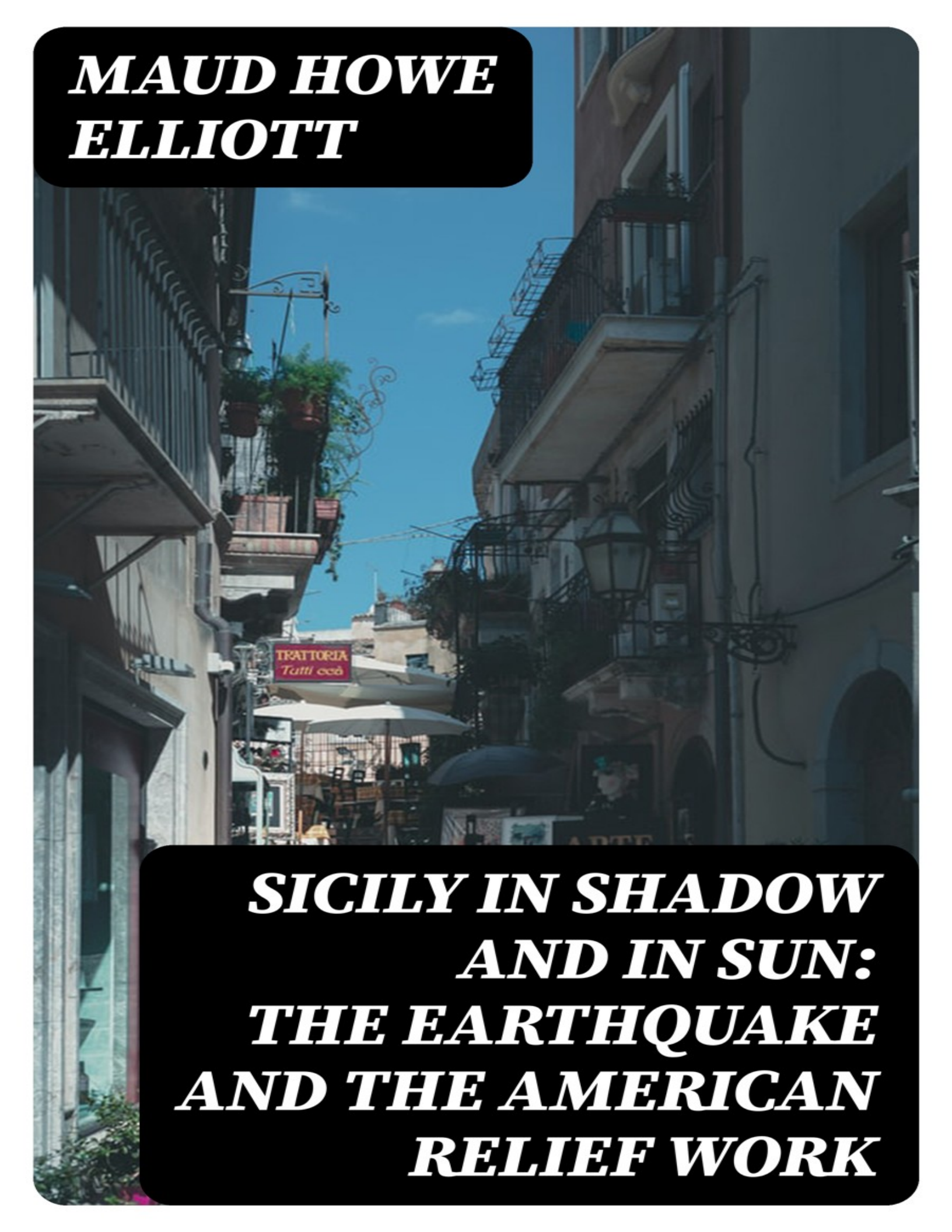


A photograph of a narrow street in Sicily, likely in a historic town. The street is flanked by tall, light-colored buildings with multiple stories. Balconies with ornate metal railings and hanging plants are visible on the left side. In the distance, a sign for "TRATTORIA Tutti e cò" is visible above a street-level cafe area with white umbrellas. The sky is clear and blue. The overall scene is bathed in bright sunlight, creating strong shadows.

