MISS HESTER STEWART WRITES INTERESTINGLY OF TRIP ABROAD

Dear Friend:

I am having such a wonderful trip enroute to the World's Sunday School Convention at Glasgow, Scotland, that I wish I could share it with all my friends; for, really, I am getting more mental food than I can digest.

The trip across the Atlantic was on the Gunard Liner "Berengaria," which is one of the largest and fastest ships afloat. This ship is 919 feet long, and has every modern equipment, such as elevators, swimming pool, etc. It has a crew of 1,000. There are four wireless operators. A twenty-eight page paper, containing the world's news, is printed on the ship. The Berengaria maintains a speed of about twenty-six miles per hour, without a stop from New York to France.

At Paris I joined the other members of the tour party, and spent five days in and around that city visiting places of interest such as the Palace of Napoleon I; museums and art galleries; went on top of Eiffel Tower. Eiffel Tower is the highest structure ever built by man. The observation platform is 910 feet from the ground and will accommodate 200 people. We also visited the palace at Versailles where the Peace Conference was held; saw the table on which President Wilson and other dignitaries signed the Peace Treaty which closed the World' War.

We visited the battlefields and spent some time on the famous "Hindenburg Line." We went in a concrete "blockhouse" where the Kaiser, Crown Prince, and Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorf held a conference for an hour on April 25, 1925.

We visited Rheims on the battle front which was a city of 120,000 population when the war started and where the destruction was so great that only 14 houses remained unhurt. We were told in Rheims that over 7,000 women, children and old men not in the war were killed when the city was bombarded. We went in the famous Cathedral of Rheims, which was torn to pieces by the German shells. Then we visited one of the most noted points on the battle field known as "Hill No. 108." There we saw holes in the ground 6, 8 and 10 feet deep where the bursting shells had torn the earth up. For miles the earth is still torn up in an almost unbelievable way. There are hundreds of acres on the battle fields where not a foot of ground remained unbroken by shells.

Next came a visit to Tours, which is about seventy-five miles southwest of Paris. This city is in one of the oldest sections of France and many old castles from 1,000 to 1,500 years old are scattered through this part of the country. From Tours we traveled in automobiles some 150 miles, visiting many of the castles. Among others we visited the old castle in which Joan of Arc visited the king. Many of these castles are not only more than a thousand years old, but are still furnished with the old furniture and priceless tapestries hundreds of years old. Some of these castles have [illegible] from [illegible] to ten [illegible] the expense of the direct [illegible] of the peasants. In the old castle [illegible] taken place many of the [illegible] events in the life of France. Many of them are large and [illegible] on large estates. For example, [illegible] we visited [illegible] and it took 1,800 people fifteen years to build it. We were told [illegible] price paid the workmen [illegible] to finish the work four centuries ago. The stable was built for 1,200 horses. This castle is on a 15,000 acre estate, surrounded by a stone wall more than 21 mile long.

Monte Carlo which is in the extreme southern part of France about 800 miles from Paris, is noted the world over as the "World's most famous gambling resort." It is also one of the most beautiful spots in the world. It is situated on a bay and a mountain side. Thousands of tourists go there who have no interest in gambling. While no member of our tour party took any interest other than curiosity in the gambling business, it was arranged for the whole party with dozens of others to be shown through the "Casino", the most noted gambling house in existence. Here at tables and wheels of chance hundreds of people were sitting gambling "big stakes and small stakes." From 20 to 30 people at each table, with almost as many standing around the table. We were told each person had only one chance in thirty-six to win, yet millions of dollars change hands daily. The place is also nicknamed "Suicide Center," because so many people lose all and then commit suicide. Few palaces are so handsomely furnished as the Casino. The surroundings are very attractively arranged—parks, flowers, music, drinking houses, etc.—everything to attract the wealth of the world, and many wealthy people come but find no happiness. One of the most interesting things is to watch the faces of the gamblers. No noise or loud talking. All speak in subdued tones, almost in whispers. It is interesting to watch a woman arrayed in the finest clothes that can be bought, wearing thousands of dollars worth of diamonds, go and spend a fortune for gambling chips and then sit at the table and win once or twice and see the expression of satisfaction on her face, then watch her lose and go for more chips, with such a different expression. Or watch a man do the same, and as he turns away see the agonized look on his face. Never a smile from a gambler. The set look as though a tragedy was at hand seems to characterize those who play. Our party left the Casino with a real object lesson that "gambling people are not happy people."

