

A Summer on the Rhine.

THE Villa Markana, situated on the right bank of the Rhine, diagonally opposite Stolzenfels, and within a half hour's walk to Coblenz, after having passed through the hands of several illustrious people (among them Beaumarchais, brother-in-law of the Empress Josephine, who often visited here), is now the property of the Bergers, and is a perfect paradise in every sense of the word. There is nothing lacking—grottoes, fountains, flowers, fruit, grand old trees, and last, but not least, a vineyard. The lady of the house, with true German hospitality, has given us the keys (the family come here later in the season on account of the children's vacation), and we came here a few days ago and took possession. There has never been enough said about the wonderful "Rhein Luft," for it is an honest fact that when it is too hot, or too cold, or too wet, or, in fact, too anything at other places, it is always mild and delightful here. We spend all of our time out of doors, take our meals under the trees, and can see to read in the garden until nine o'clock at night. We are so conveniently situated that we can make delightful excursions and return the same day, as there are forty trains passing through the village of Horchheim (where the villa is situated) during the day. There are, too, dozens of steamers passing right in front of our door, but as there is no landing at Horchheim, we do not often make use of the boats. Of course there is a ghost here, but, fortunately for us, it only appears at certain times (when the moon is on the wane, I believe), and then always stays in the garden to guard certain treasures which, as the story goes, were brought here during the Thirty Years' War and buried on the grounds. Unfortunately, nobody can find the place where these treasures are hid, because the ghost is a sly old fellow, and wanders about the grounds all night when he is on duty, never stopping once to rest or in any way to give a clue to the precious spot.

We went to Coblenz a few days ago to see the Kaiserin, who is now residing at her favorite summer palace. When the weather is fine, she holds a formal reception on Thursdays in the Rhein Anlagen (a series of beautiful narrow parks, one leading into the other, and toward the beautifying of which she has given large sums), and, like true Americans, we managed to get a "front seat," where we were able to "take in" and criticise the poor old lady to our hearts' content. I believe she is nearly eighty years old, but her maid (or maids) understands so well to fill out the wrinkles, and to give her a good color, that only her bent figure betrays her age. Her hair was combed low on her forehead in large water-waves, and the German court being in half mourning, she was dressed in a long black carriage-dress of foulard, and wore a satin de Lyon visite heavily trimmed with lace and jet. This mantle, by the way, was very short in the front and back, with queer-looking double sleeves (one might safely call them wings), which hung nearly to the ground. Her bonnet was black French chip, loaded with black ostrich-feathers, and tied under the chin with narrow-striped black and white velvet ribbon. She wore no jewels whatever, except a silver serpent on her left wrist. Her shoes were low cut and without heels, gloves light gray. The ladies who were presented were all dressed in black, and were led up to the Kaiserin one after the other by the Countess Haacke (her favorite lady of honor), and after making a stiff old-fashioned courtesy, and exchanging a few words of conversation with her majesty, they were marshaled back to their places by the countess, who seemed to be mistress of ceremonies generally. One of the best military bands of Coblenz (which you know is the strongest fortress on the Rhine, having a military of fifteen thousand) was

concealed in a sort of bower, and played the most beautiful and appropriate music during the whole time of the reception. Among other things was Mendelssohn's Spring Song, a Spanish dance by Saraste, and an arrangement of Carmen. The Kaiserin stayed about an hour; then, upon leaving the Anlagen, walked slowly among the people for a few minutes, bowing to the right and left as graciously as possible. Her only escort was two stalwart footmen, one of whom we saw the following day on the principal business street of Coblenz with very shabby velvet trowsers on.

The Kaiser is now at fashionable Ems (he spends four weeks there every year, drinking the water and bathing), and of course now the place is crowded with English and Russians particularly, not to speak of extravagant Americans who help to make Ems the gayest and dearest summer resort in Germany. We are only twenty minutes' ride from Ems, and often go down to the concerts, and to renew our acquaintance with the Kaiser, who takes great pains to bow to all. We went to see the fire-works given in honor of his majesty a few evenings since, and when I tell you that extra trains were run in every direction to accommodate the thousands of strangers who went to see the display, and at the same time to catch a glimpse of the good old Kaiser, you may well believe the exhibition was grand beyond all description. There were fountains of fire upon the water which changed color every few seconds, then disappeared altogether, only to come up at some other point and in a new form. There were double-headed eagles in the sky without number, not to speak of the numerous other patriotic emblems.