***MAUD HOWE
ELLIOTT***

***SICILY IN SHADOW
AND IN SUN:
THE EARTHQUAKE
AND THE AMERICAN
RELIEF WORK***

Maud Howe Elliott

Sicily in Shadow and in Sun: The Earthquake and the American Relief Work

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FOREWORD

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SICILY, the “Four Corners” of that little ancient world that was bounded on the west by the Pillars of Hercules, is to southern Europe what Britain is to northern Europe, Chief of Isles, universal Cross-roads. Sicily lies nearer both to Africa and to Europe than any other Mediterranean island, and is the true connecting link between East and West. Battleground of contending races and creeds, it has been soaked over and over again in the blood of the strong men who fought each other for its possession. There has never been a Sicilian nation. Perhaps that is the reason the story of the island is so hard to follow, it’s all snarled up with the history of first one, then another nation. The most obvious way of learning something about Sicily is to read what historians have to say about it; a pleasanter way is to listen to what the poets from Homer to Goethe have sung of it, paying special heed to Theocritus—he knew Sicily better than anybody else before his time or since! Then there’s the geologist’s story—you can’t spare that; it’s the key to all the rest. The best way of all is to go to Sicily, and there fit together what little bits of knowledge you have or can lay your hands upon,—scraps of history, poetry, geology. You will be surprised how well the different parts of the picture-

puzzle, now knocking about loose in your mind, will fit together, and what a good picture, once put together, they will give you of Sicily.

When a child in the nursery, you learned the story of the earliest time! How Kronos threw down his scythe, and it sank into the earth and made the harbor of Messina. (The geologists hint that the wonderful round, land-locked harbor is the crater of a sunken volcano, but you and I cling to the legend of Kronos.) In that golden age of childhood, you learned the story of the burning mountain, Etna, and went wandering through the purple fields of Sicily with Demeter, seeking her lost daughter, Persephone. You raced with Ulysses and his men from the angry Cyclops down to that lovely shore, put out to sea with them, and felt the boat whirled from its course and twisted like a leaf in the whirlpool current of Charybdis. When you left the nursery for the schoolroom, you learned the names of the succeeding nations that have ruled Sicily, every one of whom has left some enduring trace of their presence. As you cross from the mainland of Italy to this Sicily, you can, if you will use your memory and imagination, see in fancy the hosts who have crossed before you, eager, as you are, to make this jewel of the south their own.

First of all, look for the Sicans; some say they are of the same pre-Aryan race as the Basques. After the Sicans come the Sikels. They are Latins, people we feel quite at home with; their coming marks the time when the age of fable ends and history begins. Next come the Phoenicians, the great traders of the world, bringing the rich gift of commerce. They set up their trading stations near the

coasts, as they did in Spain, and bartered with the natives—a peaceful people—as they bartered with the Iberians of the Peninsula. The real fighting began when the Greeks came, bringing their great gift of Art. Sicily now became part of Magna Graecia, and rose to its apogee of power and glory. Syracuse was the chief of the Greek cities of Sicily. The Greek rulers were called Tyrants. They were great rulers indeed; the greatest of them, Dionysius, ruled 406 B.C. Then came the heavy-handed Romans and the first glory of Sicily was at end. The Romans made a granary of Sicily and carried off its treasures to adorn imperial Rome. They stayed a long time, but with the crumbling of the Roman Empire there came a change in Sicily, the first Roman province, and for a time the Goths and the Byzantines ruled her. Then came the Saracens. They destroyed Syracuse and made a new capital, Palermo, that from their time to ours has remained the chief city of the island. After the Saracens came the Normans—the same generation of men that subdued England under William the Conqueror,—and gave to Sicily a second period of greatness; for if the Greeks gave Sicily her Golden Age, the Norman age at least was Silver Gilt. The French came too, but their stay was short, their reign inglorious; it is chiefly remembered on account of the massacre of the Sicilian Vespers, when the Sicilians rose, drove out their conquerors, and drenched the land in French blood. In the early part of the fifteenth century, Spain, who was beginning her age of conquest, conquered Sicily and held it subject for more than four hundred years. Finally, in the year 1860, came Garibaldi, and reunited Sicily to Italy.

Geologically, Sicily has been as restless as it has been politically and socially. At least twice it was connected with Italy, and once probably with Africa, so that African animals entered it. The Straits of Messina, only two miles wide, and one hundred and fifty fathoms deep, are Nature's record of an earthquake rupture between Italy and Sicily. Mount Etna, the most impressive thing in the island, has been there since early tertiary times—before the days of the ice-age, when the mammoth and cave-bear roamed through the woods of Europe. It is probably a younger mountain than Vesuvius, but long before the dawn of history Sicily and Calabria were the prey of the earthquake and the volcano. The Straits of Messina and Mount Etna are both the results of earthquake activity. The Straits are a gigantic crevice in the earth; the volcano is only a tear in the earth's crust, so deep that the hot steam of the interior of the earth rises from the ever open rupture. Etna, therefore, is not the cause of earthquake, but is itself the child of an earthquake. It sprang, a full-grown mountain, from the breast of earth, as Pallas from the brain of Zeus. Etna was probably far larger once than it is now. The present cone rests on a volcanic plateau, that appears to have been the base of a larger cone, which was blown to atoms. The old mountain is full of cracks which are filled with hard basalt that cements it together. Its explosive tendency causes it to give rise to a great many little cones upon the sides, called parasitic cones, which burst forth suddenly almost anywhere.

