Daisy in Exile
The Diary of an Australian Schoolgirl in France 1887–1889
INTRODUCED AND ANNOTATED BY
Marc Serge Rivière
DAISY IN EXILE
To LYNDASY

‘To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour’

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Virginibus Puerisque, 1881, ‘El Dorado’
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Daisy in exile: the diary of an Australian schoolgirl in France 1877–1879.

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Finally, my special thanks must go to Dr Paul Hetherington and the Publications Committee of the National Library of Australia for agreeing to publish this edition of Daisy White’s diary, to Leora Kirwan for her meticulous editing and preparation of the manuscript for publication and to Anne Wakefield who designed the book.

—‘And say my glory was I had such friends’—W.B.Yeats
FOREWORD

The discovery of Daisy’s White’s diary has unearthed, for me, another facet of White family history. I am extremely grateful to Serge Rivière, a French professor living in Ireland, who became interested in the diary of a 16-year-old Australian girl sent to school in Fontainebleau, near Paris, between 1887 and 1889. The discovery of Daisy’s diary and the ensuing research undertaken by Professor Rivière has made me become increasingly interested in the life of Daisy’s father, Henry Charles White, who, in the 1860s and 1870s, managed the rural estate ‘Belltrees’, where I live, in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales.

In 1842 Henry Charles’ father, James, died and responsibility for his wife and numerous children fell on the shoulders of his eldest son, also James. Although only 14 years old at the time, James White Jr coped well and managed to expand the White family pastoral enterprise. Historically, the significant achievements of James White have tended to overshadow the roles of his younger brothers.

Like James, Henry Charles White (1837—1905) also inherited a sound knowledge of selecting good pastoral land and of breeding quality stud stock. He was the first to import Rambouillet sheep into Australia and continued breeding the ‘Havilah’ stud sheep started by Nicholas Paget Bayly. H.C. had a fine herd of Shorthorn cattle at ‘Woodlands’ as early as 1870 and in 1874 he imported 11 of the best Devon heifers from England. In 1884 he brought in a fine Angus bull from New Zealand, as well as selecting and breeding successful thoroughbred racehorses.

On 18 April 1875, Daisy’s mother, Isabella, died suddenly after the birth of her sixth child. Two weeks later, on 4 May 1875, H.C. White lost his elder brother, Francis, who died of pneumonia. In only a short period of time Henry Charles was left with an extended family and added financial responsibilities. Under these adverse circumstances it is understandable that, whilst on holiday in Tasmania in 1877, he married again. He was 40, and his young bride, Mary Helen Macmillan—a milliner—was aged 20 years. The bride brought her sisters to live with her at ‘Havilah’ in New South Wales and
subsequently bore Henry Charles five children. Daisy and the other children by H.C.’s first marriage became unsettled in their new home life and so Daisy and her younger sister, Helena, were sent to school in France.

Since marrying into the White family, it has been my interest to research and create the archives. In relation to the women in the family, there are albums and anthologies dating back to the early nineteenth century and there is an armorial by Mary Hannah (née Cobb), wife of Francis White, done in 1876. Daisy’s diary of 1887–89 has become a valuable addition to the extensive family collection, not the least because it is often difficult to find references to women in the rural record books.

I wanted particularly to research and discover more of the life of Daisy’s stepmother, Mary Helen White. Then to my surprise, on 15 October 2002, I received a letter from Sister Margaret McKay, the archivist of Kincoppal–Rose Bay School of the Sacred Heart, asking me to assist her in some research. (In 1994 Sister McKay came to ‘Belltrees’ and helped me serialise the whole of the ‘Belltrees’ archives.) On this occasion, she wanted to finalise the story of a little girl named Hal Owena White who had died from a fractured skull after falling over the banisters of the Rose Bay Convent on 26 September 1909. Her widowed mother, Mary Helen White, had been obliged to go overseas
and left the child at the convent during her absence, with the following provisos: that Hal was not to be taught any religion; that she was to be dressed always in white; and that she was to take a nap each day alone, in the room approved by her mother. Upon her return from overseas after the tragedy, Mrs White spoke with deep appreciation to the nuns of all that had been done for her daughter while she was away. This girl was Daisy’s half-sister.

In 2001 Professor Rivière came to Australia and visited the rural properties of ‘Belltrees’, ‘Havilah’ and ‘Glenalvon’, which Daisy had called home. Rivière made a connection between the diaries of Daisy White and the works of the winner of the 1973 Nobel Prize for Literature, Patrick White, another member of the family, who was sent to school in Europe at a young age and resented the ostracism.

It is interesting that the thoughts and writings of a teenager will now enable the reader to compare life in France and Australia in that era. In spite of the cultural and social differences between the late 1880s and today, there are many who will be able to relate to her story.

Personally, I am very honoured that Serge Rivière has invited me to write the Foreword to Daisy’s diary. I think his determination to find the truth about the dilemma of Daisy’s life and his ability to combine academic research with candour, insight and understanding are admirable.

Judy White AM, PhD
‘Belltrees’, Scone
January 2003
INTRODUCTION

Between two cultures

FROM THE ANTIPODES TO FRANCE WITH (NO) LOVE:
CULTURAL DISPLACEMENT

In their introductory remarks to The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing, Ros Pesman, David Walker and Richard White have underlined the relevance of travel to a full understanding of "the experience of living in Australia and to giving that life a meaning." To migrants arriving in Australia, as much as to Australians travelling abroad, travel was, and is, a way of forging new identities and has been justifiably described by Frank Moorhouse as "an encounter with one's nationality." It is, of course, also an encounter with one's own identity that includes national feelings. In his thought-provoking book, Through Australian Eyes, Andrew Hassam has turned the spotlight on the "construction of Australianness outside Australia and ... the plurality of cultural identity", arguing with great conviction that "the cultural displacement of travelling abroad was a necessary part of the process of forming an Australian cultural identity." The Eurocentric vision of nineteenth-century Australian travellers, the diverse motivations that led chiefly middle-class women to travel to Europe "in pursuit of their own agendas" and the wide range of personal reactions to new cultural experiences in the "temples of European culture", have been expertly analysed by Ros Pesman in her book, Duty Free: Australian Women Abroad. Pesman concludes: "There is no Australian "identity", only "identities", and these have been forged abroad as well as at home, in contact and collision with others, as well as in isolation." It is not my intention to deal at length with the phenomenon

2 ibid., p. xxiv.
Henry Charles White
(1837–1905)

Daisy [Monday 21st, 1889]: ‘Father wrote to me on Sunday to tell me how glad he was I had got the bee. Darling old Daddy!’

Photograph courtesy of Mrs Jay White, ‘Havilah’, Mudgee, NSW

Group photograph of the Macmillans and the Whites at the wedding of Mary Helen White, née Macmillan and Henry Charles White in Launceston, 10 March 1877

Photograph courtesy of Mrs Jay White, ‘Havilah’, Mudgee, NSW
of nineteenth-century Australians travelling abroad; this has been examined in
detail by the scholars mentioned above, and by many others. However, the
diary of Margaret Isabel ‘Daisy’ White enables us to revisit some of their
conclusions.

Statistics tell us that Daisy was one of around 200 000 arrivals in Europe
from Australia and New Zealand between 1876 and the end of the century.5
Australians visiting Europe during this period were, according to Andrew
Hassam, ‘overwhelmingly from the middle classes and often quite well-
connected in Britain’.6 K.S. Inglis quotes from the British Australasian of
23 November 1905: ‘Advertisers are reminded that only people with money
travel to and from Australia. When Australians arrive in London they want
many things—the best of jewellery and clothes—the ladies the best of English
models in costumes and of French models in millinery’.7 The periphery was
thus moving to the centre, and Australian perceptions of the centre were as
important as the vision of Australia promulgated by British visitors from
the centre.

Europe remained, for all white colonials, ‘the great measuring rod of
civilisation’, as Pesman and her fellow editors have judiciously noted.8
According to statistics for British citizens arriving in British ports from
Australia, kept by the Board of Trade and quoted by Inglis, the annual total
rose from 2000 in 1876 to 10 000 in 1887. Of these, one may surmise that a
large number would have belonged to the category of ‘Australian-born,
making a visit and intending to return home’.9 And perhaps as many as 60 per
cent of Australian tourists were women.

When they landed in March 1887, Henry Charles White and his wife,
Helen, were quite typical of Antipodean visitors to Europe. They were
wealthy pastoralists, middle-class in outlook, and they later made repeated
journeys to Europe before the end of the century. The Whites had
Eurocentric values and—more specifically—British values. However, unlike
many Australians, the Whites did not first visit England, but went directly in
the Natal to Marseilles, via Aden and the Suez Canal which, since its opening
in 1869, had reduced the crossing from three months to one. The Whites were
bound for Paris where they were to place their daughters in a boarding or
finishing school, although it is unlikely that they had chosen the school before
leaving Australia. In travelling to Europe for the sake of their daughters’
education, the Whites were representative of a number of Australians. What

5 A. Hassam, op. cit., p. 3.
6 ibid., p. 112.
Australia, Visible Immigrants Series no. 3, ed. D. Fitzpatrick. Canberra: Australian National University, 1992,
p. 120.
was unusual in their case was that they were to leave the young girls, Daisy, then only 16 years old, and Helena Henrietta (known to Daisy as Dorothy), two years younger, in a school named Les Ruches at Avon, near Fontainebleau, without residing close by to give them initial support. Family circumstances explain this seemingly harsh treatment of the teenagers.

It is useful to analyse Daisy’s diary in the context of Australian women’s motivation for travelling to Europe, while at the same time heeding the warning, issued by Pesman et al., not to generalise: ‘When it comes to Australians’ experience of overseas travel, any attempt at reductionism is doomed.’10 In Duty Free, Pesman offers a variety of explanations for women’s travel: ‘Until very recently independence and agency, exploration, adventure, travel in pursuit of knowledge, sexual identity, and self-formation, were forbidden to women.’ Generally, in the nineteenth century, family duties, visiting relatives, accompanying their husbands and children, and the latter’s education, would seem to have been women’s chief motivations. In his survey of Australians in the United Kingdom, K.S. Inglis wondered how common it was ‘for Australian parents to send their children [i.e. sons] for education in the UK’ and concludes that this became less frequent, as ‘passable imitations of English public schools were established in Australia, and that was happening by the 1870s’. He goes on: ‘For the lucky ones among the sisters of such young men, the polishing agent was not a university but a Grand Tour, which, if The Bulletin is to be believed, some Australians pronounced Grong Tower.’11 The Grand Tour and cultural tourism, the acquisition of professional qualifications and skills, provided increasingly cogent reasons to travel from 1880 onwards. Excluded from bush culture and androcentric activities on stations, women sought independence and self-advancement through travel, especially when marriage ceased to be the only option for middle-class Australian women. Travel to the centre, in Pesman’s view, constituted an important step towards the ‘acquisition of badges that proclaimed status, refinement and culture’.12

Paris at the time was a favourite destination for young Australian women seeking to train professionally as musicians or artists. Ethel Richardson, the future Nellie Melba and several others received formal training in music, but the much sought-after general polishing did not stop there. Lady Elisabeth Mitchell and her sister, dispatched to Europe in 1881, benefited generally from visits to Switzerland, Austria and Paris.13 Most Australian women travelling through Europe were seemingly more open to ideas and cultural

10 R. Pesman et al. op. cit., p. xxiv.
11 K.S. Inglis, op. cit., p. 121.
experiences than their male counterparts. So was Daisy, who would have agreed fully with Hemingway's pronouncement: 'Paris is a movable feast'.

Unlike many of their older contemporaries, Daisy and Dorothy White had no choice in the matter of their travel destination or in the location of their two-year exile. They did not leave Australia in search of adventure, self-advancement, self-fulfilment or independence; they were simply told they had to go abroad. Cultural experiences came their way through organised school visits to art galleries, museums, theatres, monuments and shops in Paris and Fontainebleau. Although she was immersed in French culture, 'home' for Daisy was neither Europe nor Britain, as the latter was for many Australian travellers. Her 'spiritual centre' remained the family home in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales—some idealised composite of 'Woodlands' near Denman, and 'Glenalvon' near Murrurundi, with a select cast.

Early on in the diary, the focus of Daisy's 'cultural displacement' is on self-knowledge through introspection. Her case may be said to be symptomatic of a postmodern condition and is representative of women's travel narratives generally. The diary therefore sheds light on an internal journey and the forging of a new identity, at once Australian and cosmopolitan. Those of us who have visited, or resided in, a foreign country for any length of time will recognise the excitement, the sense of estrangement and the trials involved in coming to terms with notions of the 'self' and the 'other'. Daisy's increasing lapses into Gallicisms, both consciously and unconsciously, are part of this gradual construction of a cross-cultural identity. The difficulties of negotiating a foreign language did not inhibit Daisy who, from the start, had a very good command of French language and culture, as demonstrated by her use of idioms and quotations, and by her imaginative coining of Gallicisms. If, as the cliché states, travel broadens the mind, G.K. Chesterton's pronouncement remains undeniably true: 'They say that travel broadens the mind; but you must have the mind.'

In considering Daisy's *drame bourgeois*, one must not lose sight of the two disparate and distant worlds she inhabits, both, in some measure, a construct of her imagination: first the pastoralist, colonial and conservative setting of the Hunter Valley, and then the culturally stimulating French atmosphere of Paris and Fontainebleau, that existed 'out there', beyond the restricted environment of Les Ruches. The influence of these two cultures, equally 'familiar and yet strange', to use Hassam's expression, is what gives a unique flavour to the drama, in which, as in school performances, Daisy chose to play the lead role.

J.A.C. Willis

*Map of New South Wales 1881* (detail)
Sydney: Surveyor General's Office, 1881.
col. map; 56 x 66 cm
National Library of Australia Rare Map Collection

Messageries Maritimes, *S.S. Natal in the Suez Canal*
State Library of New South Wales, Dickson Gregory Collection PXD 519
Daisy [November 29th, 1887]: 'There was a most glorious sunrise this morning, the most splendid I have seen since we left the dear old Natal,'
Photograph courtesy of State Library of New South Wales
Slowly but surely, introspection and reflection on the crossing of cultures helped her to impose 'a sense of wholeness on the disparate and transient concept of selfhood'.

AUSTRALIA: FAMILIAR ALLIES AND STRANGE NEW FOES AT HOME

Patrick White: 'Coming to think of it, I am almost the only renegade from the land my family has produced.'


The Whites of the Hunter Valley—a prestigious pastoralist family

When Daisy White set out from Sydney in the Natal on 19 February 1887 for her unwanted adventure, she was accompanied by three other actors in the events that were to unfold over the next two years: her sister, Dorothy, the other 'victim', her stepmother Mary Helen White, and her 'darling old daddy', as she calls him in her diary—Henry Charles White. It is fitting, therefore, to give a profile of each of the four protagonists, and of the supporting cast back home near Mudgee and in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales.

Of the four abovementioned, none was more prestigious and held more sway in the colony than Henry Charles White, who was born at 'Ravensworth' on the 25 March 1837 and died at Hobart on 24 February 1905, two years after Daisy. H.C.'s pioneering father, James White (c.1801–1842), was from Somerset and with his wife, Sarah Jane, nee Crossman (1801–1877), made his entrance onto the colonial stage at the age of 25 in July 1826, with a cargo of stud sheep for the Australian Agricultural Company. James White's groundbreaking work, the hazards of bush life that he faced, his major achievements as a resolute and resilient pioneer—first at Stroud from 1826 to 1829 and later at 'Edinglassie' near Muswellbrook—from 1839 until his death at the age of 41 in 1842, have been analysed by Judy White in her insightful study, The White Family of Belltrees.17

What concerns us more directly here is the impact that James' son, our diarist's father, had on his family, particularly his first family with Isabella Mary Ann Lowe. H.C. as he was affectionately known among his siblings and in the White family, was a very influential pastoralist and a paterfamilias whose decisions had major repercussions on the lives of his children, even if Daisy gives the impression in the diary that the real powerbroker was her stepmother, Helen, the second Mrs White.

Henry Charles White (H.C.) and Isabella Mary Ann White, née Lowe

Henry Charles White was allowed to spread his wings early in his career, when he travelled to Europe. He went to sea in 1850 at the age of 13 and visited China, Sumatra, the Cape of Good Hope and England, where he spent six months before returning to the family home at 'Edinglassie' in 1852. In 1857, while his brothers took firm control of most of the family's properties, H.C. was given the responsibility of overseeing the 'Boorooma' station, also owned by the White brothers, on the Barwon River, and in 1859, he purchased 'Terridgerie' station in the county of Bligh. The year 1860 was to prove an important turning point in his life, as he joined the firm of James, Francis and Henry Charles White, before taking over the management of 'Bando'. Judy White remarks that at this stage, 'the Belltrees estate was managed by Francis White, while the elder brother James was involved in political life, travel and the supervision of other pastoral runs along the Namoi and Barwon Rivers in the north-west of the Colony. The younger brother, Henry Charles, supervised "Woodlands" near Denman and "Bando" near Gunnedah.' At 'Bando', H.C. began to develop a high level of managerial skill and expertise in wool production, what Dr White has described as 'a knowledge of good stock and good land'.

At the University of New England and Regional Archives in Armidale, New South Wales, there is a manuscript diary of Henry Charles White that deals with his activities at 'Bando' from 1 April 1861 to 9 February 1863. This would be of special interest to researchers working on the development of the wool industry in New South Wales.

Isabella White, whom Henry Charles had married on 17 January 1861 at St Paul's Church, Maitland, was the daughter of a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, Alexander Bell Lowe, originally from Scotland and at the time living in West Maitland. Robert Donaldson, a White employee, had a great deal of affection and respect for her: 'Mrs White often ministered to the wants of the station people, and [was] a real white woman. She was not particularly good looking, had very pretty red hair which she wore in long curls over her shoulders.' In 1863, the first daughter, Emily Jane, was born and Isabella gave birth to Marion Cecil at 'Bando' two years later.

By 1868, Henry Charles White had purchased the 'Woodlands' and 'Wallon' estates on the Hunter River. The family was to reside at 'Woodlands' until 1875, when Isabella White died after giving birth to a healthy boy, Frederick George Hunter White, known as 'Georgie', on 18 April 1875.
following notice appeared in the Deaths column of the *Australian Town and Country Journal* on 24 April 1875: ‘On April 18th, at Woodlands, Denman, Isabel Mary Ann, the wife of Henry Charles White Esq.’, while another notice appeared in the Births column: ‘On April 18th, at Woodlands, Denman, the wife of H.C. White Esq., of a son.’\(^\text{24}\) Isabel [or Isabella] White had, by then, given birth to four daughters and two sons. Concerning her death, Robert Donaldson’s memory is faulty, since he named the newly born boy as Henry Hunter White, but he added quite correctly, ‘Mrs White’s death took place on a property named “Woodlands”.’\(^\text{25}\)

Following Isabella’s death, H.C.’s family moved to ‘Glenalvon’ estate near the town of Murrurundi. Daisy never mentions her mother, who would have looked very much like her and from whom she appears to have inherited her long reddish hair. But she does have happy memories of ‘Woodlands’. On hearing of its sale in 1889, she expresses her deep sorrow in her diary: ‘It is a great disappointment to me, for I should so have loved to go back there, and see the dear old house, and the orchard and the river. I can remember a great deal of it, although I was only four and a half when we went away.’\(^\text{26}\)

Choosing not to live at ‘Belltrees’, Henry Charles developed ‘Glenalvon’ as a central point between ‘Bando’ and ‘Belltrees’, the estates he was now called upon to manage simultaneously. Always an aesthete and a man of vision when it came to architecture, Henry Charles set about building a workman’s cottage and sandstone stables, designed by the celebrated architect, John Horbury Hunt. These stables have magnificent features, such as rose windows, solid wooden floors and the usual trademarks of John Horbury Hunt’s creative genius. The *Maitland Mercury* of 17 May 1889 reported: ‘The splendid stables upon the estate were built during his [H.C.’s] proprietorship; and at one time, a magnificent mansion was contemplated to replace the old fine stone house built in Mr Brodie’s time. The plans were prepared but afterwards Mr White sold “Glenalvon” to Mr Campbell.’ ‘Glenalvon’ can be visited today, and tourists can still view the workman’s cottage, against the romantic backdrop of the Liverpool ranges.\(^\text{27}\)

It was at ‘Glenalvon’ that Henry Charles furthered his expertise in breeding thoroughbred horses, after building up the ‘Woodlands’ stud at Denman. When Henry Charles’ brother-in-law, John Pensford Luke, a bank manager at Murrurundi, was forced to sell the ‘Glenalvon’ estate, consisting of 2000 acres that he had acquired on 1 May 1867, Henry Charles came to the rescue of his sister, Sarah White (1832–1899) by taking over the property.

\(^{24}\) 24 April 1875, p. 674, columns 2 and 3.
\(^{25}\) op. cit, p. 12.
\(^{26}\) Daisy’s diary [p. 205]. From this point on, references to page numbers in the diary will appear in square brackets.
\(^{27}\) David and Primrose Arnott invited me to visit the property in 2001; the latter was nee White. See *Maitland Mercury*, 17 May 1889.
H.C. White's fame as a studmaster was eventually both national and international. It was perhaps during a business tour to England and France in the early 1880s that the notion of sending Daisy and Dorothy to boarding school in Europe took seed. Could it be that sufficiently strong links between France and the Whites led them to choose the name 'Paris', and that of 'Louis XIII' for another splendid and smart horse?28

Daisy had fond memories of 'Glenalvon' and horses; she remembers intimate exchanges, when she was six, with her little sister Dorothy, about the prospects of Alice Macmillan, her aunt by marriage, being swept away by Paul Hunt [p. 230] and the family being rid of her for good. She dreamt of being happy once more with H.C. in the last two sentences of the diary: 'When I go home, I'll ride about with father and look after the station. It's a man's work, and will rest me from all the French finnikineries that one has to put up with here.' [p. 232]

Although Daisy associates her father more readily with thoroughbreds, it was as a sheep expert that he first made his mark in the 1870s at 'Belltrees' and in the Upper Hunter Valley. Judy White remarks: 'By 1878 Henry Charles White, the sheep expert for the family, realised that Belltrees was in need of a larger woolshed and commissioned John Horbury Hunt, to draw plans for a new 40-stand shed.'29 This impressively designed building can be seen today on the 'Belltrees' estate; details of the hand-blades on the roof bear the hallmark of its architect and testify to H.C.'s vision.

Much earlier, in the 1860s, H.C. had commenced using 'Havilah' or 'NPB' rams at 'Bando' and 'Belltrees'. For 40 years prior to his death, Mr N.P. Bayly, former owner of 'Havilah', had positioned himself as the premier breeder of New South Wales. It was not surprising, therefore, that when the 'Havilah' estate came on the market in 1881, Henry Charles jumped at the opportunity to purchase it at a cost of £80,000 (according to Australian Town and Country Journal of 30 July 1881), for 'Havilah' wool had, by that time, won many awards both at home and on the London market.30 Having acquired Prince II, a first-prize-winning ram, in 1875, Henry Charles became one of the most influential sheep breeders in New South Wales. At 'Havilah', he erected 150 miles of seven-wire fences and subdivided the estate into more than 40 paddocks, thereby making possible his other bold venture of becoming a Shorthorn breeder. So successful was he at this last venture in the main Hunter district and Sydney shows, that he was forced to retire from exhibiting

30 "Our Studmaster, Mr Henry Charles White, Havilah", The Sydney Mail, 9 August 1884, p. 257. See also Australian Town and Country Journal, 30 July 1881, p. 207.
cattle in 1880 through lack of competition for first prizes.\textsuperscript{31} No doubt, Daisy was aware of her father's high profile as the 'Havilah' rams expert, but she displays little interest in sheep or cattle; on the other hand, when she hears that her father has given the go-ahead for riding lessons at Les Ruches, she can hardly contain her joy. \cite{p. 216} She also makes a number of passing references to equestrian displays at the Fontainebleau 'Carrousel' (military tournament), in which the local cavalry schools took part each year. \cite{p. 143} If she is acutely aware of the drought of 1887–1889, which finally broke in April 1889, giving respite to the folk back home, \cite{p. 216} it is not so much the prestigious position of Henry Charles, the pastoralist, that she evokes in the diary, as the much-loved and affectionate father: 'I wish I could see Father. His letters are very like angels' visits.' \cite{p. 106}

The White family's residences also figure prominently in the diary: 'Edinglassie' in Muswellbrook, where Cecily visited her aunt Jane White; 'Woodlands' and 'Glenalvon' that were held in such deep affection and regarded as places where Daisy had been happy before the Macmillan invasion of 1877, and of course 'Havilah', near Mudgee, purchased by Henry Charles in 1881, after his second marriage. An anecdote has it that the word 'Havilah' was first spoken by Reverend J. Günther who went picnicking and prospecting with a party on the property of Mr N.P. Bayly. The Reverend, washing a dish, thought he had discovered gold and said 'Havilah', which in biblical language means 'gold'. It was then that Mr Bayly changed the name of the property to 'Havilah'.

The second Mrs White no doubt felt that, despite a fair number of rooms—the coach house, store rooms, stables and barns—'Glenalvon' was neither large nor comfortable enough. She had, clearly, grand English ideas and wanted a residence in keeping with her large family and her husband's high social status. Once more, it was to his friend, John Horbury Hunt, that Henry Charles entrusted the task of erecting a large addition to the 'Havilah' residence, Mudgee. A call for tenders was published in \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} of 11 October 1884: 'Plans and specifications on application to John Horbury Hunt, Architect, 85 Pitt-street, to whom tenders are to be addressed noon, 24th instant.'\textsuperscript{32} One year earlier, a similar notice had been placed in \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} of 16 January 1883.\textsuperscript{33}

The additions commissioned in 1883, were finally built soon after, in 1884: 'What was built were the existing two-storey, arcaded guest wing, the kitchen wing and the two-storeyed servants' wing,' according to an

\begin{footnotesize}
\item[31] ibid. See also C. Massy, \textit{The Australian Merino}. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin, 1990. 'Henry White, an old buyer of Havilah rams, bought the flock and property on N.P. Bayly's death in 1881 and immediately began to put more development and nourishment into the sheep. He also experimented, and both Tasmanian and Vermont-type sheep went into the Havilah flock until the 1900s, when buyers reacted against them.' (p. 622).
\item[32] 11 October 1884, p. 3, column 2.
\item[33] Page 2, column 2.
\end{footnotesize}
'Havilah, the Residence and Property of Mr N.P. Bayly'
Reproduced from Town and Country Journal, 18 March 1876
National Library of Australia, Pictures Collection

'Glenalvon' stables, c.1879, designed by John Horbury Hunt and built by H.C. White
Photograph courtesy of David and Primrose Arnott, 'Glenalvon', Murrurundi, NSW
entry for ‘Havilah’ in the recent publication John Horbury Hunt, Radical Architect, 1838–1904.34 ‘Havilah’ is still occupied today by descendants of the White family.

What did Daisy think of the improvements? Her attitude remained paradoxical, if one were to judge by the tone of her observations in the diary. She had very fond memories of the old house, especially her stay during the last fortnight of February 1887, before she started on her journey for Europe. She wrote of the time ‘we five spent there with Father’, and declared her love for the house: ‘I do so love the place.’ But she quickly added: ‘It pains me so to think that very likely when I go back there it won’t be home anymore.’ [p. 221] For not only would the older sisters have left by the time she returned but, more especially, ‘the house is quite altered already with new carpets, painted walls, engraving, English furniture. I hope they will have polished floors; it’s idiotic in the north of France, but very practical in our hot climate.’ [p. 150] In spite of Daisy’s clear reservations about the ‘new régime’, as the long wintry months ebbed away slowly, ‘Havilah’ remained ‘home’ and all she had to fall back on. On the last page of her diary, she mused in July 1889: ‘Next year, who knows? I may be at “Havilah”.’ [p. 232]

Henry Charles had, by 1885, grown tired of his managerial responsibilities at ‘Belltrees’ and had delegated this taxing task to his nephew, Henry Luke White, the son of Francis White.35 Although Henry Charles continued to be involved, it was not long before he sold over his interests to his nephews, the firm of H.E.A. and V. White.36 He remained a wealthy man and upon his death, which occurred in Hobart on 24 February 1905,37 he left an estate of £230 331, presumably to his second wife, Helen.38

Mary Helen White, née Macmillan

Mary Helen Macmillan, the daughter of James Coutts Macmillan and Mary, née Overall, was born on 4 January 1857 in Hobart and had, in the view of the White family, come a long way. She was a 20-year-old milliner when she married Henry Charles in 1877. He was twice her age.

Several members of the White family regularly spent their summer vacation in the cool climate of Tasmania. A diary in Francis White’s hand exists today at ‘Belltrees’, in which the author tells of many pleasant days spent with his wife, Mary Hannah, née Cobb, and young Arthur, during December 1871 and part of January 1872. In her own diary, Daisy recalls happy days spent

35 J. White, The White Family of Belltrees, p. 44.
36 Ibid., p. 47.
with friends and family in Hobart, especially the Garretts, and Lucy Garrett in particular, who was probably a Hobart or Launceston schoolteacher. It was not surprising, therefore, that Henry Charles should have met and married a Tasmanian.

Still less surprising was the strength of unhappiness felt by the two ‘exiled’ younger girls, Daisy and Dorothy. When, in 1877, the new stepmother and her two sisters, Alice Macmillan, who married Paul Hunt after 1889, and Nancy, who married Captain (later Colonel) Rotherham, took possession of ‘Glenalvon’, and subsequently of ‘Havilah’, life changed for the children of Isabella and H.C. White.

It is necessary to guard against judging Helen (as she was known) White too harshly. Although she sent her two young stepdaughters away to France, she probably did so because she saw herself as a cultured, middle-class European woman and wished to prepare the girls for a middle-class life back in Australia. And some of the polish of Helen and of Les Ruches undoubtedly rubbed off on Daisy and Dorothy in their later lives.

Nevertheless, whatever Helen attempted to do for the girls was treated by them with suspicion and mistrust, once they were in France. Helen’s visit to the school on Saturday, 14 January 1888, the day after Dorothy’s birthday, was described at some length by Daisy. It was just before the stepmother was due to leave for Australia on 2 February 1888, and the account of the visit reveals the formidable barriers that existed between the stepmother and her charges. She brought a number of presents: a handsome Russian leather writing case; a China sabot (shoe), a fan made of muslin, sewing cotton, buttons, French stamps, an English pound, and a likeness of herself that ‘looks rather pretty for her’. But the sting is in the tail, where Daisy’s real feelings surface: ‘Some old cards and photos she didn’t want;—8—some scraps which I shall utilise in photograph-frame making. Whew! There goes the midnight cats out on the roof!’ [p. 76] Later, when she sensed that she was close to freedom and to a long-awaited return to the family home, her hostility towards the instigator of her miseries over two years became no less apparent: ‘If the house gets too hot to hold me—as I shrewdly suspect it will if I don’t knuckle under—I’ll go out as governess, or else marry the first chimney-sweep that’ll take me, if it’s for nothing but the pleasure to see the scandalised look of the respectable part of my family.’ [p. 206] The ‘respectable’ former Macmillan could not win; one suspects that Daisy, the rebel and prodigal daughter, made a quick exit after returning home in 1889, since we know that she was living in Adelaide shortly before her death in 1903.

**Henry Charles White’s children**

Most of H.C. White’s children by his two marriages are alluded to in Daisy’s diary and deserve mention here. By Isabella Mary Ann Lowe (1836–1875), whom he married in 1861, H.C. had four daughters and two sons; the last
being Georgie. The older boy, Henry Hunter White, was born in 1867. Hunter figures quite prominently in Daisy's diary and is portrayed as a considerate and affectionate brother, who never forgot his sisters' birthdays, sending them books as Christmas presents—*King Solomon's Mines* to Daisy and *Drat Those Boys* to Dorothy. [p. 56] From Daisy's entries, based on letters received from home, Hunter appears to have been quite close to his father and spent Christmas 1887 with H.C. on one of his searches for thoroughbreds in New Zealand. [p. 58] Hunter moved to Sydney to undertake further studies [p. 145] and was one of the main reasons for Emily's decision to reside there late in 1887. Daisy also cherished the hope that the long-suffering Cecily, subjected to the 'tyranny' of the Macmillans (as she saw it), would leave 'Havilah' for Sydney, to be nearer to Hunter and Emily. [p. 106] Letters appear to have been regularly received from Hunter, in which he described the social and political atmosphere in the colony for Daisy's benefit, notably the increasing hostility of colonists towards Chinese immigrants in 1888. [p. 128] Hunter's state of health caused Daisy concern in April 1889: 'Hunter has had typhoid fever, poor fellow, but he is getting well now, and they say the attack was very slight.' [p. 216] As a child, the boy appears to have been something of a devil and even H.C., a strict disciplinarian, had great difficulty in controlling him. [p. 206] Daisy's affection for her elder brother is beyond doubt. When she recalls happy family experiences in Australia, the two elder sisters and Hunter are present; for instance, she remembered playing 'dominoes with father and Hunter' at 'Woodlands' when she was only four. [p. 205]

Daisy's half-brothers and sisters were inevitably less dear to her, for they were Helen's children. But she bears them no grudges and alludes to them with some affection, especially little Roy Mordaunt White whom she imagines having returned to 'Havilah' during the holidays from Miss Macaulay's school in August 1888: 'They say he has become a regular slangy little school-boy.' [pp. 145–150] Another child of Helen and Henry Charles White, Gwendolen Mab White, born 1878 at 'Fiona', Double Bay, was also part of the new family that had regrettably ruined 'Havilah' forever. [p. 150]

Helen, the chief instigator of Daisy's misfortunes is portrayed as less than maternal towards her own children. Daisy is indignant when she receives a letter from 'Mamma' in which the latter unveils her plans to bring little Ivy Victoria White (born 20 October 1880 in Melbourne) to Les Ruches as a student. [p. 229] Ivy would have been only nine years old at the time.

One last figure needs to be acknowledged here to complete the gallery of Daisy's half-sisters and brothers. A child was born to H.C. and Helen White during one of their trips overseas, on 10 March 1901, at '70 Park Street, Grosvenor Square, London W', according to *The Australasian* of 30 March 15

See White Family Tree (2)
1901 (p. 727). She was given the unusual names of Hal Owena, perhaps Hal after Henry, her father. Details of the sad fate of this child were forwarded to me by Sister Margaret McKay, Archivist at Kincoppal-Rose Bay School in Sydney. The school’s register and records show that Hal Owena White was admitted to Rose Bay Convent, now part of Kincoppal-Rose Bay School, by her mother, Helen White, on 29 November 1908, in view of an unavoidable absence overseas. The new student belonged to the Protestant religion.

On 26 September 1909, Hal died from a fractured skull. The entry for 26 September 1909, in the School Journal 1903—1921, reads as follows: ‘At about 10 minutes to 3, one of our Sisters found the dear little one lying on the [marble floor at the foot of the main staircase]—unconscious and very seriously hurt. She must have fallen from the banister of the staircase. Some little visitors were in the house and their voices had probably awakened her and she was coming to them.’

No blame was subsequently attached to the school and the death certificate (registration number: 1909/0011776) sent on to me by Sister Margaret McKay, mentions as the cause of death: ‘Injuries accidentally provided through falling over the balustrade of a staircase.’ An enquiry was held on 29 September 1909, following which Mrs White wrote to thank the mother superior of the school for all the kindness that was shown to Hal Owena. The child was buried on 29 September 1909, in the same double plot as her half-sister, Daisy, and her brother, Roy Mordaunt White, at Waverley Cemetery, New South Wales (Anglican Section 6, Select Row 47, Grave Plot 1993).

In Daisy’s perception, and her depiction of the family, the children of Henry Charles fall into two categories: they either belong to the blissful world of her childhood, a happiness shared with her father, or they are part of the new set dominated by the ‘wicked stepmother’ and are presented as victims of parental authority.

**Daisy’s sisters—Marion Cecil (Cecily), Emily Jane (Em) and Helena Henrietta (Dorothy) White**

What keeps Daisy’s and Dorothy’s spirits high and provides welcome links with the homeland, is the arrival of frequent letters at Les Ruches from their two older sisters, Emily and Cecily. To deal with the latter first: she appears to have been the more loyal and devoted of the two, at least in terms of the frequency of letters dispatched to France. Born in 1865, the second oldest child of Henry Charles and Isabella White after Emily, Cecily was destined for greater things in life as a result of her second marriage. However, when her

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40 In the *Life and Reminiscences of Robert Donaldson in His Eighty-Third Year*, the employee of H.C. White at ‘Bando’, aged 16 in 1863, recounts a story about the birth of Marion Cecil, Mrs Isabella White’s second daughter: ‘The overseer was suddenly dispatched for a doctor 50 miles away. On arrival there he found the doctor had died two days previously, so he turned and rode the 50 miles back, doing the 100 miles in ten hours on the same horse ... In the meantime my mother had been sent for to attend Mrs White, when another little daughter was born, and everything went well.’ (p. 11)
father married Helen Macmillan in March 1877, Cecily seems to have borne the brunt of the new régime at home, at least according to Daisy who often refers to her as 'Poor old Cecily'. It would appear that Daisy was overreacting, for Cecily was resilient and stoical and her letters to her sisters were always cheerful and reassuring, as on 14 November 1888 when Cecily reported her visit to Aunt Jane White, her father's sister, at Muswellbrook. Two weeks later, another 'dear, sympathetic letter' was received; 'it stroked all my feathers down the right way and made me feel quite Christian-like for I don't know how long', remarked Daisy. [p. 51] A further letter from Cecily arrived on 15 December, written when she was still at 'Woodlands', a name that aroused the greatest degree of nostalgia in Daisy: 'I do so long to see it again, for though I was only four years old when I went away I can remember it still.' [p. 56]

Cecily's escape to Muswellbrook appears to have done her the world of good, as Daisy reflected while she pored over letters and photographs that arrived: 'She looks prettier than ever, and the Muswell Brook life seems to have done her no harm. I hate to think of her being transformed into a drudge and nurse-maid up at "Havilah" with those brutes!' [pp. 85–86] She fears that the confinement at 'Havilah' could drive Cecily to insanity, following the departure of Emily for Sydney. Life would never be the same again for them with the Macmillans: 'How it will all be changed when we come back. Em gone, Cecily grown older!' [p. 150] Happy memories came flooding back of joyful moments spent as children or as young girls by the sea at Coogee. [p. 88]

For Cecily, according to Daisy, there was one sure means of escape: marriage to a suitable partner. However, she was being chased by the wrong kind of man, one George Simpson, who did not have a cent to his name and who was not really committed to wooing her: 'I wish to goodness George Simpson will so be able to earn his living, and that he will then come and carry off Cecil in the teeth of all opposition. Dear old Cecily, how sweet and patient she is! I should have gone raving mad on the régime she has been following these last two years and a half. Whatever will home be like without my two favourite sisters?' [p. 221] In the end, George Simpson did not come good and Cecily was forced to accept Mr Wynne instead: 'I wish that nasty little man were drowned or hanged or out of the way,' said Daisy petulantly. [p. 224] Cecily White married John Wynne, on 18 March 1891. They subsequently had a son, Richard Owen Wynne, and a daughter, Marion Dulcie Wynne. Was Daisy home in time for this wedding in 1891? The date of her return to Australia remains clouded in mystery.

Following the early death of John Wynne, Cecily was to meet the future celebrated ornithologist, Gregory M. Mathews, CBE. In his autobiography, *Birds and Books*, Mathews tells of his lonely days as a bachelor at a cattle

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41 Canberra:Verity Hewitt. 1942.
### DEATH CERTIFICATE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date and place of death</th>
<th>Name and occupation</th>
<th>Sex and age</th>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
<th>Duration of last illness; medical attendant; when he last saw deceased</th>
<th>Name and occupation of father</th>
<th>Name and maiden surname of mother</th>
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<td>22nd February 1903</td>
<td>Margaret Isabel (Daisy) White</td>
<td>Female, 5 years</td>
<td>Cardiac Failure</td>
<td>22nd February 1903, Adelaide, South Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Margaret / White</td>
<td>Margaret McKay / RSCJ</td>
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Death certificate (detail) of Margaret Isabel (Daisy) White (d. 22 February 1903), 'Welford' Private Hospital, Macleay Street, Sydney, New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, registration number 1903/000250

Burial plot of Margaret Isabel (Daisy) White, Roy Mordaunt White and Hal Owena White, Anglican Section 6, Select Row 47, Waverley Cemetery, NSW

Photograph courtesy of Sister Margaret McKay, RSCJ, and Mark Stubley
station in Charters Towers, Queensland, and of his growing dissatisfaction as a pastoralist. Then, in 1902, with his mind made up to join the wild men of Borneo, a lovely woman (with two children) crosses my path and makes me change my mind ... and instead of Borneo, I go to England. And 38 years of happy married life are to follow. Cecily Wynne married Gregory Macalister Mathews at Parramatta on 6 May 1902, a year before Daisy’s death. According to Mathews, it was Cecily who suggested that they should go to England for the coronation of Edward VII:

She also expressed a wish to have her children educated there—a wish that was supported by her sisters. Like my wife herself, her sisters were women of strong and beautiful characters, and one of them consented to accompany us. A governess for the children completed the party.

It is probable that the sister in question was Dorothy, who stayed on in England and in 1908 married a medical practitioner, Dr Arthur Waddell.

Leaving on the S.S. Damascus, the Mathews and the Wynne children, and Cecily’s sister, called at Durban, Cape Town and Teneriffe, before landing at Plymouth. They lived for some weeks in Tunbridge Wells before setting up home at ‘The Larches’, Wadhurst. The English countryside captivated Mathews, who soon began the scientific work for which he became celebrated. As for Cecily, she gave birth to a son, Alister William, at ‘Langley Mount’, Watford, where Mathews started the private library that is now housed in the National Library of Australia and which, at the time of the donation, contained some 5000 volumes, largely on ornithology. In 1938, Cecily Mathews died a few months before her sister Helena (Dorothy) Waddell. In Birds and Books, Gregory Mathews described the impact of his wife’s death on him:

The years have taken my youth, and they have taken my best and dearest friend—for my wife was always my ‘cobber’. But here in this library where I sit, this library which will, I hope, be of great value to future generations, are many reminders of my dear old helpmate, and I know that she would have wished nothing better than that it should be in Australia’s safe-keeping.

Henry Charles’ eldest daughter, Emily White, was born in 1863 at ‘Bando’ to Isabella White and was affectionately known to Daisy as Em or ‘dear old Em’. Like Cecily, she was devoted to her two younger sisters, exiled in France, and tried to keep them cheerful by strong and positive monthly letters. Early in her life, she showed an independent spirit that led her to work as a nurse.

42 ibid., p. 30.
43 id.
45 G.M. Mathews, Birds and Books, p. 44.
in a Sydney hospital, most probably at Woollahra. She is both pitied and admired by Daisy: 'I am so thankful that she has left “Havilah”, and is happy in her hospital work.' [p. 51] Photographs of family members were a source of great comfort to the two sisters at Les Ruches: 'We got a long and very nice letter from Em, with a likeness of her darling old self for each of [us].'[p. 56] Hospital work turned out to have its compensations, such as greater independence, and H.C. agreed to it, though apparently reluctantly. When the time came for her to marry, however, he proved to be more authoritarian. Emily was courted by John Ross from ‘Kinross’, Germanton, the early name for Holbrook. At the age of 26, Emily White could not choose freely. Henry Charles, ever the paterfamilias, was intent on exerting his authority and at first refused to give his blessing on the grounds that John Ross was too much of a ‘rough cut diamond’ [p. 224]. For her part, Emily appears to have been genuinely fond of her husband, who at 44 was much older. In the end, no doubt egged on by his wife, Helen, who wished to see the back of all Isabella’s girls, Henry Charles reluctantly agreed to the match, but he vowed that the family would never go to visit the couple after the wedding. [p. 229] Did H.C. attend the wedding at Woollahra, on 11 September 1889? We are not told, since the diary ends on 1 August 1889. Daisy was definitely not at the wedding, as she was either still at Fontainebleau or was making her way back home.

