luxurious for an English country house.

Rheumatism is the plague of Patti's life. Whatever abstemious regulations of diet and dress she may choose to exercise are conducted with a view to curing rheumatism, and not for preserving her voice. Just at present the rheumatism seems to have settled squarely in Patti's right knee.

When Patti has been thoroughly rubbed by her Mexican masseur, and the unfortunate knee worked into pliable shape for the day, Patti is transferred to Caroline's hands to be dressed. With certain unimportant exceptions Caroline determines what her mistress shall wear. It is impossible to write anything about Patti's daily life without devoting more than passing mention to Caroline Baumeister. Her position in the house is a peculiar one. Long years of service have induced Patti to give Caroline absolute direction of affairs which are not at all within the scope of the ordinary duties of a lady's maid. Caroline has thoroughly learned the art of making herself indispensable to her employer. She is an amiable, even-tempered and pleasant-mannered Austrian woman, well along in years, whose sole aim and purpose in life is to make Patti feel as comfortable and look as pretty as she can. Caroline entered

Nos," which is usually spread at 12.30 in the big glass dining-room adjoining the winter garden. One must have a very sound excuse for being absent from that meal, or even one minute late. This *déjeuner* is really a substantial dinner. It lasts an hour or two. Patti appears brighter and more vivacious here than she does at dinner. As a rule the conversation is carried on in French. Nicolini speaks only a few words of English. Patti, of course, speaks it without even a trace of an accent, but at the same time the conversation runs more smoothly at the table when it is entirely in French. She eats what she likes, and never diets herself.

"It is only singers who haven't much voice who spend half their time in looking after it," said Patti one day when this subject was brought up at lunch. "All that I do in taking care of my voice—except, of course, on the day of the evening that I am going to sing—is to take the ordinary precautions against catching cold. The same as regards my complexion. It is regulated by my digestion, and the best complexion tonic I know of is to obey the ordinary rules of health."

After *déjeuner* Patti usually strolls about among her pets. Her love for birds and animals is almost abnormal. She has them all over the house. The greatest pet of all is the little Mexican dog "Richi," which was given to her by the wife of President Diaz, of Mexico. "Richi" is a pet of all pets. He lives literally in the lap of luxury. No mother watches her first-born with more tender interest than Patti looks after the comfort of this tiny little dog. It nestles on her lap or on a rug at her feet when she is at table. It

her daily gallop with her Welsh pony pets with a ruddy color in her cheeks and a sparkle in her beautiful dark eyes which gives the laugh at once to the claims of complexion specialists. Patti's ponies were never photographed until the picture of them which accompanies this article was taken. After some persuasion Patti consented to have the little animals marched into the yard for a snap shot at them with a camera. She held the instrument herself, but the ponies were so restless that three negatives out of the four taken were failures; the fourth is here given, and can only be considered as partially successful.

Though Patti's passion for pet animals of all kinds is one of her most womanly qualities, it hardly exceeds her love for flowers. She takes special pride in her greenhouses; and even keeps close supervision over her vegetable garden. Nothing pleases Patti better than to hear her guests praise the melons, peaches and grapes grown on her own farm. In fact, Patti makes a perfect hostess. She is the very embodiment of life and vivacity, taking ample comfort out of all the luxuries with which she is surrounded. She eats heartily, as her appetite dictates. She knows and enjoys a glass of good wine, but she drinks very moderately. When she is with special friends after dinner she smokes and evidently enjoys a cigarette.

At 5 o'clock every guest at "Craig-y-Nos" may have tea served in their room. The dinner hour is at 7.30, and Patti exacts just as much promptness about this meal as she does for the *déjeuner*. Dinner is always a full-dress affair. At 7 o'clock the chimes in the clock tower give ample warning to the

guests. These bells are a duplication of the famous chimes in the tower of the Houses of Parliament. As a rule, Patti does not believe in leaving the gentlemen alone for an hour or so after dinner for their cigars while the ladies roam about the house waiting for them to appear. All leave the room together for the billiard and smoking room, where they take their coffee and nicotine as they please, while the big orchestra rolls out melodious music. After dinner, if no special performance is arranged in the theatre, Patti devises some form of

amusement in the billiard room. It must not be supposed for a moment that in utilizing this theatre, Patti confines herself to performances of opera. She enjoys thoroughly, and has appeared as the heroine in, some rollicking farce, in which guests at the castle are pressed into service to assist her. Patti does not sing very much at the castle. Sometimes she favors her guests with a song or two after dinner, and then she freely gives them their choice of music. If they want "Annie Rooney" she sings it for them, and she can sing it charmingly, too. Like all women who desire to keep well and bright, Patti believes in going to bed tolerably early. It must be a very exceptional circumstance to keep her from her apartments after 11 o'clock.