Historian, poet, geologist, each tells his story, but the poet tells it best of all. There is no better description of

Sicily and its people than the one you will find in the Odyssey.

“They all their products to free Nature owe,
The soil untilled, a ready harvest yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
And Jove descends in each prolific shower.
By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne;

.

Each rules his race, his neighbor not his care,
Heedless of others, to his own severe.”

—*Homer’s Odyssey, translated by Pope.*



[Larger view]

[Largest view]

SICILY IN SHADOW AND IN SUN

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I

MESSINA DESTROYED

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MONDAY evening, December 28th, 1908, four friends were dining together in a luxurious Roman villa. The hostess, Vera, sat opposite me at the head of her table with Lombardi, the Milanese mathematician on one side, and

Athol, an Englishman, the representative of a great English newspaper, on the other. It was our first meeting that season. Vera, who had passed the summer at home in Russia, had just returned to Rome; I had arrived three days before on Christmas evening. We were all really glad to see one another, eager to hear the other's news and to give our own. The dinner was a triumph! Attilio, the Neapolitan chef, had outdone himself; the pheasant in aspic was an inspiration, though the dish may have been prepared from a receipt known to the cook of Lucullus. Whatever decline other arts may show, the culinary art of Rome has lost nothing since the days of the famous banquets in the gardens of Sallust. Vera's table was laid with the robin's-egg Sevres service, the Copenhagen glass with its gilt borders, and the gold plate that had belonged to Cardinal Antonelli. In the middle stood an exquisitely wrought silver partridge, Vera's own work, modelled and hammered out of silver by that strong small hand, the speaking hand of the artist, that now sparkled with jewels as she raised her glass of Orvieto and drank to our next meeting. After dinner we drew our chairs round the library fire where the tiny Roman Yule logs blazed cheerily on the hearth. It was extraordinarily cold for Rome; the thick fur of the great white polar bear skin before the fire was comforting to our chilled feet. Outside on the terrace a dog bayed.

"Open the door and let Romulus in," said Vera. "It's very wrong of course—a watch-dog ought to sleep in his little cold house—but I haven't the heart to leave even a dog out on such a night."

"It's the coldest season we have ever known in Italy," Lombardi remarked. We all shivered in the piercing gust that came from the open door as a shambling uncouth white puppy tumbled, capering with joy, into the room. He was a foundling from the campagna, lost, strayed or stolen from his sheep-dog kin, and adopted by Vera. His rough ugliness emphasized the refinement of the violet-scented villa where a crumpled roseleaf would have hurt.

As we drank our coffee, the dog nuzzling Vera's satin slipper with little sounds of joy, a servant brought in the evening papers and handed them to Lombardi—I can see him now standing before the fire, unfolding the Tribuna and glancing at the headlines; I can smell the damp printer's ink.

"Any news?" asked Vera.

"There has been an earthquake in Calabria."

The Englishman nodded; he had heard it, he always heard the news before the rest of us!

"Another earthquake! Not a bad one?" I cried.

"The paper naturally makes the most of it, though it does not seem to have done much damage," Athol reassured us.

"Poor people, how they have suffered!" Vera sighed comfortably. After a few more comments the subject was dropped and we began again to abuse the powers that be for the shocking breaches that have been made in the ancient walls of Rome. Bits of our talk come back to me now as from an immeasurable distance. It is as if that conversation over the fire in Vera's library had taken place in another planet during another existence.

"The wall that Belisarius defended fifteen hundred years ago against the Goths without the gates has been

demolished by the Goths within the gates!" exclaimed Athol.

"It's a world's crime," I said, "because Rome belongs to the world; it's just as much ours as the Italians'!"

"Ah! so you like to think!" said the only Italian present, indulgently.

"I have heard you say it yourself, Lombardi, when you wanted something of us outlanders," Athol came to my rescue.

"Remember, the petition to have the streets put through was got up by an Englishman, who owned property near by that he thought would be improved," Vera defended.

The talk drifted from one archæological matter to another. Athol told us of Boni's last discoveries in the Forum, the tombs under Trajan's column; the "finds" made by Goclaire, the Frenchman, on the Gianiculum; why the excavation at Herculaneum had been given up:—The peasant owners of the land, seeing so much said about it in the papers, believe their land covers priceless treasures, and will not allow a spade to be put into the earth until a vast sum of money is deposited beforehand to indemnify them for the buried treasure that may be found. Though the talk veered lightly from one subject to another, it always came back to Pompeii and Herculaneum, to that old, old disaster, that volcanic horror of nineteen centuries ago, and yet at that very moment, though we did not know it, a worse devastation had again laid waste the beautiful treacherous land of southern Italy.