John and Emily Ross lived happily at ‘Kinross’, where it is known that the first telephone line was installed in 1898. The couple had five boys and three girls: one of them was named Isabella Janet, after Emily’s mother, another after Emily herself and, rather touchingly, a third girl after Margaret (Daisy). John Ross lived to be 83 and died in 1929. Emily Ross died in 1946, long after her three younger sisters, also at the age of 83. Several of their descendants are still living in the district today. Henry Charles’ judgment had clearly been faulty in this matter, and Emily found a great deal more happiness at ‘Kinross’ than she ever did when she lived in the family home.46

Dorothy had a most unhappy time at Les Ruches from April 1887 onwards. She appears to have had a weak constitution and was confined to bed on a number of occasions, according to Daisy’s entries. The first time was on 8 March 1888, with an attack of bilious fever that left her so debilitated she could not eat and was forced to stay in her room for two weeks. On 15 March 1888, Daisy reported: ‘Poor Dorothy has been very ill this last week, and has passed most of the time in bed: she sits up dressed in her room now, and I pass all the time that I can with her. Poor little thing! She is so homesick and everyone here takes it in turns to sit on her and boss her.’ [pp. 95–96] On 22 April, Dorothy was confined to bed again, this time for five days, and

46 This information concerning the Ross family was provided by Angela Peirce of Holbrook, New South Wales and Mrs Elizabeth Ross, who was married to John Nigel Ross.
was very pale and even thinner than before: ‘Her poor little face looks so drawn.’ Daisy’s irritation starts to show, however, as she longs for the day when her sister will ‘brighten up’ and leave her ‘stupid old bed’. [p. 107] On 26 April, Dorothy was reportedly much better, and Daisy expected her to get up the next day. [p. 109] Another bout of illness was to follow with a vengeance soon after. Dorothy stayed in bed, this time from 24 May until 1 June, when she came down to see Les Ruches being photographed, only to retire once more to her room, with a severe headache, before dinner. [p. 121] With sisterly devotion, Daisy tried to entertain Dorothy, keep her company and make her comfortable by asking for permission, on 4 June, to have her transferred to Miss Stretch’s room, where it was a lot cooler. [p. 121] Most of Daisy’s spare time was spent in Dorothy’s room, as the younger sister increasingly suffered from boredom. By 19 July, Dorothy had made no progress, and Daisy’s impatience began to show again: ‘Dorothy is in bed, as calm, indifferent, and Buddhical as ever; if she got in a rage three or four times a day she would get better soon, I do believe.’ [p. 137] The invalid was carried down ‘in queen’s chair’ to see a play on 28 July, and ‘when the festivities were over the maid and I carted her up again; dear little thing! She was so glad to come down and see it all!’ [p. 140] It was not until 4 September that the younger White sister was restored to full health, having been unwell for more than three months. By contrast, apart from colds and an attack of what was diagnosed as rheumatism, but sounded (at least on one occasion) more like a poisoned foot, Daisy enjoyed good health because of her strong constitution. She seemed to endure the cold European winters with remarkable resilience.

Neither sister enjoyed Les Ruches initially, least of all Dorothy, who ‘cried bitterly’ when the teachers reacted to Daisy’s letter to their stepmother, in which she asked to be moved to a school run by her beloved Mlle Rollet. [p. 93] A mature student on arrival, Dorothy enjoyed literature and academic pursuits. She received her favourite French book, Alphonse Daudet’s Tartarin de Tarascon, for Christmas 1888 from Mlle Jones, gave Daisy the Anthologie des prosateurs as a belated birthday present on 15 June 1888, [p. 128] and enjoyed reading La Fontaine’s Fables.

Daisy, blinded by partiality, deemed Dorothy to be more advanced than the older May Barron, the teachers’ pet. The elder White sister glowed with pride when, on 21 January 1889, Dorothy followed in her footsteps and received the ultimate accolade of Les Ruches, the golden abeille, or bee, for academic achievements: ‘Dorothy and Olga had their bees this evening. We have been dancing like furies. I’m so very glad that my little Dolce has got it at last ... Father wrote to me on Sunday to tell me how glad he was I had got the bee. Darling old Daddy! Dorothy’s going to write to him tomorrow.’ [pp. 197–198] Sisterly satisfaction was also in evidence when Dorothy, in her jester costume as Triboulet, was a great success at the fancy-dress ball: ‘I have rarely
seen her so pretty.' [p. 208] The two sisters, supportive of each other, never forgot each other's birthdays, enjoyed shopping together, relished cultural trips to Paris and discussed men, as Dorothy gently teased Daisy about the obvious interest that the dull, and more mature, M. Bourdil—the son of their stepmother's Paris acquaintance—showed in the older sister: 'I shrieked with laughter when Dorothy told me that. He's about old enough to be my father.' [p. 222]

For all their undoubted closeness, the two White sisters were quite different. Dorothy was an accomplished musician who performed for the school's visitors [p. 159] on Mlle Jones' birthday. While Daisy was much more adept at achieving high grades in exams, Dorothy became excessively nervous and did not cope well with Roman and French history. The ever self-analytical Daisy was fully aware of her own faults and strengths, as much as she was of Dorothy's weaknesses and timid nature: 'I can't even help Dorothy, for we are so differently made that I can't understand the secret springs of her character. She is soft and I am hard; there is all the difference.' [p. 172] Hence the need for Daisy to be protective and to take the initiative in most matters.

When an inauspicious letter about Mlle Rollet fell into the teachers' hands, the older sister became most contrite and fearful both for her own sake, and for Dorothy's. The naïve younger sister's letter to members of the White family, in which she dared criticise her stepmother, aroused much anger in their father: 'One of Dorothy's letters fell into his hands, in which she spoke of Mama in a somewhat free fashion, he was very vexed about it. Heigh ho!' [p. 106] When it came to self-preservation, Daisy was much more rational and practical than her sensitive sister, who was moved to tears at a performance of Sophocles' *Oedipe* at the Comédie Française on 15 November 1888. [p. 184] If only she were allowed to do so, mused Daisy, how she would love to return to New South Wales upon the completion of her studies, even though the 16-year-old Dorothy would have to stay on at Les Ruches. On New Year's Day 1889, in the grip of another bout of homesickness, Daisy weighed her options: 'Although I'd be loathe to leave Dorothy, sometimes the longing to see all those dear home faces grow[s] so strong I can hardly bear it.' [p. 191]

What happened to Daisy and Dorothy after the end of the diary on 1 August 1889 is not clear. Did they both return to New South Wales? Did Daisy go back home and Dorothy stay on at Les Ruches? As it turned out, fragile Dorothy survived Daisy by three decades and ended up in England, at the age of 35, married to Dr Arthur Robert Waddell. Dr Waddell died in Cambridge on 17 April 1924, leaving his widow, at the time 51 years old, an estate valued at less than £1000. 47

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47 This information was taken from the *Calendar of All Grants of Probate... during the Year 1924* (Hereford, England: Jakeman, 1924) which I found in the Hampshire Local Studies Collection, County Library, Winchester.
An invaluable source of information on what became of the ‘exiled’ young Australian after her husband’s death in 1924, is Patrick White’s autobiography, *Flaws in the Glass*. The celebrated Nobel Prize winner adopted a seemingly less than respectful attitude towards his pastoralist ancestors, whom he described as belonging to ‘the new-rich tradition’, but showed a great deal of affection towards two of his White relations: H.L. White, who was ‘the only White uncle I liked, and he seemed to reciprocate, perhaps sensing a fellow eccentric’,\(^{48}\) and Helena Henrietta Waddell. Patrick White first visited this ‘Havilah’ cousin in 1928 at her home outside Winchester. Dorothy, known to Patrick White and indeed everyone else in the family as Helen, then took him to see the Southampton Withycombes, Patrick’s relatives on his mother’s side. Who better than the great Australian author to capture the very essence of the calm and well-read Dorothy at the age of 55, four years after her revered husband’s death. The following extract deserves to be read in full:

Cousin Helen was an odd, but not so odd one to be put in charge of a schoolboy with solitary habits and literary tastes. For once Ruth got it right, though no doubt she felt that by bringing us together she was doing us both good. Helen was a ‘Havilah’ White. After an unhappy childhood with a stepmother who disliked her and shipped her off to a finishing school at Fontainebleau, she had married a curmudgeonly Scottish doctor years older than herself. Arthur cultivated roses, and bred one of his own, ‘Mrs Arthur Waddell’, in honour of the wife whose mind he formed according to his atheistic, Scottish puritan principles. Helen worshipped her husband-mentor, no doubt from gratitude for his rescuing her when dumped like an unwanted kitten. Her grief on losing him was so intense she never mentioned her husband by name. There were allusions to a ‘friend’ however, and in every room of her house an unexplained photograph of the forbidding Scottish face. Helen was tiny, perfectly proportioned, except that a mound of auburn hair and a pronounced forehead made her head look over-life-size. Appropriately, since Jane Austen was her literary idol, the face looked out from a framework of little ringlets. Her heroines in history were somewhat unaccountably Emma Hamilton and the Empress Theodora of Byzantium (‘poor dear Theodora—just a prostitute’, she used to confide in lowered tones, as though pleading with her listener to accept a disreputable yet beloved relation). She spent most of her time reclining on a sofa embroidering kneelers for Winchester Cathedral. ‘Of course I only do this,’ she explained, ‘for aesthetic reasons’; and within the confines of his silver frame the dour face of the Scottish atheist seemed to express grudging approval.

H.L. White (second from left), Patrick White’s ‘favourite uncle’ at ‘Belltrees’, Scone. H.L. White shared Gregory Mathews’ interest in ornithology.

S.W. Jackson Collection, Pictures Collection
How Cousin Helen decided to bring me together with the Withycombes I can’t remember. She had a highly developed sense of family, but more likely she was made desperate by the continued presence of a moody teen-age schoolboy. Anyhow, the meeting was arranged; we were summoned to afternoon tea in the flat above the Southampton dirt-track.

Though suffocated at times by life with Cousin Helen in the narrow house on Weeke Hill with its cypresses and flint-walled garden, I was a bit alarmed, so was Helen, to find herself in such a different context—remote from her brodering, and literary devotions at the shrines of Jane Austen, George Meredith, Victor Hugo, and Gibbon, whose *Decline and Fall*, her bedside book, she must have got through at least ten times before her death. There we were, a strange twittery pair, the Regency marmoset and the green-faced antipodean adolescent, exposed to the dashing Withycombe girls, and Jack and Ellen.49

Ten years later, the *Hampshire Observer* of Saturday, 28 May 1938 recorded the death, on 25th May, of Mrs Helena Henrietta Waddell. She was said to be 63 years old, but was in fact 65, having been born in 1873. As a ‘Friend of Winchester Cathedral’ from 1934, and well respected for her embroidery work, Helena is listed in its obituary list.50 Patrick White attended the funeral to pay a final tribute to ‘cousin Helen [who] was an odd one’. The Australian Whites had sent roses, and Miss Wynne (perhaps Marion Dulcie), the daughter of Cecily Mathews, represented the family back home.

Both Dorothy and Daisy had been, in Patrick White’s words, ‘suffocated by life’ and both had broken free of the Macmillan yoke, Dorothy by staying in England, and Daisy by being her own person in Adelaide and through her ‘confidences’ in her diary. In both cases, there was a ‘highly developed sense of family’, which led Helena Waddell to embark on an extensive correspondence on her family’s history over a period of time. This correspondence is now held at the University of New England and Regional Archives.51

**Margaret (Daisy) Isabel White (1871–1903): A rebel with a cause**

Margaret (Daisy) White’s life turned out to be short. Little is known of her childhood, except for what Daisy tells us herself in her diary and what has already been mentioned. She was born on 22 March 1871 at ‘Woodlands’, near Denman, the fourth child of Henry Charles and Isabella White.

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49 ibid., pp. 64–66.
50 *Friends of Winchester Cathedral*, no. 8, 1938.
51 ‘Havilah Station, Mudgee’. White Family Papers, M1039/11. Ms Natasha Trpezanovski, Archives Officer at the Heritage Centre, University of New England and Regional Archives, Armidale, put this material at my disposal.
Nothing is known of Daisy's early education, although she refers in her diary to a private school run by Miss Macauley and attended by her half-brother, Roy Mordaunt, in 1887 and 1888. [p. 145] It is quite possible that, after the death of her mother in 1875, Daisy and her sister, Dorothy, were educated at home by a French-speaking governess. French certainly appears to have formed an integral part of the education and upbringing of the White children; it is interesting that there still exists at 'Belltrees' today a French schoolbook, with dictées (dictation exercises) that belonged to Henry Luke White and goes back to around 1876.\textsuperscript{52}

When dealing with Daisy's education prior to her departure from Sydney in February 1887, one is in the realm of speculation. However, one may surmise that the choice of Fontainebleau and of France by Helen White was not fortuitous. A story has survived through an oral tradition in the White family that, after the death of her husband in 1905 and at an unknown date, most certainly after 1909, Helen White married a French baron or count, an indication, if the story turns out to be true, of the attraction that France held for her. In any event, Daisy must have had an excellent education in English and French literatures and cultures, a fact confirmed in the diary by the teenager's familiarity with writers, actors, composers and artists, as well as politicians, of both countries. Her skill and creative talent in manipulating both languages will become obvious to all readers of her diary. She was also well versed in European history, geography, art and music, though less accomplished, seemingly, in musical performance than her younger sister, Dorothy.

Daisy's life, following her return to Australia from France, is a mystery. What is certain is that she remained unmarried, ever 'a rebel with a cause.' Indeed, when she contemplated her future after Les Ruches, she vowed that she would not allow herself to be forced to dance at balls, engage in vain social activities for the sake of seeking a match and obeying inane directives from her stepmother. While Mrs White looked upon Les Ruches as a finishing school and as an essential prerequisite for entering society, \[p. 27\] Daisy bucked at the idea and took a strong feminist stance at the tender age of 16:

The thought of staying here for two years alone nearly drives me crazy, and yet I don't know what I want: Em gone, Cecil married, what will home be? I shall be hawked and vended from one place to another, to be sold at last to some rich old man, like a horse in the market with a halter round his neck. I will kill myself sooner than to submit to such an indignity. \[pp. 27–28\]

\textsuperscript{52} This information was supplied by Dr Judy White.
The sale of ‘Woodlands’, near Denman, in 1889 closed a very important chapter in Daisy’s childhood memories. ‘Havilah’ was viewed by her as the home of her father’s new family and as the Macmillan nest, and therefore held little promise of a happy life. The 16-year-old, who had ‘cried as long and as violently as [she could] nearly every night since [she] moved to Les Ruches—at least during the early stages—while acknowledging that such self-pity was ‘[her] little luxury’, [p. 28] encountered only fleeting happiness in her short life. On 22 February 1903, Margaret Isabel White died of ‘cardiac failure’ from an ‘enteric fever’, after a short illness of five weeks. She was 32. The death certificate indicates that Margaret Isabel White died at ‘Welford’ Private Hospital, located on Macleay Street, Sydney.\(^{53}\) Her death was reported on 23 February 1903 by her father who was, at the time, staying at the ‘Australia Hotel’, Sydney, and Daisy was described as ‘not married’ and ‘late of Adelaide, South Australia’.

As indicated earlier, there is also a remote possibility that Daisy may have accompanied the Mathews in 1902 on their voyage to England and may have returned one year later to Adelaide, in 1903, but it seems more likely that she took up a position as a governess. Nevertheless, Daisy returned to the east coast and died in Sydney, not in the bosom of her immediate family, but in the comforting presence of her father.

To depict the intelligent, passionate and talented Daisy solely as a forlorn and lonely figure trapped in the landscape of the Fontainebleau Forest, is to fail to do justice to her indomitable spirit in her quest for self-preservation. Readers of Daisy’s diary will become aware of her wit, her undoubted depth of character and her caring nature. It is clear from the diary that what started off as a bleak experience for the family-conscious Daisy when she became separated from her siblings, was later perceived by her as an opportunity for introspection and self-development. After only eight months at Les Ruches in April 1887, an optimistic, strong-minded and positive Daisy was able to write on 31 December 1887: ‘Now I feel that I am beginning to wake up, and change back to something like what I was before, only graver, and sterner, and firmer. I think my character is a good deal older and more formed than it was a while ago: let’s hope so.’ [p. 68] However, throughout her stay at Les Ruches, bouts of homesickness were never far away. The very next day after penning the entry above, Daisy pondered, with great nostalgia, the forthcoming celebrations of the centenary of Sydney’s birth: ‘In a few weeks, Sydney will be 100 years old. I would love to be there for the Centenary.’ [p. 68] She was very consciously Australian.

One relationship that was to leave an indelible mark on Daisy’s life was her strong love for Mlle Rollet, a mysterious teacher who appears to have provided much solace to the young Australian between April and July 1887.

\(^{53}\) New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, registration no. 1903/000250. 27
Mlle Rollet, towards whom other teachers appear to have harboured a degree of antipathy and resentment [p. 3], was seemingly dismissed because of her recalcitrant nature and her unconventional behaviour, 'there had been a quarrel between her and the powers that be', [p. 23] Daisy's infatuation with 'my pretty Mademoiselle with her sweet brown eyes', who 'used to hold me in her arms and put my head on her shoulders, covering me with kisses and caresses calling me "her poor little Daisy"', [pp. 23–24] was not atypical of the experiences of students in their teens who attended Les Ruches in the 1880s. In an autobiographical narrative, quite controversial for its day, Olivia by Olivia (a pseudonym for Dorothy Bussy, the sister of Lord Lytton Strachey), a sensuous and Sapphic atmosphere is said to have existed at the school.\(^{54}\) In what follows and in the footnotes to the text, the italicised form Olivia will be used to refer to the novel, and the non-italicised form, Olivia, to refer to the author and main character.

Dorothy Bussy attended Les Ruches one year before Daisy, from September 1886, and witnessed the circumstances surrounding the mysterious death in June 1887 of the head teacher, Catherine Dussaut—a figure to whom Daisy refers in her diary on a number of occasions. In much the same way as Olivia became infatuated by 'Julie', the other head teacher at Les Ruches, who is said in the novel to have had a tempestuous relationship with 'Cara', so too Daisy's real attraction to Mlle Rollet is at once physical and emotional, albeit innocent. It was perhaps Mlle Rollet who induced her to adopt the name Daisy, for Margaret is Marguerite (a daisy) in French. In the first part of the diary, she refers to her deep sorrow and loneliness after Mlle Rollet's forced exit, and to the latter's caresses and a full kiss on the lips: 'I remember so well Mlle Rollet's first caress ... she drew my head towards her, and kissed me, such a full, firm kiss.' [p. 63]

Likewise, Olivia, head over heels in love with Mlle Julie, describes her beautiful face as they return from a visit to Paris: 'No, it wasn't bitterness in the curving corner of her lips, but an extraordinary sweetness, an extraordinary gravity, an extraordinary nobility.'\(^{55}\) After the annual ball, as Olivia awaits the arrival of Mlle Julie in her bedroom, the highly excited teenager reflects on sensual observations made by the adored teacher: 'What had she said? Pretty hands, pretty feet, a pretty figure. Yes, but in French, what strange expression does one use? "Un joli corps." A pretty body. Mine, a pretty body. I had never thought of my body till that minute. A body! I had a body—and it was pretty. What was it like? I must look at it. There was still time. She wouldn't be coming yet.'\(^{56}\) During their time at Les Ruches, both Daisy and

\(^{54}\) Olivia was first published by Hogarth Press, London, in 1949 and then translated by Roger Martin Du Gard (Paris: Stock, 1950).


\(^{56}\) ibid., p. 69.
Olivia were to preserve their innocence. Daisy seemed to outgrow her infatuation and her first encounter with intimacy between women—perhaps more readily than Olivia. Daisy acknowledged later in her diary, after a great deal of soul-searching, that she had loved Mlle Rollet 'not wisely, but too well', [p. 171] despite being gripped occasionally by 'such a fearful gnawing desire to be with [her]': 'Only to think of it, to be her pupil, to live with her, to have her arms about me again, and to hear her sweet, strong voice saying "Ma petite Daisy". Sometimes I think I shall go wild for her.' [p. 92]

**FRANCE: LES RUCHES (THE BEEHIVES)
—THE SCHOOL NEAR THE FOREST**

'In spite of its really considerable extent, the forest of Fontainebleau is hardly anywhere tedious. I know the whole western side of it with what, I suppose, I may call thoroughness; well enough at least to testify that there is no square mile without some special character and charm ... and at last, to the red fires of sunset, night succeeds, and with the night a new forest, full of whisper, gloom, and fragrance.' (R.L. Stevenson, 'Fontainebleau', in *Across the Plains*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1915, pp. 78–79)

To convey fully Daisy's intellectual and emotional development during her two years of exile from home, and to assess the significance of her exile as a rite of passage to adulthood, it is imperative to evoke here the rarefied and unusual atmosphere that prevailed at Les Ruches, especially in the first few months after the Australian sisters' arrival in April 1887. This was no ordinary boarding school or finishing school, but one especially designed for well-to-do, middle-class, young ladies from the USA, Britain, Ireland, Australia and the Continent and a few wealthy local students. Fontainebleau was sufficiently close to Paris to figure prominently on most lists of day excursions, notably in *Cook's Guide to Paris*, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. In the 1904 edition of *Cook's Guide to Paris*, tourists are advised to take the train from the Gare de Lyon at 8.15 am to reach Fontainebleau at 10.30. The Palace of Fontainebleau, with its immense forest (La Forêt de Fontainebleau) covering some 18,037 hectares, or 42,500 acres, was highlighted as the chief attraction for tourists. In the Appendix to this introduction, a local historian and highly respected former deputy mayor of the commune of Avon, M. Bernard Pamart, has outlined the impact the railway station had on the growth of Avon and Fontainebleau.

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57 In *Duty Free*, Ros Pesman notes that middle-class Australians regularly placed their daughters in and around Paris, op. cit., p. 39.

The origins of this exclusive school go back to 22 December 1863, when Mlle Catherine Dussaut, whose death and grave figure prominently in Daisy’s diary, applied to the Conseil départemental for permission to open a lay primary boarding school for girls in Fontainebleau, at no. 5bis, Place d’Armes.\(^5\) Permission was duly granted, and the school opened its doors in 1863. On 10 July 1867, another application was lodged to transfer the school from Fontainebleau to no. 22, Avenue du Chemin de Fer, in the adjoining commune of Avon. Several months later, permission was granted for the school in Avon—again to be administered and supervised by Mlle Catherine Dussaut, who had all the necessary qualifications as a maîtresse, a primary teacher, and had formerly resided in Germany.\(^6\)

Many useful details about the founding and functioning of Les Ruches can be gleaned from Olivia by Olivia, where the school is given the fictitious name Les Avons, and the main protagonists, the two head teachers, are referred to as Cara M. (in real life, Catherine Dussaut) and Julie T. (in real life, Marie-Souvestre). The students were known in the novel, as indeed they were in the real community, as les abeilles (the bees).

We learn from Olivia that the original partners in this venture played different roles in having the school transferred to Avon in 1867: ‘It was Julie who had the capital, the influential friends, the energy, the intellect, the commanding personality. It was Cara who had the charm that gained fond mothers’ hearts and the qualifications that made the enterprise possible. She had passed all the necessary examinations, and Julie none.’\(^6\)

A large block of land had been acquired in 1865 or 1866, presumably with Julie’s money. The red brick building, which today belongs to the French ‘Poste’ and still stands on the Avenue Franklin Roosevelt in Avon, enabled the lay boarding school to move into larger premises. Subsequently, a pavillon (wing) was built to house the art and music rooms.

The relationship between the two head teachers provides the plot of Olivia. We are told that initially ‘they were a model couple, deeply attached, tenderly devoted, the gifts of each supplementing the deficiencies of the other. They were admired and loved.’\(^6\) They were happy for about 15 years—that is until the late 1880s, the period that provides the background to Daisy’s story. Until then, the establishment had operated with about 30 to 35 pupils, both at primary and secondary levels—les petites and les anciennes, though chiefly at the former level. Official documents in the departmental archives of Seine-et-Marne, Dammarie-lès-Lys, indicate that on 22 March 1887, the préfet (chief

\(^6\) ibid., Letters of 20 December 1869 from the Préfet of Seine-et-Marne to the Minister of Public Education, IT 600.
\(^6\) Olivia (1949), p. 54.
administrator of the district) approved an application, lodged by Catherine Dussaut, and forwarded from the inspectorate in Paris on 1 March 1887, that the school be transformed into a ‘lay secondary establishment for young ladies’. Once again, Mlle Dussaut satisfied all requirements, so in March 1887, by official sanction, the priorities at Les Ruches changed to accommodate approximately 35 girl boarders and day students, chiefly at secondary level.

What led to this change of policy by Catherine Dussaut was probably the fact that her health had become progressively worse in the 1880s. In Olivia, as the story develops, the author is undecided as to whether Cara was a hypochondriac, as her opponents among the teaching staff surmised, or whether she was seriously ill. In either case, she took a draught each night to help her sleep. Olivia describes dreadful rows in public between the two head teachers—extraordinary tantrums by Cara, her bouts of jealousy and violence, her suspicion that Julie was betraying her with senior students, and finally, her mysterious death from an ‘overdose of chloral’. Olivia pondered the options: ‘An Accident! But was it an accident? A fresh horror chilled me. Supposing it were not an accident. Supposing she had taken the overdose on purpose? Could she have? No, it was impossible. Why should she do such a thing?’

There was to be no post-mortem, and Olivia came to the conclusion that ‘ces Messieurs de la police et du parquet’ (the gentlemen from the Police and the Office of the Public Prosecutor) had done their work very inefficiently, and very unfairly for poor little Miss Smith’ who, on that fateful night, had administered the dose of chloral.

What makes the story even more compelling and adds to the mystery is the fact that, a few days before, tired of Cara’s quarrels and tantrums, Julie had agreed to sign ‘a deed of separation’, whereby Cara would be the sole owner of the school: ‘It was she [Julie] who put every penny of capital into the school, but she’s getting very little back.’ Moreover, according to Olivia, Cara also made a new will in favour of the German teacher at Les Ruches, one of her closest associates and companions, Frau Riesener, who, perhaps conveniently, chose not to administer the chloral on the night Cara died. One day, when the pupils were sent on a long walk in the forest, (an event also described by Daisy), a quiet funeral took place, followed soon after by Julie’s departure for Canada, with her friend, the Italian teacher, Signorina Baietto (in real life, Signorina Samaia). Deeply in love with Julie, Olivia was heartbroken, as she prepared to leave Les Ruches: ‘I went to the window and looked out. I should never see that sky, those trees, that road again. The road

63 Archives départementales, Seine-et-Marne, Dammaries-lès-Lys, F1660.
64 Olivia (1949), p. 86.
65 ibid., p. 90.
66 ibid., p. 79.
Avenue du Chemin de Fer, now Avenue Franklin Roosevelt, Avon-Fontainebleau, c.1900
Photograph courtesy of Département de Seine-et-Marne, Dammartin-lès-Lys
along which I used to hear her carriage driving back at night. Good-bye! Good-bye! Pour jamais adieu! Pour jamais! I knelt down by my bed and burst into tears.\(^67\)

On 16 June 1887, when Catherine Dussaut was buried, Daisy and Dorothy White were already students at the school. Indeed, Daisy describes sad anniversaries in 1888 and 1889, when teachers and students went to Avon Cemetery to pay their respects to Mlle Dussaut. On 6 June 1888, Daisy reported: 'The medallion, a profile in bronze, of Mlle. Dussaut, came this morning; it is by [Aimé] Milet, and is wonderfully like her. Mlle. Jones was quite upset by it: Poor Gertie! no wonder, it was this time last year that Mlle. Dussaut got ill.'\(^{[p. 123]}\) Daisy recounts the official commemoration ceremony of 16 September 1888, this being the first anniversary of Mlle Dussaut's death: 'It was worse at the grave [than at the funeral] ... It's a blessing that to-day is over.'\(^{[p. 129]}\)

Having lived through the drama of Mlle Dussaut's death, and therefore presumably also the sudden departure of Mlle Souvestre, it is rather surprising that Daisy does not dwell more on the mystery. She makes no mention of Mlle Souvestre, or the police enquiry, or the new will of Mlle Catherine Dussaut in favour of Frau Riesener. Instead, the head teacher in Daisy's day is named as Mlle Gertrude Jones, who appears to have been very close to Mlle Dussaut.

Was Gertrude Jones adopted by Mlle Dussaut? A local history of Avon's buildings, published in 1898 by Théophile de Fleureau, says of Les Ruches: 'Le pensionnat est actuellement dirigé par Mlle. Jones-Dussaut' (The boarding school is at present directed by Mlle Jones-Dussaut).\(^68\) Hence, Mlle Jones, who is one of the protagonists in Daisy's narrative, was still the head teacher of Les Ruches in 1898. Whatever the differences, Daisy's narrative, in some important respects, complements Olivia's account. It is a story that, even today, is well known among members of the local community of Avon.

It is significant that Daisy's stay at Les Ruches in 1887 overlapped the sojourn of the famous Dorothy Hussy. However, with the exception of Gertrude Jones, no other teacher appears in both narratives. An official document found at Dammarie-lès-Lys, dated 24 August 1887, confirms that, in real life, Mlle Lainé was authorised to take over Les Ruches as head

\(^{67}\) ibid., p.105. In his biography of Lytton Strachey, Michael Holroyd asserted that Marie Souvestre went to England when she left France with Signorina Samaia and 'became the headmistress-proprietor of Allenswood, at a little place called South Fields, not far from Wimbledon Common', and that 'both the younger Strachey daughters, Joan Pernel and Marjorie, were in due course entered there, while Dorothy was employed on the teaching staff, giving lessons on Shakespeare' (Lytton Strachey: A Biography. London: Book Club Associates, 1973, p. 57). It may be that Dorothy Bussy (Olivia) chose to protect the privacy of Marie Souvestre by altering the truth in this matter. Or perhaps she tried to give her novel a melodramatic and tragic ending. In any event, it would appear that Olivia and Mlle Julie were reunited in England after both had left Les Ruches.

\(^{68}\) Théophile de Fleureau, Les Enseignes et les logis historiques d'Avon. Fontainebleau: M. Bourges, 1898, p. 43.
Mlle Lainé is alluded to on several occasions by Daisy, who in the earlier part of her stay, gives an unfavourable portrayal of the teacher. [p. 65] One can surmise that Mlle Jones-Dussaut inherited the school and was the owner in 1887, but that Mme Geisler and Mlle Lainé ran the establishment. Daisy explains: ‘Gertie Jones is almost a girl, and is too young and inexperienced to be looked up to as the directress, so Mme Geisler naturally takes that place.’ [p. 62]

By the start of the academic year in September 1887 Dorothy Bussy had returned to England. This sister of Lytton Strachey, who himself became a highly respected expert on French literature, was to achieve fame chiefly as a translator of André Gide’s works, although she also published a study on Eugène Delacroix. 70

Dorothy Bussy was not the only celebrated woman to have studied at Les Ruches. The school was advertised as having much to offer to young foreign ladies: ‘Un pensionnat de haute culture française pour jeunes filles étrangères’ (a boarding school offering high French culture to foreign young women), stated an advertisement placed by the head teachers in 1865. 71 The Romanian poet, Elena Vacarescu, who became lady-in-waiting to Queen Elisabeth of Romania, boarded at Les Ruches between 1880 and 1885—earlier than Daisy and the author of Olivia. She later published highly acclaimed poetry and other literary works, but is not known to have written about Les Ruches. 72 Interestingly enough, Daisy refers to another Romanian student, Zoë Nicolescu, who clearly, in her opinion, was well below the school’s high academic standard. [p. 59]

Daisy deplored the loudness of several Americans who always caused havoc at Les Ruches. In her view, the same Americans were guilty of a harassment campaign against Olga Morgan, an English student, whose mother felt obliged to withdraw her from the school. [p. 200] The mystery of Olga’s braid being cut during her sleep cast suspicion on two American students whom Mlle Jones finally expelled, though later it was implied that Olga was disturbed and might have been displaying attention-seeking behaviour.

Andrew Hassam points out in Through Australian Eyes that many Australian travellers in the nineteenth century ‘saw themselves as British when it came to cultural values. Australians throughout their travels could move between

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69 Archives départementales, Seine-et-Marne, 16 September 1887, IT600.
72 Elena Vacarescu translated Queen Carmen Sylva’s poem ‘Jehovah’ into French and spent a good part of her life in Paris. Among her works are: L’Ame sereine (1896), Liseurs et flamms du son (1903), La Dommeuse éveillée (1914) and Dans l’or du son (1928). At one stage, she was a delegate for Romania at the League of Nations (Grand Larousse encyclopédique, vol. 10. Paris: Larousse, 1964).
British and Australian reference points in evaluating the United States.73 Daisy associates vulgarity with American students whom she deems ‘boisterous’, and she is glad to see them leave for Paris during the Christmas holidays. However, some students from the USA, like Edith Saunderson, had much in common with her. Edith actually became a soul mate during her short stay in the school.

Few Australians appear to have been sent to the expensive and exclusive Les Ruches, so Daisy had a most pleasant surprise when the only other Australian student, beside herself and Dorothy, turned up one day: ‘What a blessing to meet a country-woman after two years’ exile,’ exclaimed the highly excited Daisy. [p. 209] Jenny Baar hailed from Woollahra, a fashionable suburb of Sydney. What became of her after she left Les Ruches in August 1889 [p. 228] is not known, but Daisy seems to have admired her intellect, describing her as ‘clever’.

In 1889, there arrived at Les Ruches arguably its most celebrated student, the American Nathalie Clifford Barney (1876–1972), ‘poet, playwright, novelist, essayist, epigrammatist and salonnière whose evenings at 20 Rue Jacob, Paris for 60 years brought together French and Americans, intellects and artists.’74 She is referred to by Daisy in her diary, [p. 193] and remained at Les Ruches for 18 months, along with a cousin who at the time was 17, four years older than the future writer. Clifford Barney went on to create an ‘académie des femmes’ in the late 1920s, a Sapphic circle and forum for English- and French-speaking women. She also became one of the standard-bearers for Sapphic literature. In Souvenirs indiscrets, Barney alludes to ‘these Ruches where “Olivia” proceeded us by a few years. The atmosphere of feverish passion that haunts her moving little book no longer existed. The headship had changed hands. In this long, red-brick building, still visible from the main street, I suppose that the parc remains what it was when we, “the younger ones”, played croquet there, rather than indulged in greater passions.’75 However, there were still some ‘small scandals’ among the boarders. Significantly, as in Daisy’s diary, Clifford Barney comments on the cutting of a long braid of light brown hair, which was left next to [a fellow student] at night like a sleeping grass-snake’.76

Among other details concerning Les Ruches in Souvenirs indiscrets, one finds a summary of the progressive and eclectic curriculum: calligraphy, horse-riding, drawing, music theory, posturing and curtseying, dancing, French composition and poetry—the works of La Fontaine, Victor Hugo, André Chénier—whose lines were learnt by heart. Olivia and Daisy both refer to the

76 ibid., my translation.
large music room, to dancing lessons, drawing, play-acting, and ‘a fairly large library’ that was well-stocked, visits to the Théâtre Français in Paris, teachers reading Musset’s, Vigny’s and Racine’s poetry aloud, intelligent and qualified tutors from Paris coming to Les Ruches to give classes on Roman and French history, and on French, Italian and German literatures. Above all, to quote Frau Riesener in Olivia, ‘the breath of outside air was what gave the school its cachet.’\textsuperscript{77} The school encouraged its students to take frequent \textit{promenades en forêt} (forest walks) and to go on trips to Paris to visit the Louvre and its shops, the Odéon, and the galleries in the Luxembourg Palace. Students also attended numerous concerts at the Théâtre de Fontainebleau. Native speakers were employed to teach modern languages, and all foreign students were expected to speak and write French fluently. Olivia had no problems in this respect: ‘I knew French pretty well, that is I understood it when spoken and could read it fluently.’\textsuperscript{78} Daisy became so proficient in the language that she spent most of her spare time learning Italian and German instead of French. Her occasional Gallicisms in the diary denote a process of cross-culturalisation through immersion. Her fellow American students seemingly fared less well and insisted on speaking English among themselves.

On 29 January 1903, following an inspection and a review, the establishment of Les Ruches was described as a ‘private primary boarding school for young girls’, supervised by Mlle Jeanne Grandperrin-Bologne.\textsuperscript{79} By then, the competition from other boarding schools in the area was much fiercer. According to an official document dated 4 October 1904, Mlle Louise Henriette-Fleury opened another lay school for young ladies at Fontainebleau in 1903.\textsuperscript{80} In 1914, almost 25 years after Daisy left Les Ruches, the establishment closed its doors for good, having survived for 47 years.

Long after its closure, Les Ruches attracted a great deal of attention in the community in and around Avon. An article in the local newspaper, \textit{Abeille de Fontainebleau}, recorded its sale on 13 March 1914: ‘Les Ruches, with which everyone is acquainted, on the Avenue du Chemin de Fer, has just been bought by M. Soyer.’\textsuperscript{81} As late as 12 August 1969, the newspaper \textit{Le Parisien} reminded its readers of the establishment that had educated Elena Vacarescu, Nathalie Clifford Barney and Dorothy Bussy—a school with a truly international flavour.\textsuperscript{82} In 1952, \textit{Olivia} became the subject of a fine film directed by Jacqueline Audry and starring, as the older Olivia, Edwige Feuillère and as the younger Olivia, an alleged grandchild of the writer. This film did much to preserve the legend.

\textsuperscript{77} p. 55
\textsuperscript{78} ibid., p. 18.
\textsuperscript{79} Archives départementales, Seine-et-Marne, Dammartin-le-Lys, IT597.
\textsuperscript{80} ibid., \textit{Demandes d’autorisation d’ouverture d’écoles}, 1792–1901.
\textsuperscript{81} My translation.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Le Parisien}, 12 August 1969.
In 1969, in an attempt to rally public support for the preservation of the ‘domaine des Ruches, Avenue Roosevelt’, on which the construction of a supermarket was planned, a reporter on the newspaper République reminisced: ‘It is worth recalling that this residence had in days past a notoriety in worldly and literary circles ... In this educational establishment, American and European young ladies were brought up according to the more liberal methods imported from across the English Channel. Several of these became famous writers.’

I have not met any local who was aware of the presence of two Australian sisters from ‘Havilah’, near Mudgee, and a young woman from Point Piper at this forbidding old establishment. It was described by Daisy as follows: ‘Autumn is all very well, but anything sadder you can’t imagine than these dull, dark days when the sky is black with rain-clouds, and the winds [sic] howls and moans about this great, empty house, and there is a cold, grey light everywhere from the overcast sky’ [p. 9] Two long, cold European winters would have been even more unbearable for the young women from the Hunter Valley than they had been for Olivia: ‘Cold! Cold! I was dreadfully cold. I was shivering .... The cold crept up me, from feet to legs; arms, shoulders, were cold, icy.’

Towards the end of her stay at Les Ruches, Daisy reveals that she could no longer bear the ‘fimmikineries’ of a French school that offered no outlet for pent-up frustration and anger:

I wish we were at home again! For the last month I have been possessed by Lucifer and all his angels. If only something would come as a safety-valve for all my pent up energies and longings and loves and hates! I feel capable sometimes of carrying the world on my shoulders without weariness, and there is nothing to vent all that on but French compositions and 30 little school-girls! How I detest them, to be sure, and what wouldn’t I give to be a man! [pp. 192–193]

Even the Forêt de Fontainebleau had begun to appear oppressive after two years at Les Ruches, years that she grudgingly admits had been ‘the most eventful of [my] life’. [p. 210] The worst feeling of all for her was the gradual erosion of her idealism, her innocence and her faith in mankind: ‘Ah me, ah me, I thought then [April 1887], in my innocence, that father would surely come and bring us back in two years’ time, but there is no talk of it’ she wrote on 19 February 1889. [p. 201] The joy of leaving Fontainebleau ‘with its eternal forest’ for a delightful, six-day trip to the Loire Valley in April 1889,
provided only a temporary respite. [p. 215] Riding lessons helped to pass the
time and reminded Daisy of home. [p. 216] She chose to regard those lessons
as a mark of her father's continuing affection for her.

For all her moments of unhappiness at Les Ruches, Daisy was a survivor,
capable of great stoicism and introspection. As a rebel, she first refused to
answer to anyone, except Mlle Rollet, for her actions: 'Because I was meek
and obedient to Mlle. Rollet, it doesn't by any means follow that I will be so
with anyone else; I take a great deal from the people I love, but when anyone
else comes hectoring it over me, they don't find me a very meek young
woman to deal with.' [p. 79]

Readers of Daisy's diary will accompany her on an emotional voyage of
self-discovery. They will find in the author a cultured 'bon vivant' who loved
a good laugh; a born actor at heart, who enjoyed art, theatre and music; a
young Australian who had 'the lon[e]liness of the bush' in her blood; [p. 169]
a romantic given to reciting lines from poets that matched her moods; an
impressive young scholar; a dedicated student who scored highly, after rising
at 4 am on examination days; a lover of books who thought the 'library [at
the Château de Vaux Malins] the loveliest room in the house'; [p. 182] an alert
and vivacious young woman open to new experiences.

However, although she is an impressive young woman, Daisy is far from
perfect. On the contrary, she behaves like a veritable little madam on occasion,
giving in to her fierce temper and being very superior towards those fellow
students she dislikes. Self-opinionated and racist, [p. 128] she is, at times,
insensitive to the feelings of teachers and students at Les Ruches. Her puritan
streak leads her to condemn far too readily the so-called 'vulgairies' of
American students, and she does not tolerate fools gladly, notably the less able
students. She is ungrateful and bears grudges, and like most teenagers, she has
violent mood swings and is prone to tantrums. Despite her increasing
proficiency in French, she is, initially at least, careless in her syntax and
orthography. However, it is important to realise that her diary, as a collection
of spontaneous thoughts, was not meant to be published, nor was it ever
polished. The qualities and failings are all facets of the same complex,
engaging and intriguing personality that will reveal itself to the readers of this
small treasure that has re-emerged 100 years after its author's death.
The manuscript of the diary of Daisy White is located in the Manuscripts Section of the National Library of Australia, Canberra as MS9247; the notebook used is one bought locally by Margaret (Daisy) White at Fontainebleau in 1887. On the inside page is a coloured map of ‘France politique’. It contains the following details typed after the acquisition of the manuscript by the National Library: ‘Diary kept by Daisy White while at a French boarding school where she was sent by her father who had remarried. Her entries describe holiday outings, school work, teachers, the departure of friends and often her happiness.’ On the title page, opposite the map of France described above, is written:

Margaret White [in another hand]
Daisy White born March 23rd 1871
An Australian at school in France
[doub[le underline[ing under France and in another hand]]
Les Ruches
Fontainebleau [in another hand]
September 10th 1887
to
August 1st 1889 [in another hand]

There is every indication in the text of the existence of a first diary written probably by Daisy during the journey from Sydney to Fontainebleau and the first six months at Les Ruches (February 1887 to 9 September 1887). It has not been possible to locate this first diary, but it is to be hoped that, as a result of the edition presented here, it will be found and published, since it will shed invaluable light on Daisy’s character and unhappiness upon leaving Australia for two years of exile in France.

Daisy White’s manuscript text has been transcribed faithfully as regards the orthodoxy, syntax, and paragraphing. Punctuation marks have only been added on rare occasions when it was felt that the meaning of a sentence was obscured by their absence. I have resisted the temptation to add [sic] after misspellings in English; Daisy was, after all, still a schoolgirl. There are a large number of French words and expressions and other foreign words, as well as
words coined by Daisy from the French. These have been italicised (and, where necessary, translated) for the sake of convenience. Titles of plays, paintings, musical pieces or books referred to by Daisy, have also been italicised in the customary way. When Daisy chose to put French words or quotations between inverted commas, this has been respected. As with misspellings in English, there has been no attempt to adopt a consistent approach to the spelling of French words, titles and proper or common names, nor has the application of accents been regularised; this has been done with a view to letting Daisy’s text reveal both her initial knowledge, and increasing mastery, of the French language. Names of places both in and outside the Paris and Fontainebleau areas have not been italicised and are reproduced faithfully from the original. In the rare instances where a word or expression could not be deciphered, it is followed by [?]. Additions in other hands in the manuscript have been enclosed in square brackets. These additions in pencil were probably made by a member of the family at a later date, but the person’s identity remains unknown. The original pagination in the manuscript is indicated as follows [p.31]. Any additions and observations by the editor in the text itself, for example on matters relevant to the manuscript and narrative, are also placed within square brackets e. g. April 16th 1888 [year added in pencil]. Standard brackets throughout preliminary material, footnotes and end matter enclose translated titles or citations for works other than the diary. Dates given by Daisy for each entry are in bold italics at the start of relevant paragraphs.

Finally, the editor’s critical and explanatory notes on the text are numbered sequentially within each year of the diary and are indicated in superscript Arabic numerals. These are given as footnotes.
Daisy [December 29th, 1887]: 'Well, I must be off now to put my hair up in papers, as it's getting too long on my forehead, and they raise an awful howl each time I speak of getting it cut.'

Photograph courtesy of Mrs. J. White, 'Havilah', Mudgee, NSW
September 11th 1887

There is a pretty long gap between my two diaries, but it is not because I have forgotten it; only I wanted to get a pretty nice book with decent paper and to get it myself, and yesterday was the first occasion I would get of going into Fontainebleau. We have been going on in just the same old round (at least, I have) these last few days. Margot is always with Mlle. Lainé¹ and Gerty,² who come and sit with us in the evening; sometimes Gerty reads to us while we work. She reads very well, I am accustomed to her voice, and understand her without any effort. Mlle. Constantin has been giving us lessons regularly every day, but last Tuesday she went away, and we don’t have any now. She is bright and fresh and active, and I like her very well; she is going to be an under-teacher here after the holidays. Adèle and Jeannie went to Paris from Sunday evening till Thursday night, and the house was duller than ever. I write very often to Mademoiselle Rollet, sending my letters in Paquite’s and Juanita’s yesterday morning, after an unusually long silence from the Spaniards, I got a fat letter from Juana at the first déjeuner, and opened it with a spoon-handle at table, but of course did not begin reading it: however [p. 2] a glance inside sufficed to show me Mademoiselle Rollet’s hand-writing, and how on earth I sat there as the slow minutes dragged on while they talked at table, I don’t know. I bolted into the garden with my letters, and devoured them as fast as I could; she is in Paris, and has seen the Spaniards, whose letters were full of her: her own letter was a darling; I was so awfully glad to get it, and wrote her

¹ Gabrielle Victorine Marguerite Lainé, aged 35, had been given official permission to take over as head teacher of Les Ruches on 24 August 1887, after the retirement and death of Catherine Dussaut. Archives départementales de Seine-et-Marne, Melun, 1T600.

