

European Impressions of a First-Tripper

By Rev. Adolf Kuit, Pastor Swedish Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Omaha.

NAPLES. — What is there that makes Italy such a land of charms to the traveler? The landscapes do not, as a rule, offer anything extraordinary. Comparatively speaking, Italy is rather a treeless country. True, there are gardens of luxurious growth, and there come patches of woods that feast the eye. All in all, though, the scenery cannot be said to be eminently beautiful, yet, who does not love Italy? I thought of this again and again as I traversed the corn prairies of Illinois, a fair copy of Illinois, and over the swamp and slough lands from Rome to Naples. Here and there a scene of marvelous glory breaks in on the vision and delight you entirely aside from the commonplace that historical memories and art give to the commonplace in Italy, land of charms. Of all these Naples stands pre-eminent.

For panoramic beauty of location, romantic customs of the people, absence of even rudimentary ideas of cleanliness, and coral jewelry, the city of the Neapolitan bay surpasses all other Italian cities. It is in fact, sort of a amphitheater by the blue Mediterranean. Then you look a little on solemn, tracheous Vesuvius standing there threatening the peace and joy of this region of peace and scenic splendor. Right opposite it at the other end of the semi-circle, the indescribably lovely hill present of San Marino bring back present happy scenes of mind, as a lovely scene always can.

It's a unique experience to drive right into the namelessly filthy quarters of the old city. In the shop and business districts on the slopes. How a people that live such a life of squalor can be artistic, wonderful race that the Neapolitans are cannot be explained in one book or a dozen. If you are a wise traveler you avoid—and that is not pharisaism either—touching this populous mass of Naples, if you wish to see of mind and body, for they surpass all one's former notions of Neapolitan neglect. But when the soft, cool evening comes and little groups of street singers appear on the fashionable seashore boulevard, you could stand still and listen to the strange songs of Naples, those melodies of sorrow and mirth peculiar to this region. But you always avoid coming too near the singers.

At the same time it must be remembered that even in Naples there are spots where culture and cleanliness unite. People of refinement seem to be plentiful in this prosperous Italian seaport. I was very much amused at the notions of our America cherished by an educated and successful Italian lawyer, whom I met on one occasion. To be told that the United States is a country 1,000 years behind time, and a bigoted land, our treatment of Maxim Gorky cited in proof, certainly tests one's patriotism. The gentleman appeared to be at a loss to comprehend that the United States could compare with Italy in matters of, for instance, religious liberty. I tried to explain that conscience freedom was a true American ideal, but my recital of arguments was ceaselessly interrupted by view-points that to an American lacked all force, though they certainly astonished one. A very great advantage of travel is the chance of having all your former

conceptions of life, one after another, ridiculed by the merciless bullets of a logic that results from a conception of things wholly foreign to your own. The attorney belongs to the new Italy of a new patriotism born of a time when even Italy can breathe air of religious and intellectual freedom.

Few visitors to Naples omit a trip to Pompeii. How we love the tragic in life, love it, yet fear it. Pompeii partly excavated ruins attract men from all countries of the earth. It is a very hot spot in summer, even warmer than Milano, which has a bad reputation for heat. But you can spend four or five hours, or a day of pleasure and profit in Pompeii. Its sights engrave themselves on your memory. You comprehend old Roman life better than in Rome itself, as here ancient Rome comes to view in a city of wealth, pleasure and progress. In the great museum of Naples the finds are being stored and arranged except the houses and such portions as would give a vivid historical idea of the actual look of old Pompeii. Many a superb mosaic pavement lies there intact, and fountains and statues remain to enliven the scene. With only a trifle of imagination it is not difficult to reconstruct the city in your mind. If only naughty old Vesuvius will be kind enough to postpone his pranks until all the city has been excavated. He looks rather suspicious though. There must be some good, old-fashioned Roman, though, in the people that persist in living about Vesuvius after all the desolation it has wrought. But the soil has marvelous fertility, and everything is risked always of course in the hope that the grouchy old mountain will not pour out his vials of wrath just in that particular direction. Somewhat south of Pompeii Italy offers a sight which Athens alone can match and surpass, the Greek temple of Paestum, on a very desolate and malarious plain by the sea. Three structures of old Grecian art stand there quite near the shore, one of them a miracle of beauty and a fair state of preservation. Coming from Rome, with its pompous, often over-gilded and gaudy churches, to this Grecian plain and beautiful severe work, awakened in me a living sense of the inward secret of high art, beautiful simplicity in idea and plan. Our mercantile art will never attain to anything like a masterpiece before the Grecian ideal of beautiful simplicity conquers our rather barbarian inclination to seek results from wealth of material and over-decoration. That tendency runs all through modern art, exceptions, of course, to be noted. As the man of literature must first rise into classic periods to find high ideals, so should our men of art train themselves, first of all by the old Grecian models, not to copy them, but to derive the secret of powerful art. Why should flimsy Paris and Parisianism be the first dominating impressions in an artist's soul.

