

## The Acorn.

JUNE, 1887.

### TO A ROSEBUD.

BY GRACE DENIO LITCHFIELD.

Oh little timid Rose,  
That if the Zephyr blows  
Tremblest with fear,  
Oh dainty, tender one,  
That blushest if the Sun  
Glances anear,

Yet fragile as thou art,  
The secret of thy heart  
Who thinks to win?  
Closer than bars of gold  
Thy silken petals hold  
The prize within.

And Winds in vain may blow,  
And fiercest Sunbeams glow  
Above thy head;  
For when thy sweet heart lies  
Open to eager eyes,  
Lo, thou art dead!

### The Earthquake at Mentone.

Description of the Event in a Private  
Letter From a Well-Known Cazenovia Lady.

MENTONE, February 27th, 1887.

I am so used up from the shock and all that I can scarcely write ye'; still, I do not like to leave you longer without word from myself directly. It has been an awful, awful time. We can none of us ever forget the unspeakable horror of it. At 6 o'clock Ash Wednesday morning I was awakened by a violent shaking and started up in bed, knowing directly that an earthquake was upon us. The rocking was something indescribable, accompanied by a crash of breaking timbers and yielding walls and the shivering of everything breakable, which deafened the roar of the earthquake itself. And the next instant, as I looked up through the dust into the plaster filled air, I saw apparently all the walls rushing in together over me and felt everything close in over my bed. I thought it was the beams of the house. "The end has come," I said, and tried to draw up the sheet over my head. I thought the house was falling that moment. Strange to say, I was even then not frightened in the least and had none of those frightful outlooks into either the past or future usually

attributed to those in mortal peril. Then there was a momentary calm, and I knew that I was yet alive, and called to —, whose room adjoined mine, to know if she, too, was living. She called to —, whose room opened out of hers, and found he was safe, and rushed in to me and struck a light. The dear girl was a self-possessed and cheery and alert as could be, with all her wits about her. I could not move, being fastened in bed by the weight of plaster and bricks over me. But I then saw just what had happened. The other rooms as yet were comparatively safe, but one of the walls of mine had fallen in over me, bending the iron rods which supported my bed curtains, and were each as thick at least as my thumb, completely doubled over me as were they willow twigs. It was but this which saved my life, as it broke the force of the falling plaster ere it reached me. Otherwise I must have been crushed to death on the spot. The wardrobe, a great heavy "armoire à glace" close by the side of my bed, lay over flat on its face on the floor. The marble slab of the washstand close on the other side was shattered in a thousand pieces, like so much thinnest china. The air was suffocating with plaster dust, and I have not even yet got all of it out of my hair which was completely filled with it, being, as is my custom at night, unloosened and thrown loosely out over the pillow. The whole scene

was as if looking upon one of those desolate ruins at Pompeii.

And then came shock number two, the whole house rocking and shaking again, like a toy in the hand of some subterranean power. I called out to put out the lights, knowing the danger from fire at such moments, but — stood guard over them and we waited breathless till a calm again succeeded, and we realized that we were all still alive and that the second shock had been less severe than the first. What to do next we did not know, for we did not realize the necessity of getting out of the house, thinking the worst over; but I called out, "Dress yourselves as quickly as possible and then get me out, for I cannot move." — called to — to dress, he, supposing the worst was over and not having suffered much in his room, being still placidly in bed. I could not budge, being so hemmed in by the bent rods and enormous weight of fallen plaster, but the next instant Dr. — rushed in and tore me out somehow (I can't think how unless with that superhuman strength lent one at such times) and rushed with me half way down stairs, where he put me in the arms of —, who carried me out into the garden of an adjoining hotel, where she sat down on a bench with me, and Mrs. —, who was already there, covered me with a cloak, and the rest of the party followed in a nearly dressed condition, with rugs and blankets caught up in mad haste, and we knew that we were all safe at last out of that ruined building and realized with an astonishment beyond words that not one of us or any of our friends, though in such danger, had received so much as even a scratch! Everybody's coolness and presence of mind was, I think, something marvelous. As the doctor tore me out of bed, — snatched the jewel case and such valuables as were at hand and followed, and then we all stood together in the early twilight, surrounded by a crowd of fleeing people, semi-clad, and all filled with speechless horror, who, like us, were running from crumbling walls and tottering foundations, catching what they could of garments and possessions in their flight.

The scene is impossible to describe. At first we all sat as we were, almost silent with fear and dread, waiting for the third shock, which everybody said must come; then at last, as nothing happened, the rumor got about that the third shock would not be till three hours later, and temporary courage revived and some few ventured to the houses to dress and to save some of those things that began to look more valuable as life seemed less in peril. We had been directly in the line of the earthquake and by all reports our house had suffered among the very worst and my room the worst decidedly in our house. — and — ventured back and so did the doctor, collecting the rest of the "money bags" (and brandy bottles, which were served freely to the crowd just about us), and a mattress, upon which I was placed on the ground. By degrees tongues were loosened and everybody talked of how it had all come about and some few joked and laughed over it, which seemed still more horrible than to see people sobbing hysterically.

