

name. It is as though we should march up to some fair unknown on the street who pleases our fancy, and demand of her, "Madam, what do you call yourself?"

"Perhaps this epidemic of curiosity is only a source of amusement to its object. I can quite fancy her peeping elf-like through the lilac-hedges that guard her fairyland, laughing at her perplexed hordes of admirers!"

It is not very strange that suspicion should have first lighted where it did. Any one who owns a photograph of the Princess Pless may see in the lovely and mischievous features of that spirited young woman much the sort of face that he would expect of Elizabeth—refined and vivacious, though the type of one whom the world and its gauds are considerably more attractive than flower gardening—lieutenants than solitude. But the publishers say no, and suspicion goes hovering elsewhere.

A letter in the Times Review of New York announces with a conclusive air that Elizabeth is the daughter of an Englishman, that her mother was an Australian and her childhood was passed in Australia. If that be true, it may account for various things in her books that puzzle the observant reader. Australia is an unknown quantity to the mass of Americans; my own ignorance about it is immense; but I always thought of it as being chiefly British in atmosphere, slightly tainted (if you will permit the word) by other nationalities. And that is just the way the "Solitary Summer" and the "German Garden" have impressed me. Their language is nearly perfect; the correctness of "Queen's English" most of the time, with a certain "rangy," breezy quality that is generally thought more American than English. Indeed, my first conviction on making acquaintance with these books, was that they must have been written by a highly educated American with a remarkable feeling for Nature.

How in the world anybody could imagine Elizabeth to be a German is beyond understanding! If anyone born and educated in a country not English-speaking should make such use of the English language as Elizabeth does in her books, it would be, in brief, a miracle. It is inconceivable that a German, brought up in Germany, could even by any chance become so saturated with our idiom. Nor would it be at all usual for a German child, as the artful Elizabeth paints herself, to receive such thorough initiation into both the English and French languages. She would perhaps study them with her governess, and learn to read and speak them; but to make them a part of herself, like her own—hardly.

That very insistence on her German extraction makes us suspicious of our fair Unknown. Why does she remind us so assiduously that she is "only an ordinary German woman"—"a respectable German lady"—"a humble German"—"u. s. w.?" Why, oh, you respectable German lady, do you write your charming, *geistreiche* chapters in English? why, at any rate, do you write them so well?

"Elizabeth touches up, with light flicks of friendly satire, some of the foibles and eccentricities of her so-called countrymen and women. It is some thing of a proverb that we are blind to our own oddities and our countrymen's. Can you imagine a German *Hausfrau*, for instance, docile and domestic after her kind, realizing and satirizing the inanities of her *Kaffeek-latsch*-ing friends, or the momentous part that "das Essen" plays in their lives, as Elizabeth so merrily holds it up for our amusement? Remember the lady of long descent whose passion for the "crackling" of roast goose is chronicled in the "Solitary Summer;" and

with what gusto is told how she used her knife and fork—"with the awful dexterity only seen in perfection in the Fatherland." Is it credible that any child of the Fatherland could see that with the satirist's eye? or having seen, would find in her heart to chuckle over it in public? Elizabeth is taquine—perhaps she might be capable of it—I don't know.

"Something she would surely not be capable of, if she were an out-and-out Teuton, is that paragraph touching on the "Sorrows of Werther;" wherein she recalls how Lotte, in a wave of emotion stirred by the beauty of nature after a storm, laid her hand on Werther's and murmured "Klopstock"—over which hand and word the impressive youth dissolved his tears. Elizabeth's meditation on this incident is an amusing bit. The delightful whimsicality with which she mingles her sense of humor and her poetic sentiment! She wonders, with a twinkle under her pensive lashes, whether, if her "Man of Wrath" were present and she should murmur to him "Klopstock," he would "immediately shed tears of joy over her hand!" But it is the name of the poet that stirs her risibilities, after all.

"Now, what German born would ever be conscious that "Klopstock" is a droll word? Is it a droll word? Not to me, who am not even a German. I don't remember that any German word has ever struck me as droll. Why? Undoubtedly because, as a child, my brightest stars shone on a German Christmas-tree; the scent of its wax-lights among fir boughs is still the sweetest scent I can recall; the accents of those who lighted them year after year were the accents of the *Vaterland*; and year by year did *Undines* and *kobolds* weave their spell around my little New England brain. I know that the German speech is supposed to fall harshly, sometimes comically, on Saxon and Latin ears; and belike it may on some, but never, never on mine! And would Elizabeth have us believe that if she had grown up in the very land of *Undines* and *kobolds*, her ears and heart filled with its pleasant gutturals, its deep musical vowels and rich rumblings in the throat, it would ever have occurred to her that "Klopstock" was a droll word? Never, Elizabeth, never!

Further, how many German *Fraus* may be supposed to realize the unquestioned deficiencies of their lords and masters in the superficial graces of the cavalier? Elizabeth may accept with meekness (*sic*) the somewhat mediæval views of her beloved Man of Wrath on the feminine status, and she apparently never expects him to open a door or carry an umbrella for her, nor pouts when he lets her spend six weeks in a convent under repairs, with a dinner-bell for her sole safeguard at night; but through all her records of that commanding gentleman breathes the clear-eyed tolerance of affection—not the blind matter-of-course docility where-with custom and tradition have endowed the wives of Germany. All through her pages you find an undertone of playful malice in her illusions to him—recognition of and concession to the feelings of the "beloved object," precisely as would be the way with one of us American wives in similar case, and not in the least injuring the very distinct and admirable picture we receive of a typical well-born son of his Fatherland.