² Gertrude Jones was a student at Les Ruches when Mlle Dussaut was head teacher; according to Olivia, by Olivia (London: Hogarth Press, 1949), p. 43.
a long one in return, which I addressed direct to her, and sealed. At dinner-time this afternoon Mlle. Laine looked at it blackly, and passed it to Madame Geisler, who came back late yesterday from the sea-side; Mme Geisler passed it to Gerty, who examined it silently and said something in German to Mme Geisler and while afterwards; finally, after déjeuner she took my two luckless letters and went off 'to give them to Joseph'—the servant who takes the letters to the post. I wonder if Mademoiselle Rollet will ever see that letter, or Paquite hers? 'Moi, je suis d'avis que non', as Mlle. Delu used to say. Yesterday we went to see the Château\(^4\) with Mlle. Busoni.\(^5\) I walked with Adèle, and she began talking to me about my Mademoiselle, of whom Adèle is very fond; she told me why she went away, having heard the story from her aunt. Gerty wanted Mlle. Rollet to take all the work and all the responsibility and trouble of the lessons, on herself; \([\text{p. 3}]\) she was to have all the higher classes, and all the worry; for this she was to have something like 50 francs more than the under teachers, who have next door to nothing to do. Mademoiselle Rollet refused, disagreements ensued, and finally she left: about a week after she went away, she went to M. Peyre and asked him if they really needed her here, and if they did, she would stay for Mlle. Dussaut's sake,\(^6\) although she was not happy here. M. Peyre said 'he had not thought about it', and finally Mademoiselle Rollet got angry and said if he hadn't thought about it, she would, and decided for good and all to leave. I think she was perfectly right not to let herself be put upon and overridden by a little girl five years her junior. I said something to her about this in my letter, unluckily—the first time I have ever said a word about the house—and of course if my letter be intercepted that will be put into the balance with the reasons why I should be forbidden to write to her. The Château was just the same as before, but this time we saw also the picture gallery, where there are a heap of pictures: there are three or four little ones of full length figures most perfectly finished off; one especially of an artist in a George III scarlet laced coat, and a lady of the period bearing over his shoulder. The whole affair is not the length of your hand and arm to your [p. 4] elbow, but it is beautifully worked up: there was a large picture of Spanish figs and grapes, splendidly done, by Mme. Villesseyx; the painting teacher here. Yesterday evening Gerty read us *Le Juif polonais* a little play by Erckmann-Chatrian, an Alsatian.\(^7\) It is

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3 'For my part, I think not.'

4 Of Fontainebleau; the grounds were across the road from the school and were a favourite destination of the 'bees' on their walks (Olivia, p. 20).

5 The Italian teacher who had replaced Signorina Baietto when she left with Mlle Julie [Marie] Souvestre (Olivia, p. 107).

6 Adelaide-Caroline [Catherine] Dussaut opened a primary boarding school named Les Rutches, at Avon near Fontainebleau in 1867; she died in mysterious circumstances. See Introduction.

a tragedy, about a man who dies of remorse when his crime is beginning to come to light. The last scene is his dream where he imagines he is tried, and as all proofs fail he is mesmerised, and tells how he killed the man; he never wakes up again. It is creepy. M. and Mme. Pavie and there darling [?] little daughter Marianne and M. Peyre, are here for dinner. Margot is going tomorrow to the Pavies', and May Barron is coming for the rest of the holidays. Mlle. Lainé is going pretty soon. Peace be on her head! (I hope there'll be a little here for me too when she is out of the house). Dear little Marianne (une précieuse, une malade imaginaire) is Margot's bosom friend, and those two little imps used to report everything that was said and done in the school-rooms at head-quarters for the last month or two before Mademoiselle Rollet left. Mademoiselle Rollet used to be very fond of Margot, and the little serpent used to pretend to worship her. The sin of ingratitude is the blackest in my catalogue. It is Gerty's [p. 5] birthday to-day; she is twenty. There was a little dinner given this evening in honour of the event M. and Mme. Pavie and all the other visitors were here, and we had a very swell affair. It all went of very well till the end; Gerty was laughing and talking, and seemed to be getting quite bright, when that senseless M. Peyre, whom they say is a very good and perfectly tactless man, got up and made a funeral speech on Mlle. Dussaut and began talking about his own son, a boy of 21 who died only a few weeks ago. Poor Gerty cried most dreadfully, but M. Peyre went on till Mme. Geisler had to take her out of the room.

September 12th

Margot went away to-day and May came: she has been through Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia (St. Petersburg, Moscow, and the fair at Nijdi Novgorod) Austria and Germany; she does not tell us many things of her voyage, but has brought us back most delicious lollies and a lot of books, amongst others She and Allen Quartermain. I have just finished this last. It is also an African romance, of a country of whites, magnificent marble city, twin Queens (who fall in love with Curtis), a battle between them for Curtis and the crown; finally Curtis becomes king and marries the fair Queen, the dark one kills herself, Quartermain dies and Good and Curtis stay [p. 6] in Zu-Vendis. The book is not so good as King Solomon's Mines.

September 15th

We went into Fontainebleau again to-day. I went and got measured for a stout pair of walking-boots, as my own are worn out. I also bought a very pretty little box in Fontainebleau wood; it is light yellow, lined inside like a little

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8 Daisy is here referring to Molière's plays, Les Précieuses ridicules (1659) and Le Malade imaginaire (1673).
9 For details of Mlle Dussaut's death see Introduction.
work-box, with pale blue satin. I’m going to send it to Mademoiselle Rollet for her birthday, though it will be pretty late. There are heaps of pretty little things carved out of this forest wood.

September 16th

We went for a long walk with Mlle. Busoni. She wanted to go to Barbizon, which is along just the same road as the route of the Caverne des Brigandes. The forest looks different now to what it was the first time we went to the Caverne with Mlle. Nordheim during those awful May holidays: then everything was just bursting into life after the cold of the winter, and now the year is growing old and all the leaves will soon turn yellow and ‘float adown the air’. I don’t know but that I don’t like the forest better as it is now than then. It was a lovely day to-day, and just the weather for a walk, rather chilly in the shade coming back. The trees grow so thick that they overarch the road nearly all the way, and when you look up you can only see patches of blue sky here and there where the branches part, and through these rifts in the green roof the sunshine streams down and lies quivering in flakes of burning gold on moss-grown trunk and waving branch and bracken: the light seems to be concentrated in its passage through the opening foliage, and literally blazes down in broad patches here and there, cutting into the twilight and tracing out the shadows as if cut with a knife. You cannot think how lovely the effect of that golden light is on those old round grey trunks where the dark green mosses grow, and twined about here and there with ivies. The heather is all in blossom now; it flowers more thickly out on the open hillsides, where it spreads in sheets of fragrant purple blossom round the sandstone boulders; there is always a faint smell of honey hanging about it, and an indistinct sound of humming bees. There are a lot of people about here now, sportsmen, since the hunting began some weeks ago; their wives and relations, artists, and invalids, come for the fresh forest air and the ‘grape-cure’ (Mark Twain’s grape-cure, no doubt). I hate meeting these bands of tourists in our walks, they break the silence and picturesqueness of the scenery; the only thing that reconciles me to them is the musical jingle of the horses’ bells, which you can hear long before they arrive, and whose echo the wind carries back to you long after they are gone.

10 Barbizon was at the time a celebrated artistic area, 9 kilometres from Fontainebleau; the village could claim a number of artists, such as J-F. Millet (1814–1875) who painted the Angelus (1875).
11 Caverne des Brigands, a favourite destination for walkers in the Fontainebleau Forest.
12 After Mlle Dussaut’s death the students were sent for a long walk on the day of the funeral.
September 17th

I went to M. Pavie’s to-day with La Buzonica: Margot and the douce Marianne are there, and our indefatigable governess walzes over there (3/4 of an hour’s walk) about every other day to give them music lessons. I rashly volunteered to go with her, partly because I wanted a walk, although I was pretty tired after our 16 miles’ tramp yesterday, and partly to keep Mlle. Busoni company. She is awfully tiresome and exasperates me to the last degree with her servant-maidish manners: she is plain to the last degree, thinks she is lovely, and togs out tremendously: she never can make up her mind as to what she is going to do exactly, and to see her fat bluish hand wavering undecidedly from one draughts man to another, is enough to drive me crazy. I feel inclined to shriek, I get so nervous at last. But no one here likes her, and the poor thing does her duty most conscientiously, and has a pretty hard time of it, so I often try to talk to her and amuse her, albeit that it be very hard and wearisome work for me. The Pavies’ is a very pretty place on the banks of the Seine, which is wide and very calm, gliding between green meadows and the gardens of pretty houses: further down the banks are more hilly and well-wooded. When I got back late this evening my feet were so sore I could hardly walk, and all blistered. I won’t go to church to-morrow, for the pavements are all made of cobble-stones that hurt a body’s feet like the very mischief.

September 18th

We got a long letter from Cecily to-day. The weather has been abominable cold lately, but for the last four days the sunshine has been warm and plentiful, and the middle of the day is quite respectable. All the others are at church: they will be lucky if they escape a wetting, for it looks like rain. On days like that on which we went to Barbizon, autumn is all very well, but anything sadder you can’t imagine than these dull, dark days when the sky is black with rain-clouds, and the winds howls and moans about this great, empty house, and there is a cold, grey light everywhere from the overcast sky. The lawns and paths are all strewn with withered leaves now, from the birches and aspens and poplars. I think that Longfellow’s Dying Year is a perfect description of a northern autumn.

13 Olivia also refers to long walks in the forest with the Italian teacher, Signorina Baietto (Olivia, p. 29).
14 Marion Cecil White (1865–1938) who was 22 at the time. See Introduction.
15 The Protestant church in Avon–Fontainebleau.
The leaves are falling, filling,\textsuperscript{17} 
Solemnly and slow;  
‘Caw, caw’ the rooks are calling;  
It is a sound of woe—a sound of woe!\textsuperscript{18}

[p. 10] Through woods and mountain-passes  
The winds like anthems roll;  
They are chanting solemn masses, 
Singing, ‘Pray for this poor soul,  
Pray-pray!’

Then, too, the Old Year dieth,\textsuperscript{19}  
And the forests utter a moan,  
As the voice of one who crieth\textsuperscript{20}  
In the wilderness alone,  
‘Vex not his ghost!’

Howl, howl! And from the forest\textsuperscript{21}  
Sweep the red leaves away!  
Would the sins that thou abhorrest,  
O soul! Could thus decay  
And be swept away!

For there shall come a mightier blast,  
There shall be a darker day,  
And the stars from heaven down-cast  
Like red leaves be swept away.  
\textit{Kyrie eleison!}  
\textit{Christe eleison!}\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{September 23rd} [p. 11]\textsuperscript{23}

It is really too bad, the way I have left my poor diary all these days when I have something to put into it. To-day is Friday; well, on Tuesday morning we rose from our downy couches at about half-past six, breakfasted, and caught the 7.30 train,\textsuperscript{24} Mlle. Busoni, the \textit{bomme femme} and I. We got to Paris about

\textsuperscript{17} Daisy omits the opening stanza: ‘Yes, the Year is growing old, /And his eye is pale and bleared! /Death, with frosty hand and cold, /Plucks the old man by the beard, /Sorely,—sorely!’ (\textit{The Poetical Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow}. London: Warne, n.d., pp. 13–14).
\textsuperscript{18} ‘It is a sound of woe, /A sound of woe!’ (ibid., p. 13).
\textsuperscript{19} Five stanzas are missing before this line.
\textsuperscript{20} ‘Like the voice of one who crieth’ (ibid., p. 13).
\textsuperscript{21} A stanza is missing before this line.
\textsuperscript{22} It is not surprising that Longfellow should be one of Daisy’s favourite poets, since he was greatly loved by young people in the nineteenth century.
\textsuperscript{23} The station of Avon was opened with great pomp on 9 September 1849 by the prince, and future president, Napoleon during the term of office of Mayor Jean Fontenelle. The journey to Paris took approximately one-and-a-half-hours.
Foret de Fontainebleau, Entrance to the Caverne des Brigands

Daisy [September 16th, 1887]: 'We went for a long walk with Mlle. Busoni. She wanted to go to Barbizon, which is just along the same road as the route to the Caverne des Brigandes.'

Foret de Fontainebleau: Le Calvaire

Daisy [May 24th, 1888]: 'We went to the Sept Collines de Rome to-day, to look for lilies of the valley; the seven hills are near the Croix de Calvaire.'
nine, and Mlle. Busoni, asked the way to Notre Dame: after asking four different people, we got there. There are two rectangular towers, a spire, then nave, with aisles on either side, and at the end a part a little raised from the nave with long narrow stone arches springing out from it; something like this [drawing]. It looks very smoke-begrimed from a little distance, but when you get up closer, you can see the stone is dark grey, and carved all over. All along the walls are spouts—I suppose, a sort of dragon’s head and neck, about as thick as my arm, and twice as long; there are saints in niches, and flowers, and heads, and arabesques all over the place, and the three great entry gates (which take up all one narrow side, are splendid, arched, and literally covered with carving. Inside there are two rows of pillars all down the nave; the inner ones smooth and round, with carved capitals, the outer row fluted, and reaching right away up into an arch far above your head. There was a service going on as we came in; the organ [p. 12] was pealing now and then, and between the pauses we could hear the priests chanting Latin verses. All the part about the altar was carved and coloured, and brilliantly lighted up, whilst all the rest of the cathedral was in deep gloom with a little waxen taper shining before some saint’s shrine here and there; it was picturesque and religious in the highest degree: I felt almost as if I were committing sacrilege as we walked about and examined everything. The windows at the upper end of the church, under a sort of dome, are of the richest and warmest colours, mostly two or three pervading tints in each arch of the window; where the aisles open out, on either hand there are two huge round windows, with carved stone rays, making them look almost like wheels: the pervading colours are blue and crimson, so that taken as a whole these windows have a purplish colour; I like them the best in the church. All round the walls are little chapels with different saints and popes in niches: in some are statues of laymen, monuments, I suppose; one was a beast of a thing that gives me goose-flesh to think of; there was a coffin—well raised up from the floor—at one end of which an angel was leaning; a woman was half-lying on the steps before it, a hooded skeleton with scythe and hour-glass stood at the head, and coming out of this coffin by the lid [p. 13] which he holds up with one skinny arm is a dead man resuscitated; you can count every bone and muscle and vein underneath the loose grey skin: as a work of sculpture it is splendid, but looked at from all other points of view is simply revolting. After Notre Dame we hunted La Sainte Chapelle from one end of Paris to the other, and after having asked our way a dozen times of all sorts of disreputable characters we got there. We went into a rather dark little church with wooden arches running up from eight different directions to the roof; there were three of these arches, I think, the wood painted blue and edged with gold; it was rich-looking and pretty, but after all I had heard of La Sainte Chapelle I was
disappointed. Finally our guide showed us a little door by which we climbed up and round a narrow little staircase to the real Chapel above, which amply fulfilled all my expectations. All round the walls was a rich brown-tinted wooden wainscoting, above which the walls right up to the roof were most beautiful stained glass, little panes divided [by] broad iron or stone bands, each window having different shaped panes: on each side was the history of the Old Testament, and the rounded part at the top forming the altar was the new Testament history. Although [p. 14] there were a great many colours in these little panes, they had a purple appearance, owing to the prevalence of red, blue, and purple. The floor was done in mosaics of red, blue and white, and the wooded wainscotings were ornamented with beautifully worked medallions. It was a little gem of a church, all filled with that strange, rich purple light. We found the Panthéon without much trouble; it is a rather ugly building with a row of fluted columns along the front, and a fat little dome on a square above that; inside it is stuccoed, with bad—unqualifiedly bad—pictures painted on the walls. The ‘caveaux’ are reached by a wide stone stairway: there is a nasty, rather common looking affair with bead—and artificial—flower wreaths all over it for Victor Hugo and in Voltaire’s little room,26 which he shares with some other celebrity, a statue of him himself, a sardonic-looking old villain in a dressing-gown. In one of the winding passages the guide made us ‘see ze e..ccho’; it was really wonderful, the echo repeating every word when he spoke slowly, in exactly the same full, pompous voice; then he struck on a piece of parchment let into the wall with a little cane, and the hollow sound went booming past us and came back again, just like a miniature canon. It was deafening [p. 15] and perfectly blood-curdling, that hollow sound in the utter darkness. If anyone offers to take me to the Panthéon again I shall politely intimate ‘that I’ve been there before’, in the language of Huckleberry Finn, when they wanted to ‘civilise’ him. Mlle. Jones had given us a letter to leave at M. Peyre’s, but of course Mlle. Busoni had forgotten it, and I did not know whereabouts he lived; so when we came out of the Panthéon I reminded her about it, and we went racing off to the other end of the town to leave it. Then we went to the Magasins du Louvre,27 and when we had finished our purchases we went to the pastry-cook’s, as we were nearly dead from hunger and weariness, and eat some delicious little cakes, which aren’t however very ‘filling’; and so we bought little crescents of bread (this Paris bread is the best I ever tasted, so light and flaky that it is nicer than cake), and eat it as we drove to Les Invalides, where there are no guides, and where we were accosted by a gentleman in a rubbed coat, who insisted on

25 Victor Hugo (1802–1885) poet, dramatist and novelist, the author of Les Misérables (1862) and arguably France’s most prolific poet.
26 François Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694–1778), has a monument in the Panthéon alongside his inveterate foe, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Voltaire is best known nowadays as the author of Candide (1759).
27 The Louvre shops. Most Australian visitors to Paris at the time appear to have made purchases there.
explaining several scores of times in a thick voice that he ‘had a me ...
dallion’, and had been here 7 years, from all of which we deduced that he was
very drunk, so sent him off with two sous, and acted as our own guides. The
Chapel is all hung with old tattered banners, [p. 16] some so riddled with balls
that you can’t see the design. The museum is more interesting than that: in
one division are all sorts of savage dresses on dummies with their arms and
head-gear, mostly from the coasts of Africa and the Australian islands. In the
other division are all sorts of old suits of armour, lances 18 feet long, swords
as big as Dorothy,28 with hilts inlaid with gold and stones, helmets and shields
with beautifully worked figures in bas-reliefs, and pistols and muskets with steel
or wooden stocks and butts, all worked and inlaid with gold or ivory, and the
wood ornamented and strengthened with steel: we saw some suits of armour
for little boys as big as Roy,29 and others for giants almost, all kinds of historic
characters; it was awfully interesting and amusing; I could have stayed there all
the afternoon. At last we went off to see the Emperor’s tomb; it is at the other
side of the building, under a great, dark-grey dome with gilt ornaments on it.
You go up a wide flight of steps into a great empty hall of a circular form,
with a big round well in the middle, surrounded by a low stucco wall. My first
idea was that they kept hippopotami and alligators there, as there were crowds
of people hanging over the side and talking; my next was [p. 17] that as there
was an altar farther up, it could hardly be that, unless Thiers30 had discovered
that the famous Nap. was a Bhuddist. We approached and ‘leaned over the
side’, like all the other people, and then we discovered what it was—the tomb
itself, and no alligators! The floor was dark blue, with great orange-coloured
rays thereupon (why do the French spoil all their monuments with their
beastly gilt and colouring?), and round the wall were columns alternating
with 12 white marble angels. In the centre was the tomb, or rather
sarcophagus, of red marble on a granite or grey marble pedestal; above it the
dome; beyond it the altar with its gilt canopy upheld by twisted granite
columns, and the glass windows through which the light streamed down in
floods of gold on the marble floor where the Parisians passed and repassed,
their feet and voices forming together a strange rushing sound like a mighty
river for ever flowing about their dead Emperor’s grave: just what his
magnificent, ambitious soul would have loved. I wonder if at night when the
cold, still moonlight looks down on his resting place, when the crowds are
gone, and not a sound is heard under the great dome, if he ever turns in his
marble prison, and wrings his hands and comes to wander [p. 18] about the

28 Helena Henrietta White, Daisy’s sister, known to Daisy as Dorothy. See Introduction.
29 Roy Mordaunt White, the son of H.C. White and Helen Macmillan, is buried in the same grave as Daisy
at Waverley Cemetery. See Introduction.
30 Adolphe Thiers (1797–1877) politician, journalist and historian, the author of the Histoire de la Révolution
française (1823–1827) and the Histoire du Consulat et de l’Empire (1845–1862).
building and curse the English blood-hounds that pulled him down when his
time was come. For me, I should have infinitely preferred the quiet grave under
the willow-tree in the geranium valley, with the tropical sky for dome, and
the green isle set in the blue Atlantic for flooring. Finally we went and poked
about in the Louvre; I couldn’t find the St. Cecilia, but we did find the whole
Rubens tribe, which completely cured me of all romantic interest in the ‘old
masters’, great, fat, coarse-looking women flying around on ginger-coloured
clouds full of horrid little cherubs with trumpets and distended cheeks. There
were some perfect little pictures of the Flemish school, all full of soft, mellow
light—country scenes, mostly. There was a glorious assumption of the Virgin,
by Murillo;31 she was dressed in white and pale blue, and was being carried
upwards on a cloud supported by cherubs. Anything more different than
Rubens’ unrefined style you cannot imagine; the colouring was beautifully
soft and rich, and the faces were beautiful: it was a good man who painted
that woman. The proverbial ‘last straw’ arrived to-day, in the shape of a letter
from Paquita Galobart, telling me that she was not coming back, and asking
me to send her her things; there goes the last [p. 19] friend I have in the house,
the only person to whom I could ever talk freely about Mademoiselle Rollet:
I suppose I must grin and bear it as best I can: ‘tant pis’32 as these furriners say
in their cold, indifferent way. This place gets more insupportable every day.

September 28th

Madame Geisler has decided that our present room is too cold for us, and so
to-day we turned out with all our goods and chattels. I have a little room
alone in the second storey,33 the third from the end on the right-hand side,
looking out onto the street. There is a huge ward-robe in the wall with sliding
brown wood panels, a little marble-topped wash-stand with a big draw and a
looking glass above it, a bed, a three-shelved shelf, a pedestal, and a chest of
drawers with six drawers; there is lots of room for me and all my belongings;
the wall-paper is pretty, big pale pink squares with a green dado four feet
high; they say the room is very warm, but there’s small choice in rotten apples,
as the poet saith, and all the rooms are equally cold now that there are no fires
or warm air or anything; the cold is hideous; I shiver the whole day long, and
really suffer from it. Last Saturday (24) we went to Milly,34 a little village
where one of the girls—Lucienne Sergent—lives. M. and Madame Sergent

31 B.E. Murillo (1618–1682), Spanish painter and creator of The Assumption, referred to here. The Louvre
was on every Australian tourist’s itinerary in the nineteenth century. See Dora Hall’s diary: ‘The Louvre is
gigantic, they say there is 12 miles of galleries with pictures’ (MS12843, State Library of Victoria: hereafter
denoted by VSL).
32 ‘too bad!’
33 Olivia also states that each boarder had her own room at Les Ruches: ‘For the first time in my life I was
given a delightful little bedroom entirely to myself’ (p. 19)
34 Milly-la-Forêt is 19 kilometres from Fontainebleau and has a splendid nineteenth-century church.
received us with open arms and gave us a very nice déjeuner, after which we [p. 20] went in our brake to see the Château de Courance,\textsuperscript{35} half-an-hour's drive from Milly. We saw M. Heber's trout-rearing place, little eggs in glass tubes, and thousands of little fish in wide stone troughs full of running water, some as long as your little finger, others longer than your hand. The Château is much smaller than Fontainebleau, but in just the same style, dull red brick, grey-white stone facings, and grey stone entrance-stairway. There is a magnificent avenue of platins [i.e. platans] leading up to the door, with a long, narrow sort of lake on each side, where the branches are all mirrored; they take the fallen leaves off every morning with nets. Behind the Château are lawns and lakes and gardens; fountains and great trees clasped about with ivy or virginia creeper; a slow river gliding down brown and silent under the arching trees, and artificial rivulets full of graceful trout: in a lakelet we saw some full-grown specimens a foot and a half long, pale blue, silver, light grey and dark purple-black. There is a water mill for threshing and winnowing the wheat; large cow-stables where are lovely prize bulls and truly lovely little Basse-Bretagne cows, black and white with beautifully-shaped heads. In the stables are 48 horses, most of which were out hunting that day; we saw two dear little Corsican horses, as big as small [p. 21] Shetlands, but more slenderly made and smoother. There are I don't know how many carriages there, open, closed, drags, brakes, basket-carriages, open carriages for one or for two people, and pony-carriages, all in a huge coach-house with M. Heber's crest and initials done in coloured sand on the door-step; this is all spoilt as soon as you walk on it, and has to be done over about twice a day. The harness-rooms are very prettily arranged, and the floors are so waxed and polished that we weren't allowed to walk on them, but had to scramble onto little round foot-mats to look at them. The gardens, where there are 60 men employed, were the loveliest of all.\textsuperscript{36} We couldn't see the Château, as the Count and his family are there now; they say it is beautifully furnished. I never guessed before what a great lord's splendid castle was.

\textbf{September, 29th}

Last night was my first night in my new room, and I inaugurated it with a grand old cry: for why? I wrote to Paquita in the afternoon, and at dinner-time Mme. Geisler told me that she did not wish me to write to her till she (Paquita) had written to her. This naturally made me savage, and I ate my dinner in silence, and stalked off as soon as it was over. By-and-by somebody

\textsuperscript{35} Courances, 4 kilometres from Milly-la-Forêt, was popular for its park and its château that belonged to the Marquis de Ganay; in its streams were a large number of trout that attracted fishermen. It also has a twelfth-century church. See \url{http://www.alaligne.coin/randonet/courance/index.htm}

\textsuperscript{36} The gardens were designed by Le Notre—Louis XIV's celebrated architect, known for his improvements at Versailles—and are still open to the public today.
came and told me that Madame Geisler wanted me: 'Now, my dear, it's all 
acoming, correspondence with Mademoiselle Rollet, and [p. 22] Paquita and 
all' said I to myself, and off I went up to Mme. Geisler's room. She told me to 
sit down in a little low chair beside her, and then, my love, I was sermonised 
to an extent that Miss Mac [Macmillan] had never arrived at. I was regularly 
furious when I went up and you may imagine that it wasn't adding oil to the 
troubled waters to be told that neither Paquita, Mademoiselle Rollet, nor I 
were to be trusted to correspond, that if we continued to do so it was to be 
under the condition of having all our letters read; that Mlle. Dussaut had never 
done this to any girl, because she said that if they could not be more trusted 
than that she would send them away; that was the spark to the powder-
magazine; I coolly proceeded to say that as she could not trust me I should 
much prefer to go and that I would write to Mama to take me away; she 
stopped me in the middle of this with some sort of explanation and had it all 
herself way after that for about three-quarters of an hour, half-scolding, half-
reasoning, with half-pelting me: finally she began to ask me something about 
my mother, I couldn't stand any more: that on top of my excitement and 
anger and pain of hearing Mademoiselle Rollet abused right and left, was too 
much for me: I think [p. 23] I rather scared Madame Geisler with the wild 
way I burst out sobbing and rushed for the door; she caught my arm and held 
me, and I stopped myself with a good deal of difficulty, after which I went up 
to my room to wash my eyes and do my hair, and then had to sit and listen 
to Quatre-Vingt-Treize, one of Victor Hugo's novels that they are reading 
now aloud: hence my howl at midnight. I wrote up at five this morning 
burning hot, and trying to say something to Madame Geisler about 
Mademoiselle Rollet, of whom I had dreamt all night. I know Madame 
Geisler thinks that she has been instilling some deadly poison into my 
innocent soul, and it is useless to protest that she never told me anything 
about her affairs, that I never knew till long after she was gone that she had 
left Les Ruches, or that there had been a quarrel between her and the powers 
that be. It is no use to tell me that Mademoiselle Rollet is hard and bitter and 
'as jealous as a tiger': the idea of comparing her to a tiger! My pretty 
Mademoiselle with her sweet brown eyes! When Madame Geisler says 
things like that to me I think of her like I used to know her, like she was to 
me, when she used to hold me in her arms and put my head on her shoulder, 
covering me with kisses and caresses, [p. 24] calling me 'her poor little Daisy', 
and consoling me when I was all alone and home-sick; when I think of that 
all the reasoning and sermonizing in the world come in at one ear and go out

37 Alice Macmillan. See Introduction.
38 Mlle Dussaut's liberalism was not as real as Mme Geisler makes it out to be; in Olivia, we see her 
tantrums and her clear preference for some students, while she was harsh towards others (p. 40).
39 For similar use of passionate language, see Olivia (p. 39), where the author expresses her infatuation with 
Mlle Julie [Marie Souvestre]. See Introduction.
at the other. As soon as Mademoiselle Rollet answers my last letter I shall ask to be allowed to answer it; I must say good-bye to her, even if Mme. Geisler do read it. I get so sick of this continual struggle with myself and the people about me, of searching for ever the right thing to do and the courage to do it. I try to shut my eyes and stumble straight before me in doing my duty; Miss Lucy\textsuperscript{40} told us one Sunday afternoon that of that at least we were always sure, it always led to one safe end; it is such a comfort to think of that. I suppose it will always be the same thing all my life: who but a fool would demand the gift of immortality of the gods? For me, I think that three-score years and ten are enough and too long to live; I should far rather die when I was young and full of life\textsuperscript{41} and love and vigour, in sacrificing myself for someone I loved, instead of dragging myself on to die in my bed 'like a cow', as old Siward [?\textsuperscript{42}] said, an old, helpless woman embittered with trouble and pain and separations. It's my belief that half the [p. 25] trouble, and the lies about Mademoiselle Rollet, may be laid at the door of those two tale-bearing, mischief making little imps, Margot and Marianne: I could throw them into a duck pond to sink or swim, sneaking little villains. Certainly Madame Geisler talked to me very kindly, but I have not yet decided if I like her or not. Anyhow I have promised to try and keep the girls from discussing the matter and to like the house: of this last I am very doubtful. When once I get home for neither love nor money will I leave Australia again.

\textbf{October 1st}

The last day of the holidays. There are four new girls, Saidie Hill and Carrie and Jessie Merriam—Americans\textsuperscript{42}—and Alice Goldschmidt, Amy's little sister. Olga Morgan, an English girl, is coming this evening, and Mlle. Nordheim, Constantin, and Sucheté are already here: this last is to take Mlle. Rollet's place: she is about the same height, reddish hair, light blue eyes, and freckled face; she looks rather Scotch and dirty. I saw her first in the hall in the twilight, and for a moment I thought she was Mlle. Rollet, she looked so like her; my breath stopped short for a minute and I felt sick and cold: I can hardly bear to look at her now, the disappointment was so bitter. I miss her worse than ever with all the others back into their places. [p. 26] Those two poor little Merriams are very home-sick. The younger is only nine—just my age when first I went to school; I used to be home-sick for the first week, and after that I hardly knew what is was till eight months ago.

\textsuperscript{40}Lucy Garrett, a teacher from Hobart, who probably met the White girls during their holidays in Tasmania.
\textsuperscript{41}A moving statement, if one remembers that Daisy was to die in 1903 at the age of 32.
\textsuperscript{42}Les Ruches was very popular with Americans in the late 1880s and 1890s. See \textit{Olivia} (p. 48).
October 2nd

Every one nearly is back. Mlle. Suchetet who is to take Mlle. Rollet's place, has come: she is about the same height, has a good deal of reddish hair, light blue eyes, and freckled face; her manners and way of speaking, annoy me. I am going to have all my lessons with M. Billaz on Monday afternoon, and besides that German with Madame Geisler, Italian with Mlle. Jones, French with Mlle. Suchetet, arithmetic I don't know who. That is all I know at present. I think I shall get on very well with Mlle. Constantin and with Sadie Hill, who is very self-possessed and kind; she is something like Geraldine Rutherford. It makes me feel perfectly sick to see all these girls back, and to wait and listen for ever for Mlle. Rollet. I remember so well how little Loulou Starck used to leap into her arms and hang round her neck, and how she used to take little Marthe on her lap and comfort her when the poor little soul cried. The last time they made the règlement it was Mlle. Rollet and Mme. [p. 27] Geisler in the bibliothèque; I can see her little golden head bending down over the paper now. I feel as if there were oceans of tears and hurricanes of sobs storing themselves up in my throat and chest, and they cannot get out: there will most likely something come in the course of the week to let the deluge out. Juanita has gone back to Spain and is not coming back any more. I feel very cross this evening, I think I will go and read Longfellow.

October 5th

We are well settled down to our lessons now, of which I have a tremendous amount: they have not as yet exerted any soothing influence over me, and I feel as miserable and undecided as during the holidays. I cannot accustom myself to being without Mlle. Rollet. I never met anyone before who used to pet me like that, we never bill and coo at home, it never comes into our heads, and at school it was I who used to pet and protect Marcia; Lucy and I never used to go in for it much, but when we did it was still I. Now I feel doubly
my loss, and I feel as if I could not go on without someone to caress me and love me a little. I got a letter from Mama yesterday evening; she gave me a little sermon on the subject of entertaining people and going into society. The thought of staying here for two years alone nearly drives me crazy, and yet I don't know what I want: Em gone, Cecil married, 48 what will home be? I shall be hawked and vended from one place to another, to be sold at last to some rich old man, like a horse in the market with a halter round his neck. 49 I will kill myself sooner than submit to such an indignity. I have cried as long and as violently as I can pretty nearly every night since I moved into this room: I must stop that little luxury, as I begin to have sore eyes from so much crying, and it won't amuse me the least bit in the world to be obliged to leave off my lessons for a fortnight or so, especially as there is no Mademoiselle Rollet here now to look after me as she did the last time my eyes were sore.

October 13th

It is horribly cold; it has rained every day this week, and most of last week. They have opened all the heaters now, so that the warm air may come up from below, which makes the cold a little more bearable. I am overwhelmed with lessons, having only one hour free during school-time the whole of the week: we can’t begin working very early, now that it is so dark and cold; it is forbidden to work for half-an-hour after dinner (finished at 7 p.m.) 50 and at half-past eight Miss Turner reads to us till we go to bed. As I have already read [p. 29] Sans Famille, 51 and am always very tired, I go to sleep as soon as everyone is settled, and slumber profoundly till I go to bed. They are going to rearrange the règlement, 52 and take off some of my classes. I hope they’ll be quick about it. Miss Turner has been here for a long time now, before the end of the holidays: she is an old friend of Mlle. Dussaut’s, and has come to keep Gerty company; she is about 50, tall, thin, with greyish brown hair, eyes and skin, and a nose! You see it ten minutes before the owner appears. She has a grating sort of voice and speaks a little in her nose: they say she’s very nice, but I don’t know anything about her.

October 18th

This blue ink means something very wicked, namely, that I write in bed at night. I don’t know what I’m doing it for now, as I’ve nothing to say, but I feel in the grumps, and want to swear at something or somebody. The two

48 Cecil married John Wynne in March 1891.
49 Daisy remained unmarried.
50 Olivia describes the dining room thus: “There were three tables in the big dining-room; the two heads, at the centre one, sat opposite to each other” (Olivia, p. 30).
51 Sans Famille (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1883) is by Hector Merlot, with illustrations by Emile Bayard.
52 Used here in the sense of ‘schedule’.
Aschrolts came back on Saturday (to-day's Tuesday), in a blooming state of health: Marie, the younger of the two, is about my age, a superb-looking girl, tall, rather thin, well-formed, with a lovely little head set on her slender neck, and covered with crinkly, wavy hair which she does up on top of her head; she is rather dark, with a pretty complexion and beautiful brown eyes. I like her as well as anyone here: her elder sister Olga, has a face as heavy, disagreeable, and sinister as that of Marie, is bright and sweet: she has long, narrow eyes, overhung by very full lids and heavy black brows; her complexion is a little putty-y, her mouth like a wooden doll’s, her jaw long and square: all the girls hate the sight of her, and all the teachers (not the under ones, be it understood) rave about her as a marvel of wit, intelligence, good-breeding, and niceness: she makes me feel as if someone were running a piece of pampas-grass the wrong way up my backbone. We have lessons of French litterature for two hours on Tuesday afternoon with M. Wever (pronounced Veveré), a professor from Melun. He is about 30, tall, well-made, with fair hair, complexion, and moustache, and a little pointed beard; he has fine blue eyes, a good nose, and has evidently never earned his bread by the sweat of his brow, to judge from the whiteness of it and of his womanish hands: he is a terrific master, and reads and speaks very well: his lessons, together with M. Billaz’s and Miss Stretch’s, are those I like best. Mlle. Turner always gives us the Repetitions of General History; these repetitions are interesting in the highest degree. Mlle. T. takes notes, and questions us from them: as there are a good many notes, all on different bits of paper, she gets a bit mixed up sometimes: the other day she asked us when was America discovered, and who invented printing, etc. etc. SEVEN times: on my word of honour I’m not exaggerating, or making a mistake; I counted on my fingers. The other pages got turned three or four times, but this poor beggar was the last, and when she came to the end of the page, she turned it over and began innocently at the top, and so on, Heaven knows how many times: we were all choking with suppressed laughter. All the row about Mlle. Rollet has died out completely: it is a good thing, I suppose, but it makes me feel rather indignant sometimes, to see everyone bringing in their submission like beaten curs, and making their peace at the expense of the only rebel who can’t defend herself, my poor Mademoiselle! Of course, they have not all done it, but I have observed several who seem to be following out that plan: I often see things that they don’t give me credit for: I poke along with my chin in the air, my mouth half open, staring straight before me, as if I didn’t see anything nearer than 10 miles, or smaller than Mt. Wellington: with a little practice I

53 Les Ruches received students from Romania and Germany in the 1880s.
54 M. Wever [or Wever], like M. Billaz, was one of the recent graduates who came regularly to the school from Paris. According to Olivia, after their classes, the French professeurs stayed for dinner and sat at the central table with the head teachers.
55 H. C. White and his family regularly spent their summer holidays in Hobart, the second Mrs White being a Tasmanian. They must have organised trips to Mt. Wellington.
have succeeded in adopting an expression perfectly idiotic, and I would defy a detective to gather anything out of my woodenly-stupid face: sometimes it is really because I'm not paying attention to what they're all saying, but other times it is simply because I don't want to be bored with questions. I am morally sure that there is another lecture brewing for me in consequence of a letter from Ma, who would like me to become a 'demoiselle': I'll try the 'Dutch doll' face trick on her when I go home, and see if I can't gull her properly. What awful slang I am writing to-night! I never used to do it at home. I'm afraid my sojourn in this polished society hasn't done much for me. How I should catch it if somebody got hold of this book, so full of treason, strategy etc. It's been tolerably warm to-day, and we went for a very nice walk, on to one of the hills near the house; there was a lovely view from it, the little town of Avon at our feet, the white arches of the railway bridge beyond, and past that the long, swelling lines of the hills on the other side of the valley, covered with dark pines, amid whose sombre foliage the glorious reds and yellows of the elms and beeches showed up to perfection; the whole scene was flooded with mellow sunshine, and draped with a quivering autumn haze: I think I like the forest best at this time of the year.

Thursday, 20th

We went for a long walk this afternoon with Miss Stretch to the Tour Denecourt: it is a little tower in the midst of the forest, built on a hill which over-looks a long stretch of the hills. The view was simply magnificent, all those miles and miles of gorgeous colours quivering in a smoke-blue haze. I don't think we shall have much more now of this lovely weather.

Sunday, 23rd

We went for another long walk this afternoon with Mlle. Lainé. I take all the chances I can of going out a little, for on Monday (M. Billaz’s day) and Friday (M. Garnuchot) I have classes from one p.m. till six, and so never have time for a walk, and very often it rains, or something happens to prevent us from having our walk, so now I have about two or three a week, without counting Sundays. I asked Mme. Geisler this evening if I could send a book to Paquita Galobart, and obtained a rather unwilling permission after a good deal of explanation and giving a promise not to send anything in it. I was furious to see at dinner-time that it was not sent: I do really think it's too bad.

56 The Avon viaduct was built between 1846 and 1848 and can still be seen in all its grandeur today. See Appendix to Introduction.
57 The Tour Denecourt stands on the hill above Avon and was named after Claude François Denecourt (1788–1875), called ‘Sylvain’ by Théophile Gautier. He discovered hidden parts of the Forêt de Fontainebleau and published the first guide for walkers in 1839, thereby creating the sentiers (paths) in the forest. These walks are still very popular today. See http://www.aaff.org/sentiers.htm
October 24th

Mlle. Jones told me to-day that Mama has written to her saying that she did not wish me to write to anyone except my own relations: this prohibition is not levelled against Mlle. Rollet, but against the Miss Garretts and Lucy and Marcia. However that was the reason that she had not let my book go, and so she took my address off, and sent it 'for the house'; I don't much care how it goes so long as she gets it. I do get so mad for a word from Mlle. Rollet sometimes; I think one of these days I shall write to her without saying with your leave or by your leave to anybody. I should have done it long ago if they gave any signs of suspecting me.

October 26th

Poor Miss Stretch got a letter to-day telling her that her aunt was dead; it was a great blow for her, for she has hardly any other relations in England.

October 27th

We went to Paris to-day with Mlle. Lainé, and walked miles and miles in the 'Magasins du Louvre', hunting up all sorts of things in the drapery line. I brought myself a nice little alarm clock, and we got a hat each, brown felt brimmed with brown ribbon and a brown wing: we also [p. 35] bought at another shop a lot of pretty red-brown stuff to make our Sunday dresses of. We passed through the Palais Royal, where are all the best jewel-shops in Paris, windows and windows full of most lovely jewels, pearls and rubies and diamonds and beautifully worked gold and silver ornaments: we got back frozen at about half-past seven.

October 28th

M. de Beriot played this evening: he certainly does play most beautifully: I always get away down into a dark corner where I can listen unobserved; it does aggravate me so to be 'surveillé'-d, and Mme. Geisler watches me continually; I don't like it, for I feel as if she knows me very well, rather too well, in fact, and yet not so well as she thinks she does. I hate anyone to see my face when I am listening to music. 58 I howled plentifully in my little corner this evening. So many of these sonatas that M. de Beriot plays are ones that I know so well from hearing them at home.

58 Olivia refers to the 'big music-room' that was subsequently added to the original building of Les Ruches by Mlle Dussaut (p. 24).
November 1st

As it is All Saint's Day we have a holiday; I have passed all the day in doing my lessons, except when I went to the cemetery for a walk with Mlle. Constantin. Mlle. Dussaut's coffin has been removed from the vault where she was buried first [p. 36] to a grave on the other side of the cemetery; the grave is all planted with pansies and little shrubs, and with great jars of flowers on it. Several of the girls went to Moret this afternoon, a little place on the line from here; there are some nuns there who make most delicious barley-sugar; they brought back whole packets of it, and we had a regular barley-sugar fête this evening. The cold is beastly, and the leaves are almost all fallen; they haven't begun lighting the fires yet. I got a letter from Lucy Smith to-day, and heard to my great delight that Ethel is engaged to be married to her brother-in-law David's nephew after an acquaintance of four days; they say she is in a frantic state of joy and excitement. Dear old Ethelly! I wish I could have a good talk to her and tell her how glad I am.

November 9th

We had our first dancing lesson this evening, with a nasty little Frenchman, the very type and embodiment of French dancing masters, who laughs at everyone in a very disagreeable way. The lesson began at 8 p.m., and finished at nine. As the weather isn't so very cold now, and as I was wearing my heavy blue serge dress, I felt pretty hot when we had finished. Professor West's lessons have not been all in vain, for Mme. Geisler and Mlle. Jones told me that I had 'joliment bien danse pour la première leçon'. Fancy your clumsy, square sister dancing 'joliment bien!' I couldn't help grinning, it seems so rum. By the way, I am getting on with my compositions: we had one for M. Billaz on the feudality yesterday, and mine was the best, and again today with M. Wever mine on the Legend of the 'Barisel' was better than any of the others although he did growl at the middle for being too long. I could shy ink-stands at that wretched little Gaul (not M. Wever, who is tall, but M. Billaz, who is short, and resembles a stocking stuffed with bran in figure) when he begins sneering at us for making mistakes; not that I get much of it,
Daisy [October 20th, 1887]: 'We went for a long walk this afternoon with Miss Stretch to the Tour Denecourt: it is a little tower in the midst of the forest, built on a hill which overlooks a long stretch of the hills.'

Daisy [October 27th, 1887]: 'We passed through the Palais Royal, where are all the best jewel-shops in Paris, windows and windows full of most lovely jewels, pearls and rubies and diamonds and beautifully worked gold and silver ornaments.'
for he seldom questions me, and when he does I can generally answer; if I can't I say so, instead of sitting like a fool with my mouth half-open, waiting for an inspiration as so many of these girls do.