From Monte Carlo we visited Nice, France, a combination commercial and tourist town on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. From Nice we went to Genoa, Italy. This trip was a wonderful panoramic view, for the railroad skirts the coast of the Mediterranean for more than a hundred miles. On one side of the train is the "blue Mediterranean" Sea; on the other side in the valleys are ripe cherries, oranges and lemons. Roses are abundant. The farms while small are in excellent condition. Up in the foot hills olive trees cover the hillside, while further up are grapevines terraced like seats in a baseball park. Then far back, about seventy miles away, are the snowcapped peaks of the Italian Alps.

In Genoa, Italy, which is the chief seaport town of Italy, and a city of about 300,000, were many things of interest. Space forbids that many be mentioned. First in importance in Genoa, to all Americans is the house in which Christopher Columbus was born. This house is about 700 years old, and was not kept any better than any other house for centuries, but now the Italian Government has it protected as a relic. It is a stone building of two stories, with small windows. Another point of special interest in Genoa is "Camp Santo" cemetery. It is an acknowledged fact that the Italian people are the best sculptors in the world, and the statuary in this cemetery is conclusive proof. Instead of tombstones and shafts of stone as we have in American cemeteries, many of the graves in this cemetery at Genoa are marked by life size marble statutes of the dead, and often by whole family groups. One grave had a family group of eight, all life size and said to be almost as good liknesses as photographs. The work is so artistic that even the seams show in the clothes and tears are on the faces of the members of the family who are crying. The work is so accurately done that the texture of the cloth shows as silk, or whatever the material happens to be. This, remember, is cut out of white marble.

Pisa, Italy, is the city of "Leaning Tower." There is no historical account as to why this tower leans; however, the fact remains that this tower which is 179 feet high is 14 feet out of perpendicular. This tower is more than 700 years old, and is one of the original seven wonders of the world. Seven members of our party started up the winding staircase, but only two actually reached the top. It was from the "Leaning Tower of Pisa" that Galileo got the idea of gravitation, and from a swinging chandelier in the cathedral near by he got the idea of the pendulum which is so extensively used in clocks today. The same old chandelier is still in use in the cathedral.

From Pisa we went to Rome. In Rome we caught the spirit of the early martyrs. In the old Coloseum our party tried to think back and remember that here in the first century after Christ hundreds of Christians were wrapped in straw and tar, put on poles and burned as living human torches, while hundreds of others were torn by wild beasts. Here innocent women were put in the arena and large lions were turned in to tear them to pieces, while Nero and 150,000 spectators looked on and enjoyed the scene as people today enjoy movies. The only crime charged against these innocent, defenseless Christians was that they believed on Christ and would not worship pagan gods. These Christians would have been set free if they had only renounced Christ, but they remained faithful to the cause and sealed their faith with their lives. While the old Coloseum has not been used for any purpose for hundreds of years it is in a fairly good state of preservation.

The Catacombs, which are really miles of underground passage ways, where the early Christians resorted to worship, and which were used as burial places, were of special interest to us who are journeying to the World's Sunday School Convention.

On the "Appian Way," which is the old Roman road leading from Naples to Rome, Paul traveled to Rome as a prisoner on his last journey to the city. The "Appian Way" is said to be the oldest road in the world still using the original road bed. We walked a short distance over this road on some of the old original stones put down by the Romans before Paul's day. These stones have been used as a road bed for more than 2,000 years. It is almost certain Paul walked over some of these same stones as he went to Rome.

We also visited the "Mamotine Prison" in Rome, and went in the dungeon in which practically all Bible scholars, both Protestant and Catholic, agree that Paul was imprisoned when he was in Rome as a prisoner. It is also generally conceded by practically all Protestant Bible scholars that it was in this prison and dungeon Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy. This prison and dungeon seemed such a sacred place, a prayer was offered by one member of our party.

Making Sunday School speeches through an interpreter was also a privilege at Rome on Sunday, May 18. Prof. E. Philippine, Sunday School Secretary of Italy, knowing that two workers of the North Carolina Sunday School Association were to be in the city had arranged and both spoke at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Rome. The Superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church spoke good English and translated our addresses. This Sunday School is in excellent condition. Good singing and the school is well classified. This is the Church in which the World's Sunday School Convention was held in 1907. Immediately following the service at the Methodist church we were taken to the Baptist Church where Rev. D. G. Whittinghill is in charge. Here we both spoke at the eleven o'clock hour. Dr. Whittinghill has been a missionary in Italy about twenty years and seems to have a better general knowledge of religious conditions in Italy than any one we talked with. The people were generous in expressing appreciation for our efforts at speech-making at both churches. Rome has a population of about 750,000. Of these about 5,000 are Protestants, one in one hundred and fifty, practically all the rest are Catholics.