The party broke up in high spirits. Vera, followed by the ecstatic puppy, came into the hall with us. I see her vivid face, her white and silver dress, as she stood below the

enormous Russian bear that eternally climbs a pine tree in her vestibule; I can see the gay graceful gesture of her hand as she waves us a last good night.

The moment's uneasiness that had fallen upon us when Lombardi spoke of the earthquake in Calabria was forgotten. If they are short of news, the Roman papers publish rumors of the Pope's illness, an earthquake in Calabria, or war between Germany and France, with strict impartiality. It was the old story of "wolf, wolf." We were as deaf to the first rumble of the storm, as a few days before we had been deaf to the last war scare.

Nothing but a death in the house has ever made so sharp a difference as I knew between the evening of the 28th of December and the morning of the 29th, for it was only on Tuesday, the day after the earthquake, that we in Rome began to understand—but only began to understand—that the greatest disaster of European history had stricken Italy, our Italy, the world's beloved. To each of us our own country is really dearest; we hope to die and lay our bones in the land where we were born. But Italy, like a lover, for a time makes us forget home, kin, native land, in an infatuation heady and unreasonable as lover's love. The spell may be broken, never forgotten. This is the reason the whole civilized world not only shuddered, but suffered with Italy in the dark hour as it could have suffered for no other country.

The first news came from Catanzaro, Menteleone, and the other least damaged districts. Messina and Reggio were silent; their silence was ominous. Tuesday was a day of fear and restlessness. We lived from hour to hour, waiting for the extra editions of the papers, hoping, always hoping, that the

rumors that every moment grew more grave might prove exaggerated.

“Calabria and Sicily flagellated by earthquake. Enormous damage. Towns in ruins, many dead and wounded. A tidal wave on the coast of Sicily,” such were the headlines of the first editions. Later came the dreadful news: “Messina and Reggio destroyed!”

In the Corso I met Athol. He had been very ill in bed but had struggled out to do his duty, to weigh the news, sift truth from rumor, flash the dreadful tidings to the earth’s end.

“How much must we believe?” I asked him.

“Such reports are always exaggerated at first,” he answered.

We soon learned the first reports did not begin to tell the story.

“Earthquake? It is the end of the world!” people said to each other. As rumor grew to certainty, fear to dreadful fact, the effect upon our minds was very curious; nothing that concerned our private affairs seemed of any consequence. This was equally true of our friends, most of whom were like ourselves, foreigners in Italy. The day after the dinner party I dropped into Vera’s studio. The Signorina had not come in, Beppino, the model, told me; he had never known such a thing happen before. The clay was dry and greatly in need of being dampened. He was forbidden to lift the sheet that covered the statue and dared not do so. If I were not afraid?

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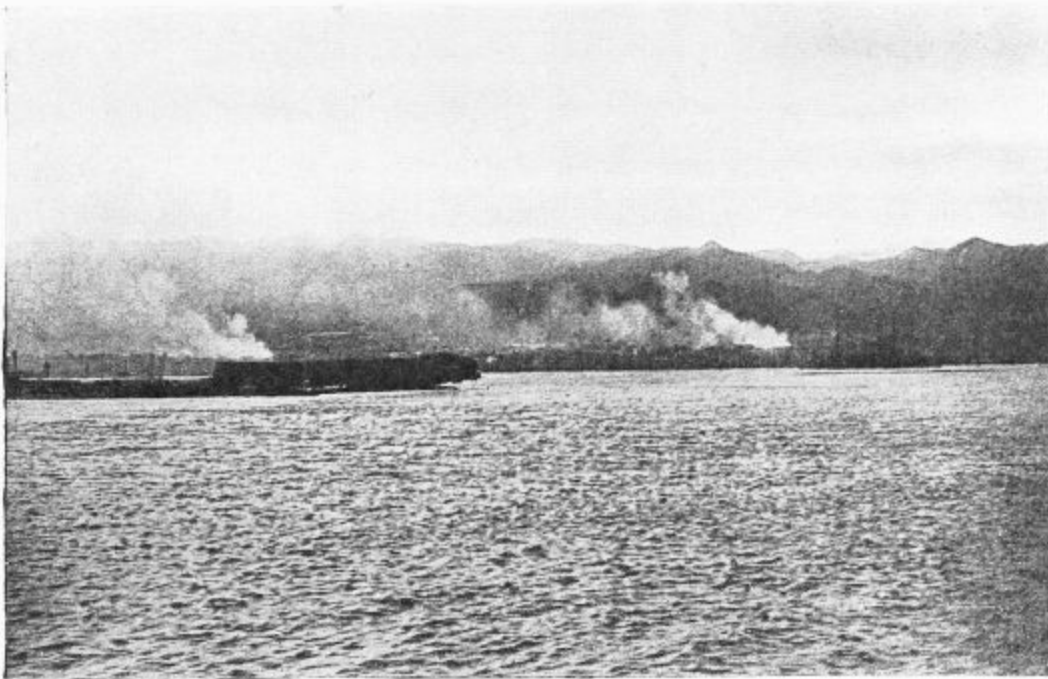
Afraid? What did it matter? I committed the unpardonable sin, stripped off the sheet, and with the big