November 11th

I used to think once 'when I was young' (ah! woful when! Ah for the change 'twixt now and then' as the poet saith), that Physical Geography, and dabbling in Physics and Chemistry and studying nature under all forms, were some of the most delightful studies ever to charm a student. I have found out my [p. 38] mistake of late. Friday afternoons have become the bane of my existence: I hate them as cordially as I used to love Mr. Fache's science lessons on Mondays and Thursdays at Shirley.\textsuperscript{64} Arithmetic I never did like, and taught by M. Garnuchot it's simply insupportable; chemistry is a little more bearable, especially when he makes horrid smells, and smashes glasses, and makes the table and floor all dirty, because it livens up the monotony, and leaves very little time for giving the real lesson. Physics is simply beastly, drier than bone-dust, and pretty hard to understand: we have the \textit{Rep.} with Mlle. Suchetet, who is an owl in my humble opinion: it takes about \textonehalf of an hour to make her understand that I don't understand, and then when she understands my questions, she answers them by telling me that I mustn't 'attack the system of the thing' or some such bosh, as if I wanted to attack her or anything; that's what I call asking for bread and being given a stone. At all events you couldn't even corner Mlle. Rollet, and she used always to answer a body fair and square, and set you right. M. de Beriot played again this evening. M. Père is giving us a course of lectures on La Fontaine;\textsuperscript{65} the lecture is every ten days, the evening in the music-room; he talks so well, and his lessons are so interesting. It's getting very late, and I've a host of lessons [p. 39] for tomorrow, so I must blow out my candle now.

November 13th

I had a long letter from Em\textsuperscript{66} to-day; she has begun her hospital life, and seems to like it very much: she says that Father is getting reconciled to it (thank goodness!) I only hope and trust that Mamma will stay quietly in Europe\textsuperscript{67} until things have got quietly and firmly settled at home. Poor old Cecily! I wish I could go home and keep her company; what fun we would have together. Ethelly wrote to me too: it is quite true that she is engaged to be

\textsuperscript{64} At that time, a school in the well-to-do Eastern Suburbs area of Sydney.

\textsuperscript{65} Jean de La Fontaine (1621-1695), author of the \textit{Fables} (1668-1694).

\textsuperscript{66} Daisy's sister, Emily Jane White (1863-1946). See Introduction.

\textsuperscript{67} Helen White was in Wiltshire, England, but also visited friends in Dublin, Germany and France during 1887.
married to Osborne McCausland, but after an acquaintance of several months: he must be awfully nice; I should like to know him. I've just finished *Grandeur et Servitude Militaire* by Alfred de Vigny; it is very deep and serious, and I like it very much; he has a touch of English quietness and thoughtfulness in all his writings. I wonder what I am turning into here. I feel as if I were growing into a perfect type of the haughty, cold Englishmen, covered over with a coating of reserve that nothing can break through. No wonder all the girls dislike me so, for I am horridly nasty, I'm sure. Sometimes when I consider myself, I think how good I was to do such and such a thing, and then I tell myself what a Pharisaical wretch I am for thinking that, and then take credit to myself for finding [p. 40] that out, until I feel perfectly sick with myself.

**November 14th**

We got a letter from Cecily to-day; she is still up with Aunt Jane at Muswell Brook, thank goodness. It began snowing this afternoon, after a most hideous cold this morning. It looks so pretty to see all those soft white flakes fluttering down; they were all most astonished that I had never seen it before. We had a very amusing afternoon with M. Billaz, who is fatter and uglier and more absurd than ever. That insufferable Olga is so rude: we had none of us understood the subject of the essay for last week, and he proceeded to growl at us about it: Olga said 'Well, we have all understood the subject just the other way', (as much as to say 'Old donkey, you know you told us that!') Little M. Billaz got ruffled up, and answered with choler, *Vraiment, Mlle. Aschrolt! Sans doute, c'est moi, comme toujours, qui ai tort!* Olga answered, nowise abashed, *Eh bien! C'est ça que vous nous avez dit,* with a French shrug and an imprudent air. Poor little Billy-boy, as they call him.

**November 17th**

We went into town to-day with Mlle. Nordheim, and Dorothy bought a blue winter jacket, not so bad, considering. [p. 41] Mlle. Nordheim and Miss Stretch are always together now; they are a regular pair of little 'bonnes femmes', small, fair, rather insignificant-looking, and with a soul to match their bodies to a T. They are a regular little pair of turn-coats also: last quarter they were always with Mlle. Rollet, always took her part, and nothing was

68 In *Servitude et grandeur militaire* (Paris: H. Delloye; V. Lecou, 1837), Alfred de Vigny depicts the disillusionment of his generation under the Empire; the book is based on Vigny's own experiences. Olivia stated that Mlle Julie used to read this work to the older boarders *(Olivia, p. 47)*.

69 Jane White (1842-1934), sister to Henry Charles and aunt to Daisy.

70 'Really, Mlle Aschrolt! No doubt, as always, it is I who am in the wrong!'

71 'Well, this is precisely what you told us'

72 'old women'
good enough for her. Now they take every occasion of saying nasty little things about her, and never try to defend her. This evening they spent a pleasant half-hour in picking her to pieces and relating old histories about her. My poor Mademoiselle! She has a quick temper, I think, and they make her suffer for it now that she isn't here to defend herself. Those two little crows pecking at her reputation this evening wouldn't have dared to open their miserable beaks if her foot had been in the farthest part of the garden. I do believe that Paquita and I are the only two to whom her going away has made any real difference, of all the teachers and pupils who used to pretend to care so much about her last term. They say she has a sort of school, or classes, or something like that, at Paris. I'd give anything to see her again; I wonder if I ever shall? Mlle. Suchetet aggravates me to such an extent that sometimes I don't know what to do: she is abominably vulgar and common, not only in dress and appearance (that I could easily forget), but in manners, language and ideas. She has been teacher in a big public school, and has evidently had pupils of all grades and descriptions under her: but as for being able to command them, and make herself respected! pooh! I could do a good deal better than she, I believe. A 'Daisy!' from Mlle. Rollet did more for me that than a month's sermonising from Mlle. Suchetet would—or from Madame Geisler, for that matter. I never knew how obstinate I was till I came here. 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, these three alone lead life to sovereign power'. Oh, if only I could possess one of those rare qualities! I think I would choose self-knowledge, the two others would follow more easily and naturally when once one had that in perfection.

November 26th

I had a letter from my aimiable Ma yesterday, after a silence of about 6 weeks: she wrote me a page, to say that I wasn't to write to any of the people here—about, Mlle. Delu in particular, as it was to her I had asked for permission to write. There has been a long fuss about President Grévy lately: it began with a story a long time back about General Cafferelle, who was proved guilty of having sold the decoration of the Legion d'honneur. Wilson, an American, Grévy's son-in-law, was accused of being mixed up in the affair, and they said that Grévy had taken away and put back again two letters to somebody about something; there was a regular row about it, Grévy has given his démission, (Tuesday, I think it was that we heard the news) and at present

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74 General Cafferel, deputy to the commander-in-chief, was accused of selling French decorations.

75 resignation
the country is without either President or Minister: they talk of the probability of a dictatorship under General Boulanger, or the possibility of a kingdom under the Orléanistes, and seem agreed on the subject of France being done for if a war breaks out with Germany. I do frankly confess that I don’t like Miss Stretch; she is disagreeably sarcastic, not to me—neither teachers nor pupils ever say anything agreeable or disagreeable to me—but to many of the others. If you are English, fond of her and of talking scandal, and tolerably lazy, you are sure to be in her good books; but she has not got a large, open soul and is not really capable of getting up out of her own fussy little affairs, and caring about somebody or something outside of her own little groove: her aunt’s death seems to have made positively no change in her; she laughs and chatters and snaps with and at everybody just the same as ever. I think she is subject to fits of love for different persons; last quarter little Marthe Dupont was so ‘gentille’, so pretty, so sweet; this term Marthe is a little nuisance who ‘agaces’ her, and is to be kept in her place and not let bother. Olga Aschrolt three months ago was a villain and an outcast, hardly fit to have a word thrown at her, and now she is spoken to quite amicably. Mlle. Nordheim, be it observed, follows faithfully in Miss Stretch’s lead, and Miss Stretch is much influenced by her adherent’s views, so if you know what one or the other thinks you know the opinions of a round half dozen, or more, of the girls, and are acquainted with the doctrine highly respectable, and favourably looked upon, if not actually followed by the majority of the pupils: they say if one sheep jumps through a gap all the rest go after it. If anyone here were to read this diary, I would pay for my heresy by a quarter’s coventry, and my memory would be eternally held up to the execration of all the generations of pupils who will follow me for a quarter of a century to come. It is a rather fashionable and amusing manner of passing one of these winter evenings to pick old girls to pieces, sometimes in the pure view of amusing us, and sometimes to warn us from following evil examples. I must say that with all their polish these foreigners’ manners leave something to be desired; Margot Clavelly and Olga Aschrolt might cure our famous Soudan Contingent of swearing in the same way as these latter cure the Irish troopers, it is simply disgraceful to hear such words in a lady’s mouth; a carter or a navvy wouldn’t use them at home before a woman. Some of the English girls amuse themselves by learning and repeating to one another all the elegant expressions that Dickens Smallweed pitches with the cushion at his decrepit old wife; ‘chattering, clattering, brimstone magpie’, by example to quote the

66 Georges Boulanger (1837–1891) general, politician, Minister for War (1886–1887), was very popular with the French people for a time. He refused to become involved in a planned coup d’état in 1889 and fled to Belgium where he committed suicide on the grave of his mother.

67 Gallicism: ‘irritates’.

68 In Olivia, a similar point is made; the two head teachers have their circle of ‘girls’ who are devoted to them. The older students are divided into camps and factions (p. 73).
least objectionable of them. And one and all, they talk about their aches and pains in public (generally at the dinner table) in a way that used to make me open my eyes to their widest extent; it makes me feel sea-sick to hear them saying that people are ordered blood to drink, and to hear [p. 46] how they go to the shambles\textsuperscript{79} and swallow down huge glasses hot and reeking. If one is obliged to do such disgusting things, at least one needn’t talk about it, above all at meal-time, when there’s very underdone beef for dinner—I feel pretty homesick to night. M. Billaz didn’t turn up this afternoon. I hope the poor little man hasn’t been drowned in the mud.

\textit{November 25th}

It is the \textit{fête} of Ste. Catherine to-day;\textsuperscript{80} there is a fair in honour of the event, and Mme. Geisler took all the little ones there; they came back two or three hours later, this afternoon, laden with gingerbread and air-balloons. My eyes have been hurting me like the very mischief lately, and Mlle. Jones dragged me (most unwilling victim) to M. Lefèbvre, who prescribed hot tea-bathing for the offending members, and smoked spectacles. They say now that I do it for show-off, so I never wear the spectacles if I can help it, and always forget to ask for the tea. I can be obstinate just as well as anyone else, when once I am fairly possessed of the devil. I wonder if I like Mme. Geisler? I don’t really know myself; but find someone to care about I must, sooner or later; my whole nature is [p. 47] springing back in revolt from this ten months’ strain; I can’t stand anymore if it—

\textit{November 28th}

Mlle. Rollet wrote to Mlle. Busoni the other day, and sent all sorts of messages to me: she can’t write to me direct, and if she sent a letter from Paris it would be intercepted at once, for they know I have no relations there. I’m going to write to her one day soon; if it is sinful and wicked, so much the worse! I consider it a lawful spoiling of the Egyptians. There: it has just struck eleven; it is only Tuesday and if I’m going to burn the midnight candle every evening this week, I shall \textit{coucher}\textsuperscript{81} myself in the \textit{ténèbres}\textsuperscript{82} on Saturday.

\textsuperscript{79} slaughterhouse

\textsuperscript{80} St. Catherine of Alexandria (d.307) was the patron saint of young ladies, and her feast day was on 25 November. Daisy is perhaps also referring to the former head teacher, Catherine Dussaut, who may have instituted the official celebration of the saint’s feast day.

\textsuperscript{81} ‘go to bed’

\textsuperscript{82} ‘darkness’
November 29th

There was a most glorious sunrise this morning, the most splendid I have seen since we left the dear old Natal. All along the sky above the dark hills were banks of grey-black clouds, burning with a strange red light in a long band all along the east; it was simply lovely, that rich, rose red between the dark clouds and the black hills: I sat on the sill in Millet Rollet’s old room (there’s no one there now) and watched the shadows fading away before the light, and the bare branches of the planes and beeches forming a trellis-work between me and the sunrise. There is a weird, poetic beauty in the forest now that it lacks in the summer; all the trees are bare, and the ground is covered with brown leaves and withered heather and bracken; the grass and mosses drip with wet, there is not a sound to be heard but the ring of our feet on the roads, and the crackle of dead branches in the little foot-paths; sometimes we see a solitary crow cawing and circling between the peaks of the sandstone hills encircling some lovely, boulder-strewn gully, and sometimes we meet a sturdy peasant chopping wood, but beyond that the woods are lifeless: it must be awful there at night, when the wind moans fitfully about even this sheltered house, and the moon breaks out pale and dim from the flying banks of clouds: goodness only knows it’s creepy enough crossing over alone to the pavilion on such evenings.

To change the subject: I haven’t had a letter from home for nearly three weeks, and I think they might find a little bit of time to scribble us a line or two. M. Billaz didn’t turn up last Monday; we heard afterwards that the poor little fellow was indisposed: if he come and give us 4 hours to-morrow, I’ll brain him with a tomahawk.

November 30th [ p. 49]

I’ve just washed my head and have nearly died of laughing (not at my head, be it understood); M. Peyre has been reading us Molière’s Scapin, and seriously speaking, it is enough to provoke a laugh under the ribs of death: I never heard anyone read half as well as he: he is a ‘méridional’, very witty, continually making puns, fearfully absent-minded, and the kindest-hearted, most generous gentleman you could wish to see. He gesticulates splendidly, and talks so well with his hands and expression (above all, his eyes), that it is almost as good as seeing the piece played: he changes his voice and tone of reading in a wonderful way for each character; we have all laughed at him till our jaws ache.

83 The Natal was the ship in which Daisy and Dorothy sailed from Sydney on 19 February 1887 for Marseilles, with Henry Charles and Helen White. See Introduction.
84 A pavilion was added to the original building by Mlle Dussaut and housed music, art and dancing lessons.
85 Molière’s Les Fourberies de Scapin was first performed in Paris on 14 May 1671.
86 ‘from the south of France’
87 play.
December 1st

We went into town to-day with that little Miss Stretch, to be photoed: I am awfully vexed not to have been able to go before, but we had to wait till our best dresses were made, and every Thursday since there has been some bother about it. The weather is still pretty mild for December.

December 2nd

Lucienne Sergeant [Sergent] is one of the most unintelligent girls I ever met. The time and patience I have spent this evening, trying to make her understand [p. 50] that prêter was ‘prestare’ in Italian, that as parlare made o, i, a in the present, prestare must necessarily make the same; but no! 500 times did she write prestarglio, prestarli, prestarla etc: at last I pounded into her head how to do it properly, and got her to write one little abc sentence without a mistake, but I know she'll go and make just the same mistake to-morrow, and the day after, and so on into eternity; I can’t conceive of anybody so destitute of understanding. She draws disgracefully badly, and paints about as well as a cow; I can draw tolerably well now, and though I have never learnt painting can lay on a colour evenly, and tell red from yellow: I took it into my head to paint an eye for the Natural History in Indian ink, and made quite a nice little affair: Lucienne, hearing me rejoice over the saving of time and trouble, wished to do likewise, borrowed my Indian ink (costs 1 fr. a stick) and made an outrageous daub, correctly drawed—or rather traced—and then made piteous appeals to me to come and help her; I passed about 20 minutes in fixing it up, and at last got it to look tidy, clear, and decent by means of a little judicious shading: it’s the same history every week, [p. 51] she makes a grubby daub or scratching, then pulls a long face, and drawls, ‘Oh Daisy, ne pourrez-vous pas venir à mon secours?’, 88 without ever troubling to see if I am busy, or have the time. There, I have growled enough at her, she is a good-hearted girl, but sometimes she does rile me with her careless slovenliness of mind, and her sleepy disregard of what she might see and learn for herself.

December 3rd

We got a letter from Cecily to-day, such a dear, sympathetic letter; it stroked all my feathers down the right way and made me feel quite Christian-like for I don’t know how long: Alice has just nearly been carried off, only unfortunately the adventure failed; ah me! Providence is very hard on us sometimes, here have we poor wretches been begging everyone to take her for nearly eleven years, and she always comes back onto our hands, like a bad

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88 ‘Oh Daisy, could you not come to my rescue?’
penny. Cecily has been to 'Woodlands', and I am impatiently expecting her account of it in Em’s monthly epistle, which ought to be coming the week after next. Darling old Em! I am so thankful that she has left 'Havilah', and is happy in her hospital work: I must make haste and get home to Cecily, and keep her company: what fun we shall have [p. 52] together. Mme. Geisler said (not to me) last dancing lesson, that I would dance better than any of the others, if it weren’t that I posed for not liking it: if she thinks I show-off, so much the better, she does not know me so well as she thinks: when I go home I will not be dragged out to balls and pic-nics and tennis parties: I think with a little practice I could soon force Mama to leave me in peace at 'Havilah'. By that same token, I must write to her this evening, and have only got a scrap of candle left.

**December 6th**

Well, if I haven’t a nice little cold in a day or two, after the tom fooleries I’ve been doing all this week, it’ll be a miracle: often after dinner, I come up to my room, all on fire after drinking scalding soup in the hot dining room, open the window wide and sit there for ten minutes: I am always forgetting my shawl, and crossing from the pavillion in the rain and night-mist with bare head and shoulders; last Sunday I drew for two hours in the salle à dessin, where there is no fire, and came away at last because I was too stiff with cold to make another stroke; to-day at one o’clock it was raining cats and dogs so Mlle. Busoni and I sallied out alone, and went as far as the Avon church, half an hour’s walk there, in a pelting shower: we talked about Mlle. Rollet and all sorts of treason, the whole time: as Mlle. Busoni doesn’t care for anyone here—they’ve all rough enough with her, poor thing!—I could relieve my mind without danger, and blew off a lot of explosive matter that has been lying around inside me for a long time.

M. Wever was awfully nice to me this afternoon; he gave us a fable to analyse for our last essay, and I had written a lot of bosh, of which I became aware when it was too late, and I couldn’t do it all over again. Generally he passes the essays in close review, and holds them up to unlimited mockery, and it is always mockery, however good-natured; I saw what was coming before he opened the cover of my book, and blushed furiously; naturally I was wild with myself, but he took pity on me, said simply that my composition was not as good as usual, that I was evidently unaccustomed to that style, and ill at ease in it; so he gave me back the cahier with a reccomendation to look over the mistakes: I could have flung my arms round his neck and kissed him in the fullness of my gratitude, for if he had corrected it aloud he would have

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89 For 'Woodlands' and 'Havilah' see Introduction.
90 art room
skinned me properly, and it is awful before that big class [p. 54] when one knows it is so stupid, and that there are no redeeming points. He has given us La légende de Noël for next week: I haven’t an idea of what legend it is, or how we are to set about it, but I want to do it as well as possible, to show my gratitude for his mercy this afternoon.

December 14th

To-day is Thursday; last Monday I got a long, long letter from Ethel Searle: poor girl! She had been engaged for just three weeks when Osborne McCausland cut his foot badly with an ax; he did not take enough care of himself, lock-jaw set in, and a fortnight afterwards he was dead, after terrible sufferings. Poor Ethelly! She is almost heart-broken! I had been feeling pretty moky about it all Tuesday, and when I got up to my room after having been bothered right and left all day, and being besides homesick and Mlle. Rolletsick, I just sat down and proceeded to cry; after about half-an-hour I was pretty tired, and had not enough strength left to stop myself, or even to stifle my sobs, which Miss Stretch heard, and came into my room to see what was the matter: she was very nice to me, and so was Marie, who turned up from I don’t know [p. 55] where: I think she is going to leave after Christmas; the only consolation I find in her departure is that that abominable Olga will go too. Yesterday there was a row in the school-room; Camilla Fraser, Amy Goldschmidt, and Margaret Young are sworn friends: Margaret is the best of the trio—not saying much for her—it appears that they have been disagreeable to the Aschrolts—high treason, my dear—and saucy to Mlle. Nordheim, who to punish them, spoke of this to Mme. Geisler. They can’t find out who did it, and have been asking everybody in the school-room; I didn’t say who it was, and hardly any of the others know. Camille refused flatly and openly to kiss Mme. Geisler in the evening; she rebels openly, and Amy eggs her on secretly and keeps out of the rowing; I would not care to trust that young lady too far. I lost my little gold and pearl brooch that father gave me last Thursday; I hunted all the house for it, but had small hope of ever seeing it again, as money and jewellery have been disappearing rather unaccountably lately: but to-day Joseph swept my dear little brooch out of some corner in the Galerie Vitree, a little [p. 56] bent, and minus a pearl, it is true, but I’m too thankful to get it back to fash myself91 unduly about that.

91 A Scottish expression meaning 'to trouble' or 'to upset' oneself.
La Grande Rue, Fontainebleau c.1900

Daisy [November 17th, 1887]: 'We went into town to-day with Mlle. Nordheim, and Dorothy bought a blue winter jacket, not so bad, considering.'

La Grande Rue et l’Église (The Main Street and the Church), Fontainebleau 1909

Daisy [December 1st, 1887]: 'We went into town to-day with that little Miss Stretch, to be photoed.'

Photograph courtesy of Département de Seine-et-Marne, Dammartin-lès-Lys
December 15th

It is Margot Clavelly's 17th birthday; she got a heap of pretty presents. There was a concert this evening, it's just finished—at 11 p.m. and I am pretty sleepy. We got a long and very nice letter from Em, with a likeness of her darling old self for each of us; also a letter from Cecily at 'Woodlands', I do so long to see it again, for though I was only four years old when I went away I can remember it still—parts of it, at least. Hunter also sent us a book each, to me *Treasure Island* a very interesting book in the style of *King Solomon's Mines* and Dorothy *Drat Those Boys*, which I haven't yet read. There now, I must shut up shop and hurry to my downy couch.

December 21st

It is the last day before the holidays to-day. We have been poking about and doing nothing all day. This evening I dressed before dinner—in a soft stuff grey dress trimmed with grey silk and with a cream waistcoat and collar—and went down to be turned round, and examined, and criticised by everyone. I used to think once upon a time that the girls in Hobart were ridiculous the way they talked incessantly about their clothes. We idled about for a good while after dinner, and then we all went into the *salle à musique*, and fished up packets out of a bath full of shavings: I got a very well-bound Corneille, and Dorothy La Fontaine's *Fables*. After that we played games to amuse the little ones, and when they were in bed we danced for a bit. Mlle. Jones gave four bees, Adèle, May Barron, Amy Goldschmidt, and Lucienne Sergent. Lucienne was very much moved, and wept copiously all the rest of the evening. Mme. Geisler was very kind to me, and kissed very affectionately when she said good-night, after which I went up to my room, and wrote to Mlle. Rollet till midnight. I poked the letter under Mlle. Busoni's door, as she had promised to take it for me. Ah me! ah me! I think I'm growing a sad hypocrite.

December 24th

It is Christmas eve, very nearly Christmas morning—11.30 p.m. and all Fontainebleau is asleep, I suppose. I wonder what they are doing at home now, half-past nine? A good many families will be breakfasting, ours probably among the number. Em has a holiday most likely, and is perhaps spending

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92 Daisy would have left 'Woodlands' in 1875, shortly after the death of her mother, Isabella Mary White.
94 Daisy would have met these girls during her summer holidays in the 1880s.
95 The works of Pierre Corneille, French dramatist (1606-1684), author of *Le Cid*, among other plays.
96 The students of Les Ruches were awarded 'bees' for high scholarly achievement. The students themselves were known as *abeilles*, 'bees', or *Avons* (after the town).
it with Cecily—happy, happy, happy pair! Father and Hunter are in New
Zealand, I think;\(^{97}\) Mama is in Wiltshire, at some old country house, the Macs
are in possession of 'Havilah'; I wonder what the Miss Garretts are doing, or
if they will think of us to-day? We two poor beggars here. It was hideously
cold all yesterday, and towards dusk it began snowing; this morning it was all
white, and they were hoping for a white Christmas, but a warm, persistent
drizzle has melted all the snow, and nothing remains but the ever-lasting black
mud. At one o'clock Mlle. Lainé went off to Paris with most of the girls.
There are only Mlle. Jones—going also on Monday—Mme. Geisler—goes
New Year's Day—Miss Stretch, Camille, Alice, Zoe Nicolesco—a funny little
Roumanian who is fearfully inquisitive and homesick—Olga Morgan—
going in a day or two—and Mlle. Nordheim—at Paris till Sunday evening.
Some of the girls will be back before the end of the holidays. This evening
M. Peyre read us *Le Juif Polonais*, the creepiest and ghostliest tragedy
imaginable: it has got me into such a state of excitement and goose-flesh that
I am very far from thinking of sleeping. That Zoe [p. 59] is a perfect little cure:
the other day she assured me with the greatest gravity that Roumania\(^{98}\) and
Vienna were much to the north of France, that railways haven't been invented
a score of years yet, and that they are going to make a bridge from here to
America; 'So that you can go there on donkey-back, I suppose', I suggested
sarcastically when she met me with this astonishing news, for she had been
laying down the law in a rather high-handed fashion for a fortnight's pupil of
twelve years old. She didn't see it the least bit in the world, and continued to
harangue me thereupon in all good faith for another \(\frac{1}{2}\) hour. Zoë will never
hear the end of that Transatlantic bridge. Mme. Geisler said to me on
Wednesday evening—'C'est gentil d'avoir une abeille, n'est-ce pas? Eh bien!
Chacune à son tour; ça sera à vous après.'\(^{99}\) so I suppose that I shall have one
sooner or later; I have already been here eight months, and am just beginning
to accustom myself to the place a little bit.

**December 26th**

This morning it was offal, offal cold: I looked out of my window to see the
cause, and behold, the whole place was white with snow, the sky was a deep,
clear blue, and the sun was glittering on the crystals of snow till they shone
like diamonds. This [p. 60] splendid weather has continued—the first sunny
day for several weeks—months, I might say almost. Mlle. Jones left for Paris

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\(^{97}\) In December 1887, H.C. White and Hunter went to New Zealand to buy Angus bulls. The *Sydney Mail*
reported in its obituary for White on 16 March 1905: 'In 1884, he imported a very fine polled Angus bull
from New Zealand and Australian Land Company's stud herd at Totara in the South Island of New
Zealand.'

\(^{98}\) Shortly before Daisy, the Romanian poet, Elena Vacarescu had attended the school. She was the author

\(^{99}\) 'It is nice to have a bee, isn't it? Well, each one in her turn, it will be your turn next time.'
this morning, and to-morrow Mme. Geisler's sister, who came yesterday, is
going to take Olga Morgan to the capital to meet her mother. This afternoon
I went into town with Mlle. Nordheim, to get the stuff to make a little bag
for my ‘Ma’. It will be rather chic, I think; dark canvas cloth with golden
threads, double with cherry-coloured satin, and embroidered with different
tinted silks; it cost 4 fr. she sent me 17 the other day. Mlle. Nordheim is a
rather odd sort of personage. She takes her rank as a lady, and yet if you asked
me if she was one, I would say ‘no’ most decidedly; nearly everyone has begun
Olga and Margot’s habit of swearing, and one hears from all sides Zitt = ‘d.n.’,
‘Fische-moi la paix’, = ‘go to the devil’, etc. etc; Mlle. Nordheim is getting quite
accomplished therein. Also she relates stories of herself, and what she and her
friends do in society, which—making due allowances for her Tartarinism and the ‘soleil du midi’, which magnifies everything magically—don’t do
much credit to a [p. 61] gentlemwoman. Thirdly, I consider that the books she
has read render her totally unfit to be the intimate companion of a girl in
whatever station. When we have classes with her, she chatters with us all the
time, and that most openly and carelessly, of the novels she has ‘chiped’ from
locked book-cases, etc. and then the others laugh, and tell her how they have
done the same—books that men hardly read, and lock away because they are
too filthy and disgusting for their wives to read. And then these girls wonder
however anyone could dare to write such loathsome trash, as if anyone
mightn’t wonder at their owning to have read them, or to have been
shameless enough to relate them to each other (and some of them have done
that, I know). It makes me feel sick sometimes to hear them talk of it even,
though they have never said anything of the inside of their aristocratic
literature before me. These French writers are many of them much worse than
Ouida, and all the tribe of English ‘French novelists’. They are very hard
here about little things; if a child eats badly, is not clean enough in her person,
etc. etc., or if she has told an untruth, she never hears the end of it; they are
always ‘twitting’ [p. 62] her with it in the most disagreeable and relentless
fashion, Mme. Geisler, Milles. Lainé, Jones, Turner, etc., and of course the other
mistresses and the pupils follow in their wake. ‘A word to the wise is enough’,
often to those not very wise, and I think a quiet speaking-to would do more
good than a public reprimand at table, where all this generally goes on. Gertie
Jones is almost a girl, and is too young and inexperienced to be looked up to
as the directress, so Mme. Geisler naturally takes that place. She said to me the

100 Tarascon was the main town of the Bouches-du-Rhône in the south of France. Tartarin, from Tarascon,
is the name of the boastful protagonist in novels by Alphonse Daudet: Les Aventures prodigieuses de Tartarin
de Tarascon (1872), Tartarin sur les Alpes (1885) and Port Tarascon (1890).
101 ‘midday sunshine’
102 Ouida (1839–1908), the nom de plume of Louisa de la Ramée, author of Held in Bondage; On, Grannie
de l’eigne; A Tale of the Day (1864); Lady Marmalard’s Troubles (1889); Belée; Or Two Little Wooden Shoes (1895);
Bimbi; Stories for Children (1892), among others.
night she gave me such a talking-to about Mlle. Rollet that she would never attempt to win my affection against my will, so to say, but that she did very much desire to have my respect; I told her then, and told her truly, that I did respect her, but I could not say that to-night. I cannot believe all she tells me is true, I cannot trust her fully and freely, I would bite my tongue off sooner than confide in her. I don't know why; she has never deceived me in any way that I know of, and most of the girls—all, I think—are very fond of her. But she falls, oh so short! of that high ideal of firm pure, wise woman-hood that I have always before [p. 63] me since I knew Miss Lucy, and the memory of Mademoiselle Rollet is always beside me like a spirit holding my hand, and telling me that my instinctive, spontaneous love for her was true and just, and not a silly child's fancy, and not to trust too much to my reason when that instinct cries to me to beware. So I trust not Madame Geisler overmuch, and I remember my darling always. I feel as if half a lifetime had passed since those cold spring days when I came here. I remember so well Mlle. Rollet's first caress: it was in the evening, after dinner. I was in the hall, reading Madame Thérèse; or rather I was holding it upside-down, and was looking at nothing nearer than home; when she came and put her arm round my neck—she is half-a-head taller than I—and asked me why I was always alone, and looked so miserable: I burbled something indistinct, being intent on keeping back a fit of sobbing, and she drew my head towards her, and kissed me, such a full, firm kiss, and then made me go and walk with Lucienne and Mlle. Delu. No one ever thought of disputing Mlle. Rollet's orders, in whatever form expressed. [p. 64] This evening the moon is shining as it has never yet shone in France, gleaming on the snow-drifts till the garden is like fairy-land. Olga and I were behind all the others coming out from dinner, and we both stayed a moment looking at the moon-lit paths, and suddenly Olga said, 'I do want to go out'. 'We'll go', said I, and without more ado pushed open the door, and wandered away, bareheaded, with thin slippers, half round the garden and back again. No one saw us. If it were a story-book, we should both be seized by colds to-morrow, and die of brain-fever, ague, and rhumatism, confessing our crime; being every-day mortals of flesh and blood, we shall be none the worse for it. 11. 40 p.m.

December 29th

We have been getting on pretty well, and I have not found the holidays so wearisome as I expected. I read or translate Italian for an hour every day, read German with Mme. Geisler for a good while in the afternoon, draw, copy French poetry, tell stories to Alice—the poor child has had to stay in bed for

103 Madame Thérèse was part of the Contes et romans nationaux populaires in seven volumes by Alexandre Erckmann-Chatrian (Paris: Hetzel, n.d.).
the last two days (Christmas dinner and bon-bons)—and read: I have just finished John Halifax,\textsuperscript{104} my last English book—alas! for I don’t know how long. After dinner we all sit and work in the salle à musique till 10, when I amuse myself in my room till midnight, or thereabouts. Mme. Geisler is really nice about amusing us and indulging us in all sorts of little holiday luxuries; she was very amiable to me the other day: alas! our ‘beaux jours’ will all be over when Mlle. Lainé comes back; I never saw any woman cursed with such a villanously bad temper, in all—my—life! She is very sharp with the children, and degrades herself—to my thinking—by the violent and unbecoming way in which she scolds her servants. When this gentle dame gets in a rage with you personally, her nostrils twitch, and her green eyes have an evil glitter that remind me of Miss Mac. No, I retract my opinion; I think Miss Mac’s temper is a match for Mlle. Lainé’s, only this latter’s is more vindictive. Little Zoe Nicolesco affords us infinite amusement. She is as broad as long, and rolls rather than walks; she says the most ridiculous things in the most laughable way, and half the day, we talk over Zoe’s sayings; she has never been teased before, and takes it very well considering; she is getting much nicer too. It snows nearly every evening, and then freezes on top of that, so that we are having genuine Christmas weather, sunny cold days, and biting moonlight nights. We went to the Chateau to-day, and came back almost dead with cold. I do believe I’m going to catch a cold: I made another moonlight excursion this evening—alone, as Olga went away on Tuesday—and now my feet are almost insensible, and my head feels not too comfortable. Well, I must be off now to put my hair up in papers, as it’s getting too long on my forehead, and they raise an awful howl each time I speak of getting it cut.

\textbf{December 31st}

It is almost the New Year—ten minutes to twelve. Mama wrote to me to-day, and said we might go to Paris to the theater one morning. Mlle. Lainé arrived this morning; she has a bad cold, which keeps her quiet. Miss Stretch is most attentive and affectionate to her, though I’m sure they detest each other. Miss Stretch can’t bear the sight of me. Madame Geisler went at twelve to-day: I am sorry for it, as she has been very kind to me these holidays, and I shan’t be able to have any more German lessons. She began talking to me about Mama this morning—who is coming to see us in 2 or 3 weeks—and somehow she began telling me all sorts of things about her, that I was too stiff with her, that she would certainly be very grateful for any kind words

\textsuperscript{104} Dinah Maria Mulock Craik, \textit{John Halifax, Gentleman}. New York: Munro, 1883.
or acts that I would bend to bestow upon her, as if I were a sort of Jupiter
deigning to allow her to eat of the crumbs from my table. If Mme. Geisler
imagines that Mama and I stand in that relation to each other, she is mightily
mistaken. I used to be very, very fond of her once, but I shall never like her
again; I can't do it: she is cold, and careless, and diametrically opposed to me
in everything. The first stroke of midnight—there, it has finished now; 'and
another day is with the dead'. This year has been the most eventful of my
life, I think. Last New Year's day I was in Launceston. All 1886 I had not
shed one tear, and was determined not to do so, even when we heard we were
coming here. On New Year's day I let it all out, and cried to my heart's
content; since then I have cried more than I ever did in all my life up till a
year ago. I don't fancy I shall cry much this year, I have pretty nearly run dry,
and there will probably be a drought. I have done little good to myself or
anyone else since we left home. When we came here for a [p. 68] good while
I was too home-sick to do anything but be miserable. Then I found
Mademoiselle Rollet, and was perfectly happy and began working well for a
little while; but after she went I was worse than ever, and have wasted five
months in being more wretched than I ever thought I was capable of. Now
I feel that I am beginning to wake up, and change back to something like
what I was before, only graver, and sterner, and firmer. I think my character
is a good deal older and more formed than it was a while ago: let's hope so, I
shall need all the courage and stoic patience that ever were in a year or two.
I have been here for more than eight months now. In four more months
winter will be over, and we shall have leaves on the trees once more.

105 Smudged full stop here; the result of a tear?
106 Perhaps an adapted version of Alfred Lord Tennyson's:'But the tender grace of a day that is dead/Will
never come back to me' in 'Break, Break'; J. Bartlett, Dictionary of Familiar Quotations, 10th edn. Boston:
107 At the home of the Macmillans, Helen's parents.
108 Since the departure of Mlle Rollet in July 1887.
How strange it seems to write it! In a few weeks Sydney will be 100 years old. I would love to be there for the Centenary—it is awful cold this morning. I do dislike the Calvinist Church; there is never any attempt at decoration, never any singing beyond the one man in the choir, and his friend who plays the wheezy old harmonium. For the communion cloth they pin an old crumpled table-cloth to the table, and cover the bread with an untidy old napkin; it looks so horribly wanting in reverence and love for one's religion. Mlle. Lainé has a bad cold, and stays in bed a good deal. I got a long letter from Father and another from Cecil to-day.

Jan. 8th

I did enjoy myself yesterday. We went to the theatre with Miss Stretch. It was rather less cold, and began to thaw a little, so that the streets were in a disgusting state of mud and dirt. We got a cab and went to the Madeleine, the ‘chicest’ church in Paris after Notre Dame, it is built on the plan of the ‘Maison Carée’ at Nimes, a Roman ruin: inside it is cold, stiff, and ungraceful, but I like the double row of fluted stone columns outside that seem to support the roof. We went to the Théâtre Français, the best got-up in Paris, they say, where they speak the purest French and act the best. It was Le Barbier de Séville, by Beaumarchais, and Molière’s Malade Imaginaire: this last was the more amusing of the two, and we nearly died of laughing at

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1 This date bears a triple underlining in the manuscript.
2 The Théâtre Français, previously and later the Comédie Française, was located in the Palais Royal from 1812.
3 A civic Roman temple built by Agrippa who died in 12 BC. It was dedicated to his two sons, Caius and Lucius, heirs to Augustus, who both died young. See: http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Maison_Caree.html
4 Molière’s Malade imaginaire opened at the Palais Royal on 10 February 1673. It was during the fourth performance that Molière, who played the part of the hypochondriac, was taken ill and died.
Diæforus, the doctor's son,⁵ and at little Toinette, the sweetest little maid you could imagine. The Barbier⁶ was as [p. 70] pretty a piece as you could wish to see; an old Hidalgo is the guardian of Rosine, and wishes to marry her; she wants to marry the Count of Almaviva, who wooes her in disguise, and who is helped by the famous barber Figaro. The costumes are beautiful. Figaro's is the prettiest—a broad white felt hat, short rich-brown satin jacket, striped vest, and close-fitting satin knee-breeches; all the dress is ornamented with silver buttons and silken tassels, two of which ornament his garters and dangle on either leg, swinging every time he moves, and he is in motion all the time—skipping behind the guardian's back, racing out of one door to reappear at another, dancing about all over the place; I never saw anyone so light outside of a circus. The Count is a handsome Don enveloped at first in a great brown mantle, with powdered wig and broad flapped hat: afterwards he is dressed as a soldier in the style of the Georges; then as a 'Bachelier', in black cloth, with a short mantle; lastly in a splendid black velvet dress, laced with gold and scarlet. One scene is delicious where he comes instead of the guardian's friend, a Jesuitical organist, to give Rosine a music lesson. The guardian is simply [p. 71] eaten up with jealousy, and refuses to go out of the room; so the Count plays on the spinnet, the guardian sleeps in a great armchair, and Rosine sings on the other side of him; as soon as he is fast off, she steals behind him, the Count seizes her hand and kisses it passionately; then the old man begins to wake up, the lovers rush back to their places, and begin singing away with great zeal. The organist is splendid, he is dressed in sweeping black robes with a white linen, puritanical collar, and a big black hat rolled up on each side: his advice to the guardian is to slander Almaviva, and to force him to leave Seville: his description of calumny is splendid; I must copy it out: in the last scene the Count wants another witness to his marriage with Rosine, so pitches a bag of gold at the organist's head: afterwards when the poor guardian ramps at him for deserting him, he says "Qu'est ce que vous voulez, mon ami? Ce diable d'homme a toujours de si convaincants arguments!"⁷ He is tall and thin, with a long solemn face, drooping eye-brows and moustaches, and a slow, measured manner of moving and speaking. It was raining when we came out; we got a cab with a good deal of difficulty, [p. 72] and got back at about 8 p.m. To-day it is quite warm, comparatively speaking; not a speck of snow remains. Sadie and Adèle came back yesterday afternoon, and brought heaps of sweets with them.

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⁵ Thomas Diafoirus was the young lover of Angelique, the daughter of Argan, the hypochondriac.
⁶ By Pierre Augustin Caron, Baron de Beaumarchais (1732–1799).
⁷ "What can one do, my friend? This fiendish man always has such convincing arguments!"
Jan. 4th
There is sun and no snow to-day; we went for a long walk to the Rocher d’Avon, where we went during the May holidays, when we fell into the École d’Application. I have never seen a prettier view here than those miles of dark pine forest rolling away to the horizon, with the hill-tops strewn with grey granite boulders. It is perfectly satisfying to the eye; not a line, not a tint, jars upon you. One can’t say that of everything in France. Yesterday evening Mlle. Nordheim read us the Contes fantastiques d’Erckmann Chatrian till I had creeps all over; ‘Les trois âmes’ was especially horrible. I don’t think I’m a coward, but I confess to a very disagreeable sensation in coming up these wide, sounding stairs to bed. To-night I don’t feel quite comfortable either, for she is reading Hughes-le-Loup, the story of a hereditary illness, a sort of fit that comes on periodically in a family and though we haven’t yet got to the creepy part, it isn’t exactly a story to conduce sleep. Despite Chatrian’s ghost-stories, I am yawning outrageously, for the forest air is fresh and strong when one walks smartly for 3 hours after being shut up in the house so long.

Jan. 7th
The girls all came back from Paris this evening, at about 7.30. We had all been hoping most charitably that they wouldn’t turn up, but were doomed to be disappointed. I was very glad to see Mlle. Busoni, for she gave me news of my Mademoiselle. The Aschrolts are both back again, but are going to leave soon, I think.

Sunday 8th
M. Falle inflicted his usual weekly sermon upon us this morning; it is really painful to listen to him. I feel as if these holidays were almost as far away as the last: but they really weren’t bad at all; I have had the time for working up my German and Italian a little, also for reading and being idle. I didn’t ennui myself half as much as I thought I would.

Wednesday 11th
Yesterday evening after our dancing lesson, I came up here to my room, got half undressed, and finally went to sleep kneeling beside my bed. I had been crying a good deal—very foolishly, I don’t know what for. I had got Australian

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8. A favourite destination for walkers in the Forêt de Fontainebleau.
9. A military school for officers and cadets where they receive training in weapons. There are still several military academies in the Avon–Fontainebleau area.
letters, and that always gives me the blues after the first excitement is over, and
Mme. Geisler had been scolding me, at least, sermonizing me, as she does
every Tuesday evening, about [p. 74] my character and my disposition, and
goodness know what not: can't think why she always hits upon Tuesday but
certain it is that that Tuesday sermon is 'règle comme des petits pâtés'.11 Well, as I
said, I had been sleeping deeply for about half an hour, or longer, and should
probably have stayed there all night, when suddenly I was awakened by an
awful shriek ringing in my ears as if someone were being murdered: I sprang
up, groped for the matches, struck one after several trials, and lit my candle: it
was past eleven: I was giddy with sleep and weariness, and hardly knew
whether it was I who had screamed, or someone in my dream, or Miss
Stretch, whose bed is beside mine on the other side of the wall. Somebody
knocked at my door, and Mlle. Lainè put her head in, asking me if I had
shrieked. I directed her to Miss Stretch's room, and it subsequently transpired
that this lady had had a bad dream, and had uttered the piercing yell that had
awakened the whole house. This morning everyone laughed at us dreadfully,
and Mme. Geisler suggested that I awaited Romeo, as I was not undressed till
so late. I kept my own counsel, and said nothing to nobody about my crying:
my bed-room is my own, and [p. 75] nobody on earth shall call upon me to
render an account of my doings therein, at midnight, or any other hour of the
day or night. People must learn to mind their own business. Mme. Geisler has
apparently given up all hope of converting me into a nymph of grace in the
dancing line. So much the better! Mama is coming on Saturday.