While in Rome we visited the Vatican Palace, where the Pope lives. This is said to be the largest and most expensive palace in the world. We were told that there were more than 1,100 rooms. More than half of these are used as picture and art galleries, for in the Vatican Palace are some of the world's greatest paintings and religious pictures. Many of these are pictures of the early martyrs and scenes of the executions of the martyrs—in fact almost a history of the early church in painting. Our tour party was shown through several hundred rooms of the palace by an English speaking guide.

St. Peter's Cathedral at Rome was our next point of special interest. This is the largest and most costly church in the world, costing approximately $50,000,000 when money had a purchasing power of about five times its present value. The size and grandeur as well as the architectural beauty of St. Peter's Cathedral is very impressive. The Church is 639 feet long, built in the form of a cross.

After Rome we spent four days in and around Naples, Italy. Here we saw poverty and wealth, ignorance and learning as next door neighbors. A nice house with luxuriant flowers, ripe oranges and lemons in the garden, while over the wall next door may be poverty and filth in great abundance. This city of about 800,000 population is far from being sanitary. Late in the afternoon cows and goats are driven along the streets by their owners who ring a bell to attract customers for the milk which they milk and deliver "fresh with the foam on it." In certain sections of the city the streets are crowded with children, dirty and poorly clad. Boxes of macaroni, piles of bread, baskets of ripe cherries, and other vegetables on the street seem to be in a contest to see which can get the most dust. Very few automobiles, travel is by street car and carriages.

From Naples we visited Pompeii, some eighteen miles away. This was a thriving city of about 30,000 inhabitants completely destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius in A. D. 79. For 1,600 years the city remained about 20 feet underground, but in the last four hundred years excavations have cleared away the ashes and lava, and now the city stands with some of the houses almost complete. The paintings on the wall of some of the houses are in good condition. The cooking utensils, the pottery, the tools in some of the work shops, are still in a good state of preservation. The sudden and complete destruction visited upon Pompeii caused some of us to think of what the Judgment Day may mean.

Next we went to Vesuvius which is one of the largest if not the largest, volcanoes in the world. Words fail in an attempt to describe the scene. Four thousand feet above the Mediterranean Sea, some miles away. The roar and gurgle down in the crater was a sound never to be forgotten. Over on the far side of the crater, about half a mile away was a smaller cone or mountain. This smaller, or active crater is possibly 2,000 across and from it comes at intervals a gust of flame, smoke and melted rock, going high up in the air.

Next we took a day to visit the Island of Capri, and its wonderful "Blue Grotto." The next day was used for coast south of Naples. This trip led coast sout of Naples. This trip led through the orange and lemon orchards, and also gave us an opportunity to see what the earthquake in March of this year did on the mountain sides. We saw one place where nearly one hundred people were killed.

At Florence, Italy, we visited the two most noted picture galleries in the world. Some one has said, "In Florence there are seven miles of priceless paintings."

From Florence our schedule leads us on to Venice and Milan in Italy, then through Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and England, then to the World's Sunday School Convention in Glasgow, Scotland.

Yours sincerely,
HESTER STUART.

TWO NORTH CAROLINA MEN KILLED IN GEORGIA

Vance Henson, of Candor, aged 20, was instantly killed, and Fred Smith, of Henry, N. C., was very seriously injured near Washington, Ga., last week when they were run over by a train of the Georgia railroad. Smith suffered the loss of his left leg above the knee. Members of the train crew state that the two young men were in the employee of a saw mill near Washington, Ga. The engineer claims that the men were lying across the main line of the road using the rail as head rest when his train rounded a curve about 200 yarls south of the station. Smith told hospital officials that he had a wife and child residing in North Carolina.

Farmers of Caswell County are growing Abruzzi rye for seed this year as a result of ten bushels being put out in that county in half bushel lots two years ago, reports County Agent J. L. Dove.

Gerald Johnson, who for many years has been connected with the Greensboro News, is slated to become professor of journalism at the University of North Carolina. His election to the position by the board of trustees is expected at an early date. The executive committee have been on the lookout for a man for this position and from all indications Mr. Johnson as perfectly capable of filling the shoes for this job. Mr. Johnson is a native of Davidson county, having been raised in Thomasville. It was in Thomasville that he did his first newspaper work. His parents, Dr. and Mrs. Archibald Johnson are still living in Thomasville. For many years Dr. Johnson has been editor of Charity and Children.

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