syringe wetted down the grey clay of that statue of Vera's we had all been so curious about. Her well-kept secret was before me, but I only know that it was a female figure, whether a Psyche or a Niobe I neither knew or cared, nor whether it was good, bad, or indifferent. Vera had only a week to finish the statue that was to compete for the prize she had strained every nerve to win. Three times I wetted down the clay for my friend; after that I forgot it and the statue fell to pieces. Vera had other work to do, and so had I. We ourselves were at rather an important juncture in our lives. J. had just finished his decorative painting, *Diana of the Tides*, for the Smithsonian Institute in Washington; he was on the point of sending out cards for his exhibition. All this was swept into the background of our thoughts. We lived only for tidings of the South. All day long we could only speak, only think of Calabria and Sicily. At night we only slept to dream of them, to wake from the terror of the nightmare to the greater terror of the reality, and then to sleep painfully again. A feverish desire to do something, to be of some use, seemed to drive us and all the Americans and English we saw. Inaction became intolerable; we were scourged by pity and sorrow into some sort of doing, whether it was of any use or not.

Athol alone of all our intimates stood steady at his post, his finger on the pulse of Europe. His work was quadrupled. Instead of being jarred and thrown off the track like the rest of us, he toiled day and night, sometimes without sleep, often without food, in order that his words—words that would sway a nation, influence a world—should be the wisest, the best words that it was possible for him to say.

When I found that I could be of some small use (or I thought I could) by running about picking up little straws of news for Athol, who was sending off despatches day and night, I took heart and felt that I could get through the day. It may not have been of much real use to him or to Sicily and Calabria, but it was of use to me. Besides, the most infinitesimal thing counts, the universe is built of atoms. For these stricken people to have their story well told was surely something. It was a little comfort to me, it gave me all the repose of mind I knew in those first days to gather these tiny straws, whether or no they were woven into the texture of my friend's "story." It helped me to bear the strain if it did not help Athol to do his work.

Day and night the cries and groans of those



MESSINA IN FLAMES. *Page 7.*



MESSINA. THE MUNICIPIO IN FLAMES. *Page 7.*



MESSINA. RESCUE PARTY OF RUSSIAN SAILORS. *Page 36.*



MESSINA. THE PALAZZATA. [Page 41.](#)

sufferers buried alive in the ruins of their houses were in my ears. I felt their pain in my bones, in my brain, in my heart. I breathed pain with every breath till it seemed to me there was nothing but pain in the world. When notes of invitation to dine came—as a few did—it seemed an insult to humanity that tables should be spread with rich food and wine while our brothers agonized and slowly, slowly starved to death. When cards were left with the usual wishes for *Buon Anno*, one almost laughed at the mockery of people wishing each other Happy New Year. For the most part, though, the conventions and civilities of Rome—the most civilized of cities—were dropped. People threw their social duties or pleasures to the wind, even those whose whole business in life seems to consist of leaving the proper number of cards, making the proper visits, the exchange of banquets, teas and other formal courtesies. Birth and death always strip away these silly rags and trimmings; when

there is such a harvest of death, humanity, even the humanity of Rome, perhaps the most sophisticated place in the world, weeps and cowers and stretches out to touch hands with any hand that is warm and living and in which the pulses beat.

Wednesday morning a bugle sounded in the street under our windows. I looked out and saw a group of young men wearing gay fifteenth century plush caps, and on their arms a strip of white cloth with the words "*Pro Calabria e Sicilia*" in red letters. The bugle sounded again. I knew what the summons meant, caught up the pile of extra clothing I had sorted out, snatched an overcoat and a cloak from the rack in the hall and ran downstairs into the street. I was immediately surrounded by half a dozen lads with fresh shining schoolboy faces. They carried between them, two by two, heavy wooden money boxes with a slit in the top, which they rattled and offered to all who passed.

"Who are these?" I asked the tall boy with a scarlet cap on his mop of brown curls, who relieved me of the coat and cloak.