Monday 16th

It was Dorothy's birthday last Friday; I sent for Schmidt's fairy tales12 for her,
but they haven't yet appeared on the scene of action. Mama came late on
Saturday afternoon, and I missed my French History Rep. with Mlle. Suchetet
in consequence. Must see if I can't manage to get that rep suppressed. We
stayed in mama's room till dinner-time, and after dinner bored ourselves
awfully in the drawing room till bed-time, when we stayed with Mama till a
quarter past eleven. She brought us a heap of things. 1.—a large, handsome
writing-case in red Russian leather, with I don't know how many pockets
crammed with lovely paper—2. —a little china sabot for my étagère13—3.—
a little fan of muslin, painted, on gold frame-work—4.—sewing-cotton,
buttons, hooks and eyes etc. —4.—an English pound (25 francs)—5.—
several new French stamps—6.—a likeness of herself, taken in Dublin; it is
beautifully finished up, and looks rather [p. 76] pretty for her—7.—some old

11 'As regular as little pies'—colloquial.
12 Johann Christopher Schmidt, Cent et un contes pour les enfants, par le Chanoine Schmidt. (Paris: Lethielleux, 1888).
13 shelf
cards and photos she didn’t want—8. —some scraps which I shall utilise in photograph-frame-making. Whew! There go the midnight cats out on the roof! they’re singing all sorts of delightful moonlight sonatas, and the dogs are acting as a sort of orchestral background to their thrilling treble: this place is being converted into a menagerie, but less completely than the one in Hobart. So on the whole I don’t think we did badly with Mama, but ... but, there’s no rose without its thornes and she does not seem all at pleased at there being so many Americans here, and doesn’t seem to think that there are enough big girls here. I don’t want at all to go to that old Mme. Havet’s, and only hope Mama will find something very disagreeable there. I’m used to this place now, and infinitely prefer to vegetate in peace to being roused out to go to another school. Any how we’re safe till July, and it may all fall through: let’s hope so. Mama went this morning, and is going to start for home on Feb. 2nd. It is bright, fine weather, but very cold; I believe it’s going to snow. Oh! I was forgetting; the two Aschrolts went on Saturday afternoon, and Mme. Geisler with them: it was most inopportune; the Aschrolts would have been two more big [p. 77] girls to cite, and Mme. Geisler is by far the best disciplinarian and the most tactful person in the house, and she might have managed Mama better than these people did. We’ve been having a nice little row. I do wish Miss Stretch and Mlle. Nordheim were up a chimney, or somewhere where they might fight quietly without disturbing other people. One day they are bosom friends, and the next there is war to the knife between them. It seems that Miss Stretch is a very evil-minded young woman; that she goes about seeking whom she may devour amongst these lamb-like pupils here, slowly and cautiously sapping their innocent minds, and perverting their unwary foot-steps from the straight gate to the broad road leading to tropical climes—and what for, think you? Not for some political purpose, or to get their help to rob a bank, and to blow up Paris with dynamite: no! but—listen well, my friends! —but in order— that—she—may—s.p.e.a.k ev-ill of the house!!!!! Only fancy any sensible woman being so silly as to spend months in perverting girls to do that: it’s rather too absurd, besides, I don’t think Miss Stretch has enough talent to carry out that plan, it would want someone rather intelligent. But they have been having a row about it—I think [p. 78] there have been one or two before that came to Mme. Geisler—and Miss Stretch is very angry; she accuses Mlle. Nordheim of having perverted her pupils, and set everyone against her. Well, a mistress has no business to have her pupils, but there were several girls here devoted to Miss Stretch, her own particular friends during several months, who have every one of them turned round against her. I don’t like Miss Stretch at all—even less than Mlle. N., but I do think she has reason to be angry at seeing her

14 Helen White therefore stayed in Europe from March 1887 to 2 February 1888.
own friends turned to bitter enemies. If anyone I cared about had done that to me, I should be bitterly hurt. Commend me to the faith of school-girls! I'd like to make these English and Germans swallow their reproaches to the French on the score of fickleness; there's small choice in rotten apples. Mlle. Nordheim has been coming into the rooms lately (when she saw that Miss Stretch had been trying her reed-pipe ditties on any of the girls) to give them a little advice on the score, and warn them to be on their guard. I know if she had come warning me, or Miss Stretch perverting me, in the sanctum of my bed-room, that I'd have run either or both out by the shoulders, and locked the door; if I choose to be perverted, I'm not going to be stopped by any little governess. I wouldn't [p. 79] take a lecturing like that from Mme. Geisler. Because I was meek and obedient to Mlle. Rollet, it doesn't by any means follow that I will be so with anyone else; I take a great deal from the people I love, but when anyone else comes hectoring it over me, they don't find a very meek young woman to deal with. I'm quite capable of taking care of myself; but I wish Mme. Geisler would come back, the house is quieter, and I like to work in peace.

Thursday 19th

There was a Christmas tree for the poor children of the Society to-day. They rigged it up in the pavillon, the kids turned up at two, and played games in the salle de dessin for a while: they formed a ring, and then one of the children walked round it outside, touched someone's shoulder, and sloped; the one touched had to chase her. It was most amusing, especially with one little fellow who ran and dodged and doubled like a hare. After the presents were given the children were feasted on cake and chocolate, and sent away. I may as well explain here what the Society is. All the girls pay 5 francs as entry fee, and 2 francs every month afterwards; most of them keep on even after they leave, sending their money once a year; if they like they can send 200 fr. in a lump and have done with it. [p. 80] There is a president and secretary (elected from the pupils in the house) and a treasurer (Mlle. Jones). With all this money—some thousands of francs—they help poor children working for their living, either to pass some exam that will give them pupils or a scholarship, or else to get a place in some school.

Friday 20th

M. Garnuchot has been giving us a really interesting course of lesson[s], telling us stories of African sheep that have such fat tails that the natives are obliged to make little sort of carriages that fasten on behind to support them. We all went off into claps of laughter, and I asked if each sheep had a little
boy behind to wheel the barrow, or whether he was harnessed in. M. Garnuchot laughed, and explained that it pulled its own little affair about unaided. Then at the Chemistry he gave us each a little salt of ammonia in the palm of our hands, and mixed it up with 'chaux', some chemical preparation of chalk: the two substances united, and the ammonia—the gaz—escaped, and we all began choking and coughing; I've still got some on my handkerchief, and don't dare to blow my nose till I get a clean one. Then at the lesson of Physics he [p. 81] got a great basin full of ice, and mixed it up with kitchen salt: the salt makes the ice melt quickly, but also brings down the temperature wonderfully: the ice without the salt was at 0° cent. (32° Fahren) and with the salt it went down to 18° below cent. (about 14° Farenh). I nearly froze my fingers off in the half-thawed water. M. Garnuchot says that it's very bad to melt the ice in the streets with salt, for it is better to walk in the snow than 'd'avoir de la boue noir[e] a 17° au-dessous de zéro sur vos semelles, ce qui n'est pas chauffant'.

I should think not! Mme. Geisler came back at about 2.30 this afternoon: it is now six, but I haven't seen her yet, having had classes all the time. I hope they'll stop their quarrels now she's back. There goes the dinner-bell; I must stop.

Thursday 26th

I am passing the day in my room, a very uninteresting occupation, to say the least of it. On Tuesday evening my big toe was a little sore, so I examined it, and thought there was something in it; poked at it with a needle, and got into bed. Yesterday morning the joint of my toe felt a little stiff, and by midday hurt a good deal. [p. 82] We went out as usual, and I walked pretty lame all the time; when we got back I could have yelled it hurt so taking off my boot; I hobbled downstairs, and suffered martyrdoms all the afternoon and evening: I felt awfully cold, it was impossible to get warm, and my teeth went like castenets the whole time. Goodness only knows how I got up to bed and took my stocking off; the instep and big toe were all red and swollen, and hurt me very much, so I tumbled into bed, and woke up about half a dozen times during the night, sometimes too hot, and sometimes shivering. I woke up for good at 5.30, and tried to get up towards half-past seven, but was obliged to give up the attempt after washing. I thumped on the wall for Miss Stretch and asked her to say I had a pain in my big toe and couldn't walk, if anyone asked for me. Mlle. Laine and Mme. Geisler came in and examined me, and are going to put on a cataclysme or cataplasme or something like that, most likely it's Greek for a poultice. Mlle. Jones also came after breakfast, and said she had had a letter from Mlle. Delu's father, that his daughter had been behaving in

15 'to have black mud at 17 degrees below zero on your soles, which does not provide any warmth'.
16 The correct French word for poultice is cataplasme.
the most outrageous fashion, and that her correspondence had been seized, that there were French letters among others with abominable things about M. Delu, and that Mlle. Delu had had to leave Perugia in consequence of her disgraceful conduct. Mlle. Jones said it wasn't fit for me to hear what it was; she wanted to know if any of these precious letters could belong to me: I said that it was impossible, as I didn't know she had a father; I am going to give her all Mlle. Delu's letters that I have, so that she may see that she never said any harm of anyone to me. I am sorry that Mlle. Delu has turned out so badly; she used to be kind to me.

Friday 27th January

The doctor came yesterday afternoon, not that long brown M. le Febvre [Lefèbvre], who has taken a holiday, but a little, oldish man, with rather grey, curly hair: he examined my foot, and poked about, and nearly made me yell by pressing on the instep, where it is swelled, and the skin is as tender as can be. He said that the tendon was swollen, and burbled something about rhumatism, and the possibility of the other foot being attacked, and finally took himself off. Mme. Geisler came and rolled up the offending member in wadding, after having rubbed it with burning-hot 'baume tranquille'; when I asked her how long I should have to stay in bed, she only laughed, and said: 'The doctor [p.84] says that you must stay till your foot is quite well, and even after it hurts you no longer and you can walk on it, you mustn't put your foot to the ground'. Which little speech probably means, in plain English, that I am to be quarantined for two or three weeks, for the swelling gives no signs of taking itself off. Mme. Geisler has forbidden everyone to come and see the invalids, and they won't even let Dorothy in to me. I do feel mad at having to stop in bed. For one thing I shall be all behind-hand with my classes, which alone is enough to make a body ramp. Secondo, it is very wounding to my pride to be ill here, for whenever I did anything foolish, such as getting my feet wet or going about without a shawl, they always say, 'Oh, it's all very well for you, but it won't be quite so amusing for us, who will have to nurse you'. I have heard so many speeches in that line before now that if I could possibly hobble about without exciting notice—indeed, if I could hobble any way at all—a mad dog as a guard wouldn't keep me in bed: they never say anything of that sort now I am laid up, but the memory of their former speeches is none the sweeter for that. Thirdly, I suppose they will have to spend money on me, which will be put on the account, and there's nothing [p.85] on earth Mama hates half so much as being obliged to spend a penny above her calculations: and just now when she is grumbling about Les Ruches, and thinking of sending us to that Mme. Havet woman! It's too bad. I could cry for vexation!
Tuesday 30th

It has been very cold for the last few days; on Saturday it began snowing, and everything is quite white now: the snow is much thicker than during the Christmas holidays.

Wednesday 1st February

I came down this morning, and have begun working again (thank goodness!) My foot's nearly all right.

Feb. 2nd

Just a year to-day since we went up to 'Havilah'.

Friday 3rd

Got a letter and a rowing from Mama; she does not seem very angry; she has started for Australia.

Friday 10th

M. de Beriot has been playing as usual this evening. This afternoon a little dwarf from some band of travelling *saltimbanques* came up here. She is one foot, eight or nine inches; she is eleven, and weighs 6 pounds. She is fairly well proportioned, and by no means repulsive, but played with the numerous toys the children gave her, and asked questions in a perfectly childish way. We got a letter from Em to-day, and some likenesses of Cecily's a day or two ago; she looks prettier than ever, and the Muswell Brook life seems to have done her no harm. I hate to think of her being transformed into a drudge and nurse-maid up at 'Havilah' with those brutes! What a blessing for Em that she has gone away: I thank Providence for it every time I think of it, though goodness knows what the house must be like without her. M. Billaz has given us our last classes of history, as he has been appointed professor somewhere 'en province': everyone is rejoicing loudly over his departure, though he gave excellent lessons, and personally, I have never been able to discover what he did so very disagreeable: the dislike to him was school-girl prejudice. Olga

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17 Tenders for improvements to 'Havilah' were called on 11 October 1884. It is unclear when the work was finished but John Horbury Hunt subsequently sued H.C. White in February 1887, presumably for non-payment of fees.

18 street acrobats

19 Presumably the Macmillans.

20 Emily went to work in a Sydney hospital as a nurse; she would have been 25 in 1888 and Cecily 23 years old.
Aschrolt hated him, and as she was the rage last quarter, of course all the others followed her example: there's nothing easier than to lead these girls on all sorts of goose-chases, simply by taking them by the nose and pulling persistently. Lucienne Sergent and I simply join our prayers that we mayn't get somebody a great deal worse than that inoffensive little Gaul.

**Monday 12th**

To-morrow is ‘Mardi Gras’, the Carnival, but we have had our holiday to-day; this evening there were tableaux vivants and a dance, and Jeannie Hamilton got a bee.\(^2\) Upon my word, I shall go wild here soon, I can't stand much more of it: I feel mad tonight; I hate everybody in the house and connected with it; I feel more [p. 87] alone and awful than I have felt since Mlle. Rollet went. Oh, if only I could go to her! and I know it is an utter impossibility, yet I dream of it day and night, and the thought of my happiness so very, very near, and yet so far away, nearly drives me crazy. I don't care a hang to-night if we stay here, or go to Mme. Havet's or to the dogs. It seems to me as if I have been progressing with remarkable agility towards that last destination of late. Not a soul in this house cares twopence what becomes of me. Madame Geisler is mortally offended with me—why, I don't know, and what's more, don't care: at least, I have an idea; I told her Mama was thinking of taking us away, and she said something sarcastically about ‘sending us to Mlle. Rollet’. I didn't say anything, but she knows very well that my silence meant that I'd give a year of my life to do it, and I expect it is the source of her wrath. Tant pis! I'm too proud to crawl on my knees seeking her grace, though as George Elliot says, the hunger of the heart, the need of being loved, is a very terrible hunger, and brings one's pride down quite as effectually as the bodily craving. I never felt it truer than to-night. Sometimes I wish I could become an idiot, so as not to feel or think anymore. Well, I suppose [p. 88] one can't play chromatic scales on one's nerves all day, and torture one's self all the evening, without having a pain in one's temper at midnight—and a very sore place in one's heart. Oh, I wish I could cry; my head feels as if it would burst: perhaps if it all came out I might get to sleep some time before to-morrow morning. I think I'll go and read.

**Sunday Feb. 19th**

It's just a year to-day since we 'sailed out over bar'.\(^2\) Often now that the snow is lying in drifts about the house, and covers all the pines, when the house is all quiet in the grey morning twilight, I sit and stare into the cone fire till the

\(^2\) See Olivia: ‘It was a little later that we had the usual Mardi Gras fancy-dress ball. Oh, yes, it was exactly like all the other girls’ school fancy-dress balls’ (p. 65).

\(^2\) This confirms that the *Natal* sailed from Sydney on 19 February 1887.
The marvellous professor came on Monday; he is about two or three and twenty, tall, pale, sallow, thin; dark hair, fine brown eyes, two hairs and a half's apology for a moustache, and womanish hands. He looks 'transparent', as if he had spent his life poking over dusty old histories and MSS. He was painfully shy, but gave his classes pretty well, considering. Margot raves over him in quite as absurd and undignified way as she used to abuse M. Billaz. She rushed out of the dining room after déjeuner before she had spoken a word to him, declaring he was an 'amour, a 'cheri, an angel, a darling, and that she loved him, and kept up in the same strain all the rest of the afternoon. It is ridiculous the way they allow these little bread-and-butter school-girls to talk of their professors. But then Margot sets up for being a grown-up young lady, though she is only seventeen, and looks a good deal younger than I. M. Wever—whom I prefer greatly to the A.G. Troglooly creature of Monday afternoons—gave us a very nice lesson, and a very interesting devoir, a ballad to relate; any one we like to choose, and to be told after our own fashion. It is a devoir after my own heart: I think I shall take Carmilhan, it is poetic, peculiar, and not

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**Wednesday, 23rd**

The marvellous professor came on Monday; he is about two or three and twenty, tall, pale, sallow, thin; dark hair, fine brown eyes, two hairs and a half's apology for a moustache, and womanish hands. He looks 'transparent', as if he had spent his life poking over dusty old histories and MSS. He was painfully shy, but gave his classes pretty well, considering. Margot raves over him in quite as absurd and undignified way as she used to abuse M. Billaz. She rushed out of the dining room after déjeuner before she had spoken a word to him, declaring he was an 'amour, a 'cheri, an angel, a darling, and that she loved him, and kept up in the same strain all the rest of the afternoon. It is ridiculous the way they allow these little bread-and-butter school-girls to talk of their professors. But then Margot sets up for being a grown-up young lady, though she is only seventeen, and looks a good deal younger than I. M. Wever—whom I prefer greatly to the A.G. Troglooly creature of Monday afternoons—gave us a very nice lesson, and a very interesting devoir, a ballad to relate; any one we like to choose, and to be told after our own fashion. It is a devoir after my own heart: I think I shall take Carmilhan, it is poetic, peculiar, and not

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23 Coogee beach, south of Bondi and 8 kilometres from Sydney's CBD, was one of the Whites' favourite resorts, as it was for many of their contemporaries.

24 A dramatic ballad for soloists, chorus and orchestra, Carmilhan, based on the legend, was composed in 1906 by William Havergal. Unfortunately it was lost. Daisy's esoteric taste is revealed by the fact that information about the legend is very difficult to come by.
much known. Ai! Ai! Ai! How stupid these girls are!!! Marguerite Veil, Marie-Anne Pavie, Olga Morgan and I are the only ones who seem to have any glimmer of intelligence in us; the others are, for the most part profoundly, and unqualifiedly, and densely, hopelessly stupid: if they have any wit or memory by nature, they exert it in getting out of as many lessons as possible: the professor's classes, as may be imagined, are not brilliant. Last Monday in three classes out of four M.Veil and I were the only two who answered, the others sat with gaping mouths, each one looking more mystified and perplexed than her neighbour. When they did try to answer a question they let one or two substantives be dragged by M. Benoist from their unwilling lips; but never one single verb, not one complete, grammatical, French sentence. And it wasn't because they were shy, but because they didn't know. Marie-Anne is ill this winter, and can't come to school, and Olga is so painfully shy that she cannot answer, so 'juge un peu' what the classes must be like! It is really deplorable, such ignorance and such idleness. I had a lovely dream last night; I thought that M. Wéver was desperately in love with Lucienne, that he came here, to demand her hand from Mme. Geisler, who sent for Lucienne. Lucienne took this declaration in a very embarrassed way, and M. Wéver carried her off, I think. Anyhow, it was a very ridiculous dream, and when I told it to Lucienne out walking we nearly died of laughing in the principal street. Oh, but it isn't everyday in the week I get a good laugh, and I like to profit by it.

Tuesday 28th

It is my usual evening for a howl, only I feel too hot and excited internally to cry, or go to sleep, to do anything but blow off a little steam from my usual safety-valve. I am really afraid it is all over with Les Ruches: eight of the oldest girls are going between now and the long holidays, and probably five or six of the little ones. Unless some new old girls come, Mama will certainly take us away from Les Ruches. I don't want to go: I would, on the contrary, like very much to stay, but I have such a fearful, gnawing desire to be with Mlle. Rollet. Only to think of it, to be her pupil, to live with her, to have her arms about me again, and to hear her sweet, strong voice saying 'Ma petite Daisy'. Sometimes I think I shall go wild for her. And I know Mama will never let us go! I am very fond of Madame Geisler, and she has unbent again considerably towards me, but it is a very matter-of-fact, unsatisfactory affection to be put beside Mlle. Rollet. And I have got such a store of love for her heaped up since these long weary months since she went away: August, September, October, November, December, January, February; seven months since that last lesson in the Pavillon. It is very hard to be so alone. Miss Stretch is going at Easter, thank goodness! I fancy Mlle. Busoni will not stay either,
March 5th

I have passed the Rubicon, and written to Mamma about Mlle. Rollet. The fact of the matter is that I am about full of this place, and the sooner I get out of it the better for all concerned. I feel in a hard, dull sort of stupor to-night, as if I were incapable of suffering or enjoying anything more, and I don’t care a brass fathing where I go to or what becomes of me. I don’t know what I’ve done to Mme. Geisler, but it is clear as a [p. 94] pike staff that as far as I’m concerned, I may go to the dogs and welcome, provided she has enough pupils for her precious old house: well, I don’t care to stay anywhere because I represent so many pounds, shillings, and pence, so that is why I have finally written to Mamma. Dorothy is no happier here than I am, so we have better slope to-gether, and as fast as possible. Mme. Geisler told me the other day that I resembled Gertrude Thornton in everything except her asthetecism. I think Gertrude a very noble, unselfish girl: Mme. Geisler detests her, so you may imagine how encouraging that is from the only person who has ever showed the least spark of interest in you amongst all the inhabitants of this happy, prosperous, undivided bee-hive. The snow is still lying about everywhere. My other foot has gone now, but I can still walk, and will not go to bed until reduced to the last extremity.

March 8th

The snow has all melted, and the weather is quite warm for this place; the wind is really beginning to feel quite springy, and people are talking of summer clothes. Cecily sent me *Rudder Grange*25 the other day; I am getting quite a collection of books, and my little room looks quite smart. Poor

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The old Emperor Fredric (Frederick) William died at 8.30 this morning. For some months past we have been hearing nothing but of the dangerous illness of the Crown Prince, who was not expected to live: and now it is the poor old Emperor who is gone, and nobody seems to have been paying any attention to his maladies. If the Crown Prince die[s], and his young son become[s] Emperor, I shan't be at all astonished at a declaration of war with Germany: I shall seize the occasion to try and get home again. 'That to me is equal' if France and our neighbours d'outre-Rhin eat each other up like a pair of Kilkenny cats.

Friday 9th

The old Emperor Fredric [Frederick] William died at 8.30 this morning. For some months past we have been hearing nothing but of the dangerous illness of the Crown Prince, who was not expected to live: and now it is the poor old Emperor who is gone, and nobody seems to have been paying any attention to his maladies. If the Crown Prince die[s], and his young son become[s] Emperor, I shan't be at all astonished at a declaration of war with Germany: I shall seize the occasion to try and get home again. 'That to me is equal' if France and our neighbours d'outre-Rhin eat each other up like a pair of Kilkenny cats.

March 15th

The weather continues to be mild and rather damp. France and Germany seem to be on the best of terms, unfortunately for my home politic. We had dinner by daylight for the first time since last autumn. Poor Dorothy has been very ill this last week, and has passed most of the time in bed: she sits up dressed in her room now, and I pass all the time that I can with her. Poor little thing! She is so home-sick, and everyone here takes it in turns to sit on her and boss her. Everything that precious little May Barron does is perfect and Dorothy, who is a year younger, more advanced, and who works much more, gets more kicks than half-pence. If I ever get a chance of giving a piece of my mind to the authorities here, I'll just let off some steam. I don't care half a straw what I say to these bosses, because I don't respect them a bit, and I can't get into blacker books than I am in with everyone at present. I'd check Mme. Geisler almost as readily as Miss Mac, because I know she only wants us here because of our money, and if there were plenty of pupils here I know they'd be beastly to us: so I take the will for the deed. If we go at midsummer Margot and Olga Morgan will be the only two big ones left. That old ass of a doctor came the other day, said the blood didn't circulate in my
Certainly I am not lucky, the first spring we pass in Europe is late and cold, the summer is short, the autumn sloppy, and I don’t believe that the winter will ever finish: here we are towards the end of March, and the whole place is white with snow! I went to a lecture in the théâtre de Fontainebleau with Mlle. Suchetet this afternoon: it was awfully cold, but the lecture was pretty interesting: we couldn’t get an omnibus coming back, so had to tramp through the snow and mud. If my rhumatism doesn’t begin in a day or two it’ll be a wonder. The house seems to be pretty hard up for tin: they have put the big kitchen garden over the road up to sale. If Mlle. Jones can’t find any pupils to bring back from England I believe they’ll go smash: I only hope and pray they won’t, for there will be no earthly chance of going to Mlle. Rollet if they do. We shall be packed straight off to Mme. Havet’s. I don’t know the Bourdil’s address, nor the Yeos’, nor any of those of Mama’s English friends, so what we shall do if anything like that happens is a problem which remains to be solved by time and circumstances.

March 18th

Certainly I am not lucky, the first spring we pass in Europe is late and cold, the summer is short, the autumn sloppy, and I don’t believe that the winter will ever finish: here we are towards the end of March, and the whole place is white with snow! I went to a lecture in the théâtre de Fontainebleau with Mlle. Suchetet this afternoon: it was awfully cold, but the lecture was pretty interesting: we couldn’t get an omnibus coming back, so had to tramp through the snow and mud. If my rhumatism doesn’t begin in a day or two it’ll be a wonder. The house seems to be pretty hard up for tin: they have put the big kitchen garden over the road up to sale. If Mlle. Jones can’t find any pupils to bring back from England I believe they’ll go smash: I only hope and pray they won’t, for there will be no earthly chance of going to Mlle. Rollet if they do. We shall be packed straight off to Mme. Havet’s. I don’t know the Bourdil’s address, nor the Yeos’, nor any of those of Mama’s English friends, so what we shall do if anything like that happens is a problem which remains to be solved by time and circumstances.

March 20th

We went to a concert in the bus yesterday evening, and got back at 12.30 p.m. frozen to death and sleepy, but after having had a good time. We had two boxes at the theatre from whence we could see very well: there was a big band of trumpeters and cornet players—fifty or sixty—who played two very pretty pieces, all except where the drums beat, and then it was the most awful corroborie you can imagine, as if all the tin pans and kettles in Fontainebleau were being pitched about in a boiler, and then blown sky-high with a big charge of dynamite. There was also a baritone with a fine voice, and a mouth like the mouth of the pit; when he opened it his whole face disappeared, and one could see nothing but this abyss bounded north and south by a strip of red flesh garnished with moustaches curling with fright, and the end of a nose turning up in horror from the great cavity beneath it: his name was Bello, and, like the young man in the Bible, he lacked but one thing—a ‘w’, which would have characterised his nature as well as his name. A sort of Dutch doll played...
Coogee, NSW

Daisy [February 19th, 1888]: 'I got to know it well [the sea] that month we spent at Coogee with Cecil[y] and Mamma.'

Photograph courtesy of Yesterday's Images, Sydney
two or three pieces on the violin, and a juggler performed several very clever tricks; as a wind-up we had the band again and Chinese shadows. I got to sleep at about one o’clock this morning, and woke at six, so feel pretty tired now at nearly ten. M. Wéver didn’t come to-day to my great disgust: the devoirs were all awfully bad, and I’m sure that we should have laughed over them.

March 22nd Thursday

We have just come back from the theatre. We started at 10.40 this morning, and went to the Odéon as soon as we got to Paris. There were three of the girls, Mmes. Lainé and Nordheim, and I. We had a baignoir all to ourselves; they are a sort of boxes opening onto the pit; one can see very well from there, but no one sees you, as it is quite dark there. They played Polyeucte and Les Folies Amoureuses (de Regnier). M. Sarsey, a celebrated critic, made a splendid lecture on Polyeucte: it lasted an hour and a quarter, and we were so interested that we thought it had lasted about half that time. I think I understand Polyeucte now, which I never should have done without that explanation: and Sarsey speaks splendidly, so clearly and concisely, with such delicate touches of French wit flashing out every minute; it is a perfect pleasure to hear him: and even while making everybody laugh, he went right to the bottom of the characters of Polyeucte and Pauline, showing all the windings and twinings of their actions, and the little secret springs that make them work. Polyeucte was a very handsome actor, a tall, bearded man, who acted very well indeed: he recited that confession of faith—Acte V, Scène II—perfectly, and he and Pauline were splendid in the last act, where she throws her arms round him, and declares she will die with him, in very high-flown verses, rather flat in reading, but which go well on the stage. Pauline was ugly, but her dress was lovely—pale pink and white, trimmed with silver—at least, all the dresses were, especially Polyeucte’s, a long white tunic and cloak trimmed with gold. Les Folies Amoureuses was killing: I never laughed so in a theatre, not even for the Malade Imaginaire. The valet who

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31 The Théâtre Odéon was founded in 1797 and, though destroyed twice by fire, it became the second most prestigious theatre in Paris in 1841.
32 ground-floor box
33 This play by Pierre Corneille was first performed in 1642 and published in 1643. It was performed at the Comédie Française 684 times between 1680 and 1963.
34 Les Folies amoureuses is by J.-F. Regnard (1655—1709), not Regnier, and was first performed and published in 1704.
35 Francisque Sarcey (1828—1899), the celebrated critic, determined the success of plays on the Paris stage. His lecture on Polyeucte is often quoted in critical editions of the play.
36 Polyeucte is attracted to martyrdom and must renounce his wife Pauline and all worldly goods to achieve eternal happiness. The conflict between love and duty is always at the centre of Cornelian tragedy. Polyeucte is regarded as the pinnacle of Cornelian drama, partly because of its stylistic merits, and partly because of the depth of its contents.
helps his master to rescue the lady and her maid from an old guardian desirous of marrying her, is called Crispin: he is tall, with immensely long legs; he has a short tunic and cloak, with a leather belt under the arms, which makes him look longer legged than ever—and such legs!—he can twist them into any position possible or impossible. He is all in black, with a sword that sticks out behind like a tail; he and the maid are simply killing; when they got laughing and dancing, one on either side of the garden gate, I leant back in my chair, and laughed till the tears rolled down my face: Mlle. Lainé was in about the same state. The master’s dress is lovely, a long brown cloak, high grey boots turned down with scarlet, and a grey suit trimmed with lace and scarlet satin. The lady wore a pretty silk dress at first; then she pretended to go mad, and came out in all sorts of dresses: first in cherry colored satin laced with black—a lovely little dress—then as an old old woman, all in long black robes and veils (she looked lovely), lastly as a soldier, with short cloak plumed hat, high boots, etc. We enjoyed ourselves awfully, and only regretted not being able to go to the ‘Français’ this evening, to see Pailleron’s Monde où l’on s’ennuie.  

March 26th

Miss Stretch is going on Monday. Everybody here has had about enough of her; she is always getting into mischief, and then coming and confessing, promising to be a good little girl in future, and being humbly desirous of winning back Mme. Geisler’s respect. Mlle. Busoni is going in a very little while. She very foolishly told M. de Beriot that she was going to leave before informing the authorities, who heard the news indirectly through M. de Beriot: M. Pavie came here the other day, and he and M. de Beriot baited the poor thing for about half an hour, tormenting her with questions as to why she was going. Poor Mlle. Busoni got mad at last, told them that she was free to go when and how she liked, and that she didn’t like the house. Of course everyone is pointing the finger of scorn at her; Mlle. Nordheim came out fuming from dinner the day before yesterday. ‘But it’s really too bad, the impudence of Mlle. Busoni! I was talking English to Mlle. Constantin, and she said to Daisy loud enough for me to hear: ‘C’est un peu fort; même les maîtresses parlent anglais ici devant moi; je m’en plaindrai à Mme. Geisler.”  


“Thats a bit steep! Even the teachers speak English here in my presence; I shall complain to Mme Geisler.”
world. I think the generous southern sun, that magnifies everything so to the 
good folk of Tarascon, shines a good deal in the neighbourhood of Reims, 
Mlle. Nordheim's natale town.\textsuperscript{41} It is asinine the way they badger and worry 
anyone who is leaving this precious old house, as if it were a sort of terrestrial 
paradise, where everyone would like to live eternally. I never saw such people 
for fighting; I believe they'll tear each other to ribbons one of these days: we 
shall never have any peace so long as Mlles. Nordheim, Stretch and 
Constentin are in the house; two of them must take to water, for they can't 
all pull in the same boat.

\textit{Feb. [April] 8th [p. 103]}

Miss Stretch went on Monday, she cried a little, and seemed sorry to go. Sadie 
Hill went on Saturday afternoon; she cried a great deal, poor girl. I miss her 
a great deal, she is so jolly and noisy. We went for a long walk on Monday as 
it was so warm and bright, but the weather has turned quite wintery again. 
On Wednesday evening, as I went into the \textit{cabinet de travail} to take the letters, 
Mme. Geisler came in and asked me if I had had any communications with 
Mlle. Rollet. I told her of the letter I had written and the answer I got. She 
was awfully angry, and gave me such a talking to as I have never had before 
and never hope to have again. I knew that what she said was quite true, and 
it was simply a sort of torture to stay there and listen to it: my hands had got 
clenched up somehow, and though I could feel the nails digging into the 
palms of my hands, I couldn't unloosen them; my feet were all contracted and 
felt dead, and though the blood was ringing in my ears, I could hear every 
word and understand everything. I remember thinking; 'Oh if only I could 
faint or die, or anything to loose consciousness for a few minutes'. I couldn't 
tell on Mlle. Busoni, who had carried my letter, so after dinner Mme. Geisler 
sent the little ones away, and asked who it was. Mme. Busoni said that it was 
she, and she went on [p. 104] Thursday morning. Mlle. Lainé came up to my 
room and talked so kindly to me on Wednesday evening. I had a good cry 
with her, the first time that crying has ever relieved me. Dorothy came and 
stayed with me for a good while. Poor child she cried so bitterly; if only I had 
thought when I wrote that wretched letter how many other people would be 
punished by my fault! I got all wrong when I came here, and have never been 
able to get back straight. When I care very much for anyone, I always think 
that it is quite allowable to do anything for them without paying the least 
attention to anyone else's claims on my confidance or good behaviour. I was 
a beast to go and deceive Mme. Geisler like that, and I know she trusted me 
implicitly. I suppose Mme. Geisler said something about it to the girls; they

\textsuperscript{41} Mlle Nordheim is not from the south of France after all, but from the Marne. The use of \textit{natale} 
(birthplace) is a Gallicism, \textit{ville natale} being a very common expression.
have all been very kind to me lately, and I try to overcome my reserve and coldness towards everyone. Mlle. Lainé took me out driving with her on Thursday when she went with the riding-class. I have written to Father, and told him all about it; I don’t know what he will think of me, but it is such a blessed relief not to have anything to hide from anyone at all, thank goodness Mme. Geisler asked me before they gave me the bee: I used to feel sick all over with fear least they should give me one when I [p. 105] knew I had been so underhand. I never really thought how bad it was till Mme. Geisler showed me. Yesterday evening she spoke to me again; she was so kind and good: she kissed and talked to me so kindly that I felt sorrier than ever; I am fonder of Mme. Geisler than of anyone else here. Mlle. Jones wrote to me about it; she is very vexed and sorry, and I will do everything I can to deserve her pardon and try to win back her esteem. Mamma wrote to me too, from King George’s Sound, and says that she doesn’t like Mme. Havet’s, so we shall stay here. What a blessing!

April 16th 188842

April 16th 1888

Just a year to-day since we came here. How I wish I could begin it over again. Mlle. Jones came back last Thursday; I have not had any lessons with her yet, but she is very kind to me. I feel sometimes as if that dreadful letter affair had never happened; indeed everything has fallen back into its usual place, and I into mine; the only thing that reminds me of it is my lost letter ‘charge’. I wonder if Madame Geisler will ever give it back to me? She has been so kind to me lately. Ethel sent me Grey’s Elegy for my birthday, what an awfully nice girl she is. The new mistresses have come: Miss Lewis is small, fair, and gentle; she is soft looking, and hasn’t too much go in her. Mlle. Mollitor is an international Hungarian, who speaks about half-a-dozen languages; she looks gay and amusing; I do hope she will be nice. There is only a fortnight now before the May holidays. The weather has become warm and damp; the forest ought to be green soon. One whole year nearer home! The yellow tulips will be in flower soon. It must be autumn now. If only I could see Em and Cecil for a wee while!

42 The year appears to have been added to the manuscript later, in pencil.
43 Gallicism: ‘responsibility’ or ‘duty’.
44 Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, by Thomas Gray and published by Dodsley in 1751, marked the poet’s rise to fame.
April 22nd

A new girl came the other day, Alice Greeney, an American, who tells stories ‘à la Louise Catherwood’ of her sister, who was taken by pirates, and lived on a desert island, where she drank water out of the palm of her hand, etc. She looks cool, self-possessed, and rather clever, and she sleeps next door: I can hear her rummaging at the present moment. Father wrote to me to-day; one of Dorothy’s letters fell into his hands, in which she spoke of Mama in a somewhat free fashion: he was very vexed about it. Heigh ho! I wish I could see Father. His letters are very like angels’ visits. Mamma must be at home with her little Pole now. Poor little Pole; I wouldn’t care to see the ‘breaking-in’; it always hurts me so to see anything run to bay. I do hope and pray that Cecily will go to Sydney this winter: a little dancing would do her all the good in the world, and she will be within reach of Emily and Hunter, and perhaps of someone else. Poor Cecily! I only [p. 107] wonder she hasn’t gone crazy with this system of solitary confinement; [in pencil: George Simpson was not allowed to write to her] I have been trying it here for some time past, and know by experience what it’s like. Dorothy has been ordered off to bed again by M. Lefèvre; she is not overburdened with visitors, and ennuiy herself passably. I stay with her as much as possible, but except on Sunday I have not much time free: she is very pale and much thinner than formerly; her poor little face looks so drawn, and her eyes twice too big: she is positively pretty sometimes, but I wish she would brighten up and get some colour; she looks so tired, and I’m sure she would be better up and about than tied into a stupid old bed. I intend to dispense myself with Sunday afternoon Bible classes: upon my word, when it comes to listening to the history of Cain and Abel, written in a style which is a cross-breed between an encyclopedia and a dry commentary, it’s a little too much. I don’t hold there any longer. The school-rooms have been very peaceful of late, since Miss Stretch’s departure. Miss Lewis will certainly never set the Thames on fire. Camilla Fraser is going tomorrow morning; nearly everyone is very fond of her; she is so old and good-hearted. I’m so sorry she is going.

April 24th

The Emperor of Germany dies every other morning in the ‘journaux’, and resuscitates in the evening; there seems to be every reasonable prospect for his continuing in this way for some time to come. Boulanger is


46 A suitor, considered unsuitable by the family.

47 Friedrich III, who died in 1888.
keeping the metropolis lively; he has left the army—or has been cashiered, I don’t know which—and has just been elected deputy for ‘Nord’ by an overwhelming majority. For some days past people have been enjoying themselves at Paris; last Thursday Mlle. Lainé went to the Odéon, to a ‘matinée’, with some of the girls: the theatre was shut, because the director was ill, and they got mixed up in a Boulangiste crowd outside the Hôtel de Ville, rue de Rivoli. The whole street was blocked, everyone was yelling and calling out ‘Vive Boulanger!’ etc. etc. and seemed to be amusing themselves very much. On Saturday there were representations—manifestations, I mean—in favour of the all-powerful general. M. Benoist was telling us about it yesterday: he said there was a good deal of free fighting going on in the streets, and most of the bridges were blocked: from eight o’clock till midnight things seem to have got lively. The sergents de ville were mustered to the number of 500, and dealt out blows indiscriminately in the crowd, especially on the anti-Boulangistes: there were also ‘coup de canne’ to be had for the asking: some anti-Boulangistes got hold of a fat old military who had been calling out ‘Vive Boulanger’, and told him to shout ‘A bas Boulanger!’; He refused stoutly, and was subsequently flattened against a wall until he [p. 109] had recanted: on a good many on [of] the bridges one has to cry ‘Vive Boulanger!’ before the mob will let you pass. The little school-boys, ‘collégiens’, have been manifesting also, and have written to the Minister of Police, complaining to him of the want of respect of the sergents de ville of their dignity of ‘lycéens’! The babies in arms will begin manifesting next! The eighteen years of Republican government are nearly at a close: there will be a Consulat soon, I suppose. M. Wéver (to change the subject) has given us a very nice lesson to-day; to begin with my essay was fair, with very few mistakes; then he questioned us a little, and afterwards analysed and read us the greater part of the Misanthrope. He read it very well indeed, and altogether the lesson was interesting. When M. Wéver heard that Camille was gone he was quite astonished: he remarked that she had gone ‘avec les premières hirondelles’.

48 Georges Boulanger struck off the army-roll the names of princes belonging to the Bonaparte and Bourbon families.
49 The removal of Boulanger to the retired list of army made him eligible for the Chamber of Deputies. He was returned as Deputy, first for the Département of Dordogne and then for the North.
50 town constables
51 ‘Down with Boulanger!’
52 Molière’s Misanthrope was performed for the first time at the Palais Royal on 4 June 1666; it was the sixteenth play by the dramatist.
53 ‘with the first swallows’. Swallows usually leave for warmer climes in September or October and return to France in March or April of each year. A popular expression is: ‘Une hirondelle ne fait pas le printemps’ (One swallow does not make a spring).
April 26th

Dorothy is much better to-day and is going to get up to-morrow. This afternoon Lucienne and I went to the kitchen and made cakes (all alone) for afternoon tea: Mlle. Turner invited us to come and have it in the *cabinet de travail*, as a reward for our trouble. Miss Lucy wrote to me to-day: Mme. Geisler knows that Mama and I have had ‘words’ on the subject. I did not want to open the letter without her leave, and had to wait all the afternoon [p. 110] with my letter burning a hole in my pocket. After dinner by the greatest good-luck in the world I found her alone and had a good talk with her in her room: she knows very well what I think about Mamma, and guesses just about how things stand at home though she has never heard of it from either of us. Doctrines of patience and reconciliation may look very well from afar, but don’t I know how they’ll go off in smoke eighteen months or two years from hence! Oh my prophetic soul! what scenes there’ll be one of these days. Mme. Geisler is awfully nice and kind, and I am really getting very fond of her. A body doesn’t have to explain for half-an-hour with her: she catches one’s meaning before one has half finished speaking.

April 29th

We all went off to Bois-le-roi""""54 primrose-hunting. We went there last year a few days after I came, with Mlle. Rollet. There were a good many primroses, and in many places the ground was literally yellow with cowslips. We brought back armfuls of them. Mlle. Jones was with us; she was so tired before we got back, for we had been on foot about 3 hours.

April 30th Monday

The last day of school. M. Benoist gave his classes as usual, we had an awfully nice German lesson this morning, and Lucienne went this evening. I am going [p. 111] to begin idling and embeasting myself as per usual for the holidays, and I will inaugurate the event by a royal old lie in bed for two or three mornings, till I get sick of it. I mean to draw a great deal, work up a little German and Italian, along with French and Greek history: I am going to ask Mlle. Nordheim to give me some lessons in pronunciation, I want to read Carlyle’s *French Revolution*""""55 and *Henry V* and to go for as many long walks as possible. I suppose we shall pass the evenings in the *salon de musique*, and the morning till 8.55 will pass in bed and at *déjeuner*, so I ought not to have too much spare time: I hope so, at least.

54 Situated some 10 kilometres from Fontainebleau and 51 from Paris, this village is on the northern side of the forest and on the left bank of the Seme.
May 13th

Alas for good intentions! In less than a week we will be grinding again, and I have done next door to nothing. On Wednesday, the second day of the holidays, five of us went for an awful walk with Mlle. Nordheim—to the rocher St. Germain, as they call the range that encircles the farther side of the champ de Course, and from thence to the Belle Croix, where we lost ourselves last May holidays. We walked more than when we went to the Caverne des Brigands, and came back thoroughly tired: the forest is awfully pretty now: all the beeches, ashes, and elms are green, and in those little paths amongst the hills the slopes and hollows are all filled with fallen leaves, and covered with dead bracken and heather: the juniper bushes have lost all their clusters of purple berries, and the blackberries are not in flower yet. We saw squadrons of cavalry wheeling and galloping on the champ de Course, with jingle of spur and bridle-rein, and flash of naked sabre in the sun, shining hot and bright through the clouds of dust raised by the horses’ hoofs.

The other day we went on a bon-bon expedition to Melun. The weather was warm and dusty, and a lolly-manufactory isn’t just the coolest place in the world. I came back nearly cured of my love for chocolate: they put the matière primaire, a sort of rough powder, most likely—for we did not see the whole operation—with sugar, etc. into huge steel pans, which turn rapidly in a great iron caldron: the chocolate is a thick, brown paste, like pap, and turns round with the pan, by which movement it is dashed again two big wheels turning slowly in opposite directions. When the paste is sufficiently mixed and smashed it is withdrawn by means of a sort of plug, and as soon as it is cool enough they fashion it into moulds: we saw one grimy, perspiring workman flattening down the warm paste into little pans—the chocolate in tablets—[p. 113] and then patting the row of little pans with the fore-part of the arm. We saw them making peppermints and dragees, fondants, burnt almonds, etc. etc. and altogether we bought 42 fr worth of goodies before leaving. Everybody has eaten such a lot that at this present moment (and I’ve only eaten about half-a-dozen lollies these last two days) I wouldn’t accept a pound of dragees as a present. Mlle. Nordheim went to Paris towards the beginning of the holidays and gives no sign of life. Alice Greenaught and Margot are also absent, as are nearly all the children. We dine always at the big table. I have made myself an apron, and everyone admires it very much. Mme. Geisler has been ‘wrastling’ for the last year with me on the subject of aprons, and has

56 A walk from Avon-Fontainebleau to the Grotte-aux-Cristaux, at the Rocher Saint Germain and back would be about 14 kilometres long.
57 racecourse
58 Plateau de Belle-Croix in the Fontainebleau Forest.
59 Melun is the main town of the Departement of Seine-et-Marne on the Seine; it is 46 kilometres from Paris and was readily accessible from Avon by train.
only just succeeded in getting me to make and wear them. Dorothy went to Paris yesterday, and had an unsound tooth ‘arrachée’.\(^{60}\) It hurt the poor child very much, and she has to eat minced meat now. Mlle. Jones has some stomach complaint, and is reduced to a meat-, milk-, and eggs-diet, she and Dorothy both look very well indeed: Dorothy has a good colour, and is really much better, but poor Mlle. Jones is really very seedy. While the others were at Paris yesterday we sauntered out into the forest and sat down in a sheltered corner—for the [p.114] wind is awful cold—for a couple of hours. Adèle and I chattered away all the time like a pair of magpies: she is very nice, and I am so sorry that she and Jeannie are leaving on the 4th of June. To-day I have been reading ‘Virginia of Virginia’,\(^{61}\) a little gem of a story in Harper’s Magazine, and now I have been cooking the pudding for dinner: the others have all gone out for a walk, so I think I will take my departure into the garden—till I get too cold.