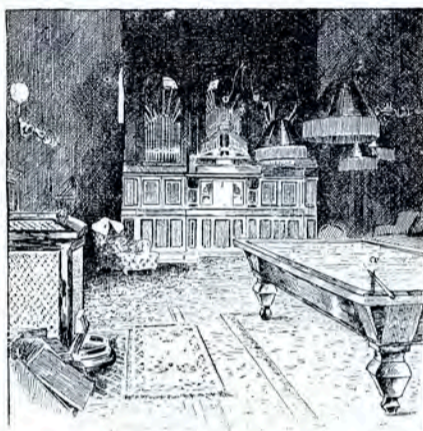
After all, Patti at home is very much the same as Patti on the stage—a bright, impulsive, entertaining little woman, with a warm heart beating with continual goodwill for those who love her; a devoted wife, and a most generous mother to the children of the man she loves.

#### THE JOURNAL THROUGH THE SUMMER

THE next (June) issue of THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL is the first of the summer numbers, for which a number of special timely features have been prepared. Through these numbers there will be sprinkled articles dealing with "Flowers at June Weddings," giving the newest flowers and points of floral etiquette in connection with June nuptials; an entire page given over to new ideas for "Lawn Parties and Out-Door Fetes;" the benefits of "Rowing for Girls," will be presented; Mrs. Potter Palmer, in a specially contributed article, will outline the part which women are to take in the World's Fair. Mrs. Beecher's famous reminiscences papers will continue to their conclusion during the summer, the remaining articles being among the most interesting in the entire series. Mrs. Gladstone will contribute her closing article on "Hints from a Mother's Life;" the famous and funny little "Brownies" will disport themselves on the Brooklyn Bridge, in Independence Hall celebrating the Fourth of July, take a summer trip down the Mississippi River and visit the grounds of the World's Fair. Three new stories will also begin, one by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, depicting the life of a New England girl; the second by Mrs. Caroline Atwater Mason, and the third, a beautiful love story of the Southland, by Miss Julia Magruder. Some special articles on needlework suitable for summer work will be presented, while at the end of the season, in preparation for the approaching busy time, a page full of "New Ideas for Church Fairs" will have a special interest. In addition to these, thirty or forty other articles and short stories will be given—all of a fresh, timely character prepared with a special view to summer reading, when we are apt to wish for entertainment perhaps, more than for instruction in our literature. Then will begin the special autumn and winter issues to which particular attention are naturally given each year.



A Corner in the Boudoir



The Billiard Room and Orchestra



A Favorite Walk along the Lake

[From "Kodak" pictures personally taken for THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL by Madame Patti]

Patti's service a little more than twenty-five years ago, when the diva was stopping at Wiesbaden. The engagement was only intended to be temporary, but it has lasted all these years without interruption, and probably will not be broken until death terminates it. Caroline goes everywhere with Patti. She accompanies her to the opera houses and concert halls; sees that there are no drafts in the dressing-rooms; heads off would-be callers and interviewers; sees that offerings of flowers left at the stage door are not allowed to reach Madame Patti until after she has done singing for the night. Caroline says that the perfumes of certain flowers—violets particularly—affect Patti's voice almost as much as a cold. She does not, for instance, allow Patti to have any plants or even cut flowers in her bedroom.

The wardrobe which Caroline has to select from in arranging her mistress's morning toilet is not remarkably extensive. Keeping her stock of rich stage dresses and finery as a thing apart, Madame Patti does not spend anything like so much on dress as an average American woman who has not one-quarter of Patti's income. She buys the best of everything, of course, but she is very careful of her clothes, and as she "goes out" very little except on professional duties, her evening dresses last her a long time. Women who visit Patti often and know her very intimately, say that she is, all things considered, very economical in her dress. Her extravagances are more in the direction of expensive undergarments.