He made me the bow of a prince as he answered: "We are the students of the University of Rome, Signora, at your service."

In Italy, an old country where we find that supreme virtue of age, thrift, even spendthrift Americans grow cautious about spending money. I had meant to put a few sous in the box, but the eager eyes, the urgent voices, overcame discretion. I emptied my small purse, heavy with silver for the day's expenses, into the first money box and so bought the sufferance of the students. I was now immune from

other demands and free to follow them on their errand of mercy.

Another trumpet call and the students, laden with gifts, swarmed like honey bees to the hive about the lean obelisk in the Piazza del Popolo, just outside the monastery with the tall cypresses, in whose shade Luther paced, deep in the thoughts that were to change the course of history. In the middle of the piazza stood forage cart number 24 of the 13th Regiment of Artillery. The cart was drawn by two big army mules, one of them ridden by a soldier. At the back of the cart sat the bugler, a hard, merry, Irish-faced man with a snub nose and a missing tooth; he looked a living proof of Boni's theory that the Celts and the Italians were originally of the same race. In the cart beside the bugler stood a young student with soft brown eyes and the rich coloring of the southern Italian; he wore an orange velvet cap on the back of his head and seemed to be chosen for his beauty, as the third man in the cart (a rather plain shabby fellow with a bandaged throat) had been chosen for his voice. The bugler sounded his trumpet, the driver cracked his whip and the procession started. The cart was closely followed by two artillery men in uniform and surrounded by that host of clustering students, busy as bees with their task of gathering *soldi*.

The cart passed at a footpace across the Piazza del Popolo under the shadow of the obelisk that Sixtus the Fifth, the great building pope, placed in the middle of that noble square, which lies between the old Flaminian Way and the Corso. The cart jogged and rumbled along just as in the old days the carnival cars jogged and rumbled over the rough

stone pavement. The bugler sounded his call again as the cart turned into the Corso; the gallant notes stirred the souls of the people. When the fiery call of the bugle trailed into silence the voice of the tall man with the bandaged throat rang out above the noise of the crowd:

“Pro Calabria e Sicilia! Give much, give little, give something! Every centesimo is wanted down there!”

From every window fell an *obolo*. A hailstorm of coppers rattled on the pavement, white envelopes with money folded in them came fluttering down like so many white birds. Outside the Palazzo Fiano, where the Italian flag tied with crape hung at half mast, the forage cart halted. At an open window on the top floor two sturdy men servants appeared and threw down a red striped bundle of pillows, another of blankets, a third a great packet of clothes. From every house, rich or poor (there are many poor houses in the Corso), came some offering. Two good beds were carried out from a narrow door. The cart was now filling fast, the money boxes were growing heavy. From a shabby window a pair of black pantaloons came hurtling through the air and the crowd, strung up and nervous with the tension of a night of mourning—for Rome mourned as I had never believed it could mourn for anything—laughed from pure nervousness.

At the shop of A. Pavia, the furrier, on the second floor, two people came to the window, an elderly woman with a face swollen with weeping, and a dark man who looked as if he had not slept. The cart stopped again, and from that modest shop there hailed down no less than twenty warm new fur coats and tippets—and this in Rome, the heart of thrift. If I had not seen it with my eyes I should not have

believed it. At Olivieri's, the grocer's, a great quantity of canned meats, vegetables and groceries were handed out. From a hosier's near by came two great packages of men's shirts, some of cotton, and dozens of brand new flannel shirts. At a tailor's bale after bale of stout cloth was brought out and thrown into the cart. Another bed with pillows was given by a very poor looking woman; at the sight of this a man of the middle class took the overcoat off his back—it was a cold morning, too, with a good nip in the air—and threw it into the cart. I went into a news vendor's to buy the last edition of the *Messaggero*. The woman behind the counter said to me:

“I have not read the papers, I could not—but I know; I am from that country. Never since the beginning of the world has there been such a calamity.”

How did she know? It was only later that most of us began to realize it!

Outside the Palazzo Sciarra I met Vera walking with Donna Hilda.

“Oh, to think that we were warm at your fireside that night when down there they were freezing!” I began.

“I know, I know!” Vera interrupted. “Can you get me some money for my Belgian nuns? I have raised a thousand pounds already, but we shall need more.” I promised I would try; I knew her nuns to be wise as they are good, and that the money would be well spent. It was our first meeting since the dinner. Vera was pale, with disordered hair and hat awry. I think her jacket and skirt did not belong together. It was a shock to see her, with whom dress is a fine art, so unconscious of what she wore, or how she looked. Donna

Hilda, a Roman, though white as paper, was perfectly trim and smart in appearance.