I pass by the delights of a most exhilarating trip to Anagni, Sorrento and Capri, and go on, by a very tiresome road to the very lovely city of Pisa, somewhat north of Rome. On a plain stands this once most famous city. Her attraction is a series of church structures, absolutely unique; a cathedral, a campanile (bell tower), a baptistry, and a campo santo

(cemetery). This is certainly the loveliest collection of harmoniously organized ecclesiastical buildings conceivable. Here Romanesque, with slight Gothic additions, triumphs beautifully. The Grecian ideal of simplicity and conception, and the medieval ideal of richness of ornamentation meet here in a perfect union. There is every reason for travel on Italy, as it unites in one land almost all styles of art from the Grecian of 2,000 years ago to the latest Italian work, for example, the unfinished Victor Emanuel monument. Marble and alabaster things are astonishingly cheap in Pisa. We cannot comprehend how Italians can execute those dainty things at such low figures, but the artistic genius is so contagious to the Italians that they have inherited the artistic brains of generations of artistic men and women. Just as the street Italian often shows a refinement of bearing and gesture, which comes as a mental and physical inheritance, so even very ordinary Italians, otherwise illiterate and ignorant, feel quite at home in artistic occupations. Culture is more an inheritance than a school product.

Italy has one railroad achievement of greater horror perhaps than any stretch in Europe, the line from Pisa to Genoa. Most of this distance leads through tunnels that choke you, nauseate you, anger you and test the very last efforts of patience on your command. And the creation of railroad engineering is what is fearful, but travel must not only furnish speed and safety, but comfort is also a desirable adjunct. I imagine that I am not the only person that would like to ask the Italian engineers of that grim road what they meant by creating a line so unpleasant and even terrible as this. My advice to fellow travelers would be to get out of the car, to sit in the air, or walk on foot, anything to avoid the road to Genoa. It is absolutely my most horrible travel memory.

Genoa's location reminds one of Naples, but cannot match the beauty of the Neapolitan bay. I went to Genoa for one purpose only, to see the cathedral, a masterpiece of pure Gothic art, which is built in the form of arched rectangular structures on a beautiful hillside. The general architecture is quite good, but modern Genoa understands money-making far better than the creation of truly artistic sepulchral monuments. Commercial realism of often the baldest kind reigns and rules in the campo santo. It is a north Italian and modern enemy of the south Italian ancient temple of Paestum. Here and there a masterpiece of art remains to view. On the whole the campo santo proves how much modern Italian art has fallen behind the great ideals of the past.

It was refreshing to leave the Genoese campo santo, and its many sentimental and utilitarian and artistic monuments for a second look at the miracle of deathless beauty, the cathedral of Milano, and then for the almost matchless semi-Alpine Italian lakes. One advantage of travel is freedom of choice. You need not take larger doses of travel than you wish. The world is full of beauty and delight, in nature and in art. To choose well is itself an art, and the art of travel may, perchance, not be the least of cultured pursuits.