Thursday 17th

The last day of the holidays. I have ennuiéd myself passably, but I feel lazy and disinclined to work just now, and M. Garnuchot to-morrow morning is not an enticing prospect. May, Margaret and I went to Paris yesterday with Mme. Geisler; the day was warm and close, and it rained a good part of the time, but we enjoyed ourselves, at least I did myself, very, very much. We went first to a corsetière’s where Margaret had a pair of stays tried on, and I got a pair after several unsuccessful trials: then we went to the [Magasins du] Louvre, where we chose the stuff for a dress for Dorothy—a sort of biscuit colour with bluish bars, rather pretty—and a biscuit-coloured wool cloth, and a pretty pink print, for my two summer dresses: I also got a little black cape for Sunday wear, and [p. 115] sundries of all sorts. After déjeuner in a restaurant we drove to Mme. Martin’s—no, we paddled there in a pelting shower, I was forgetting—to buy hats, for me and for Olga. After some haggling and much choosing Mme. Geisler gave the necessary orders, and we started for the salon—still in the rain. An omnibus took us up the Champs Elysées, and dropped us at the door of the Académie des Arts.\(^{62}\) There are 5,500 objects (painting and statuary) exposed. The statuary, from what I saw of it, was in general abominable: The pictures I liked the best were Mme. Villebesseyx’s lilacs, white and purple: Reve de gloire, an night-encampment, with sleeping soldiers, watch-fires, picketed rifles, and a phantom army in the reddening east; it’s the prize picture: L’Appel au Passesœs, two girls hailing a boat from a

\(^{60}\) An interesting Gallicism meaning ‘extracted’.  
\(^{61}\) By Amélie Rives.  
\(^{62}\) The Académie des Beaux-Arts, which took its modern form with 50 members in 1795, is located at 14 Rue Bonaparte, in the 6th arrondissement, Paris.
river-bank, a sweet little landscape, where the artist has caught the movement of the two girls wonderfully: *Un intérieur de Bretagne*, two women with large white coifs, and two men sitting drinking at a table by an open window; the lights and shadows are strong and mellow, and there is none of the lamentable economy of paint seen in most of the other pictures, you know how I mean, when the lights are hard, and the shadows shallow and blue, without any relief. Some of the pictures were villainous; you never saw such daubs; there [p. 116] was, so far as I could make out, no attempt at classification; in the same salle are hung pel mel flowers, landscape, portraits, historical pictures, allegorical pictures, mythical pictures, études, modern pictures, blim! blam! all that bundled together in picturesque [?] confusion. There were any number of women in all stages of undress, and of ungraceful attitudes: I don't much care for looking at paintings of women in a state of nudity, and I think there is only one excuse for doing it, and that is—doing it very well. We saw some awful daubs—one of a corner of a house, whitewashed covered with lettuce-coloured convolvuli; then we saw a young man, a poet, lying by the sea, whose waves were formed by mermaids and sea-nymphs, in all sorts of absurd attitudes; a man who was going by said something about: 'grenouilles'; as a matter of fact, they did look rather frog-like. We laughed a great deal over most of the portraits, of the ugliest women you can imagine: there was a fine painting of Boulanger hanging opposite one of Jules Ferrer.63 I only hope they won't come down from their frames and fight during the night. What a lively scene it would be, to be sure, if all the pictures came to life, if the flowers smelt, the fruit were good to eat, if [p. 117] Apollo caught Daphne, and Cupid kissed Psyche, or old San Sebastian walked up with his gory, cadaverous head under his arm: it is such a pretty idea of Andersen's in the *Snow Queen*, where little Gerda sees the dreams coming up the back stairs, and flitting shadow-like, along the stately halls, to take the lords and ladies out hunting in the sombre forest.64 Paris is splendid; I never saw the town so lovely before: all along the quais the limes and aspens are in leaf; the boulevards are shaded by beeches and planes, and the Champs Elysées—well, they beggar all description! Just one great forest of magnificent chestnuts in full bloom, all the way on either side of that lovely drive, right away down to the Arc de Triomphe. The Parisians may well be proud of their city; she sits like the queen of nations on the winding Seine, girt with green woods and broad fair meadows. It is a joy to be alive in such delicious weather. Where's the fool who prefers winter, that I may pound him? And to think that we have nearly six months of leaves and life, and no snow!

63 Jules Ferry, lawyer, politician, Minister for Education (1879–1883), President of the Council 1880–1881 and 1883–1885 promoted free, lay education.

April 18th

M. Garnuchot has begun a class of astronomy, which is more amusing than chemistry. Lucienne came back this afternoon. M. de Beriot didn’t come this evening. [p. 118] to Mlle. Jones’ great vexation. It must be an awful bother to come down here to give four or five lessons to very middling pupils, when he has so many good ones at Paris. I quite understand that he is not very ardent about coming, it is the second time quite lately that he has missed his day.

April 21st

M. Benoist came this afternoon; he was telling all sorts of absurd stories about England—where he has passed his holidays—at the dinner tables, making us choke with laughter: he is very young, and is just like a school-boy: in class he is always making us laugh with puns or comical little stories. Yesterday evening I went into Alice Greenaught’s room, as she had promised to do my hair up on the top of my head. Mlle. Nordheim heard us chattering and came in to send me off to bed. Of course she told Mme. Geisler about it, and I had a round ranting this evening. Mme. Geisler said ‘Vous êtes toujours en train de faire quelque chose de défendu.’ I did know it was forbidden to go into each other’s rooms, but I did not know it was absolutely wrong. When Mme. Geisler found Margaret Young in someone’s room not very long ago I don’t fancy she was quite so angry. They [p. 119] say some folks may steal the horse, whilst others mustn’t look over the hedge. I know beforehand that everything I do will vex her, so it is hardly worth while picking and choosing what complicated piece of villany I shall execute next.

May 24th

We went to the Sept Collines de Rome to-day, to look for lilies of the valley; the seven hills are near the Croix de Calvaire; the ground is all cut up by long, artificial gullies, to prevent the roots of the pine trees from getting tangled up together. The *muguets* grow on the slopes. I lay down amongst them, and picked them till I could carry no more. We all had great bunches of flowers; they smell so sweet. Dorothy is in bed again, and I spent most of the afternoon in her room, reading up Carlyle to write a *devoir* on Mirabeau.

65 You are always doing something that is forbidden.
66 On the north-eastern side of the forest.
67 lilies-of-the-valley
68 Honořé Gabriel Riqueti, Comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791), a skilful orator during the Revolution; though of noble birth, he was elected the representative of the *Tiers État* for Aix in 1789.
May 27th (Sunday)

Four of us turned out at 5.30 this morning to go to the Sept Collines with Milles. Lainé and Constentin. It was rather chilly at first, but we got warm in walking, and everything looked so fresh and bright that it was well worth the trouble to have got up to see it. All the hill-slopes are one mass of golden, sweet-scented bloom, which shows up well against the grey boulders and the dark heather. We found very few lilies, so struck off to the Bois Gauthier, where there were none at all. [p. 120] We got back at eight o’clock, famished, but very pleased with our walk. They decided a while ago that the big girls need not learn gymnastics this summer; I was included in the happy number of exempt: now they’re making a hullabaloo about it. Mille. Lainé says that I walk ‘indignement mal’, which is profoundly indifferent to me. Mme. Geisler remarked: ‘Oh, c’est inutile de la forcer de prendre les leçons; elle sera de mauvaise humeur, et ne fera rien du tout.’ Now I will learn those lessons—though I hate them because I know she wants me to; and I’ll wager a hundred pounds that she thinks it is because I want to walk well—of which I fish myself like a fish of an apple—or else to spite her for saying that I would not do it—which I’m not quite contrary nor stupid enough to do. The more I try to conquer my abominable temper, and to give up my own will because the others want me to, the more she seems to delight in riling me till it is all I can do to hold myself in. She knows my character perfectly well—better than I do—and the best ways to put me in a passion, and she has no sort of mercy on me. What an ass I am to be sure to fish my stupid head about it all!

June 1st [p. 121]

They came to photograph the house to-day; we were taken in all sorts of positions on the lawn, and will probably look as hideous as most other instantaneous groups. Dorothy came down for the first time to-day, to be there and see the fun; she stood and ran about in the sun, got a bad headache, and went back to bed before dinner. Poor child! it’s a perfect calamity. I wish I could do something for her. The scheme for our walk to Franchard yesterday has fallen flat, and nobody wants to go now.72

69 ‘shockingly badly’
70 ‘Oh, it is pointless to force her to take lessons; she will be in a bad mood and will not do anything.’
71 That is, ‘Je m’en fiche’, meaning ‘I don’t care two hoots’. I am not sure where the phrase ‘like a fish of an apple’ originated.
72 The Gorges de Franchard is a popular climbing area near Fontainebleau. See http://perso.club-internet.fr/acatte/Fontainebleau_Franchard.htm
Monday 4th

M. Benoist's classes were as amusing as usual. He said my devoir on Mirabeau was very good, for which I was glad, as I had taken a great deal of trouble over it. It is such a satisfaction to get through a long piece of work like that. Poor little Dorothy is still in bed, and seems likely to stay there for some time longer. Yesterday it was pretty hot for France; everyone was grumbling and groaning as loudly over the 'chaleur étouffante' as they were over the 'froid persistant' two or three weeks ago. Coming back from church it really was warm. I had bundled my hair up, no matter how, under my hat; everybody said that it suited me very well, and made me look much older—which is just what I want to look. I got leave to put Dorothy in Miss Stretch's room, as it is much cooler on the north side of the house, and sat doing my map with her all the afternoon.

Tuesday 5th [p. 122]

Adèle and Jeannie went at 7.30 this evening. I'm so sorry they're gone, for they are awfully nice. During the year and a half I have been here never has anyone said a word against either of them. They were certainly the most popular pupils in the house. I liked Adèle especially, she was so bright and kind-hearted with everyone. I have caught a nice cold in my head from somewhere, and have begun also with my customary nose-bleedings. Three times during M. Benoist's lessons had I to rush out of the room. It was beastly, but I couldn't help it. This afternoon I was cooling myself in the bibliotheque when in came Marguerite Veil, said in a dictatorial fashion: 'Il ne faut pas que vous soyez dans des courants d'air', and shut the window; I leapt up and opened it; she shut the door; I opened it wide. Marguerite went off, because she said, 'If I go into the salle d'étude Mme. Geisler me verra, et demandera pourquoi j'y suis', which really happened, and I had a little 'sermon à quatre points'; I said that in Australia draughts were the only remedies used for colds; I'll never hear the end of it, for everyone teases me about it, but I don't mind.

Wednesday 6th

We were all awakened at 1 a.m. by an astonishing thunderstorm. I woke up in the middle of a big clap, and before it had finished I was up, with the candle lighted, to go to Mlle. Nordheim, whom a storm scares out of the senses: I heard her voice in the passage with Mlle. Lainé, however, so got back
into bed and watched the storm till 1.30 a.m. when I went to sleep. The medallion, a profile in bronze of Mlle. Dussaut, came this morning; it is by Milet, and is wonderfully like her. Mlle. Jones was quite upset by it: poor Gertie! no wonder, it was this time last year that Mlle. Dussaut got ill. We had a grand dinner this evening, in honour of Mlle. Lainé’s birthday to-morrow, M. and Mme. and Mlle. Pavie were here, and it was altogether a swell affair.

Thursday 7th

Mlle. Lainé’s birthday to-day: she went to Paris with Margaret and May, and so Margot presided at the dinner-table in her absence. Margot is really very fairly fleshed for a girl of seventeen. Mlle. Nordheim thinks that she is rather stouter than I, our height and build taken into consideration. We went to the cemetery this morning; the grave is enclosed in a broad stone border, with a bed inside, cell planted with pansies: they are going to erect a piece of masonry in this shape behind it, where the medallion is to be fixed up. My nose began bleeding furiously ‘en route’, and I thought it never would stop. They say I am much paler than in the winter—which means that my cheeks are suffused with a very healthy, auroreal blush, ‘alors juge un peu ce que ça a dû être’ in the winter time. Dorothy ennuiés herself in bed, and I pass all my spare time with her; it is her charge to clean the ink-bottles with Mlle. Suchetet on Thursday morning: Zoë was to have done it while Dorothy was in bed, but ‘elle n’aime pas se salir les mains—elle n’a jamais fait cela à la maison’, and flatly refused to touch the ink pots. I had to do it last week, and Olga did it this afternoon, because, forsooth, that brat of thirteen thinks that that sort of work is beneath her!

Monday 11th

Dear me! how we have laughed to-day. M. Benoist was in the middle of a lesson on the Revolution; he was telling us about Marat, how filthy he was in his person, etc: and how he was killed by Charlotte Corday: there is a very fine passage in Carlyle, a translation of which M. Benoist was reading us, and had just got to where Charlotte penetrates into the bath-room; here he stopped for a moment to take breath: we heard a thin, high voice from the

78 The medallion can still be seen on the monument today. See illustration on p. 110.
79 Aimé Milet (1819-1891), a sculptor, born in Paris.
80 ‘So you can imagine what it must have been like’
81 ‘She does not like to dirty her hands—she has never done so at home’
82 Jean-Paul Marat (1743-1793), editor of L’Ami du peuple, the favourite journal of the sans-culottes, and an active member of the Cordeliers (Grey Friars) Club; Deputy for Paris at the Convention.
83 Charlotte de Corday d’Armont (1768-1793) stabbed Marat in his bath on 13 July 1793 to avenge the Girondins. She was executed five days later. The Death of Marat is a celebrated painting by Jacques-Louis David (1793).
84 M. Benoist was reading from the French edition: vol. 3, chapter 4.
other end of the table—Alice Greenaught's voice, piping slowly: 'Mais s'il était si sale, pourquoi prenait-il des bains?' You can imagine, for I can't describe, the claps of laughter that followed on a brief silence. M. Benoist held his book before his mouth and fairly yelled. Mlle. Suchetet was in fits, with her face [p. 125] in her hands; Mme. Geisler was twisting herself, and as for us pupils we went off into peal after peal of laughter: when one could hear one's self speak, M. Benoist said: 'Je ne voulais point vous dire la raison, Mademoiselle, de crainte de vous effusquer, mais puisque vous la demandez il le faut bien. Marat était infesté de vermin, et il prenait des bains pour s'en débarrasser.' He might have said that to boys, but for a class of girls it was coming a little too strong. When Alice was gone, he said: 'Je vous lirai un hymne d'André Chenier sur Charlotte; comme je n'avais pas peur d'être interpellé.' Then in Greek history he asked me why it was forbidden to cut off the water from a besieged city: I gave half a dozen reasons, and as he kept on asking for more, I said in despair without thinking 'Parce que les Grecs étaient très propres.' He began to laugh, and said 'Décidément, nous tombons toujours sur la même question aujourd'hui.' When he corrected our devoirs, he came down like a thousand of bricks on Alice for her writing, saying it dated from the 12 century, that she made greek 'e's, that 'rappelait les beaux jours de Mile White', and that her writing was illegible, etc. etc. We found out afterwards it was to 'se venger pour avoir été interpellé comme ça pendant la leçon de l'Histoire de France'.

June 12th

M. Wéver's lesson was very gay this afternoon. He [p. 126] gave us an idiotic piece of poetry to learn, and as I was sure I wouldn't have to say it, I had only half learnt it. We were choking with laughter over it—Margot, Lucienne and I—when in walks M. Wéver. Of course we pulled our faces straight as quickly as possible, and my lungs were still full of 'laughter-breath' when he said calmly: 'Mile. White, voulez-vous commencer?' You might have knocked me down with a feather: I didn't 'vouler' at all, but began the best way I could; when I got to the 'abat-jour vert', I began to laugh: Margot was in fits opposite me. The laugh grew audible when I began 'Assise au piano sur les
The grave, in the Avon Cemetery, of the celebrated writer Kathleen Mansfield (1888-1923), who was buried not far from Mlle. Dussaut's monument.

Photograph courtesy of M. Bernard Pamart.


Daisy [Wednesday June 6th, 1888]: 'The medallion, a profile in bronze, of Mlle. Dussaut, came this morning; it is by Milet, and it is wonderfully like her.'

Photograph courtesy of M. Bernard Pamart.
touches d’ivoire la jeune fille etc." and when I had to say ‘Puis se retourne et rit’, I could stand no more; everybody was off in fits, and M. Wéver asked innocently: ‘Mais qu’est ce que vous avez cette après-midi, Mademoiselle, que vous riez comme ça?’ I don’t know how I got to the end, and then he began with the devoirs. I had given a faithful description of Circe and her pigs, which he read out loud, and made everyone choke. Afterwards he went on with Scapin and Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, which are not at all laughter-calming. As I was going out of the room he held the door open for me and said ‘Qu’est ce que ce’tait qui vous faisait tellement rire, Mademoiselle?’ I laughed, and said it was the poetry, so he promised to ask my opinion on the next piece he gives us. That deep man’s voice sounding just in my ears when I didn’t know he was there, gave me an awful fright; I nearly jumped out of my skin. How I love a good laugh sometimes.

This evening we went to the cemetery. I can’t say I like the grave, the head-piece is like a wall, with the medallion hung on it: the best thing they can do is to train creepers over it to hide the bareness. Mlle. Marguerite Peyre came yesterday evening; she is going to stay for some weeks: M. Peyre is mortally offended about something or another, and refuses to come to Les Ruches anymore, much to my regret. He is the Wittiest man I have ever seen.

Thursday 14th

It was to-day last year that the girls all went off to Les Platreries and that Mlle. Dussaut died. It must be terrible for that poor Mlle. Jones, and the worse part of it is that she mustn’t show a cheerful face to everyone, and has so many little worries. Lucienne and I made an excursion to the kitchen this afternoon and helped Anastasie to make the rhubarb pie. It’s the first time I have been down there since the May holidays.

Friday 15th

The Emperor of Germany died at 11.30 a.m. M. de Beriot brought the news this evening. Only a little while ago they were always boasting about their 4 emperors, and now there are only 2 of them left. They say Prince Wilhelm
(the new Emperor) hates the French and wants war. Hunter wrote me a long letter to-day; it seems that things are getting lively out in the colonies. The chinkies are coming out in ship-loads; the colonists object to be flooded with these vermin, and have refused two consecutive lots. They say the home government doesn't want to exclude them, so as not to bring a hornet's nest about its ears with the Chinese, and the colonists are as mad as they can be over it; some of the newspapers even counsel separation, but I don't think it will come to that just yet. Dorothy gave me the *Anthologie des Prosateurs* today, for my birthday present: better late than never.

**Saturday 16th**

The anniversary of Mlle. Dussaut's death. M. and Mme. Milet came this morning to déjeuner, and Mlle. Henry arrived in the course of the afternoon. At 3.30 p.m. we started for the cemetery, the eight girls who had known Mlle. Dussaut, with Mlles. Nordheim and Constentin. There were two big crowns of white roses from the girls, a lot of bouquets, and the two mistresses had a sort of cushion of cream-brown tea-roses with a cross of white rose-buds in the middle. It was awful walking along there to the cemetery; nearly everyone was in black, no one spoke a word, the sky overhead was as black as ink, and in the west there was a horrible sulphurous lurid glare. The wind kept coming along in gusts, shaking all the trees for an instant and then dying away to a flat calm. I thought we were going to have a terrific thunderstorm, but happily it passed over. When we got to the grave we hung up our wreaths and arranged our bouquets, and then waited and looked at all the people there. We saw Mme. Sauvey with her mother, Mlle. Mandeville, Mme. Lainé and her daughter, all the servants from Les Ruches who were here last year. M. Falle, M. Peyre, M. Vigué, and a whole lot of other people. Mlle. Jones came up at last with Mme. Geisler. Poor girl! the tears were streaming down her face, and she was trembling with suppressed sobs. I would have done anything to be able to help her. M. Falle made a most ridiculous sort of speech, and then M. Vigué, who preached the funeral sermon last year, got up and spoke very nicely for some time. I think it was worse at the grave than going there. The sky was covered with black masses of clouds, and the wind was moaning and sobbing in the oaks and beeches beyond the churchyard wall; it began to rain pretty hard, so we had to stand and listen with open umbrellas in the wet grass. It's a blessing to-day is over.


Sunday 17th

M. Viguiet preached very well this morning. I spent most of the afternoon in the kitchen helping Anastasie, and this evening before dinner (which was a swell affair) Mlle. Nordheim fixed my hair up on the top of my head. Everyone says I am much better like that, but personally I have [p. 130] my doubts. The table was very pretty, all laid with different coloured wine-glasses and a new service; the garden is full of roses, and so they always do the table up with them now. There were M. and Mme. Viguiet, M. Falle, Mlle. Henry and the Pavies. There was never such a naïf man as our good 'pasteur' since the days of Noah. When he came away from the cemetery he seemed to have been having some Candle lectures [?] on his speech: at the dinner-table he asked Mlle. Jones if it had been all right. Of course she said 'Yes'; so he said, 'Je suis très content que vous le trouviez, parce qu'hier, en rentrant du cimetière ma femme m'a dit, mon ami, tu as râlé l'affaire!'—Mlle. Jones turned round the other way and discreetly put her handkerchief to her mouth. Then to mend matters in the evening he saw a pastelle of Margot, and took it for Mlle. Dussaut's portrait: when they showed him her photo, he said: 'Ah, mais ce n'est pas aussi ressemblant que l'autre!'

Tuesday 19th

Great event! M. Wéver stayed to dinner!!!!!!!!! Margot and Margaret are clean gone on him, and he made an immense sensation. We found out that he was given to versing, so asked Mlle. Jones for one of his poems; she objected that she didn't know their names. Lucienne came to our help: she has a cousin at Melun [p. 131] who has talked of these famous verses, Les Vendanges en Bourgogne. It appeared unhappily that that was not the title, that it was a sonnet, an Anacreonite, not for 'jeunes filles'. He teased Lucienne with it half dinner-time, and was really very amusing. We are revelling in strawberries just now—you never saw such monsters: I must get a very big one weighed and measured, they are enormous, and of a delicious flavour.

June 26th

We have been getting a soaping from M. Wéver this afternoon and no mistake! To begin with, we had half a scène of the Misanthrope to learn. Of course he made those who didn't know it, say it. He said: 'Il faut beaucoup mieux d'apprendre moins et de le savoir bien.' Then he began with the devoirs:

104 'I am very happy that you thought so, because yesterday on the way back from the cemetery, my wife said to me: "My Dear, you have completely flunked the whole thing."'
105 'Oh, but it is not as good a likeness as the other!'
106 'It is far better to learn less and know it well.'
it seems that it wasn’t at all what he wanted ‘tant pis pour lui’ he ought to have been more explicit. He said that the devoirs were all too childish, that the style was this, that, and the other: in short a regular growling. Well, as ill luck would have it he gave us an awful essay last week: ‘Chercher une symbole de la melancholie et de la gaiete, en art, en nature, dans la vie.’ Mlle. Jones said it was much too difficult; we were all groaning over it, so she gave us another, an ‘Episode d’une guerre’. She said we must tell M. Wéver: of course I suppose Margot would take this charge upon her; but she got flunky at last and wouldn’t do it, so I had to. M. Wéver was [p. 132] awfully angry, and threatened to give us no more devoirs if we ever dared to attempt such a thing again, and imposed the next devoir on us in such a dictatorial fashion that I felt my pecker getting up, as the vulgar say. To mend matters he began questioning me on Les Femmes Savantes. It’s a piece I know very well, but I couldn’t answer, because I felt cross, and had lost my head, and he takes me up for the least little mistake I make in French. So it wasn’t very gay this afternoon. We’re to have our history exams in 2 weeks, so I must begin grinding. Sadie Hill came yesterday afternoon to stay till Thursday.

**Wednesday 27th**

We have been having tableaux vivants this evening; they weren’t so pretty as those we had for the Carnival. The little ones acted the Sleeping Beauty first: it was very pretty: Then they had a taking of the veil, not a great success. It appears that I was to have taken part in it, but I didn’t know, and no one told me, and so stayed behind, not to my great grief. After that we had the Six Burghers of Calais: to my thinking it was the success of the evening. Marguerite Young was Edward III, Olga Queen Philippa (by the way Olga acted a great deal, and had all the best men’s parts; why I don’t know, as she is by far the plainest girl in the house) and four of us in night dresses, with ropes round our necks, and bare-footed, represented the ‘bourgeois’. We were of course blacked up: everyone laughed very much:

107. ‘too bad for him’
108. ‘Look for a symbol of melancholy and joy in art, nature and life.’
109. ‘An episode from a war.’
110. One of the most popular plays by Molière: first staged on 11 March 1672, it was performed 1655 times by the Comédie Française between 1680 and 1963.
111. Based on Pierre Dumas’ Eustache de St Pierre, ou le dévouement des six bourgeois de Calais, scène historique (Calais: Tartar-Crespin, 1861).
112. In 1346, Edward III laid siege to Calais, which was harbouring pirates. After 11 months, the Governor of Calais, Jean de Vienne, agreed to surrender the town on condition that the safety of the citizens was guaranteed. Edward insisted that six burghers came barefoot, with nooses around their necks, to beg for mercy and hand over the keys of the city.
113. When the burghers arrived, Queen Philippa was so touched that she asked the king not to harm them. Edward allowed the burghers to return to the town as heroes, and he terminated the siege. See: [http://www.ferryview.co-uk/le-shopper/burghers.html](http://www.ferryview.co-uk/le-shopper/burghers.html)
Mlle. Jones called out: 'Oh le beau bourgeois que Daisy!' The others looked so ridiculous, and we all burst out laughing: when I was half-way up-stairs, my slippers in hand, they called me down to be reviewed in the salon: oh dear me! how we all laughed over those burghers. We had the Seasons, and I was autumn, in my grey dress, ornamented with vines. They say it was a very pretty group. After that they had a charade, 'Cléopâtre', danced a little, and came off to bed.

**July 1st (Sunday)**

Mlle. Laine has gone away to Melun for a few days, and Margot presides at table now. Horrid cold weather.

**Saturday 7th**

M. Benoit came this afternoon, and we have been grinding away all the afternoon like so many galley-slaves. I have cramps in my right hand at the very sight of a pen. As the exams are to take place the 16th, we have had to have an extra lesson to get to the end of the Consulat. I feel as cross and stupid as a stick—two sticks, I mean.

**Monday 9th**

That blessed M. Benoist has had pity on us to the point of giving us our questions for each 'cours', to be drawn from the classic urn: a question for French history and geography; and for Greek history (we must hold forth for 20 minutes for this last!!!!!!!), and all the Greek literature from Homer downwards.

**July 10th** [p. 134]

We went to the theatre last night to see L'Abbé Constantin. It was very well played for 'la province'. The best actor was the old curé, who was really very good. The sentimental young officer quite missed the mark: we fairly yelled with laughter over him: his rival, Paul, and his scheming old mother were much more amusing. There were Marguerite, May, Alice Greenough, Lucienne and I with Mme. Geisler; she is so nice when we go out, and lets us laugh and amuse ourselves as much as we like. By the way, we are to begin

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114 'Oh, what a handsome bourgeois Daisy makes!'
115 That is, up to 18 May 1804, when Napoleon became emperor.
116 The novel, L'Abbé Constantin, was first published by Ludovic Halévy, a member of the Académie Française, in 1882. It was so popular that by 1899, it reached its 200th edition. It was adapted for the stage by Messieurs Grémeux and Decontencel. This tale recalls The Vicar of Wakefield by Oliver Goldsmith.
comedyising here soon: Mlle. Jones wants us to act the Demoiselle à marier before the holidays; I am the father, Marguerite is the mother (two sticks looking at one another); Lucienne has the role of 'jeune ingénue', and Alice is 'le jeune premier'. Margot—the only decent actor among us, is the old godfather. I don’t fancy somehow that it will be a brilliant success.

July 16th

It’s rather more than eighteen and a half hours since I got up, and as I have been grinding hard from about 4.20 a.m. this morning till 6.30 this evening, I feel a little bit dead. Dorothy came down last Thursday, and as she was running about much too much for her weak state of health after 2 months on her back, she got overtired, which brought on a bilious attack and a bad headache. The poor child didn’t eat a morsel for nearly two days; she is getting better now, and I hope we’ll have her downstairs for [p. 135] a few hours every day soon. We have been having the exams with M. Benoist to-day—French history, Greek history, Géographie, and Greek literature. He gave us the questions for each class, and I have passed more than a fort-night over them, never getting up later than 5.30, and going to bed towards eleven p.m. In French history I didn’t want Louis XVI and Turgot: M. Benoist put all the lots into his 'beau chapeau gris', and looked round on us offering it, none of the others would draw, so I boldly grabbed the first paper in the hat (with my heart beating double-quick march 'dans mon estomac'), and drew—Louis XVI! Those things never happen to anybody else. However, he was very nice, and helped us all most mercifully: I felt uncommonly chilly the first three or four sentences, and then warmed up to my normal degree of—4°, normal degree for this country. In Greek history I got ‘La Guerre de Peloponnesie’, and in Géographie 'the United States': those two were really a godsend. I felt queer about the Greek literature, not having looked at it since goodness knows how long, but all the others were in the same quandary, so it wasn’t worth while to fash myself with it. I fell on the Iliad, which was another piece of good luck. M. Benoist was in a beaming temper, as the exams had passed off well, the devoirs were pretty good, and he has just been received ’licencier en droit’. Of course having got [p. 136] through his own exam well he was as gentle as a ‘mutton’ with us. He is really a good-hearted boy. I had 10 on 10 for the three first questions, and Margot and I had 9 on 10 for the literature. Oh dear! To think that we must begin to-morrow for M. Wéver, and M. Garnuchot. Mlle. Lainé has left for Paris again. We had rather fun here the 14th. I passed the day

118 'The Peloponnesian War'
119 'Bachelor of Law'
in Dorothy's room, 'spading'; for dinner we all dressed up in red, white, and blue: there were big blue and red stripes on the tablecloth, and the vases were full of red and white flowers with blue bows. It looked so pretty to see all those girls and children in red, white, and blue with tricolor rosettes\(^{120}\) in their hair and on their breasts. I had on a white evening dress of Marguerite's, a grubby full white net skirt, and a pleated jacket with elbow sleeves and the neck cut down a little. How I got into it is a problem: Marguerite's arms are as thin as matches whereas mine are of very goodly proportions; we're about the same height, but she is thin, stoops, and carries her chin in her chest; I'm about 3 inches wider-chested, broadly made, and carry my head very much in the air. We stuffed up the crevices with red tule, and hid the scantiness of the waist-band by an artistically-rolled ribbon. It was quite chic. All the front windows were \([p. 137]\) draped with flags, and \([in]\) the evening we tried an illumination, only we might have said, like Mme. Falle: 'Mon ami, tu as ratte l'affaire'. By the by, the 13th Friday, I finished reading my Bible: I began the 8th of April 1885, and reading a chapter every day it is only just finished. How little I guessed where I should be when I finished it.

\[July 19th\]

To-day the 40 days of rain and bad weather are up, after the Saint-Médard.\(^{121}\) This whole summer we haven't had more than a week of warm weather. Mme. Geisler has had a woollen dress made for me: it fits like a glove, and is very pretty—brown-grey polonaise, and a striped skirt and striped trimmings. Mlle. Laine has been at Paris since this day week, for her holidays. Margot presides in her absence. Dorothy is in bed, as calm, indifferent, and Buddhical as ever: if she got in a rage three or four times a day she would get better soon, I do believe.

\[July 24th\]

Well, we've been having a day of it. I turned out at 4.30 this morning, and as soon as I was dressed, went down and woke up the others who were grinding for M. Wéver's exam. We worked till breakfast, then we went out for an hour, after which we ground again till twelve. From one to two I spent the time in waltzing all over the place, and trying to go over all the questions at once. The fact of the matter is, that I was in a blue funk, although I didn't say so. At ten o'clock M. Wéver arrived, \([p. 138]\) and corrected our devoirs. Mine was the best, so that gave me a little more courage. We drew our questions all together;

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\(^{120}\) rosette of ribbons

\(^{121}\) The feast of St Médard, the patron of bad weather, is on 8 June. There is a saying in Belgium: 'If it rains on the feast of St Médard, it will rain for the next 40 days, unless St Barnabe (whose feast is on 11 June) cuts off his nose.'
I got 'Montaigne', and 'Le caractère des femmes de Racine', neither of them easy, though I preferred them infinitely to 'Malherbe' and 'Corneille a fondé chez nous une école d'héroïsme', which questions Margot and Marguerite fell upon. Margot began, and I was one of the last, so that when my turn came I was quite reassured. Poor Marguerite was in an awful fright, and didn’t answer very well: Olga hardly said a word, and M. Wéver finished by getting angry with her. He questioned us very badly, he has a horrid trick of saying the first and second syllable of a word, and leaving us to guess the last one. You can just think how ‘malin’ one must be to find ‘ne’ when he has already said ‘Ra—ci—’; then he interrupts you in the middle of a sentence, goes off into a long dissertation, and finishes by asking you a heap of questions quite out of the ‘donnée’, which he answers himself. He gave himself very good notes, by the way. Olga had six (maximum 10); Lucienne had 8, Marianne 10, and I 9. M. Wéver stayed so late that he missed his train, and stayed to dinner. M. de Beriot, M. Sigicelli, and Mlle. Henry were united here after dinner to give us a concert: there were heaps of people from Fontainebleau, amongst whom [p. 139] that lean, long, brown grass-hopper of a Coco, of whom I have elsewhere spoken [in the 1st diary?]. The violin and piano together was simply lovely. M. Wéver missed his train at 11.5 p.m., and went off very ‘galliardly’ with Coco, to pass the night at the hotel: By the way, it wouldn’t be a bad idea if I followed his example: it is near the witching hour of midnight, and I must go and wake Olga at a quarter to 6 to-morrow morning. Unfortunately I am so tired now in the morning that the alarm doesn’t wake me any more than the wind singing.

28th Saturday

Our exams are all finished—grâce au ciel!—I think I was one of the first in M. Garnuchot’s exams but we don’t know yet. Yesterday I was about done up, and when the evening came I was fairly reeling with sleep and mental weariness. To-day we have done nothing but prepare for the comedy. We had two rehearsals this morning, spent most of the afternoon in rushing about, and at 6 o’clock had a ‘dîner de cérémonie’; we all cleared off to our rooms as soon as the feeding was done. I was M. Dumenisl, the father, Margot the parrain.

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122 Michel Montaigne, author of the Essais (1580) and of a journal of his travels in Europe.
123 Jean Racine, arguably France’s greatest dramatist, author of Andromaque (1667), Britannicus (1669), Bérénice (1670) and Phèdre (1677), among other tragedies.
124 François de Malherbe (1555—1628), who first belonged to the Pléiade school but broke up with it to promote a more classical style.
125 ‘Corneille founded a school of heroism in France.’
126 ‘clever’
127 ‘subject matter’
128 ‘archaic: gaily’
129 Thanks be to God!
130 godfather.
Marguerite the mother, May the servant, and Lucienne and Alice Greenaugh had the interesting and touching roles of *jeune ingénue* and *jeune premier*. We all had Louis XV costumes, the ladies with high-dressed, powdered hair, low necks, and big *pannaires*; the men in silk stockings, knee-breeches, [p. 140] braided velvet coats and waistcoats, lace ruffles, three cornered hats, and powdered hair, done up with a little roll along each side of the head, and a queue with a big low behind. The get-ups were really awfully pretty; everyone looked nice except Alice, in whom everyone had prophesied a prodigy of acting, etc. She has legs like railway-sleepers, and pale blue stockings aren't made to give a slender appearance to the limbs. Margot was simply lovely, and acted in perfection. My costume was very pretty, and suited me well; I got out of my role much better than I ever hoped or expected. We danced when it was finished, and I enbeasted myself tolerably. Dorothy came down: Margot and Valentine carried her in queen's chair, and when the festivities were over the maid and I carted her up again; dear little thing! She was so glad to come down and see it all. The little ones played a pretty little piece too: Pauline Sauné acted like a little angel, and Nathalie was delicious as the dignified little mother. How I'm going to sleep for a week now! For four weeks and more, except Sundays, there's hardly passed a day when I didn't turn out between 5 and 6 o'clock and sometimes earlier. It's killing at the end. All the same I'm not half as exhausted and 'aplatied' [p. 141] as last year; at all events the few hours I have passed in bed were passed in sleeping instead of crying, as I foolishly did every night last year for some time before the summer holidays. Mlle. Jones is going to England with the two Marguerites and Olga on Monday morning; the Greenaugh takes her departure for Deutschland the 31st: the little ones are going away in a day or two, and Mme. Geisler leaves here the 6th or thereabouts. The *Caroussel* [132] is to take place this day week; I'm very glad of it, for if it had been for to-morrow, as was at first fixed, I couldn't have gone, on account of its being Sunday.

**29th**

M. Viguiet preached at church to-day; he came here this evening for the 'dîner de cérémonie': we were so long about eating it that I thought I should have taken root.

**30th Monday**

Mlle. Jones left for Paris to-day with five of the girls. The house is beginning to get empty.

[131] Gallicism: 'flattened', or here, 'tired out'.
[132] *Carrousel*—a cavalry parade going back to the days of Louis XIV
Tuesday

Alice went this afternoon. I didn’t take a tender leave of her, as we were up to our eyes in green beans down in the kitchen. Dorothy actually came down to-day; the comedy has done her good. Mlle. Nordheim and Miss Lewis are going to-morrow morning. Miss Lewis and Mlle. Suchetet are going to be replaced next term by Marian Grant, to my great joy, for once Miss Grant is here Mlle. Constantin will be obliged to take rather smaller proportions, I hope. She is fixing up her little ‘menage’ very well, staying here all the holidays, and trying to make herself indispensable to Mlle. Lainé. She would like to play Mlle. Rollet’s role here, but she hasn’t got the wit or the fascination and charm to succeed in it. I wonder if Mme. Geisler sees through her little plans. One thing I’m very sure of, and that is that I shall have very little time free next term, and shall try and get my lessons with her knocked on the head. I’m not going to be bossed by any little chit of an undergoverness, and shall just go off and say so to the authorities if Mlle. Constantin tries to make things disagreeable for me. We must try and keep the peace at all events during the holidays. A new girl came yesterday: her name is Edith Saunderson; she’s an American, 17 years old, very small and childish in face and figure, very gentle and sweet tempered: we get on pretty well; she has travelled and read a great deal, and seems to be a very keen observer of men and things; her conversation is generally amusing and she walks well; so we don’t go badly. She practises five or six hours a day, so I have not always got her on my hands, which enhances her value in my eyes. We have begun covering and arranging the books: it’s a Herculean work.

August 1st

Mlles. Nordheim, Henry, and Lewis went this morning. Zoe and Mme. Geisler are at Paris, so the house is very empty. We finished the books.

Thursday

It’s been raining awfully since Monday: this weather’s becoming monstorous. We have begun the music, which is in a perfect state of delapidation, we shall have to pass 2 or 3 days at least over it.

Friday

The weather has cleared up. I helped Mme. Geisler at the Pavillon this morning; everything is arranged over there now. This afternoon we went to the Tour Denecourt in the middle of the forest. It was really a pleasure to show it to Edith, she was so delighted with the pretty scenery.
Saturday

Finished the music this morning, and cleared up the salles d'étude. This afternoon we all went to the Carousel, except Dorothy, who is still too weak to gambol much, and Mlle. Turner. We went in the omnibus, where we were nearly cooked to death, and when we got to the entrance in the park we found the place swarming with visitors and officers. We were more than an hour too early, and yet we had a good deal of difficulty in getting places. Edith and I were poked away all alone at some distance from Mme. Geisler. We could see pretty well standing up, but there were two horrid bourgeois just behind us, regular snobs, who kept shrieking all the time 'assis, assis! Asseyez-vous!', pulling the corners of peoples' coats and ladies' jackets, and behaving altogether in the most insolent [p. 144] way. I paid no notice to all this; as it was impossible to see sitting down. At last the woman began pugging my jacket; I didn't turn round; the pulls became jerks; 'Mais Mademoiselle, asseyez-vous donc! faites comme les autres, vous gênez tout le monde!' 'Tout le monde' were those two low bourgeois; however I sat down for a minute and then jumped up again. They actually had the cheek to begin again, and when at last I sat down, they began making all sorts of remarks on us. 'Il y a une petite à côté qui pourtant ne se lève pas. Elle est grande, la demoiselle; c'est pour ça qu'elle veut se faire remarquer!' etc. If only those people had understood English, they'd have heard a charitable criticism of France and French politness. There were about 60 or so artillery officers, who performed all sorts of evolutions in the field, and who also danced a quadrille. They had to carry off a ring on the point of a lance, at full gallop; then they took a sabre, and tried to carry off four heads in paper, planted at intervals along the field: 12 or 13 took all the four; some of them missed them all. After that they threw a javelin at a great iron target, passing it on horseback at a galop. Three out of the whole lot touched the target. The last thing was the prettiest, a steeple-chase. The barrier was in the middle of the field, and not one horse [p. 145] baulked it; some of them jumped splendidly. We were really wasted when we got back to the house.

Sunday

It's raining cats and dogs this morning. Mlle. Constantin said to me in confidence yesterday, that she thought Mme. Geisler would give me the charge of the stamps if I asked her. I don't think I'd take it if she offered it me; it would only be because there are no other big ones here to take it, and not

133 gambol, or wander  
134 'Be seated!'  
135 'But, Mademoiselle, sit down! Do as the others are doing: you are inconveniencing everyone!'  
136 'Yet, there is a young girl next to her who remains seated. She is older, the young lady in question, and that is why she wants to be noticed!'  
137 Daisy's interest in horse displays reflects the Whites' passion for horses at home.
because she trusts me. Anyway I could never screw my courage to the sticking point; it would look as if I had a right to ask it. Mlle. Constantin (who, as she herself says, seldom pays compliments) told me that I had become much nicer, and that everyone thought I had changed immensely this last term.

Things are going pretty well at home. Mamma is very amiable; Alice is up at Cairns (may the heavens be blessed for her departure!); Hunter’s at college, much better after his trip to New Zealand: Father’s still down there, or only just come back; Cecily of course is up at ‘Havilah’, and says she is quite happy, but wants to go to Sydney, to be near Em, who has left the hospital to look after poor Mrs Dight. They say Em is getting thinner, and has an exquisite complexion now. Darling old Em! I never saw anyone so thoroughly unselfish and loyal-hearted. Roy has come home from Miss Macaulay’s for the holidays, they say he has become a regular slangy little school-boy. How it will all be changed when we come back. Em gone, Cecily grown older, Roy no longer a baby, Mab as old as I was when we first left Hobart, Nea almost a big girl, the house is quite altered already with new carpets, painted walls, engraving, English furniture. I hope they will have polished floors; it’s idiotic in the north of France, but very practical in our hot climate.

August 6th Monday

I feel perfectly cracked to-day. Yesterday evening just as I was coming out of my room Mme. Geisler called me from her room, that famous room where I have had such scenes and passed such ‘mauvais quarts d’heure!’ She told me to come in, so I came and sat down beside her, and she said: ‘Daisy, vous savez, j’ai envie de vous rendre la charge des timbres.’ I felt my face turning scarlet; she put her arms round me and kissed me, and talked to me awfully nicely: she said she was sure of me now and could really trust me, and she hoped that one day I would win the bee. So I took back my dear old charge that I have ached over and longed for so these last four months, and we kissed and made friends. I think all the old scores are wiped out on both sides, for I have sinned deeply against her, and she has made me suffer horribly in the things I am most sensitive about, often when I had no thought or wish to do wrong. ‘Un point, c’est tout!’ We went for a walk to the Rocher d’Avon, and came back half an hour ago pretty well done up. Edith Saunderson is really a very nice girl.

138 Hunter, would have been 21 at the time.
139 A boarding school in the Hunter Valley. Did Daisy also attend this institution at an earlier time?
140 The page numbers in pencil suddenly jump, at this point, from page 145 to page 150.
141 Mab and Nea were Daisy’s half-sisters. See Introduction.
142 ‘torrid time’
143 ‘Daisy, you know, I am keen to put you in charge of looking after the stamps again.’
144 ‘That is all there is to it!’
August 7th
Mme. Geisler started on her journey to Hanover, in making a détour through Belgium and Holland. I am very sorry she is gone. It is a miserable rainy day.

August 8th
Went into town with Mlle. Molitor to buy some fancy work. It is the first warm day we have had since the beginning of June.

August 9th
We went to the château to-day with Mlles. Molitor and Suchetet: they didn’t show us the theatre, most likely because it was in the direction of the President’s rooms. We sat in the garden under the beeches, and listened to the 46th playing Lucrezia Borgia, and all sorts of love-sick waltzes. I embeasted myself considerably.

Tuesday 14th
We have been going along in a rather monotonous way lately. The weather has been simply divine, cool, fresh mornings, warm in the middle of the day, calm evenings, and lovely starlit nights. We have been going out for a good many long walks lately—one to the Rocher d’Avon, where we enjoyed ourselves very much; another day we sat all the afternoon under the firs at the ‘Reine Amélie’, it was too hot to walk much, so we read and idled there. How delicious a dreamy dolce [p. 152] par niente is. I have been etching a good deal lately, giving English lessons to Mlle. Constantin, reading English to the little ones, and German to myself. Mlle. Lainé has just finished us Daudet’s La Petit Chose. I’m reading La Petite Fadette aloud with Mlle. Constantin. Any spare time I have I spend in the kitchen, but there’s little enough time for reading and working and walking as it is, now that I’m never down before eight, and never do a thing but chatter to Edith, sew, and listen to the reading, after dinner. I helped Anastasie in the kitchen this morning, and passed nearly all the afternoon in stalking red and white currants. This evening it has been deliciously fresh and balmy in the garden: we two went off as is our wont.