When Patti's toilet is made she sends for her "bailiff" in her own apartment, and discusses the management of the farms on her estate. She owns several of them, nearly all small holdings. Patti is a very lenient landlord as landlords go, but she is not at all lax in the management of her property or in the collection of her rents. If, as sometimes happens, a tenant has had a bad harvest, and cannot pay his rent, Patti either extends the time, or hands the tenant a receipt for the amount, as her judgment dictates from the necessities of the case. She is thoroughly alive to what is doing, and if she catches a tenant trying to impose upon her good nature, she directs the bailiff to turn the screws a little. But as a rule all the farms on Patti's estate are prosperous, and bring her in a substantial revenue. The land is fertile and the tenants are thrifty. They appear to be very fond of Patti, but so, for that matter, do all the peasant people in the valley. The women curtsy to her and the men uncover their heads as she drives along the country roads. Patti is undoubtedly generous to the poor. She always gives them a Christmas treat at the castle each year, and once a year sings at the charity concert in Swansea, which nets about \$4,000 for the poor of the neighborhood.

It is close toward midday before Patti puts in an appearance among the guests stopping with her at "Craig-y-Nos." Of course, everybody has had coffee and toast, with eggs if they wish it, some hours before. Patti allows her visitors to ring for their breakfast when they choose and have it served in their rooms. But she always likes them to be punctual at the first formal meal of the day at "Craig-y-

trots along after her when she takes her walk about the grounds, and at night it sleeps in a wee little cot of eiderdown close by Patti's bedside. Two or three times Patti has insisted on having Caroline bring "Richi" to her dressing room at the theatre. But the little animal always howls dismally when Patti sings, so it was found wiser to leave him at home. The picture of Patti with "Richi" on her lap accompanying this article, was given to the writer by Patti especially for THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL.

Next to "Richi," Patti probably loves her parrots best—and the famous "Jumbo" most among the parrots. She bought this precocious parrot at a store in Sixth Avenue, New York, for \$6,000, being attracted by the richness of his voice and his almost unlimited vocabulary. Just why Patti calls him "Jumbo" it is hard to imagine. He is not at all a large bird, as parrots go. "Jumbo" has the reputation of being an exceedingly vicious creature, and he has drawn enough blood from people who have attempted to take liberties with him to justify the reputation. But with Patti he is gentleness itself. He perches on her shoulder, nestles his soft, brilliant feathers against her cheek, and tenderly holds her jeweled finger in his fierce beak. Until "Jumbo" came to England it was popularly supposed that W. S. Gilbert, of comic opera fame, had the most intelligently talkative parrot in England. But "Jumbo" now takes the lead in that respect. When Patti is away from "Craig-y-Nos," and "Jumbo" misses her usual daily call, he sits in a very dejected manner in the bottom of his cage and constantly pipes out in a doleful tone: "I am so sick! I am so sick! Where is Patti?"

Among Patti's other birds of plumage is another parrot named "Pinkie," who came from New Zealand, and can talk marvelously when she wants to; but she would rather fight with "Jumbo" than talk. Then there is a whistling bullfinch which is sometimes brought down to the dinner table to amuse the guests at dessert. This beautiful bird seems to know that he is on exhibition at these times, and whistles wonderfully. He seems to feel amply rewarded with a piece of sugar bestowed upon him by Patti. Most of Patti's household pets have been purchased by her during her travels. She is a splendid judge of birds.

Of course Patti, like all tender-hearted women, likes horses. Her stables are full of them, but her especial pets are two little Welsh ponies, strong and agile, and as well built as the famous little Norwegian ponies. Patti saw them at a Welsh fair, fell in love with them and bought them. They cost her \$500 each. She drives with them every day when the weather is fine. It is an especial privilege for a guest to be invited to drive with Patti behind these ponies. She handles the reins very skilfully, guiding the lively little animals over the smooth, hard roadways with the swiftness of the wind. A few years ago Patti used to ride a great deal; but the rheumatism has stopped that. She thoroughly enjoys driving, though, and comes back from