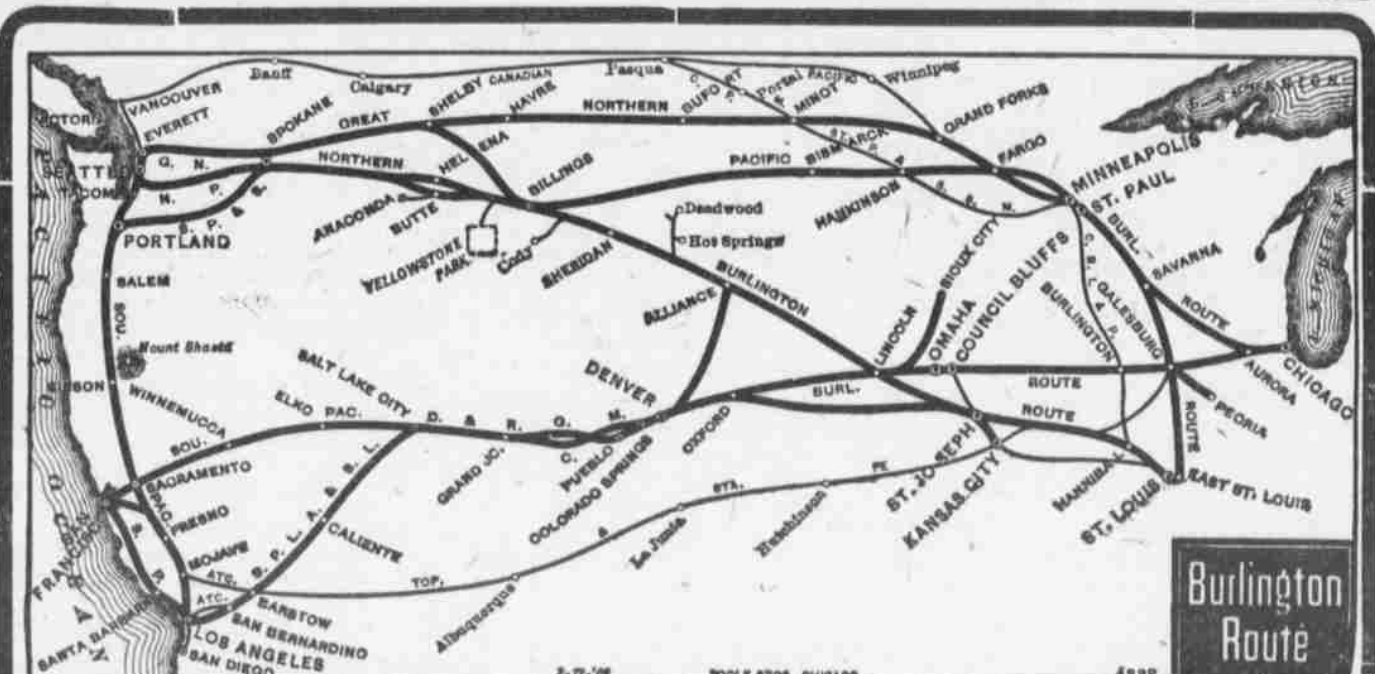
the limit, but except what Aldrich voluntarily yields to them they will not receive; neither will they be displaced until he voluntarily retires—which now seems probable in Bill. Moreover, it is safe to say that the one thing which will prevent his retirement at the end of the present term—if anything prevents it—will be the demands of his colleagues, absolutely insisting that he remain. They will demand that he remain in the body long enough, though many of them love him, that there not in the senate or the country a man who can fill his place. Some individual senators think themselves perfectly adequate and capable, but no other senator thinks so of them. No one can be suggested who would not have an overwhelming majority in opposition. But there must be someone at the head.

How He Obtained Mastery.
For every combination, corporation, club, there is a dictator. Neither anarchy nor nihilism could be without a controlling card, and centralization of power is the cause and effect of successful dictatorship. The senate has always had a dictator and always will have one, and the man best fitted for the position will hold it, in time, if he remains in the body long enough. But the climb, Aldrich is not what he is by any accident or political chicanery. He came to the senate nearly twenty-eight years ago, from four years' service in the house, and before that he had served conspicuously in his state legislature. It is the judgment of a lifetime, of his constituents, and the judgment of his senatorial colleagues—weightier than the snapshot things: level headed, imperturbable, unemphatic, but a man of marvelous clear, cold, dominating, executive ability. He knows what he wants and he gets all he can of it. His invariable calmness and good nature are not artificial. Nothing disturbs him. When the tariff fight waged its fiercest and he was made the target for every blow, he would quietly slip away from the senate, if a set speech was under way and there was no chance of a vote, go over to the new office building, where the finance committee has an elaborate array of rooms, shut himself in the one devoted to his individual use, quietly lie down and take a nap. In the prostrating heat, when the end was at last positively in view, I came upon the senator looking as cool and fresh as if he were on the deck of his yacht. I said to him:

"You must be very tired, senator, and glad that adjournment is fixed."
"No, indeed. I am not tired," he said. "The tariff matter is settled; and it is growing pleasantly. I shall be glad for the business interests of the country, to have the little monotonous, but I am not tired," and he was not. There was not a man in the senate but looked more fagged. Then when the end came and he started for his beautiful Warwick, it was precisely the same as when he took a nap. He directed his clerks not to forward to him any mail except what was strictly personal. He left the whole business behind him, and if I am sure of anything I am sure that he immediately forgot all about it as thoroughly as he would forget a winter suit when he turned to a spring wardrobe.

The following vote showed the same old majority—from eight to a dozen—which Aldrich held from the beginning to the end, with very few exceptions. Nevertheless, Aldrich left for Warwick not in the least defeated, knowing, as he knew from the beginning, that he was the best disliked and the best abused American at large, still shoulders and smiles, and when a friend ventured to suggest an explanation, a defense or a reply, always making the same reply, "What's the use?"

Solid in Rhode Island.
And for the other fellow, too. What's the use? You may hate Aldrich and you may hit him, but you can't hurt him. For public opinion he cares not a straw. He is as firmly founded in Rhode Island as the eternal hills. They may not love him; they may not worship him, but they know that the interests of the state are better off in his hands than they could possibly be in any other—and so they are. He is as firmly founded in the senate. Insurgents may insure, ranters may rant, earnest and sincere progressives may progress to



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Out of the smoke and dust of the tariff fight every one, from the president down, has emerged more or less perplexed and uncertain as to just where he is standing and convinced that the most important part of the fight lies yet before him—explanatory and apologetic. Constituents do not seem so enthusiastically with them as they thought. Democrats and republicans, insurgents and insurgents, all are finding that they lost something of the proper perspective at close range, in the heat of the conflict, and are chiefly concerned, just now, in efforts to convert those for whom they thought they were fighting—all but one. Just one of the combatants knew before the start exactly where he would finish and came out of the fight precisely as he expected—just one: Nelson W. Aldrich—the most disliked and the best abused of all participants in the fray.

No Apologies from Him.
Senator Aldrich has been muck-raked from the cradle up, assailed, arraigned and denounced—with more or less fire for so much smoke—but he has never explained or apologized—and he never will. He undertook tariff revision knowing perfectly well that he was directly "in the line" of fire. He knew that he would be personally denounced, the country over, for whatever there was in the tariff that any one disliked. He knew

and ferociously as his chances of success grew less. Aldrich keeps a sharp eye on the enemy and many a time he has beaten a graceful retreat, only to appear again with the same bill under another dress—or after some of the opposition had been quietly converted behind the scenes—and carry it to success. His currency bill, in the last congress, was beaten. Another bill was sent over from the house. When it was presented to the senate, Aldrich rose, in his inimitably quiet way, and offered an amendment striking out all after the first clause of the bill and substituting what was really his own old bill. The only difference was that in the meantime he had "found" new supporters. The amendment was carried, supported in conference, with a few trivial changes which made no difference, and became a law.

Master of Manipulation.
A leader he is not. A standpatter he is not. But what he is is a manipulator and organizer, a keen-eyed, marvelously shrewd, far-seeing manager of men and things: level-headed, imperturbable, unemphatic, but a man of marvelous clear, cold, dominating, executive ability. He knows what he wants and he gets all he can of it. His invariable calmness and good nature are not artificial. Nothing disturbs him. When the tariff fight waged its fiercest and he was made the target for every blow, he would quietly slip away from the senate, if a set speech was under way and there was no chance of a vote, go over to the new office building, where the finance committee has an elaborate array of rooms, shut himself in the one devoted to his individual use, quietly lie down and take a nap. In the prostrating heat, when the end was at last positively in view, I came upon the senator looking as cool and fresh as if he were on the deck of his yacht. I said to him:

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