“You have no one of yours down there?” I asked Donna Hilda. That was the first, the inevitable question that in those days one asked every Italian one met.

“Not I, thank God! But my grandmother has some cousins. She does not know if they are alive or dead. If they are gone, it would be best if they are all gone together. I am more sorry for those that are saved than for those that are killed.”

I shall always think of the Roman Corso—the gay thoroughfare where in the carnivals of my mother’s time the wild horses used to run their race from the Piazza del Popolo at one end to the Piazza Venezia at the other—as it looked that day. I never saw the *barberi*, but I have seen many carnival processions when the balconies of the Corso were full of pretty women throwing flowers and confetti, and the street of young men tossing flowers to the belles in the carriages and balconies. To-day the street was filled with these stern-faced students in their gay carnival caps. Every cart, carriage or automobile that passed carried a student on each step, asking, begging, *demanding* alms! They were no respecters of persons. The Japanese Ambassador, with his inscrutable face, and his wife and doll-like child passed in their unbecoming European dress. They alone looked impassive and indifferent in a crowd where every other face was tense and tragic. The students who stood on each step of the Ambassador’s carriage would not be denied; I could not see in the end if their passion or his passivity won the day.

It was nearly one o'clock when forage wagon number 24 reached the Piazza Venezia. The cart was piled high. The streets were emptying; people were going home to lunch. The students and the tall man with the bandaged throat held a consultation, to decide whether or no there was any use going on with their work. Meanwhile, the bugler, sitting on his stool at the back of the cart, lighted a cigarette and began to read a newspaper. The sight of his sturdy merry face was somehow calming. If the end of the world was coming, had begun, while his world lasted it was for him to blow his bugle!—to call upon the people to give food, clothes, money, everything, *pro Calabria e Sicilia*.

From the first J. refused to read the papers or hear the details, and from the first he said, "I want to go down and dig if I can get the chance, but I don't want to hear about it."

For some days there seemed no chance of his carrying out his wish of "going down to dig." The red tape, the slowness, the utter incapacity of the railroads, the post, the telegraph to cope with the situation seemed maddening; it may have been inevitable, it probably was. He offered his services here, there, everywhere, but martial law had been proclaimed and it was impossible to reach the earthquake region without great influence.

Thursday, December 31st, the American Ambassador, Mr. Lloyd Griscom, despatched the first American relief party from Rome to Messina. The Ambassador himself had hoped to lead the expedition. In those days of anguish when we knew that thousands of lives might yet be saved if only help came in time, it was torture for such a man to sit with idle

hands,—hands that might dig!—no matter how actively he might be working with brain and wits. He soon realized that he could not leave his post; his place was Rome, his work to inspire, organize and plan the American Relief, to dispense the nation's largess!

Major Landis, the military attaché of the embassy, was put in charge of the party. His special care was to search for the bodies of



MESSINA. RUINS OF THE AMERICAN CONSULATE. [Page 21.](#)

Mr. and Mrs. Cheney, our Consul and his wife, and to recover the papers of the Consulate, for we knew now that the Consulate had been entirely destroyed. Mr. Bayard Cutting, our Consul from Milan, was of the party, and Mr. Winthrop Chanler, whose mission was to look up missing Americans. From the moment the news of the earthquake was known in America, the Embassy was besieged by telegrams from people at home who had friends in Sicily. The largest American colony in Southern Italy is at Taormina, only two hours distant by train from Messina. It was impossible for our Taorminesi to send word of their safety to their relations at home, who were torn with anxiety about them. It was at this time we first heard that Miss Catharine Bennett Davis of the Bedford Reformatory was traveling in Sicily and it was feared was in Messina, and of Anne Lee, Dr. and Mrs. Herbert Paton, Harry Bowdoin, Charles King and Charles Williams, all Americans settled in Taormina by Etna, a town at first believed to have suffered severely.

We went up to the station to see the relief party start. The train was half an hour behind time. It was easy to see the impatience of the Americans to be off.

"You have plenty of provisions?" a friend on the platform asked Chanler.

"I have a sack of Bologna sausages, a whole Parmesan cheese, and a case of Nocera water," was the answer.

"Where will you sleep?" asked an anxious wife of one of the travelers.

"We have one small tent, the last in Rome,—all the rest have been bought up,—and several umbrellas."

Food, water, shelter were the three indispensables; they were going to a desert that lacked all these, and the torrential rain that began on the fatal day still continued.

“Try to establish wireless communication between a warship in the harbor and the Marconi station at Monte Mario,” said Athol to a press representative. “If that’s impossible, wire Rome via Malta.”

“Don’t expect news of me till I bring it myself,” one of the travelers called as the tardy train moved out of the station.