I must say all our household behaved wonderfully, down to the very servants, who all kept their heads marvelously. And at 9 o'clock came the third shock, less severe still, but awful enough, I can tell you. The houses around the open space where we all were rocked and swayed, and the rumble of the

earthquake and the falling of the bricks and plaster and timbers were horrible to hear, followed by a great heart rending cry of all the people. Every face turned ghastly white with a horror of fear terrible of itself to witness, and many rushed frantically into each other's arms and embraced with cries of despair, thinking death was sure at hand. And then again came peace and silence—such a silence. And we all breathed once more. What we were to do we did not know. Many of the hotels were completely wrecked, as were quantities of the villas and houses. The telegraph wires were down; no messages could be sent anywhere. The entire population of Mentone was in the streets and the railway station thronged with an excited crowd of English and other winter guests of the place, all flying for their lives. By this time the line of the earthquake had been made out, and it was known what portions of the town had thus far escaped. Our villa was a wreck. The outside walls were still standing, it is true, but the inside walls had given way from top to bottom, and we were homeless. At this crisis—that is, when we had just begun to ask ourselves where it was safe to go and what on earth we were to do Mr. — appeared in search of me, dreading the shock upon such an invalid. He had no idea, however, of the state in which he would find us; his villa was at the other end of the town and had escaped thus far. Of course there was no guarantee that any place would continue safe did the earthquake return, but every one thought it was best I should go there anyway. So he brought a carriage, in which I was laid, with nurse to support me. — and — walked. So we all came to Villa Fantaisie through streets filled with debris of every description, the houses all empty and ruined on every side, and the excited populace filling every open space everywhere. It was a sight never to be forgotten. Most of our friends were homeless, like ourselves, and were being temporarily burdened by those whom the earthquake had spared. No one, however, dared venture upon the upper stories to sleep. Hundreds and hundreds, though spared by the earthquake, were too frightened to venture within walls at all, and prepared to encamp outdoors in bathing houses along the shore or in tents in the public squares or just on the ground anywhere. The shocks were continuing at intervals, though much less severe now; still each rumble of the earth and accompanying shake was enough to set every heart—even the calmest—beating wildly.

The shocks continued, though in vastly diminished intensity, all night long, doing no further damage, however, and by 5:30 the next morning (Thursday) a good final shake had everybody up and dressed and walking about to see what might not have happened elsewhere. The Randalls spent the night in the garden, but by the next night moved into one of the very few hotels which had been spared and pronounced safe. House after house (our own, of course, of the number) were examined by the officials and pronounced unsafe for further occupancy, and soldiers guarded streets which were unsafe for travelers. Thousands of people left the place, abandoning bag and baggage, many of them. The shops are all closed and the season is emphatically at an end. Such an earthquake has not been felt here for ages, and the mystery is that so much damage could have been done and

comparatively so few lives lost. I believe no one has been killed at Mentone, though the place is pretty much one big ruin. At this end of the bay matters look a little better, however, and confidence is gradually returning to us, who have resolved to brave it out, feeling that the worst is certainly over and not knowing how to better ourselves by moving, nor where to go to be safe, as it seems equally risky to be on a railroad at the time of another earthquake, if there are to be more, and if not we might as well stay here as to go into any other of these widely desolated regions. The officials have examined all buildings, and

we have decided to move into another villa near here as soon as it can be gotten ready for us. The shocks continued all Thursday and Thursday night, and even until yesterday, but very slight ones; many of which would have passed entirely unnoticed at any other time when we were less on the *qui vive*, and by now we have all recovered life and courage and spirits, too. There was service this morning (Sunday) held out doors, as all of the churches were condemned. Everybody feels or at least hopes now that the earthquake is quite at an end.

## ST. NICHOLAS.

JUNE, 1887.

### THE SONG OF THE MOSQUITO.

BY GRACE DENIO LITCHFIELD.

HUM! hum! I 'm coming, coming.  
Don't you hear me humming, humming,  
Like some distant drummer drumming  
    His tired troops to sleep?  
Rat-tat-tat, and hum-hum-hum,  
Near, more near, I come, I come,  
With some to dine, to sup with some,  
    With all a feast to keep.

Hum! hum! I 'm coming, coming.  
Don't you hear me humming, humming?  
Don't you feel me thrumming, thrumming,  
    'Round and 'round your head?  
I am choosing some fair place  
In that field you call your face,  
There to rest me for a space,  
    While supper shall be spread.

Hum! hum! How neat you are!  
Hum! hum! How sweet you are!  
Hum-m! hum-m! Too sweet by far!  
    I 'll dally for a bit.

Try you there, and try you here;  
Taste your chin, your cheek, your ear;  
And that line of forehead near,  
    Ere settling down to it.

Hum! hum! You can not say  
I sup and dine, and do not pay.  
Behind me, when I go away,  
    Just here, and here, and here,  
I 'll leave a tiny, round, bright spot—  
A brand-new coin, laid down red-hot,  
In full return for all I got.  
    I pay most dear, most dear.

Hum! hum! I 've supped, and rarely  
And you still are sleeping fairly.  
Hum-hum-hum! We twain part squarely,  
    All my dues I pay for.  
One more taste, and one more sip,  
From your eyelid, from your lip,  
Then away I 'll skip-skip-skip—  
    There 's nothing more to stay for.

IT had  
bre  
olives of  
steel-bl  
down on  
if at all,  
just end  
making  
of dream  
ness of  
the boor  
ing of  
accomp  
rumblin  
train th  
And th  
questio  
violent  
the wor  
and wa  
sprang  
the pla  
earthqu  
china a  
timbers  
human  
asunde  
imagin  
den aw  
destru  
The  
less th  
but in  
myself  
fallen  
but fo  
protect  
on the  
and f