145 The theatre is in the inner part of the Louis XV wing and was built during Napoleon III’s reign between 1854 and 1856. It was designed by the architect Lefuel. The ceiling, painted by Charles Voillemont, is adorned with allegorical figures representing Music and Poetry. It could hold up to 450 people and was inaugurated on 18 May 1857 in the presence of Grand Duke Constantine of Russia and the French court.
146 Either the opera by Gaetano Donizetti or Fantaisie brillante sur des motifs de l’opéra Lucrezia Borgia, de Donizetti, for flute and piano, opus 56 (c.1850), by Guilio Briccialdi.
147 Alphonse Daudet, La Petite Chose (1868).
148 George Sand, La Petite Fadette (1849).
after dinner, walking about arm in arm, talking. M. Grant is here, and Mlle. Henry (she only came this morning), so we did not go to the Salon; everyone sat out in the moonlight, talking and laughing; Edith and I walked and walked till our feet were tired, then we sat under the maples for a bit till we got cold, and when we were tired of walking again we went to the bench under the chestnut; there we discussed friendship, activity, Parisian life, occupations, careers, acting, women, Edith's character and inclinations, a little of mine, and a great many other things. At last I became conscious that it was perfectly dark, the stars were shining very brightly, and it was cold, with a dampish night wind. So we came in. I guessed it must be near nine o'clock. Edith declared it was later than that; imagine our dumb-foundedness when we saw by her watch that it was 9.50 p.m. In the Salon they had not noticed our absence, everyone being in the salle-d'étude: in the salle d'étude they thought we were in bed; only hope there won't be a row about it. Yesterday we all went to the theatre, except Miles, Turner and Constandin with the two little Barneys. A Parisian troupe played L'Avare and Pierre Gringoire. The actors were mostly from le Théâtre Français and l'Odeón, they played very well. The Avare was a great long animal in black, a first rate actor; La Flèche and maître Jacques and Valère were all great successes. I can't help thinking in spite of all the jeering of the others, that there is something sad in L'Avare, as M. Wéver said. That old man, so fearfully alone, constantly quarrelling with his son, no peace in his house or his heart, is really pitiful; and that scene where he looks for his 'dix mille écus', and cries with such terrible rage and despair for a glimpse of his gold, is far rather tragic than comic. Cléante played well too; his rôle is almost too earnest to make you laugh: he looks at the miser so savagely over his shoulder that his eyes are steel-blue with rage, when Harpagon reproaches his son's extravagance; when he learns that his father loves Mariane his face is so white and tortured that it makes you pity him; and with Mariane he is far too earnest and passionate to make one laugh. Pierre Gringoire has a background of sadness, poetic, tender sadness, in it too. The costumes were old and worn, but pretty; the acting good, our places not to be complained of; altogether I enjoyed myself royally, and only wish I could go there again. Decidedly the doctor ought to order a régime of theatres for her [Dorothy?], for the excitement does her

149 By Molière, first performed on 9 September 1668.
150 This could be Le jeu du prince des sots et mere sotte, joue aux Halles de Paris le Mardi Gras, l'an 1511, by Pierre Gringoire (Bibliotheque Nationale catalogue, Paris).
151 La Flèche is the valet of Cléante, the son of Harpagon, the miser; Maître Jacques is Harpagon's coachman; Valère is the lover of Harpagon's daughter, Elise.
152 Molière, L'Avare, act 4, scene 8, a soliloquy in Harpagon's garden.
153 Marianne is Cléante's beloved whom Harpagon has resolved to marry (act 1, scene 4).
154 Written in pencil at the foot of page 153.
good. The theatre was crowded; the piece began half an hour late, and the "entre actes\textsuperscript{155}" weren’t very short. The result was that I got to sleep towards one p.m., and am dropping with sleep now. I had my hair cut at the end of last week. My face is so odd and changed I hardly know it.

\textbf{Friday 17th} [back to p. 154]

I have had a very nice letter from Mademoiselle Jones. My raging hunger for a real novel is somewhat appeased; I am taking the edge off my appetite with \textit{Shirley},\textsuperscript{156} The weather is very cold.

\textbf{Saturday 18th}

We went for a very pretty walk to Mont Ussy\textsuperscript{157} all winding up and down amongst the bracken and juniper-bushes and sandstone boulders. There are such numbers of painters in the forest now: we met four to-day, all more picturesque the one than the other. If I were a man, and had some talent, I would be either a painter or a squatter.

\textbf{Sunday 19th}

M. Clouë preached this morning. His style is a very decided improvement on M. Falle’s. We went up to the Croix de Calvaire after dinner and came back by moon-light. The moon is about full now; I wish we could go for a good long walk one evening by moon-light. It reminds me of those two delicious weeks we spent together at ‘Havilah’.

\textbf{August 21st}

Wrote home to-day. We went to Notre Dame de Bon Secours\textsuperscript{158} this evening after dinner. I like that funny little chapel in the wood; there is a quaint old legend about it. They say that in the seventeenth century a young man was riding along one moon-light night near the Croix d’Augas, which is on the hill above the [p. 155] Chapel. Suddenly the horse took fright, bolted, threw his rider and dragged him some distance with his foot in the stirrup. The young man prayed to \textit{La Sainte Marie, reine des âeux}, and suddenly a light appeared amongst the shadows of the ancient forest-trees, as the aureole one

\textsuperscript{155} intermissions
\textsuperscript{156} The second novel published by Charlotte Brontë in 1849.
\textsuperscript{157} Mont Ussy in the Fontainebleau Forest, from where Montigny and the valley of the Loing can be seen.
\textsuperscript{158} This church is part of the Diocese of Meaux. A pilgrimage was first initiated in 1661 by d’Auberlon, an officer of the Prince de Condé. See: \url{http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10098a.htm}
sees above the heads of saints in cathedral windows: the horse stopped, the young rider was saved, and vowed a chapel to the protectress Marie, on the spot where the horse stopped. There is a painting on the ceiling of the appearance of the virgin. The people about here seem to reverence the shrine greatly, and there are always flowers before it. This evening we found a taper burning in front of the Madonna's statue. Whenever we girls are specially desirous of something, such as the non-arrival of a professor, a fine day, or a party in the forest, or if we lose something, we vow a sou, or 2 sous (on great occasions) to the bonne Dame, if our vows are exauce.\textsuperscript{159} Mlle. Turner went away to Paris to-day.

\textbf{Wednesday 22nd} [back to p. 156]

We went to the Bonne Dame to look for \textit{girolles},\textsuperscript{160} and got caught in a nice little thunderstorm. Fortunately I had a mackintosh, but did not altogether escape a wetting. It is such fun walking in the rain. We passed the rest of the afternoon peeling rhubarb.

\textbf{Friday 24th}

We took our déjeûne\textsuperscript{161} to the Fontaine Désirée, and after having eaten bread and butter, cold beef, grapes and apples, we sat about for half an hour, and then walked to the tour Denecourt. We gathered a big basketful of \textit{girolles}, and a small one of black-berries; I helped Anastasie make jam of those black-berries; there were just three little pots.

\textbf{Saturday 25th} [p. 157]

Adèle came this afternoon and Mlle. Molitor went away to England. I spent most of the day reading the \textit{Maitre de[s] Forges}: it is like all French novels.

\textbf{Monday 27th}

We went to the Foire de St. Louis in the Park of the Château. It was rather amusing. There was a flower-show (a very miserable sort of affair), we saw a lot of \textit{salimhanques}, and streets of little booths, where they sold ginger-bread, goodies, toys and ornaments and rubbish of all sorts. The little ones took a ride on a splendid merry-go-round, and as Adèle and I couldn't resist the temptation we got in and had a turn too. I feel very cross this afternoon. I was

\textsuperscript{159}"granted"
\textsuperscript{160}Yellow-orange mushrooms that are edible.
\textsuperscript{161}Located at a very popular lookout in the Fontainebleau Forest, named Marie Colinet. See: http://www.aaff.org/histoire-aart.btni
just in the middle of the most exciting part of *Le Maître des Forges*, and because I left my things lying around in the school-room, Mlle. Constantin *octroyé* herself the permission to collar them and is going to keep them for a week. I think it's most infernal and confounded cheek; she exasperates me to the point of making all the hairs on my body prickle with aversion. Why on earth she can't mind her own business I really don't know.

**Tuesday 28th**

We have spent the morning in playing croquet. Adèle and I gained the first party, M. Henry and Constantin the second. It was very amusing and exciting. I have spent most of the afternoon in the kitchen cooking currants.

**Friday 31st** [p. 158]

Mlle. Suchetet went away this morning early. Adèle left for Paris a little later. Mlle. Henry went with her, but she is coming back this evening.

**September 4th Tuesday**

Two new girls have come, Bertha and Orchie Lewis, Americans from New York. Bertha is tall and *gauche*, fair, and resembles Louise Catherwood. She dresses richly and showily, gives herself airs, says she is 17, and looks 20. She has travelled a good deal, and poses for the young lady of society who has been everywhere, seen everything, and is rather *blasee*. Orchie is 16 (so she says). She is rather small, quite shapeless, dark-haired and delicate-looking. She is infinitely more agreeable than her elder sister. They are both cool and cheeky as only Amurkains know how to be. I am reading *An Altar*, by Werner. It is not so good as *Under a Charm*, but I like it very much.

**Thursday 6th**

The little Barneys went to-day. I don’t know when they are coming back, or if they are going to return to Amurka with their parents. They are dear little children, pretty, well brought-up, intelligent, and amusing. I foresee a violent friendship between Mlle. Constantin and the amiable Bertha. Mlle. Jones is coming back on Monday with Adèle and Margot.

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163 Gallicism: "s’est octroyé", that is "gave herself".
164 Another Gallicism: "gagnées la partie"—won the first game.
165 Another Gallicism: "gagnées la partie"—won the first game.
166 Zacharias Werner (1768–1823).
167 By Elisabeth Bürstenbinder (New York: G. Munro. 1882).
Tuesday 11th [p. 159]

Mlle. Jones’ birthday. I had not thought of it, nor Dorothy nor Zoe either, so we had nothing to give her. I was awfully sorry, for it would have given her pleasure to see we had thought of her. And we all three passed a mauvais quart d’heure in the Salle de Musique when we went to wish her a happy birthday. There was a grand dinner this evening, then Dorothy and Zoe played a duet, Mlle. Henry sang Little Sweetheart, Come and Kiss Me, and made us all roar. We danced till about eleven o’clock, and then went up to bed. Edith and I (who sleep near the stairway) went up the passage to say goodnight to Orchie. Mlle. Constantin and Bertha were laughing and talking in the bed-room, and we three stood at the door. Suddenly Mlle. C. came out with: ‘Edith et Daisy, allez-vous coucher!’ As there was no need or reason for this bullying command of course we didn’t stir, and she repeated it three times. At last she came out of the room to send us off, and actually laid her hand on Edith’s shoulder. Edith turned round and said: ‘Je ne suis pas habituée qu’on me parle comme cela!’ And we went off to our [p. 160] rooms in a state of fury. I simply execrate and loath that brutal, ambitious, bullying nature. If she thinks she will ever get me under her thumb she is slightly mistaken.

Friday 21st

At last we have had our long-promised journey to Paris. Yesterday morning Mlle. Laine, Zoe, Dorothy and I set off by the 7.30 train in grand spirits, and got to Paris about 9 o’clock. We went straight off to see the Bastille and the Rue Ste. Antoine. It is at the Champ de Mars, where the Exhibition is to be held next year. The prison of the Bastille is rebuilt very much as it was in ’89, only a little smaller, and all the Rue Saint Antoine leading up to it and surrounding it has been reproduced after the descriptions existing of it. There is a soldier in the costume of the time—close-fitting white breeches, broidered waistcoat, and scarlet coat, with a big sort of shako, regular George III style—who guards the entrance; you see a whole street of queer little shops, with funny advertisements over the low, narrow doorways: one, a cobler’s, is very curious; the shoes, boots, and sabots of the epoch are hung up all over the place, from the high boots of the garde de corps, and the court ladies high-heeled satin slippers, down to the thick heavy clumpers of the artisans. Most of these [p. 161] people wear the Louis XVI costume. Of course there are no end of photos of Louis, Marie Antoinette, the Dauphin, and Mme.

168 ‘Edith and Daisy, go to bed!’
169 ‘I am not accustomed to being spoken to like that!’
170 Execrate—to dislike intensely.
171 Daisy is referring to the forthcoming Paris Exhibition of 1889.
172 Louis XVII (1785—1795), the son of Louis XVI, was incarcerated with his family in the Temple and was buried secretly.
Elisabeth, but we didn’t buy any. There is the old church of the Quartier St. Antoine, which inside is turned into a sort of museum. You see the masque de fer (in wax, of course); the escape of a prisoner from the bastille, a diorama of Camille Desmoulins, a prisoner taming a spider, the torture of the Duc de Namurs, etc. The Bastille is very interesting. You go in by a drawbridge, through a dark heavy doorway, and stumble down a flight of cold, smelly steps. When you’re at the bottom, and your eyes are accustomed to the dim lantern-light, you see an iron railing, a pillar in the middle of the round ‘cachot’, a little straw on the ground, and two prisoners, wax figures, but which look real in the uncertain light. One, an old man with a white beard, had been there thirty years; the other was a lawyer, delivered by the mob after two years captivity. We went up to the top of the tower, a long, tiring climb, up badly lighted, winding stairways. From there we saw all over the Champ de Mars, which is now covered with buildings for the Exhibition. The Tour Eifel is nearly half finished. This second Tower of Babel [p. 162] is to be 375 yards high—825 feet. The four great arches at the base are finished, and the second story is done too. Eifel has made unto himself a world-wide name and a fame of several centuries. The tower looks like a piece of delicate lace-work against the sky, and yet can resist a pressure of 300 kilogrammes of wind on a square metre of iron. I think it will stand. We went to see the Trocadéro, where are the casts of all sorts of statues. The salles we saw were all Middle Age—the sculptured portiques and arches of cathedrals, the full-length figures of kings and bishops on their tombs, crushing dragons under their feet or guarded by angels and grey-hounds. There were some lovely carvings, so rich and graceful seen from a little distance, and so curious looked at closely. Every face has its own peculiar expression and character so vividly expressed. We had enough to eat in a little patisserie to aggravate our hunger, and then we went to the Hippodrome. In France the circuses aren’t given in tents, but in solidly-built houses, made expressly for that. The Hippodrome is enormous, very well lighted from above, and capable of holding 2 or 3000 persons, I should [p. 163] say. The horses are lovely, the clowns are idiotic as elsewhere, the serpent charmers and gymnasts as astonishing as in all circuses. But the great charm of the thing is a tableau of Russian life, taken at the moment of the war with

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173 Elisabeth de France (1764–1794), also called Madame, Louis XVI’s sister, who was guillotined.
174 Camille Desmoulins, a journalist and politician (1760–1794), called on the people to take up arms in the Palais Royal. He was a member of the Cordeliers Club and was guillotined with Danton.
175 dungeon
176 Seven prisoners were found in the Bastille on 14 July 1789: four swindlers (Jean Bediade, Bernard Laroche, Jean La Corrèze, and Jean-Antoine Pigade); two mentally ill prisoners (Tavernier and the Comte de Whyte de Malleville) and a gentleman condemned for incest (Comte de Solages).
177 Eiffel was actually a pseudonym for Bonickausen.
Servia. There is a drinking scene before an inn, a fight between the Cossacks and the Turks, and a skating party: there are between 200 and 300 people in the arena, with horses, sleighs, and a big white dog. It was really awfully pretty and well got up. The costumes were lovely. We got back here at 8 o'clock, sleepy and ravenously hungry. To-morrow some of us are going to see the Louvre, Cluny, and the Luxembourg. Quelle chance!

**Saturday 22nd**

We have been to Paris and enjoyed ourselves royally. Orchie and I with Mlle. Lainé started at 7.30, after having 'bolted' (to be vulgar) a mouthful or two of bread. We got out of the omnibus at Cluny, and found the concierge washing his face. We went too early, so we went off to the gardens of the Luxembourg; it's so pretty there in the early morning. There is a perfect forest of yellow-brown chestnut trees all about the grey old Medician palace, and in the hollow before it the gardens, all blazing with flower-beds, set in fresh green grass. The gallery of the Luxembourg is in a new [p. 164] brick building, about as picturesque as that in Sydney. It is only for living artists, the chefs-d'œuvre of each year at the Salon. There are some lovely pictures there, landscapes, or rather 'seascapes' of Zirm, taken from Venice, a little Saint Jean-Baptiste with wide blue eyes and brown curls; a lovely painting of a saint comforting a poor mother for her child's death; one of Rosa Bonn's celebrated 'oxen pictures', an Aphrodite on the Waves, etc. I must not forget a picture of Puvis de Chavannes, the most ideal thing of its kind I ever saw: it is entitled Pauvre pecheur; it represents a fisher (very thin, of a greyish tint, with smudgy edges), standing in the bow of the rummest looking craft built since the days of Noah; there's a green-gray meadow in the background (also smudgy), and a woman and child picking grey-yellow flowers of a wavering, indistinct nature. And M. Wèver admires him! I didn't know before how many fools there are in this world. Cluny is an old abbey which has been turned into a musée: many parts of the building are in ruin, and seem to be bound together only by the dark ivy and scarlet Virginia creeper that festoon the walls in many parts. It is [p. 165] preserved in all its graceful, sombre Gothic style, with richly carved window and door arches, with dragons heads for spouts; and the whole

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178 Servia, a Hungarian protectorate, became an independent kingdom in 1881. In the Russo-Turkish war, Servia fought on the side of the Russians.
179 Annual Paris exhibition of the most recent paintings.
180 Felix Zirm, French artist born at Beaune (1821-1911), famous for his paintings of Venice.
181 French artist (1824-1898) whose paintings adorned the Panthéon and the Sorbonne in the Latin Quarter of Paris.
182 Many Australian visitors at the end of the nineteenth century mentioned visiting the Musée de Cluny; Sarah Jennings in 1887 admired the 'lovely Gothic house with such beautiful carved oak and ebony furniture and most interesting collection of tapestry, embroidered stoles and vestments, carved ivory and China' (MS9432,VSL).
is old and grey and timeworn, and gives you such a strange impression of rest and old-time beauty. The rooms are for the most part low and not much lighted. There are the most heavenly chests and wardrobes, all in massive oak and carved! One can hardly believe that our forefathers were so skilled. There are heaps of little coffrets in ebony inlaid with gold and ivory, and others in metal all worked and ornamented. The tapestries are very beautiful, the colours a little faded, but so harmonious and rich in tints. Some of the lace shawls and the handsome embroideries are enough to make old dowagers tear out their hair for envy and despair. We saw a collection of royals coaches that were magnificent: the 4 wheels are very high, and the carriage is hung between them. The porcelain was very fine, a collection of all sorts of styles, Italian, Sévres, Delft, Dutch, German: we saw a number of pieces made by the famous Palissy the Potter. Altogether it was quaint and very interesting: of course an enraged antiquarian would find even greater charms to it. We went into a patisserie to eat our lunch, which consisted of cakes and Paris rolls. Then, strengthened and refreshed, we drove to the Louvre, and spent 2 1/2 hours there. We visited first the Musée de M. et Mme. Dieulafoy, who have just brought back all sorts of curiosities from Babylon, where they have been on a government expedition. The greater part of the walls are in tiles, Assyrian tiles of a greenish-blue tint, wonderfully fresh, some representing archers and spearmen, others lions. There are some enormous massive stone sphinxes, which make a very fine effect in these great salles. We next saw the "Musée des Souverains", which is most interesting and curious. Then we hunted up the principal picture galleries, "le Salon Carré", where are none but the master-pieces of the old masters, Titian, Correggio, Guido Reni, Teniers, and Rembrandt. In the long gallery near it are mostly pictures of the Flemish school, those beastly Rubens, of which I have elsewhere spoken, portraits by Rembrandt and Vandyke, beautiful enough to excuse a terrible breech of the tenth commandment; land and sea-scenes of Ruisdael, a few of Albrecht Dürer's paintings, and then the Spanish and

183 See A. Hassam, Through Australian Eyes (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2000): "Australians gave expression to an Australian or, perhaps more generally, a colonial attitude to historical continuity [...] the appeal to history also acted to remind Australians of their own apparent lack of history" (p. 121).
184 Daisy clearly identified here with European culture and heritage.
185 Bernard Palissy (1510-1589), potter and erudite writer, was celebrated for his pottery displaying animals, plants and fruit modelled "an nature". The grotto of the Tuileries was decorated with his works.
186 Dieulafoy was a French archaeologist born in Toulouse (1843-1920).
187 The Salon Carré was next to the Gallery of Apollo in the Louvre.
188 Titian, Italian artist (c. 1485-1576) painted The Entombment at the Louvre from 1523 to 1525.
189 Antonino Allegri, named il Correggio (c. 1489-1534).
190 Guido Reni, Italian artist active in Bologna (1575-1642), a disciple of Raphael and creator of Samson Victorious, The Massacre of the Innocents, Nessus et Dejanire and Head of Christ.
191 David Teniers, the Younger (1610—1690), Flemish painter.
192 Jacob van Ruisdael or Ruysdael (1628-1682), whose Dutch landscapes were celebrated, e.g. Coup de soleil at the Louvre.
193 Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), German artist and engraver.
Italian school; Murillo’s *Cuisine des Anges*, and another [p. 167] beautiful painting of his opposite it, a Biblical scene, I fancy; one or two of Velasquez and Ribera’s pictures, a good many of Tiziano, Correggio, Carracci, and Guido Reni. I don’t like most of Reni’s pictures, he abuses of violent movement and startling colour; but here was a head of Christ, crowned with thorns, and a woman praying, both by him, that were lovely. The Italian school is more imaginative, more delicate, graceful and fanciful than the Flemish; but I prefer the latter; it is truer to nature, and consequently more touching; the ‘effets de lumière’ are exquisite. We came away without seeing the Venus of Milo: we were dead beat, and could hardly stand. It was about 7 p.m. when we got back here. I think I’ll sleep well tonight. *Hélas!* M. Falle preaches tomorrow.

**Thursday 27th**

Madame Geisler came back from Germany yesterday. She has been very kind and cordial to me. We are expecting the arrival of 3 Grahams, friends of May Barron; likewise a Scott girl, the sister of an old pupil. I have just turned out into my fifth room! No. 6, it seems, was the room of Violet Scott, and she wants her sister to have it. It’s a nuisance, but I hope I may keep May’s room now [p. 168] I’m there. I have had a lovely drive with Mlle. Lainé this afternoon.

**September 28th**

Well, the holidays are over, to all intents and purposes. Edith Sanderson has just gone back to Paris, though I have tried hard to persuade her to stay; she is nearly alone all day, has no friends, in or out of her family, and seems to be misunderstood by her mother and sisters; all the same, I think she exacts too much and gives too little: if a girl is unhappy in her own home surely a little of the fault lies at her own door. Yet Edith is shy and reserved, and must be hard to really get at: I know she will mope herself to death if she does not go in a French family. The little Barneys came back to-day, and Lucienne came with her mother, to accompany a friend who’s sending her daughter here. Miss Grant and company are coming this evening, so the holidays are really finished. I’m not sorry of it, for this continued inaction of thought and monotony of life weighs on me like lead. The old twinges of home-sickness are coming back, and were by no means stilled by an amiable and sympathetic letter from home the other day, informing me that we should most likely stay

194 Ludovico Carrache or Carracci (1555–1619) from Bologna.
195 In 1891, Lilly Madden thought the sculpture ‘a come down after all one had heard of her’ (MS13055, VSL). Her husband, Henry, was even more critical: ‘When I want a statue to represent a perfect model of a woman, it certainly shall have both arms’ (MS13055, 3754/1, VSL).
for 2 years more. We begin to hear vaguely in [p. 169] Cecily's letters of a plan for sending us (or me) for the last twelve months to a school in London—of all absurd ideas about the most ridiculous. The summer is finished; the days are chilly in the morning and evening, mild and grey from ten a.m. till five p.m.; to-day everything looks not dead nor asleep, but in a kind of trance or swoon, not a breath of air stirring, the faint chirp of a bird from time to time coming across the stillness. The brown and yellow leaves flutter down silently, one by one, till the paths and seats are all strewn with them. It is a deathly afternoon; the silence in the house has made me creepy, and I'm writing in the garden: this strange repose is so different from the lonliness of the bush; there the silence and the pauses seem like the momentary rest of some Titanic power, of which every quiver and simultaneous wave of the forest is the breathing; you can feel the mighty heart beating beneath the repose; here it looks like a weary nature, fainting beneath the labour of summer days, falling, sinking into an everlasting slumber; it makes me feel weird. I see the name of 'Salles' scribbled on the table where I write. How often I used to sit here last year with the Spaniards, and how things have changed [p. 170] since then. I used to feel as if all my faculties of love and suffering and endurance were falling away from me, worn out with the strain of them. Only from time to time a paroxysm of grief and rebellion and pain would wake and rage within me, to show me to myself to make me understand that I could still suffer, if to outsiders I looked a block of marble. Why can't people at least read clearly and honestly in their own hearts, when they wish to? Oh, self-knowledge! How very, very few ever attain unto that excellent wisdom! Why can't I see why I do things, so that I may be able to walk upright and honest before all men. I wonder if I really care for Mademoiselle Rollet? I shall never hear her side of the story, I can only judge her from a few scattered facts, and when I might have known more, I would not, for I loved her too well; perhaps even now, if by some supernatural power I could know all the impulses and reasons which weighed on and produced the events of a year ago, all the motives of those hearts, I would still refuse it. Perhaps because I do not trust her, I have not enough faith in the strength of my affection to stand any severe shock to it—but who knows the reason, when [p. 171] I search for it diligently in my heart, and do not find it. All I know is, that to hear her name uttered, or to see it written, thrills me strangely still, like the firm grasp of her hand on my wrist when she wanted to force me to be quiet. If she were here before me, holding out her arms to me, nothing could keep me back from her. Would it be wrong? Is it the remembrances of past things, affection, gratitude, that draw me to her, or is it only my own, self-will and seeking of self-pleasure? I always choose the easy, pleasant things to do, and shrink away from what is hard and

\[196\] Daisy seems to have had a talent for poetry in the tradition of Longfellow.
true, with a moral cowardice and ‘mollesse’\textsuperscript{197} that make me hot with shame. Or again, am I weak and inconstant, and have I let myself be influenced by the opinion of others against her? I know I loved her ‘not wisely, but too well’.\textsuperscript{198} I am afraid if she had begged me to do something wrong I would have let myself ‘aller’\textsuperscript{199} to it; ‘afraid I would!’ I have done it. What but that was my letter to her? But if an outside influence has been brought to bear on me, it wasn’t Madame Geisler’s reasonings, nor Mlle. Jones’s warnings, nor Mlle. Laine’s opinion. It was the letter Em wrote me. We are constituted so alike in [p. 172] some ways that though in totally different spheres of life, we meet with the same experience. And all she has suffered can serve me to no purpose. I must walk my own road alone, and rely on my own individual strength, and pick myself up when I am down. I can’t even help Dorothy, for we are so differently made that I can’t understand the secret springs of her character. She is soft and I am hard; there is all the difference. Madame Geisler has been very kind to me since her return from Germany. How I am given to day-dreaming! Here have I been sitting for a quarter of an hour watching the dance of a cloud of gnats, with all my wits off wool-gathering. The Lewises are used to the house, I think. I like them both very well. Berta is much nicer than at first. Orchie is very childish in many ways; she might be 13 or 14 for some things; her judgment and reasoning are quite unformed.

October 4th Thursday

The new girls have been coming in shoals since Saturday. Ethel Scott was the first arrival. She’s a nice little American of 14 or thereabouts, very like Jeannie Hamilton. The two Paysons and Elsie Nourse came on Monday, all three Americans; the Paysons spoke [p. 173] French, and Elsie has been at school in Dresden for 2 years so she may be considered almost as a German; fortunately she’s not homesick, but the Paysons make it up for her. Valérie Litkie came on Monday too: she’s an awfully nice English girl of 15, very sweet-looking and bright. She has quite got over her home-sickness, I think. The three Graves, Jennie, Marie, and Emma, came on Tuesday afternoon. Olga and I went to receive them in the drawing room where we found them with their sister and her friend, in tears: these five weeping females took us rather aback, but the elder sister’s little boy of 4, who was very obstreperous, made us shriek with laughter by sturdily refusing to kiss his aunts. These three girls wept all the way upstairs; Olga and I accompanied them in solemn silence; their sobs quite stiffled our feeble efforts at conversation. They had each a huge trunk and we

\textsuperscript{197} ‘softness’\textsuperscript{198} William Shakespeare, \textit{Othello}, act 5, scene 2, lines 346–347.\textsuperscript{199} ‘aller’
helped them to unpack; then they began asking all sorts of questions about the house, the mistresses, the lessons, etc. They are tall and willowy, and look stupid as cabbages, and very lazy. We were dancing yesterday evening; the Boston waltz is simply awful, about as graceful as if two six foot 'old man boomers' got up and footed it together. Mlle. Grant—the new English mistress—dances beautifully, and Valérie and Olga and I get on very well together. [p. 174] Mlle. Grant is just as nice as she can be. I am going to try and have literature lessons with her. We are all frozen to death, as the weather is frosty and rainy, and they won't warm the house. These Graves girls are so fast and vulgar, they exasperate me with their twang and drawl and general 'loudness'.

Thursday [4 October]

We have been at Moret to-day for a bon-bon expedition. The weather is beautifully warm and mild, just a regular autumn day; the forest is beginning to take brown and yellow tints, the crops are all reaped, and the sky is a soft, pale blue, with downy white clouds floating over it. Moret is a strange little town; the last two hundred years have gone over it without leaving any but slight traces of their passage. The old feudal gateways and walls are still standing—old grey, mouldering walls grown with mosses and lichens, that look red and golden in the afternoon sunshine. There are two round towers on either side of the gateways; their walls are pierced with long, narrow loopholes, and their whole appearance is so formidable that one would be no wise surprised to see a soldier in helm and hauberk marching along the rampart. The streets are winding and narrow. The cobble-stones are without doubt the same as those that saw Louis XIV courtiers and 'Republican Terrorists'—if any ever such intruded onto the sleepy little town—parading or haranguing. As for the church it is a regular 'bijou', old, old, and grey, and calm, standing in a cobbled-paved, silent street; the spouts and gargoyles are carved in the form of dragons' heads, like those of Notre Dame. The walls are as grey and moss covered as those of the archways; inside the old coloured windows cast warm red lights on the round smooth pillars and the worn flag-stones. The Loing flows into the Seine just beyond the town; it comes down over a quaint old weir with a melodious rush and roar that almost sends you to sleep. From the bridge you can see far away up a still reach all bordered with poplars and alders and weeping willows, under which the

200 Written in pencil at the foot of the page: 'kangaroos or wallaroos'.
201 The main street of Moret leads on both sides to two gates where there are traces of former drawbridges; one is the Porte de Bourgogne, the other the Porte de Paris. The fortifications give Moret its quaintness.
202 Large coat of mail in the Middle Ages.
203 Jewel
women of the town come and wash their linen; there is a sort of mill built on
grey stone arches right in the middle of the curants of the two streams, and
the water comes rushing out dark and frothy from the dark shadowy canals.
It is a strange, sweet, old-time town and country.204

October 24th

I went to Paris with Mlle. Lainé to-day, to get my winter dresses fitted on and
to buy a heap of things at the Louvre.205 We went to Mme. Andrews first,
where she tried on my brown dress; then [p. 176] we went down to the
Louvre, where I bought two rather nice felt hats, a black fur muff, a pair of
gloves, an umbrella, a shawl, and goodness only knows what all. We were half
dead when we went away to the Avenue de l'Opéra and had a cup of hot
chocolate and Paris rolls for déjeuner. After that I bought a pair of boots and
shoes, and then we went to the Louvre. We saw the salles of modern sculpture,
of which I remember two things, viz. a Neapolitan fisher boy in bronze,
dancing the tarantella;206 and Canova's Cupid and Psyche.207 This last is a dream
in marble. Then we hurried off to see the Vénus de Milo. Of course everyone
who respects himself has seen a cast or an engraving of that Venus; but it takes
you aback after all: she is divine; that graceful, perfect form, those sloping
shoulders, that queenly little head carried as never woman carried it before!

'A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair'208

I could have stayed for hours before her: her grace and power are indolent;
natural, she is a lovely lazy, goddess-like creature, and when you watch her lips
you half expect to see them open and to hear [p. 177] a deep, musical voice
speak to you slowly. The winged Victory209 is divine too, but it is another
divinity, all life and strength and movement. Oh why is her head lost!

October 25th Thursday

To-day is a red letter day in my existence. Mademoiselle Jones gave me the
bee this evening. We had some tableaux vivants after dinner, then we began
dancing, and when I was resting after an infernal tarantella with Olga, all of a
sudden I saw Mlle. Jones coming towards me with something in her hand, and

204 Moret-sur-Loing (4147 inhabitants) provided much inspiration to the Impressionist painters, notably
Monet, Renoir and Sisley. The latter resided in the town for 10 years and his house is now open to the
public.
205 That is, at the Magasins du Louvre.
206 The Neapolitan Fisherboy (1884-1885) by François Rude.
207 Antonio Canova, Italian sculptor (1757-1822), creator of L'Amor et Psyche (in the Louvre).
208 Alfred, Lord Tennyson. 'A Dream of Fair Women' (1832), quoted in Oxford Concise Dictionary of
Quotations, p. 310.
209 The Winged Victory of Samothrace (3 BC or early 2 BC).
I guessed what it was; she fastened it on my breast, and I just flung my arms round her neck and hugged her; the girls all began clapping, and then kissing me all round; I didn't know who I was kissing or where I was or what I was doing, till I worked my way over to Mme. Geisler and Mlle. Lainé and got settled a bit; then I began dancing again, and we went on like a lot of mad things till Mlle. Jones and Marion began singing a lovely little German operette, and we got up to bed at last at about eleven o'clock. I can hardly believe now that I have got it, my own dear bee.

Friday November 2nd

We have passed a very interesting day at Melun. Mlle. Jones has promised us for a long time past to take us to Melun, to see the Château de Vaux Pralins. The Castle was built by Fouquet, the surintendant de finances of Louis XIV. They say that when Louis came to see his minister he was received with such magnificent pomp as offended his despotic soul, and Fouquet paid for his wealth and good taste by a thirty years' imprisonment. The Château belongs now to a M. Sommier, a certain ci-devant sugar-manufacturer, who has restored Vaux in the Louis XIV style at the cost of several million francs. M. Wéver knows M. Sommier, and with some difficulty managed to get us a permission to see the place while the owner was there, but with this stipulation, that he, M. Wéver, should pilot us about over the park and house. All this week the weather has been splendid, but this morning very early it began pouring with rain. We had to go all the same, as the carriages were engaged and everything settled. We lunched at 10.30 and started in an omnibus train for Melun; there were nineteen of us all told, we filled completely two railway carriages, and shouted with laughter all the way. We drove to Vaux in two big breaks—remark that it was raining cats and dogs all the time—and after half an hour's very pretty drive through the quaint old town of Melun, with its narrow stone-paved streets and old grey church, across the Seine, and through the sad, picturesque 'paysage champêtre' round the town, we arrived at Vaux. Unfortunately M. Sommier and the due de Chartres had chosen this particular hour of the day for luching.
and M. Wever declared that it was quite impossible to go into the castle and disturb them at their meals. What was to be done? We couldn’t sit in the brakes and stare at each other for two hours, so we gathered up our courage, turned out of the brakes, and started bravely off to see the gardens—and the rain. During two mortal hours did we trudge up and down those soppy gravel paths which acted as a sponge; when one stood still one could see the water oozing up in little rills all round one’s feet, and when one walked the mud splashed around all over one’s dress and boots and legs. It was awful, but the funniest thing I ever saw. Madame Geisler and Mlle. Grant and I were walking in the rear a great part of the time, and we nearly died of laughing, looking at the seventeen umbrellas and mackintoshes which adorned the landscape. The view from a hill right at the end of the garden is really very fine: just before us was a great pond—rectangular, of course—surrounded by a wide stone embankment and a gravel walk; then came a terrace, then another pond, then the French garden, laid out in straight lines, all peopled with statues and ornamented with fountains; at the far end the palace, grey, stately, princely, the whole enframed in the woods of the park, that is all red and brown and yellow with the autumn frosts. Not even the rain could spoil the beauty of that ‘coup d’oeil’.

We got into the château at last, all dirty and draggled. M. Sommier himself came to meet us, and poor Mlle. Jones had to make him an amiable little speech; then we began our investigations. The hall is splendid; it looks over the garden, and occupies the whole of the great central dome, right up to the tiles. The roof is painted to represent the sky, whereon floats a huge eagle with outspread wings, holding a lamp in his claws; all round the wall on one side are the high windows through which the light comes in floods; on the other are glass doors, mirrors, which open into the different parts of the house; all round the walls are beautiful marble busts on porphyry pedestals; the table-tops are of coloured marble or porphyry; the black and white marble flags are almost hidden by lovely Smyrna and Persian rugs; the great arm-chairs and divans covered with satin or plush seem to stretch out their hospitable arms to passers-by, inviting them to come and be comfortable. The three salons opening out of the hall are very handsome: the billiard room is lined with portraits and pictures in the Louis XIV style; the dining-room is lined with old-gold brocaded silk, and there are some very fine portraits of celebrities of the XVIIth century hanging on the walls. The salon is a gem; the walls are ornamented with dark red silk, between the ‘encadrements’ of which are let in silver grey silk curtains; right at the

217 ‘glance’

Charles Le Brun (1619–1690) was commissioned to draw the apotheosis of Fouquet, but his work came to a premature end with the minister’s arrest.

219 The Grand Salon is in the centre of the building, and the east and west wings stretch on either side of the domed Oval Room, linked by a gallery.
end of the room there is a grand piano, covered with a dark red satin cloth, all ornamented with lovely gold braid; the tables and the sofas and the nick-nacks in that room! ... What tempted me the most was a splendid Gobelins tapestry, which occupied the whole width of the wall, from wainscoting to ceiling. It represented a battle-scene, a wounded horse kicking and rolling on his rider, and a group of soldiers and officers running to his help. One sweet little salon took my heart entirely. The walls of white wood were painted with cupids playing amongst flowers. The window closed by shutters of white wood painted to match the panels, and at one end hung a very pretty painting of a Watteau shepherdess playing the mandolin, while a lot of little cupids fly round her, and a young man stoops over her to speak to her. A delicious little satin chair was standing before the picture, as if waiting for some fair marquise of by-gone days. I wonder if some handsome marquis ever came love-making in this sweet little boudoir with a pretty chatelaine of Vaux: the room looks to have been made for that. Over a mantel piece in another room is a very good bust of La Fontaine, which Fouquet had carved as a mark of gratitude for Les Nymphes de Vaux. M. Sommier is tall, thin, English-looking, and keen. His hair is just turning grey, and his [p. 182] eyes are blue: he scanned us all from top to toe as we came into the library. Oh, that library, it is the loveliest room in the house; so dark, so warm, so cozy; before the great fireplace stand two great, low leather arm-chairs; and the books, rows on rows of them round three sides of the room; there must be near a thousand of them. At last we got into the brakes again and drove away to see the ruined chateau-fort of Melun. This old chateau is all in ruins: the circular courtyard is covered with weeds and nettles, and enclosed by crumbling grey stone walls and ivy covered round towers. We climbed up into pigeon-lofts and fortresses, and down into horrible dark dungeons; those 'oubliettes' were enough to make one’s flesh creep; they were low ceiled rooms, under the level of the ground, and only lighted by narrow windows high up in the wall. We found a sort of hole in the wall which was the opening of a subterranean passage; unfortunately we hadn’t got a light and so couldn’t explore it. We spent about an hour scrambling about over the ruins, looking into all the crannies and crevices of the walls; there was a little French peasant-boy who came to ‘guide’ us, as he said, but in reality to amuse himself. He seemed to enjoy himself perfectly, and sent us on all sorts of wild goose chases after ‘oubliettes’, mysterious wells, and ruined archways. Altogether I enjoyed [p. 183] myself a good deal more there than in the chateau. We were wet to the skin when we got back, and we were

220 After Fouquet’s downfall, his vast art collections were seized by the state. It is said that Louis XIV acquired 14 gold-woven rugs, 120 tapestries, marble tables, and a large number of bronze, gold and crystal vases. See http://www.kipar.org/vaux2.html

221 In 1661, Jean de La Fontaine composed the Elegie aux nymphes de Vaux to rehabilitate the character of Nicolas Fouquet.
all as hungry as wolves when we sat down to dinner, for we had had nothing
to eat since déjeuner à 10.30. Really, the self-sacrifice of M. Weever on that party
was worthy of the highest praise; he accompanied us all over those gardens in
the pouring rain, presented Mlle. Jones to M. Sommier, and explained
everything to us in the ruins. I wouldn’t have been in his shoes for something.

Thursday 8th

We went to Paris to-day with Mlle. Grant. We intended to go and see Oedipe
Roi,\textsuperscript{222} at the Français,\textsuperscript{223} but we found to our intense disgust that they are
going to play it next Thursday, and there was nothing to be seen either at the
Français nor at the Odéon. So we went shopping at the Louvre, and then
went to see the Luxembourg and L’Eglise Saint Sulpice;\textsuperscript{224} Saint Sulpice is
very big, cold, and heavy-looking from the outside, and not much more
promising inside. The paintings in the chapels are abominable, and the
columns are graceless and stiff.

Thursday 15th

We have seen Oedipe Roi at last. It was splendid. The scenery is very pretty, the
costumes are lovely, very well copied from Greek statues and frises, the poetry
is melodious, stately, satisfying; as for Mounet Sully,\textsuperscript{225} he is perfection.
Imagine a kingly head, black hair and beard, a perfectly proportioned body,
tall and shapely, draped in a long yellow tunic and a splendid white
toga. His arms were bare; they are white and round and soft as any woman’s,
yet when he lifts them you can see the nerves and muscles start up on them.
The whole piece is palpitating, but the last scene is awful; when Oedipe learns
who he is he gives one fearful cry and rushes back into the palace after Jocasta
with his head bent, his arms stretched out before him, and his white cloak
streaming out behind him. Then there is a moment of horrible suspense
before he comes back onto the stage; all the actors are grouped about the
palace steps, bending forward, hardly breathing, while they watch for Oedipe;
they stand silently like that for fully five minutes, and one might hear a pin
drop in the theatre; at last they all shrink back with a sort of
half audible murmur of horror and surprise, and Oedipe comes forward, holding his arm
before his face, and comes stumbling down the steps. Then when they bring

\textsuperscript{222} The French translation in verse of Sophocles’ Oedipus King was by J. Lacroix.
\textsuperscript{223} That is, the Théâtre français.
\textsuperscript{224} The church, in the 6th arrondissement, is more than 350 years old and its interior is decorated with works
by Delacroix and 20 other artists. Its organ is famous.
\textsuperscript{225} Jean Mounet-Sully, also known as Jean Sully-Mounet (1841–1916), a leading actor at the time when
Emile Perrin was the administrator of the Théâtre Français. He acted in the first performance of Dumas’s
version of Hamlet (1855) and later became a doyen (the oldest member) at the Comédie Française.
him his children he takes them in his arms and kisses and caresses them; when they try to take them away he cries. ‘Mes enfants! pas encore! Je t’implore, n’enlèves pas mes enfants.’ It was so sad and so natural that half the women in the theatre were reduced to tears, Dorothy and Valery among the rest. We got back just in time for the train.

Sunday 18th

We went to hear a Conférence at the Theatre of Fontainebleau on Carnot and Tour d’Auvergne. It was very good, and what made it [p. 185] still more interesting to a great part of the population of this town was that Tour d’Auvergne’s regiment is quartered here, and nearly all the men and officers were in the theatre. Mademoiselle Grant has taken up Miss Stretch’s old plan of reading to us on Sunday afternoons. We are in the middle of Pride and Prejudice, which I like far better than Northanger Abbey. Mlle. Grant is just as nice as she can be.

November 24th

We are getting up a comedy for the middle of December; Mlle. Jones has decided on the Epreuve, and all our roles are allotted. I am to be Lucidor, ‘le jeune premier’, it is a love-sick part, which much disgusts me; Berta Lewis, ‘la jeune ingénue’, is much taller than I am, but she plays pretty well. Margot of course has the most difficult role, that of a farmer who talks patois all the time. May Barron is my valet, and she plays really very well. Orchie Lewis is the soubrette, and as such is a complete failure. May and I are charged to collect the money for the Christmas presents: it’s a most disagreeable charge and I shall be jolly glad when it’s finished. I hate going round begging.

December 1st

The weather till to-day has been wonderfully mild; the air is so warm and damp it seems almost like the spring; to-day it froze hard, and we are going to have some Australian winter, I think; frosty nights and bright days.