It seemed hopeless to expect news. Our first friend to leave was Colonel Delmé Radcliffe of the English Embassy (the famous hunter of lions), who went down on the first train after the disaster. Later several official people we knew and one or two newspaper men followed. After they left Naples we heard no more from them. They disappeared into the blue, and we learned not to look for news of them till they themselves brought it.

As the train pulled out we heard the tramp, tramp of marching men coming up the street—more soldiers for the south. Nearly all the garrison at Messina had been killed; every day regiments of soldiers went down to that grim battle-field, some to lose their lives, all to suffer agonies of mind and body, for as usual the army bore the brunt of the disaster—and bore it well.

As we left the station we met Princess Nadine, called “the first citizen of Rome” by reason of her splendid work for the poor sick children of the city. Something was said about meeting the *profughi* (refugees) who were expected on the next train from Naples. She shook her great benevolent head and answered firmly:

“That is for the rest of you. I must keep to my work. My sick babies cannot be neglected. Everybody else will do for Calabria and Sicily; *they* only have me.”

The Princess was right. She belongs to the regular working army of philanthropists. The reserve volunteer force of the world was already mustering for this world disaster.

A little farther on we met our friend, Lombardi, the great mathematician, carrying a traveling shawl and an umbrella. He stopped to speak to us:

“Just in time to say good-by! I am leaving by the next train.”

“For Messina?”

He laughed—“No, to get *out* of Messina—that’s more than I can do in Rome! I am off for Morocco, the farthest place from Messina I know. The Moors won’t trouble themselves much about the earthquake. I must have more quiet than can be found in Italy this year, if I am to finish my calculations.”

Just as we were getting into our cab outside the station our friend Nerone came along. He looked pale, red-eyed, completely knocked out.

“What is the matter?” I asked. “Have you been ill?”

“Matter?” he cried, astonished at the question. “This thing has made me ill. I had to take a purge and go to bed.”

I never heard that Nerone did anything else for the sufferers—taking a purge did seem an odd way of showing sympathy.

As we drove from the station, past the Baths of Diocletian, we met the regiment, whose measured tread we had heard, and recognized, marching gallantly at the head

of his company, a young captain whom we had often watched drilling his men in the great field across the Tiber. We called him Philippus for that soldier of Crotona the Segesteans found slain among their foes after the battle, and to whose memory on account of his superhuman beauty a temple was erected. Philippus was our neighbor; now that he was leaving it seemed he was almost our friend. The barracks where he and his soldiers lived were near our house. It was their bugle that every night at halfpast ten sounded the call we too obeyed, "Go to bed, go to bed, put out the lights." The soldiers were most of them mere boys with beardless faces. When we should meet again they would not look so young. Those who went down to the earthquake region aged fast as men do in battle.

I haunted the station in those days, watching the departure of the bands of engineers, firemen, doctors, medical students that went down from Rome by every train that left for Naples. From Milan, from Turin, from Florence, from every city or town of northern Italy, help poured down towards the stricken country. The Knights of Malta sent a field hospital and a corps of doctors and nurses. Food, clothes, medicines, tents, nurses, doctors, the great stream of help flowed steadily towards the south. The railroads were not equal to the tremendous strain put upon them, and the congestion of traffic was one of the hardest of Italy's trials. Her people were starving, dying of cold and hunger, while the whole railroad system was congested and the good food and the warm clothes, instead of reaching the poor victims, were shunted on side-tracks or delayed in freight houses for weeks, even months. It was inevitable

that this should have happened; the same thing would have happened in any country. But everything was against Italy. The unheard-of severity of the winter was not the least element of danger and difficulty. The railroad is managed by the Government, that poor overburdened Government that tries its best to carry the great weight put upon it. The strain of carrying south the vast stream of provisions and supplies and of carrying north the enormous numbers of the refugees flying from Sicily was too much for it. What nation, what railroad system could have handled such a situation? One sinister commodity took precedence of all others—quicklime; already the menace of pestilence was in people's minds, for now we knew that in Messina, a city of 200,000 souls, more than half the inhabitants had perished.

On Saturday, the second of January, Athol asked me to visit one of the first families of refugees who had arrived in Rome. I found them in a gaunt new barrack of a house in an arid street of one of the ugliest quarters of new Rome.

"You have some *superstiti* here?" I inquired of the porter's wife, who came out of the little den where she lived and cooked (chiefly garlic it appeared), for her husband and children.

"Oh yes, poor people! You will find them on the second floor. You are not the first who has asked for them." She stopped and looked at me curiously. "Excuse me, you too have perhaps come to inquire for news of some relative down there?"

"No, no, thank Heaven! only to ask if I can do anything for them."