At one of the jewelry shops on the Colonnade some of the jewels of the Ex-Spanish Queen Isabella were offered for sale. They told us that the Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria had bought a medallion and bracelet of rubies and diamonds for his intended bride, the Belgian Princess Stéphanie. I see in a late Brussels paper that the veil which is to be presented to her by the city of Brussels is completed, and is supposed to be the finest and largest piece of Brussels lace in existence, having occupied three hundred women for more than three months in its completion. The design has for the center piece the Austrian and Belgium coats of arms combined.

My winter home is in Antwerp, the paradise for silks, gloves, and furs. The rich wide silk for cloaks is made by hand. We visited a factory some time ago, and saw the weavers at work; it was primitive enough, I assure you. About twenty workmen were sitting at their looms, at the top of the building, plying their bobbins, their fingers flying as if impelled by machinery. It was very curious. The silk made by hand is much smoother, as well as thicker, wears much longer, and costs, the proprietor said, three times as much as machine-made silk. His price was forty francs an ell.

I. L. B.

Correspondents' Club.

THIS department is intended exclusively as a means of communication between those who have questions to ask in regard to art decorative, industrial, or art proper, and those who have information to give to those seeking it. Questions in regard to literary and social matters, household, fashions and the like, belong to the department of the Ladies' Club. The "Class" must adhere strictly in future to its original purpose.—(Ed.)

"HOME DECORATION."—In some domestic work the ornamentation of the glass goes no further than the tracing, with the exception of certain portions of the patterns on the white being stained with yellow.

1. "TACKLING THE COLORS."—If the glass has not been matted previous to tracing, and has been

traced in water, it is necessary that it should be fired in a kiln in order to "tack" it, or, in other words, to attach the color by means of heat to the surface of the glass. This burning need not be very great—the only object being to enable the color to withstand the action of both water and oil, and to prevent the tracing from rubbing up in subsequent operations. If, however, the tracing has been executed in water color on a mat, this preliminary firing is unnecessary. But should it have passed through the kiln, carefully wipe it, and lay an even water mat as before described, and then proceed to take out the lights.

2. "TAKING OUT THE LIGHTS."—Must be done before burning. The process is as follows:—Procure some flat French tools, or hog-hair brushes, and burn their working ends down to about half their length. This is done by placing the bristles or hair sideways on a bar of red-hot iron, and afterward rubbing them on emery paper. According to the stiffness of these "scrubs," as they are termed, and the quantity of gum in the mat out of which the lights are to be taken, so are they more or less easily taken out. It is usual for the glass painter to have several of these scrubs—of different sizes and lengths of hair—suitable for various widths of lights and various thickness of mat; and it should be understood that the quantity of gum in the color to be used for a light mat must not be nearly so great as that intended to be used for a dark one. These brushes, when drawn across the surface of the mat, remove a portion, varying according to the pressure put upon the scrub; and a great deal depends upon the manner in which the pressure has been directed and regulated, as to whether the result is merely an unmeaning "wipe" or the effect intended. Should there be an error in the taking out of the lights, it is better to wipe off the mat and to commence afresh, than to allow any portion to remain that is incorrect. Students are advised to make themselves thorough masters of this branch of painting, as there is more art knowledge and manipulative skill required in this apparently simple process than might be supposed. Excellent effects can also be obtained with styles of fine-grained wood, pointed in front and smooth on the back, and which are sold under the name of etching tools.

3. "STICKING UP."—The foregoing operations are executed on the pieces of glass in their separate state; but in large work it is usual to "stick up the work," as it is called, before taking out the lights or commencing to paint. This is managed in the following manner:—A piece of rolled or plate glass, sufficiently large to take in the subject or portion of the window to be painted, is laid upon the cutting drawing, and the pieces of glass in their proper positions placed upon it. Beeswax, with or without the addition of a little resin and pitch, is then melted in a pipkin, and dropped from the point of a knife at the corners of each piece of glass. This causes them to adhere so strongly to the large sheet that the whole of the work can be raised without any difficulty or risk. In this condition it is placed upon an easel, when the general effect may be studied, injudicious coloring altered, and pieces that are found to be too light removed to make way for darker ones. From this stage onward it will be advisable to execute the painting as far as possible upon the easel—placed, of course, so as to throw the light through, not on the work. By this means the proper depth of color in tracing may be judged of, and spottiness in shading avoided.

QUESTIONS.

"COR. CLUB.—1. Please give directions for 'Painting in Tar,' in glass painting.

"2. Enameling.

"3. Stains.

AMATEUR."