"Our fair recluse tells with glee the favorite luncheon of her best friend—exquisite woman and musician—which consists of beer, pork chops, and cabbage-salad with caraway-seeds in it. And adds: 'What better proof can be needed to establish the superiority of the Teuton than the fact that after such meals he can produce such music?' Figure to yourself a genuine *Hausfrau* saying that! Was one ever known to

breathe a whisper of disrespect against so national, so representative a meal? To make light of cabbage salad with caraway-seeds! *Schrecklich!*

"Are we all taking Elizabeth too seriously? I believe myself that she never expected us to think her a German, but simply made a transparent pretense at it, that she might behind the screen say more freely whatever flitted through her head about her adopted country and its ways. For otherwise, why not have studied to deceive us by foreign constructions of speech? And I protest—as she says—I have found but one small phrase in the two books which even suggest that a German might have written it. If by any strange chance she is a German, what better compliment could she ask from an Anglo-Saxon?"

"There are phrases, now and again, that are not quite English either—not quite perfect English, that is. It is a little surprise, for instance, to hear her speak of 'catching' cold, of 'lunch' and 'lunch-time,' or using a phrase like 'not but what I may,' etc. But those are so slight flaws in her charming language that really it is too bad to notice them. I clung, for a time, to the thought that she might be a compatriot, and found several things to bolster the theory. I did not know that anybody read Thoreau outside of America, nor, often, Holmes or Hawthorne. Probably my ignorance again.

"She has a jauntiness and energy, a frankness of approach that are very characteristic of our American young women. But lo! to this she joins the brilliancy and verve of the Frenchwoman, the talent for poetic friendliness of the Italian, and the romantic passion for Nature and Mother Earth of the German!

"O many-sided Elizabeth, mischievous spirit, how you must rejoice at our mystified condition!

"De Musset, in one of his poems—'Dupont et Durand,' I think—makes a critic say, 'how sweet it is to depreciate everything!' Generally, I think that is true; reviewers know the fierce joy of slashing their way through the piles of helpless books, and serving them up brown to the public. But who could or would slash at so winning an aggregation of sweet fancies, piquant phrases, and curiously vivid word-painting of the face of nature as we have in these garden-books? Who can find anything in them that would not defy depreciation?"

"Let us take pleasure in them as we should in the garden itself, and thank the light-hearted author for sharing a part of her fragrant, delectable life with us. If she persists in hiding among her rose-bushes, and ever baffles our longing to know her name, let us try to submit gracefully. We will admire blindly, and wish for her nothing less than that her days should, as she charmingly says of lilac and acacia-time, 'melt away in a dream of pink and purple peace.'"

SANTIAGO DE CHILE.

BY MARIAN SMITH.

Santiago, October 10, 1900.

It is said that in spite of the healthy location, climate and water supply the mortality of this city is three times that of London, and that under ordinary circumstances a child born here has but one chance in seven for life. Just now this death rate is increased by epidemics of measles and typhoid fever, which, with their complications, leave hardly a household without anxiety for some of its members. Last month five hundred deaths were reported from measles alone and five thousand children were said to be ill with them, causing public schools and liceas to be closed for the present week.

Healthfulness has little to do with

the lives of the poorer classes of Chileans. They have no understanding of cleanliness, either in their housekeeping or personally and during the winter suffer all the ills which come from exposure to dampness and cold. Their houses are built of unbaked mud bricks which have a marked tendency towards caving in on wet days and are at all times abounding with fleas. The floors are often of earth and usually below the level of the street and are swarming with illy cared-for children.

In the raw wet days of winter everything here seems to leak, from the coaches and street cars to wealthy dwellings, an annoyance unmitigated by any sort of artificial heat. As one wades along the streets in mid winter there are many windows wide open and people, huddled in all their available wraps, gazing placidly and immovably at the passers-by. For pure gazing abilities and plenty of time to use their talent, recommend me to the Chilean population! A Chilean house in winter, unless rain is actually falling, is more comfortable outside than in, for the rooms of the fine houses are large with high ceilings, cheerless places which it would be a difficult and expensive task to heat comfortably even if it were the national custom to make the attempt.

The chief danger to the public health and the thing which must be largely responsible for the present state of the city is undoubtedly the system of open sewerage which is the sole relief of a city of 450,000 people. There are occasional attempts made to remedy the trouble, but Chilean politics has not yet reached that ideal state where money voted for a public purpose reaches its intended destination.

The weather in Santiago now is almost like winter and a heavy rain is falling, although it is a month past the eighteenth of September, the holiday when people are supposed to begin wearing summer clothes and to revel in a dry summer weather. The *Diez-y-cho* season was an unprecedented one. Five years ago the whole great Alameda was lined with drinking and dancing booths and fairly paved with men made drunk on chicha, but this year almost the whole demonstration was confined to the park where the *rotos* had their cuecas, dancing and chicha drinking, the government troop their military parade and sham battle, and those who could afford it rode sedately back and forth in beautiful carriages and toilets which would have caused a Paris fashion plate to hide its head for dullness.

It is queer how "becoming accustomed" changes one's point of view. Last year wandering out in the crowded park looking on at country couples dancing and waving handkerchiefs slowly around their heads, the men looking all sorts of unutterable things,—merely as part of the dance and the women looking demurely and changelessly at their feet; the interim of drinking chicha from a common and immense glass; the gaily dressed girls pounding harps and guitars or clapping their hands; the motly mob of people trailing in and out, all seemed like being at some new sort of opera, but this year it seemed inexpressibly cheap and coarse.

This year the president, who is in his last year of office, did not appear at the national festivities, his place being filled by the vice president. President Errazuriz is universally unpopular, and is said to be afraid of assassination. A few months ago when he was very ill, and it was rumored that he was dying, many people began to cheer. He is said to have even married his wife, an exceedingly unattractive woman, for her fortune, and is generally admitted to have bought and paid for his position as head of the government.

That it is the nature of the South American, as well as of other men, "to