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226 ‘My children! Not yet! I beg of you, don’t take my children away!’
227 Either Lazare Carnot (1753–1823), engineer, member of the Directory (1795) and Minister for War (1800) who was exiled during the Restoration for the crime of regicide; or, more likely, François Sadi, alias Sadi Carnot (1837–1894), President of the French Republic (1887), later assassinated by an anarchist.
228 audition
229 ‘the young lover’
230 ‘the innocent young woman’
231 maid
**Thursday 5th**

We went for a long long walk this morning to Héry, a little village on the other side of the Seine. We went and had a look [p. 186] at the queer old church, and then we came back to the market place to buy roasted chestnuts, because we were half famished. These French peasants are so different from any type of nation that I have ever seen; the women are very small, and mostly are very sturdily built; their faces are tanned brown and red with the sun and wind, their hands are hard and wrinkled. All have the same tinge of hair, about as brown as mine, or a little darker; all have brown eyes: they are all scrupulously neat and clean, and they wear colored cotton handkerchiefs or knitted woollen shawls over their heads: everybody was chattering and chafing when we came onto the 'place', 232 but although I saw well that we created a great sensation I hardly heard a word of us, and not one spoken at us: there is more inborn politeness in a peasant, I think, than in a bourgeois.

**Wednesday 12th**

We have been having a warm time of it in the salles d’étude lately. On Monday afternoon Olga found her map of the Netherlands torn nearly in half; on Monday evening she discovered her Italian poetry cahier in a like condition; on Tuesday evening she found her devoir for M. Wéver had a corner torn off, and the same evening she found her Epreuve torn clean across; the Jeu de l’Amour et du Hasard, 233 which is in the same book, wasn’t touched. Olga Morgan wouldn’t hurt a fly, so she couldn’t have made any enemies by being disagreeable; she is very shy and timid, never puts herself forward, and never speaks in a lesson if it is avoidable. The only person who would have any reason to [p. 187] be jealous of her careful work or her beautifully neat copybooks would be I, as we are always together in the same classes, we are perhaps a wee bit rivals in the way of maps and devoirs, though we are very good friends. Of course there was a row about it. On Tuesday morning Mlle. Jones asked each one of us at table if we had done it. Nobody answered. On Wednesday morning (this morning) we had to go one by one into the Salon de Musique, where Mlle. Jones and Mme. Geisler were in close council; they interrogated each girl, and everyone denied it. At last came Elsie Nourse’s turn. She is a big thundering Amurken, of 15, vulgar and boisterous. She had said that she knew something of the affair, and at last, I don’t know how, Mlle. Jones’s suspicions fell on her. Anyhow Elsie most likely was frightened at the idea of being accused, and she denied being in the salle-d’étude early before breakfast; I don’t very well understand the business, but I know she told Mlle.

232 'square'
233 A play by Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux, first performed in 1730.
Jones three lies one on top of the other, which was sufficient to confirm her suspicions. Elsie went up to her room, and Mlle. Jones gave us a lecture on the subject. At dinner-time, as Elsie persisted steadfastly in her denial, and as Mlle. Jones had declared that she would expel her for having lied about the affair, she spoke to us again about it, and said that if before ten o’clock in the evening the culprit came forward and confessed, she would forgive Elsie and the culprit, and no one could talk any more of the affair. Jenny Baar got nervous and thought they were accusing her (why, no one can discover). So after dinner she did not find anything more ‘futile’ to do than to go and have a fit of hysterics. Nobody has confessed up till now.

**Thursday 13th [p. 188]**

May and I went to Paris to-day with Mme. Geisler. In the train she told us she was sure that it wasn’t Elsie who had torn the books, and as she has begged and prayed to be allowed to stay, I don’t think Mlle. Jones will expel her. We went to the Louvre and the Bon Marché to buy Christmas presents for all the girls and teachers. These big shops are beautifully arranged for Christmas, and there are all sorts of awfully pretty Christmas boxes for next door to nothing. We went to Bourselet to order a heap of books, principally for Mlle. Jones and the old girls. We’re going to give La Biche and La Martine to Mlle. Jones, and while we were there I ordered Molière’s Theatre in broche for Dorothy. I’m sure she will be pleased with it; the house is going to give her Tartarin de Tarascon.

**Saturday 15th**

The day of the comedy! We had a repetition at 9 a.m.; at one o’clock M. Wéver was here, so we couldn’t have another at one. I was in the hall as M. Wéver was going, and he asked me if I knew my rôle, which rôle I was going to take, etc. He said he would like very much to come and see it, but luckily Mlle. Jones hasn’t asked him; I should be frightened out of my wits to act before him. After dinner we all fled upstairs to dress. I had a red velvet coat with a sort of white satin waistcoat, trimmed with deep gold braid and with lace ruffles and ‘jabot’. I had a pair of tight fitting (very tight fitting) corduroy

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234 ‘crafty’

235 According to an advertisement in Cook’s Guide to Paris it was ‘a Drapery Establishment, the most important in the world and [is] to be visited as one of the most interesting sights of Paris. Interpreters for all languages’ (New York: Cook, 1904, p. 125).

236 Eugene Labiche, author of Le Voyage de Perrichon (1860) and La Cagnotte (1864).

237 Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869), romantic poet, author of Méditations poétiques (1820) and Harmonies poétiques et religieuses (1830).

238 By Alphonse Daudet (1872).

239 rehearsal
knee breeches, red silk stockings, and black kid shoes with big buckles. Mlle. Lainé did my hair in the Louis XV style, two rolls on each side of the head, and a queue tied with a satin bow. I look so different with powdered hair and black eyebrows that I hardly know myself. They told me that I made a splendid boy, and I think—modesty apart—that I looked rather nice. May Barron made a splendid valet disguised in ‘grand seigneur’; Olga actually spoke in a clear and intelligible voice; Berta didn’t play badly as the ‘jeune ingénue’, Orchie only burst out laughing twice or three times (we may thank our lucky stars it wasn’t oftener); of course Margot acted perfectly; she was simply delicious as a young country farmer, in love with the ‘beaux yeux de la cassette d’Angélique’. We danced till eleven o’clock. I didn’t get to bed till after midnight, and at 2.20 a.m. I woke up again; it’s impossible to get to sleep again so that is why I am writing this at a quarter to five, by candlelight.

Sunday 23rd

Madame Geisler, May and I have been up all day in the pavillon, decorating the Christmas tree. It’s awfully tiring work, hanging up oranges, cakes, spangles, etc. and fastening all sorts of mysterious packages. It’s standing on the ladders that kills your feet.

Monday 24th

We have passed most of the day as we did yesterday, with that blessed old tree. At about 5 o’clock we went up stairs and had a half hour’s rest. At 6.30, being dressed and coiffed, we all went to the dining-room, which looked very pretty. The three tables were all laid, there were about fifty people to dinner, and I thought I should have grown to my chair before the affair was over. At about eight o’clock we were all assembled in the salle de dessin, and Mlle. Jones and Mlle. Henry led off the Christmas carol. Then we distributed the presents and talked with each other and the guests. Towards nine o’clock we began dancing in the salon, and continued until midnight, with the interruption of two or three tableaux vivants. At twelve o’clock we all sang noël, and then went to supper. Afterwards we danced till half-past two, when everyone was simply dropping asleep. My poor feet! I do believe I’ll die, they fell so sore and bruised and swollen. Mademoiselle Jones seemed very pleased

240 pigtail

241 literally ‘the beautiful eyes of Angélique’s money chest’, meaning that he was attracted less by Angélique’s beautiful eyes then her money chest. The play is Pierre Marivaux’s L’Epreuve (A Test of Character) that revolves around Lucidor, a wealthy Paris bachelor who falls in love with Angélique, the daughter of a country landowner. To test the virtue of Angélique, Lucidor sends his servant disguised as a nobleman to court her. Love, intrigue and disguise all add to the fun. The play was performed at the Nuffield Theatre, Southampton, England, from 8 to 10 March 2001 in a translation by the director, Simon Williams.
with her present, all Lamartine’s and La Biche’s works. Dorothy had her dear Tartarin illustrated, the girls gave me Alfred de Vigny’s poems and Servitude et Grandeur militaire. Mlle. Henry gave me a sweet little porcelain slipper, and Dorothy gave me a silver thimble—a most acceptable present.

**Wednesday 26th**

Mlle. Jones has gone to Paris with nearly all the Amurrikens. Thank goodness the house is quiet at last. Yesterday was just beastly, not any more like Christmas day than it was like le 14 juillet. We wrote letters all the morning and told ghost stories in the afternoon. Our holidays only last till the 5th Jan.

**Friday 28th**

Olga, Mlle. Nordheim and I went to the cemitary this morning. Coming back Olga told me that her white evening dress, which she ought to have worn on Christmas eve, was all torn, by the same person who tore her exercise books, also her Italian poetry book was torn, just as the other. That’s really the [p. 191] last straw. If they don’t catch the little villain who did it, it will be rather too bad. It looks as if the amiable ‘inconnue’ has as much a grudge against me as against Olga, for that Italian book was certainly torn to throw the blame on me; I am the only one who has Italian with her, we always pull pretty nearly abreast in class, and we might very well be furiously jealous of each other. If ever I catch that girl, I’ll throttle her.

242 ‘unknown woman’
Another year begun. I hope it will be better and happier for me than this last one has been, and oh, if only the end of it might find me at home! Not that I am unhappy here, but although I’d be loathe to leave Dorothy, sometimes the longing to see all those dear home faces grow so strong I can hardly bear it. Em sent us her likeness yesterday: she is photographed in indoor and outdoor costume, and her good, strong face has such a peaceful look, as if she were never troubled by the everyday cares and worries of selfish, vulgar beings. Father has gone to Tasmania with Cecil and Hunter for the summer, I think. How I hope Cecily will see Miss Lucy and write to us about her.

January 5th

The girls came back from Paris this evening with Mlle. Jones and Mme. Geisler. After all, I am glad to have them back again. All these holidays I have been lying steeped in a state of swinish indolence. It wanted all my most violent efforts, and even they didn’t always succeed, to shake me up into a condition of being capable to render the most ordinary duties of unselfishness; as for [p. 192] rising to the height of bestirring myself and going out of my way to do a service to anyone, I was utterly unfit for it. It is finished now, and I feel ready for grinding and healthy action. There is something in the air, I smell a thunderstorm. All the governesses and old girls are drawing together, and the Amurrkan Americans are still more closely bound to each other—indeed, it is their hot friendship that throws us others together so much. Somehow the suspicion about Olga’s exercise-books seems to lie on us all; there will never be any real peace in the house till the criminal is discovered. The new Americans are, as I have said, as thick as thieves, always together, whispering apart in each others’ rooms, talking English, doing, in short, everything that is forbidden; we shall have a row before three weeks are over. What a blessing Mme. Geisler is back again! I wonder why I like her so
much better than Mlle. Jones; yet Mlle. Jones is really ‘charmante’, in the true sense of the word; she is very nice to me, and nearly all the girls are very fond of her. Yet all the time I have been here I have never been able to get near enough to her to say that I like her; I mean ‘like’, as I use it, not as the word means in its current use, because as far as that goes I ‘like’ her very well indeed; but there is such an unfathomable gulf between my ‘like’ and ‘love’ that I don’t know what word to use for the every day, everybody’s ‘like’. Heigh-ho! I wish we were at home again! For the last month I [p. 193] have been possessed by Lucifer and all his angels. If only something would come as a safety-valve for all my pent up energies and longings and loves and hates! I feel capable sometimes of carrying the world on my shoulders without weariness, and there is nothing to vent all that on but French compositions and 30 little school-girls! How I detest them, to be sure, and what wouldn’t I give to be a man!

Thursday 10th

I have been to my very very first ‘evening party’. Mme. Sauvé had got up a comedy for her children, and for two or three of the little ones from Les Ruches; of course all the bosses were invited, and Mme. Sauvé also prevailed upon Mlle. Jones to bring all the other brats and the ‘anciennes’. The comedy began at eight o’clock. It was not a very brilliant success, for the scene was so narrow that the children could hardly sit in a row across it; the piece itself was idiotic; a discussion on all the Christian virtues between the flowers at the feet of Flora; the children spoke so low and so fast that one could hardly distinguish one word from another, and the only thing left to redeem it was the costumes. Hélène Gaubert was awfully pretty; she was dressed as Flora, in a white dress with a splendid red cloak; she is a ‘meridionale’, with brown skin, red cheeks, dark eyes and black hair. Pauline Sauvé was very pretty too; she was the ‘Soucis’ all in white with yellow ribbons, and with little bunches of ‘soucis’ all over her. The prettiest costume was Natalie Barney’s; she was the poppy and she had a pair of poppy-red silk trousers, a green velvet (grey-green) vest with long narrow sleeve flaps, falling to her knees; the vest had little red puffs here and there, and she wore a red poppy in the way of cap; under it all her pale gold hair came tumbling in a wave over her shoulders and down to her waist; that child looked like a little angel. Marguerite Veil was there also, dressed as the lily; her long Jewish nose projected forth from a mass of tow-coloured hair, which was adorned with a wreath of Christmas lilies; her hands, even in summer time, are always of a tender under-done beet tint;

1 ‘marigolds’
2 It is clear that the future American author, Nathalie Clifford Barney (1876-1972), had already arrived at the school. Her book Souvenirs indesirables (1960) referred to her time at Les Ruches. See introduction.
Théâtre Français, Paris 1903

Daisy [Thursday 8th, 1888]: 'We went to Paris to-day with Mlle. Grant. We intended to go and see Oedipe Roi at the Français, but we found to our intense disgust that they are going to play it next Thursday, and there was nothing to be seen either at the Français nor at the Odeon.'

Photograph courtesy of Mr Brendan Bolger


National Library of Australia Map Collection
and now when she has chilblains imagine what it must be! She wore a pair of 6 button kid gloves and very short sleeves, so that a good 'coudée' of ox-flesh was visible between the edge of the gloves and the lace of the sleeves. When the comedy was finished we came straight home. Mlle. Jones is still in mourning, so of course that is a good excuse for her departure; besides she herself said that she didn't care at all about chaperoning a half a dozen girls for a whole soirée. The officers from the Ecole Militaire were not there when we left, but it appears that Mme. Sauvé had invited a good many. I was rather sorry to come away, for after all I should rather have liked to dance a little and try and put out the joints of the noses of several very ugly young ladies I saw there. Vanity apart, I'm sure that we three 'abeilles', Margot, May, and I would have had some success (it's not saying much; if only you had seen the 'belle laideur' of those girls!).

Friday 11th

Things are going one from bad to worse; I really think the house is bewitched. When Olga came back from Paris she told me that she had found two enormous holes in the back of the drapery of her dress; that was done either by Elsie Nourse or me here, or by Orchie at Paris. Then during the quarter up till now, this little game has been going on. Olga found the likeness of her little sister torn right through in the frame yesterday evening, her needle-work (a chimney screen) had a big piece cut out of it: her devoir for M. Wever was torn to rags; and what is the most extraordinary is that her bedroom is always locked and her school-books are all kept in a tin box that shuts with a padlock. There must be two of them at it. I had a long talk with Mlle. Nordheim yesterday, and she said she was sure of the guilty one. The evening the girls came back from Paris nearly all the anciennes and the mistresses had left the school-room, leaving Orchie, Elsie, the Graves, and Mlle. Nordheim. As Olga was going out of the room Elsie (who has been taken with a sudden and most extraordinary friendship for Olga) called out to her: 'Nous nous sommes joliment bien amusées l'autre soir à l'Opéra, n'est-ce pas Olga?' It was the evening that Olga had had to wear her torn white dress—as she turned her back Orchie took her own dress as if to tear it, and winked at Elsie—that looks suspicious. Then the next day, Mlle. Nordheim saw Orchie looking at Olga's tin box, and then shrug her shoulders and spread out her hands, as much as saying: 'Quel dommage! nos jours de fête sont finis!' When we were at Mme Sauvé's yesterday evening Mlle. Nordheim managed somehow

1 'cubit'
2 'fine ugliness'
3 older students
4 'We had lots of fun the other night at the Opera, didn't we, Olga?'
5 'What a pity our fun days are over!'
or other to overhear the Lewis and the Graves talking about the house. Orchie said that Mlle. Jones was a baby in swaddling clothes; that Mme. Geisler and Mlle. Lainé were two old thieves, and that they only wanted to get the most possible out of Mlle. Jones who was quite under their thumb, etc. etc. Mlle. Jones took the occasion to get rid of Orchie, who has a detestable character and a great deal of influence on weak, stupid girls like the Graves, or on bad ones like Elsie Nourse. The two Lewises are going as soon as a letter comes from their mother at New York.

**Sunday 13th**

Dorothy's birthday. The whole house is bubbling. Mlle. Jones told us yesterday at table that Orchie and Berta were going, that they are sent away, and do not go of their own free will, as Orchie would be capable of saying; she begged Mlle. Jones to let her stay, and even prayed for forgiveness on her knees. But Mlle. Jones was inexerable. Berta did not wish to stay here 10 days, in waiting for her mother's letter, so they went to Paris this morning, to a friend's house. Poor friend!

**Wednesday 16th**

Things are livelier than ever. Olga has found another photograph and her third Italian exercise-book torn. Mlle. Jones is sure now that Orchie and Elsie are the guilty ones. Orchie said too often before she went, 'If anything more is torn, that will show I'm innocent'. I'll put my hand in the fire that she made Elsie promise to go on doing it to clear her. Elsie is going; she has lied right and left again and again since Mlle. Jones forgave her, and this last thing finishes it: it's either Elsie Nourse or I. Olga found her book torn half an hour after dinner, in her 'carton'. Mme. Geisler took it into the Salon de musique, where Mlle. Jones was reading to the girls, Elsie amongst others. Mlle. Jones looked at the book, said coldly, 'Eh bien, Elsie sait ce qui l'attend: je tiendrai ma parole', and then went on reading. The other day she warned Elsie that if anything more was torn she would be expelled. That girl is made of pure brass; she never stirred and did not even blush. I believe she is capable of poisoning anyone.

**Thursday 17th**

Elsie came down to breakfast this morning looking rather white and harder than a stone. She is at present in Mlle. Jones's study, under the surveillance of Mlle. Constantin. Her mother is at Dresden, so she can't leave here for four or five days yet.

8 ‘Well, Elsie knows what awaits her: I shall be true to my word’
Monday 21st

Dorothy and Olga had their bees this evening. We have been dancing like furies. I’m so very glad that my little Dolce has got it at last, and that good old Olga too; she is only fifteen and a half. Elsie Nourse went yesterday afternoon, the torn books went for a good deal in Olga’s having the bee, so that is all the Americans’[p. 198] spite against her did her harm. We shall have peace in the house now, I think. Father wrote to me on Sunday to tell me how glad he was I had got the bee. Darling old Daddy! Dorothy’s going to write to him to-morrow.

Thursday 24th

We left Les Ruches at 7.30 this morning for Paris, to go to the Français. Dorothy and I went with Mlle. Jones to see Mlle. Turner. Poor old lady, she is looking so pale and thin; they say she is very ill and will never get better: I should rather be killed straight away than die like that by inches. Mlle. Jones is in an awful state about those things of Olga’s. It seems that Mrs Morgan is furious about it, and Mlle. Jones talks of shutting up the house completely till the summer holidays; but I don’t believe she’ll do it: she says that Elsie Nourse has certainly paid someone to go on with this little job after her departure. Qui vivra, verra? We dined at Chilcrest’s, and then went straight to the Français; I was in the loge with Mme. Geisler and Jenny Baar. We ate bonbons nearly all the time, and M. Benoist came to see us in the entr’actes. He’s madder than any March hare, and told us all sorts of bosh, amongst the rest that he had once acted Clytemnestra, another time a chorus of Eumenides[1][p. 199] all alone, and (as a crowning point) Mignone[11] Mignone with his hair on his shoulders! And all that with his quiet refined face and inched twinkling eyes; it was enough to create a laugh under the ribs of death. Mounet Sully acted Ruy Blas,[12] and Mme Bartet[13] [p. 199] the Queen: they made a splendid pair; he is tall, strongly built, and very dark, she is rather slender, with a beautiful figure, very pretty shoulders, and a sweet, refined face. I had hoped that Coquelin[14]

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9 The future will tell!
10 This play forms part of the trilogy by Aeschylus—Agamemnon, Choephoroi, Eumenides—about the adventures of Orestes.
11 Mignon (1866) is an opera in three acts based on a character from Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister, with music by Ambroise Thomas and lyrics by Michel Carré and Jules Barbier.
12 Ruy Blas, by Victor Hugo, was performed for the first time at the Renaissance Theatre on 9 November 1838. It soon became a favourite at the Odéon Theatre and at the Comédie Française from 1879. Sarah Bernhardt and Mounet-Sully excelled in the play.
13 Jeanne-Julie Regnault, alias Julie Bartet made her first appearance at the Comédie Française in 1879 and became a sociétain (shareholder) in 1884; she retired in 1919.
14 Coquelin Cadet (1848-1909) was a celebrated actor. His brother, Constant Coquelin, ‘Père’ (the elder), (1841-1901) was also an actor at the Comédie Française.
would play 'Don César' but the role was acted by somebody else—I've forgotten his name—who was really very good. The last act was 'grimmig'. The gas was nearly turned off, and the stage was lighted by a lamp; Ruy Blas and the Queen meet in this semi-darkness and take a long farewell of each other, when suddenly Don Sallust—the traitor—appears and threatens to disclose her love for Ruy Blas; he to save her kills Sallust and poisons himself; the Queen throws herself on her knees besides him, and he dies in her arms. It's melodramatic, but very touching on the stage.

Monday 28th

When we were all at breakfast this morning Mme. Geisler came down into the salle-a-manger, looking very pale and agitated, and asked us all round the table if any one of us had left our room between 10 last night and 6 this morning. Of course everyone said no. 'Parce qu' Olga s'est réveillée ce matin sa natte coupée,' said Mme. Geisler. There was a long 'Oh!' of horror all round the table. I felt a cold sweat all along my back and a choking in my throat, as if I had done it. We finished breakfast—rather, most of us didn't finish it—and went into the salle d'étude. Of course there everyone's tongue was loosed, and they all began cackling and chattering à qui mieux mieux. They made such a noise over it that they got frightened at the sound of their own voices. Marie Graves went off into a faint in the hall, and they had all the trouble under the sun to bring her round; Emma began howling as loud as she could (and that's saying a great deal); Nettie Payson was on the verge of a violent burst of tears, and Jenny Baar had a semi-hysterical, nervous fit. When I saw her beginning to shiver and shake I administered a glass of cold water, huddled her up in a shawl, and dragged her out into the garden, where it was perishingly cold; we raced up and down till we were out of breath, and Jenny had got her teeth unlocked, and then we went in again. Poor Olga's head is in a state: she had a lovely head of hair, and her pigtail was cut off right close to her neck. Everyone is sure she has done it herself; she sleeps just opposite Mme. Geisler, who wakes at the slightest noise, and if anyone had come into her room with a candle and begun hacking off her hair she would certainly have wakened up. M. Lefèbvre has seen her and says that she is very nervous and really ill, that she is quite capable of cutting off her hair or doing anything else mad. The whole house is in a state of excitement, je ne vous dis que ça!

15 Don César de Bazan is a character who resembles the adventurer in Spanish picaresque novels and is fond of fighting, but is devoted to religion.
16 Wordplay by Daisy? Probably 'grim'.
17 The Queen of Spain in the play, Doña Maria de Neubourg, was a real historical character.
18 Don Salluste de Bazan, a proud and treacherous Spanish nobleman, is out to avenge his honour.
19 'Because Olga woke up this morning and found her braid cut off'.
20 Enough said!
Tuesday 29th

We heard to-day that Boulanger has been elected member for Paris, and that all France is very interested in the event; all the rag, fag, and bob-tail being for him, and people of common sense against him.\(^{22}\) Olga went away to-day for England with Mlle. Jones. Her mother doesn’t want her to stay here any longer, and the poor girl was simply heart-broken at leaving. We were all gathered together [p. 201] in the hall round her just before she went, no one speaking a word, and looking (and feeling) as glum as could be. Margot, May and I went to the train with her to see her off; Mlle. Jones was nearly as knocked up as Olga, for she is very fond of the girl, and really it’s an awful responsibility to have her in the house when such things are always happening to her.

We have begun taking elocution and pronunciation lessons; once a fortnight. Mlle. de Laperrière comes on Tuesday morning for 2 hours and we recite exercises and poetry, read, or narrate something; it will do us all an immense amount of good.

Feb. 19th

Just two years to-day since we went away from home. Ah me, ah me, I thought then in my innocence that father would surely come and bring us back in two years’ time, but there is no talk of it, and the letters which we have had during the last three months seem to imply that we shall stay at the very least another year. I had a letter from Em on Sunday, a letter that knocked two or three years’ growth out of me. She says that as Mamma seems to be firmly resolved to keep us here till our elder sisters are out of the road, she, Emily, is going ‘to offer herself on the altar of matrimony for the good of the family’. ‘He’ is coming to Sydney at the beginning of March, and with a little encouragement will be sure to ask her, she says. If only I knew who ‘he’ was, and what he is like, and if he loves her, and above all if she loves him! And to think that all this will come off in a couple of weeks, and that for love or [p. 202] money I can’t manage to send a letter to her before then! If she doesn’t care for him, I don’t believe she would marry him, and yet she spoke so coldly and jestingly of the whole affair in her letter. Well, I can’t do anything to prevent it; thank heaven Cecily will see her before then, and if there’s anything to be done, she’ll do it. Dorothy has been in bed for the last ten days, but she seems to be getting better again. Amy Gold-Schmidt has just left Les...
Ruches after a month’s visit, and Alice is more ‘diable’ than ever without her. We are all in a state of excitement about the preparations for the Carnival, on the fifth of March; Dorothy will go as Triboulet, if she’s well enough, and I as Cinq Mars, that is to say if I don’t change my mind again. The Carnival will be very pretty, I think.

23rd Feb. Friday

We have been enjoying ourselves right royally this evening. A very good troupe came down from Paris to play here, so Mlle. Jones took places for us, and we went down there in an omnibus. The first play was François le Champi, one of George Sand’s novels very well put on the stage, and Le mari à la campagne, a quite modernized piece, very witty and amusing, which the acting of Feraudy made simply killing. This poor unfortunate husband is a gay, weak-minded, middle-aged Parisien, who has married a very dévote little girl, with a mother! The poor husband gets himself sent away to the country to escape the infliction of endless sermons and lectures. During [p. 203] these stays, which he calls his Sundays, he goes and amuses himself in the Paris cafes and saloons. Of course his wife finds this out, she is very horrified and frightened at these vicious tendencies, and to keep him at home she gets rid of the belle-maman, and manages to make her house a little gayer. All the actors were very good, and the music was not too bad, so altogether we enjoyed ourselves a great deal. I hope we’ll go to the Français in the ‘semaine grasse’.

Feb. 28th

Mlle. Zuchelle, the new Italian mistress, came this morning. She is little, dark-eyed, black-haired and lively. I think she will be pretty nice. She plays well, and embroiders as I never imagined anyone could embroider. It’s simply wonderful. She can make lace also, lace that you would pay 10 or 12 guineas the yard in a shop, it is so fine and so regular.

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24 Février or Le Feurial (c.1498–c.1556) was the buffoon of Louis XII and Francis I, kings of France.
25 Henri Coeffier de Ruze, Marquis de Cinq-Mars (1620–1642) and favourite of Louis XIII, died on the scaffold having joined in a conspiracy against Richelieu.
26 George Sand, François le champi. Paris: Lévy, 1869.
27 Maurice de Feraudy made his début at the Comédie Française in 1880, became a sociétaire in 1887, and retired from acting in 1929.
28 ‘mother-in-law’
29 ‘the week before Lent’
March 2nd

We have just had a letter from Em. She is still on night duty, and says nothing at all about her new plan. However, the affair is not to come off before the beginning of March, so I must still wait six weary weeks before knowing anything definite about it. Dorothy is up again, and seems to be none the worse for her three weeks in bed. Mamma did me the favour to send me a letter the other day, the first I have had from her for about three months. It’s a good job she doesn’t write oftener, for I should feel obliged to answer her, which would be a fearful bore. We have begun taking two lessons a week with M. Wéver, our ordinary two hours on Tuesday and an hour with the little ones on Saturday. Those two little lunatics Nella Darvari and Julie Chamberlain have begun teasing me about him, and saying that he makes des yeux doux at me. I laugh at them, even when they say that it is reciprocal, but all the same I don’t like it at all at all. I don’t care two straws about him, and it would be simply ridiculous to suppose that a man of thirty paid any attention to an awkward little school-girl; but all the same I should like it far better if they would leave me alone and not put any rubbish into my head. I can’t care half-and-half about anyone, and if I did take it into my head to fall in love it would make me suffer horribly. I haven’t any intention of so doing, but sometimes I do ennuye myself so fearfully that I would dearly like something to stir me up a little bit now and again. He is thirty, or thereabouts, good-looking, tall, very well-educated and intelligent, and with all that polite and agreeable as a Frenchman knows how to be. I like his lessons very much indeed, and he is always very kind to me when he speaks to me. There! That’s enough rubbish for to-day, and if ever I want to let a living soul read this diary, I’ll tear out this page and burn it up to ashes. I wouldn’t have anyone see this nonsense for half a kingdom, least of all Nella and Julie, for I’d never hear the end of it.

March 4th

The eve of the Carnival. I’m simply embeasting myself, and am thinking seriously of composing my essay on Phèdre and La Fontaine to desennuye myself. My costume is perfectly hideous, and I look a guy in it; perhaps that makes me feel still crankier, although personal vanity has never been one of my favourite vices. It seems that Father has sold ‘Woodlands’. It is a great disappointment to me, for I should so have loved to go back there, and see the dear old house, and the orchard, and the river. I can remember a great deal of it, although I was only four and a half when we went away. In 1875 after her mother’s death.
Inside the Avon-Fontainebleau Railway Station c.1900
Photograph courtesy of Département de Seine-et-Marne, Dammartin-les-Lys

Le Nouveau Théâtre (The New Theatre), Fontainebleau c.1900
Daisy [March 18th, 1888]: 'I went to a lecture in the theatre de Fontainebleau with Mlle. Suchetet this afternoon."
Photograph courtesy Département de Seine-et-Marne, Dammartin-les-Lys.
remember a great deal more than people give them credit for. There are such heaps of little things of those first four years of my life that come back to me so clearly that it almost makes me laugh and cry. It seems as if it were only a year ago since I used to sit on the drawing-room floor, building card castles or playing dominoes with father and Hunter. One day I asked Aunt Jane how deep the sea was—it was a few weeks, I suppose, before we left 'Woodlands' to go to Sydney—she tried to explain it to me, and after I had thought it over well, I said: 'Well, I suppose it's about twice as deep as that wire flower stand over there'. And then I can see Dorothy and myself pouncing down on Em and Cecil's 'stone games'; and the day that Hunter almost broke our hearts by expelling one of our stone pupils, our favourite, a long fellow with a very noble character: Hunter threw him so far away that we could never find him again [p. 206] though we hunted everywhere. Hunter used to be a regular little demon, thrashed about twice a week, smashing window-panes right and left, scaring us little ones out of our wits by galloping down on us with his pony. Ah dear! if only we could begin fourteen years back, and not fall into the hands of the MacMillans! It would have been all so different. Housomdever[?]; the mischief's done now and the best thing we have to do is to grin and bear it in silence. There's no good in making the smothered war-fare at home blaze up openly. It would only make father and the little ones miserable. As for us others we can't jump from the frying-pan into the fire, seeing that we have been grilling in that latter place for nearly twelve weary years. If the house gets too hot to hold me—as I shrewdly suspect it will if I don't knuckle under—I'll go out as governess, or else marry the first chimney-sweep that'll take me, if it's for nothing but the pleasure to see the scandalised look of the respectable part of my family. If the said family ever read this, what a 'savon' I'd catch.

March 6th

We enjoyed ourselves famously yesterday evening. We dined at six o’clock, and afterwards we went upstairs and dressed.34 At eight we were all assembled in the big drawing-room, and formed ourselves into groups—Cinq Mars with the Abbé Constantin and the headsman, Triboulet with a Grecian statue, the village fiancées with 'music', etc. etc. Afterwards we danced a farandol,35 and then began hopping on our own account. In the [p. 207] course of the evening eight of the girls danced a hunting-quadrille, and two of the little ones came forward and sang a little woman duet. We had supper at midnight, and then

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32 Jane White (1842–1934), the daughter of James White and Sarah Crossman.
33 'scolding'
34 A similar dressed ball is described by Dorothy Bussy in Olivia (pp. 65–70).
35 A provincial dance for six to eight people in a circle, accompanied by music played on galoubets and tambourines.
Pierrot and Pierrette\textsuperscript{36} sang the Revue des Ruches, wherein everyone's little peculiarities were taken off. \textit{Dis-donc, hein? Incontestablement. Du tout, du tout, du tout—Notez-bien etc. etc.}\textsuperscript{37} Mlle. Jones gave the materials, and M. Pavie put the[m] into verse and arranged the said verse to the tune of \textit{Au clair de la lune}.\textsuperscript{38} We danced \textit{cotillons} till half-past two, and then went up to bed. I got up towards nine o'clock this morning, and the result is that I'm half dead. It seems that my costume was a success. I had a broad-brimmed felt hat with an ostrich feather, a velvet waistcoat, short and open in front, a muslin shirt, a dark red velvet mantel, knickerbockers and silk stockings to match, with pale yellow rosettes on my shoes and at my knees, and a big turned-down collar. Of course my eyebrows and moustaches were 'made up' with a burnt cork, and I wore my hair on my shoulders. Those Louis XIII costumes are very pretty, and as I'm much better looking dressed up as a man it is not so astonishing that I came in for a good share of compliments; my moustache took Jenny Baar's heart; she made love to me the whole of the evening, and has continued to be very affectionate to-day. Dorothy was costumed as Triboulet, and looked very nice: she had a little \textit{[p. 208]} blue and yellow fool's costume, with 'grelots'\textsuperscript{39} all over it, and I have rarely seen her so pretty. We did enjoy ourselves so much. I'd give anything to begin it all over again. To-day I'm so tired, and I feel so flat and discontented with everything. \textit{C'est le lendemain du bal.}\textsuperscript{40}

\textbf{Sunday 10th}

Three of us, Natalie Darvari, Jeanne and I went down to Sauvager's to-day with Mlle. Molitor to get photographed. We dressed down there, and passed the greater part of the afternoon posing and reposing. I think the photoses will be good, for he showed us the plates, and the figures seem to have come out very well.

\textbf{Monday 11th}

M. Benoist was perfectly mad to-day; he talked more nonsense in an hour at table than a reasonable being could say in a week. At the Roman history he gave us back our essays on the \textit{Plebéiens} and the Patricians; he told me that mine was very good; it seems that he paid all sorts of compliments to my \textit{devoir} to Mlle. Nordheim after I was gone, but as he is not \textit{Méridional} for

\textsuperscript{36} Pierrot was a character from Italian comedy and pantomines and was traditionally dressed in white, with a powdered white face.
\textsuperscript{37} You don't say! Indisputably. Not at all, at all, at all. Note that etc.etc.
\textsuperscript{38} '\textit{Au clair de la lune/ Mon ami Pierrot, Prête-moi ta phume/ Pour écrire un mot}' etc.
\textsuperscript{39} 'small bells'
\textsuperscript{40} It is the day after the ball.
nothing, as Mlle. Nordheim has also a stroke of the *Soleil de Tarrascon*, and as the whole story came back to me by someone else, I thought it safer to believe nothing of the whole affair. I would rather like to know what he really said about it.

**Thursday 14th**

We have been to Paris to see the *Cid* and the *Dépit Amoureux*. The *Cid* was very well played, but Rodrigue and Chimène were so ugly. I'm very glad to have seen it, for one hears it so much talked about. The *Dépit Amoureux* was very well played, but not so well as by Féraudy and Samary at the Français. We saw M. Peyre in the Pit, and he came up and talked to Mlle. Jones; but unfortunately she was too far away from me, so that I couldn't hear a word of what they were saying. We got back here at 8.30 p.m., nearly famished, for we lunched here at 10 a.m. before leaving for Paris, and nine hours and a half's fast are rather much.

**Saturday 16th**

I feel regularly turned inside out to-day. Two new girls have just arrived, and one of them hails from Woollahra!! They are cousins; their grand-parents were Spaniards, and one lives in Australia and the other in England. Inez, the Australian, is pretty engaging, and seems to be very clever. She is so dark skinned, and looks to be made on purpose to be kissed and cuddled. I felt like hugging her when she told me that she came from Point Piper Road and that her aunt is Mrs. Baar. What a blessing to meet a country-woman after two years' exile! We are going to play a few scenes from *Les Plaideurs*, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, and *Le Malade Imaginaire* for the *mi-carné* (March 28th). I am to be the Malade, for which I thank heaven. The rôle isn't difficult, and I've had enough of the rôles of *jeune premier* once and for all.

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41 In *Le Cid* (1636) by Pierre Corneille, Rodrigue kills Chimène's father in a duel, despite his love for her. The tragedy is centred on the intense conflict between love and duty.

42 Molière's play was first performed at Béziers in December 1656. It was performed 1246 times between 1681 and 1978 at the Théâtre Français and Comédie Française.

43 Jeanne Samary acted at the Comédie Française from 1875 to 1890. Féraudy and Saumary were part of the excellent troupe administered by Emile Perrin.

44 This is the first mention of an Australian student other than the White sisters.

45 *Les Plaideurs* is by Jean Racine and had its début in either October or November 1668.
**March 19th**

M. Wéver gave us back our *devoirs* on 'Shakespeare and Voltaire'. Mine was a very good one, he said, and I came in [p. 210] for a good many compliments about it—more than I generally get from him. M. Benoist's praises are too easy to earn for me to care much about them. We had our last dancing lesson this evening. Glory halleluia!

**March 22nd 1889** [year in pencil]

My Birthday. I can't believe that I am really and truly eighteen years old. This time two years ago we were grilling in the Red Sea, at Aden. I little thought then what lay before me; these last two years have been the most eventful of my life. Mme. Geisler gave me a dear little copy of Goethe's *Iphigenie*. She was the only one in the house (except of course Dorothy) who had remembered it. I do wish I knew if she likes me.

**March 28th**

It's the *Mi-Carême* to-day; we had a *fête* this evening, comedy till 9.30, and then dancing till mid-night. We acted several scenes from Molière—Margot, Marianne, May and Nettie in the *Precieuses Ridicules*; Hélène and Jenny Baar in the *Plaideurs*; Pauline, Valérie, Loulou and I in the *Malade Imaginaire*. I was the *malade*, with an enormous dressing-gown of pink and blue satin, velvet trousers, woolen stockings and leathern slippers embroidered with beads. My head was the best of it. Mlle. Jones tied my hair up under a bandanna handkerchief, and my face was all powdered. The three others played very well, and I think that I acted much better than I generally do; it was so amusing [p. 211] that I hadn't the time to be afraid. We're going to act the *Dépit Amoureux* on the 11th of April.

**April 2nd**

I had a long long letter from Lucy to-day. It did give me so much pleasure, for I thought she had quite forgotten all about me. Dear old Lucy! how I do like her. They gave me two sweet little volumes of Voltaire's letters for my birthday; they ought to have been here for the evening of the *mi-carême*,

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47 Voltaire saw himself as the first literary critic to introduce Shakespeare to the French public. In the *Lettres philosophiques* (1732), he describes Shakespeare as a genius, but one who had no taste, compared to seventeenth-century French classical dramatists such as Racine and Corneille.


49 Written in pencil: 'Garratt? From the school in Tasmania. Miss Garratt I think the name.'

50 Voltaire was a prolific writer of letters and his correspondence runs into several volumes of his *Complete Works*. (Geneve: Institut et Musee Voltaire, 1968–1977).
but they weren't found in time. I feel nearly ready to jump out of my skin with joy and excitement, what with my letter and my books and one thing and another.

_April 3rd_

We heard quite suddenly to-day that poor Camille Fraser was dead.\(^5\) It gave me such a shock, for the last time I heard about her she was talking of coming here, and I quite expected to see her for the Exhibition. They say she died of diphtheria. Poor Camille! only nineteen, and so bright and gay and pretty. It gives me cold shudders to hear of anyone so young dying. Hardly a year older than I am! If I were to die in a year's time! I feel life so, and it seems so very sweet and beautiful to me, that I can't help having a great horror of death and burial and mourning. Sometimes everything looks so flat and dull and grey that I catch myself repeating half unconsciously—

'Ve are such stuff as dreams are made of
And our little life is rounded by a sleep.'\(^5\)

[p. 212] There now, I'm getting a croaky old woman. That's rubbish enough for one day.

_Thursday 4th_

We have seen _Le Mariage de Figaro_\(^5\) to-day. We had a pretty good _loge_ at the Français. Coquelin _cadet_ acted Figaro, and the other actors were nearly all well known, although their names are Greek to me. The _piece_ is very gay and witty, the costumes are magnificent, the scenery changes at every act, and the actors belong to the Théâtre Français—_et c'est tout dire._\(^5\) I enjoyed myself thoroughly. The theatre is for me what champagne is for most people. It goes to my head and excites me like a heady wine. Perhaps it isn't the best thing in the world for me, but we don't have very much of it, and it is so pleasant. There's just the ghost of a chance of our seeing _Hamlet_ these long holidays. I'll move Heaven and earth to go and see Mounet Sully act it. It seems that poor Boulanger is _mis en accusation_, and like the arrant coward that he is, he has cut his stick and taken refuge at Brussels.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) Camille Fraser left Les Ruches on 23 April 1888; she was very popular.

\(^5\) William Shakespeare, _The Tempest_, act 4, scene 1: 'We are such stuff / As dreams are made of, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep.'

\(^5\) By Pierre Augustin Caron, Baron de Beaumarchais.

\(^5\) I need say no more.

\(^5\) Boulanger's trial at the High Court of Justice began on 8 April 1889 and proceeded slowly. By June, papers indicating that Boulanger and others had taken part in a plot were discovered. On 12 and 14 August, General Boulanger was found guilty in his absence and condemned to life imprisonment, together with Count Dillon and Henri de Rochefort (V. Duruy, _A History of France_, tr. M. Cary. New York: Crowell, 1896, p. 678).
Thursday 11th

M. de Beriot arrived this afternoon with his wife and his two little girls. Mlle. Jones got up a comedy in his honour—Le Dépit Amoureux. We had the first repetition last Friday and we had to act it this evening. Margot acted Gros René; Pauline Marinette; Marianne had the role of Lucile, May that of Eraste, and Valérie and I appeared for [p. 213] two or three minutes as Mascarille and Valère, the rival valet and seigneur.56 May was to have acted the rôle of Lucile; but Mlle. Jones gave it to Marianne, and May fell back on that of Eraste, which is very long, nervous, irritable and difficult. May learns with a ‘sainte lenteur’,57 and begins to stutter as soon as she tries to speak fast, so you may see from here what sort of a lively, jealous, quarrelsome lover she’d make. It seems that they gave her one or two gentle hints to change with me, but my rôle was very insignificant, and Mlle. May stuck to Eraste. Elle en a fait un immense pour ce soir.58 I feel rather porcupinish, and so don’t pity her. She ought to have learnt it better and studied it a great deal more. Six days aren’t much to learn a long role in when one’s as thick-headed as she is. I know—vanité à part—that if I had had it I would have at least known it by heart, and I think I could have acted it better; for if there’s one thing that suits me more than another it’s putting myself into a stage rage. I only have to be natural. Margot made up amply, however, for May’s stuttering; she really acted very well, and so did Pauline and Marianne. We danced till past midnight, and I feel so restless and wide-awake now.

Friday 12th

M. de Beriot played for us as usual this evening; Jeanne and Madeleine de Beriot played too; they have a very [p. 214] great talent for it, which isn’t surprising, seeing that their grand-mother was la Malibran,59 that their grandfather, Charles de Beriot was a composer, and that their father and mother are both very musical. After the cour d’audition Loulou and I acted our scene in the Malade Imaginaire, Jenny Baar and Hélène the Plaideurs,60 and May and Valérie sang their Revue des Ruches. I didn’t understand much about it, for May had half forgotten it, and came down on three or four false notes...!

56 In Molière’s Le Dépit amoureux (1656), Gros René is Eraste’s valet; Marinette the servant of Lucile who is Albert’s daughter. Eraste is in love with Lucile; Valère is Polidore’s son and Mascarille Valère’s valet.
57 ‘in such a blessed slow manner’
58 She made a huge deal of this tonight.
59 Charles de Bériot, composer and violinst, was married to Maria de la Felicidad García, alias La Malibran (1808–1836), a celebrated Spanish singer. She is said to have been a source of inspiration for Alfred de Musset (1810–1857), a French romantic poet.
60 A rare comedy and satire of the French legal system by the dramatist Jean Racine (1668):
**Sunday 14th**

I have been dying of ennui all to-day. This morning at church my wits were all off wool-gathering, and this afternoon a horde of ugly, dirty, savage little peasants swooped down upon us for their Easter fête and we had to amuse them. It was icily cold in the garden, so they hid Easter eggs all over the place, and we walked about after the brats while they hunted for them. It was ghastly jolly. Then the beasts went to feed on sponge cake and chocolate, after that more games and sports and freezing in the garden, until after four o'clock. How I did rejoice when they all went and we were left in peace! M. Wever has gone up five or six points in my esteem. He gave us a very hard subject of composition for Tuesday—a sort of critic on the pictures of some great master, or on a school of painting, in the style of Théophile Gautier. Il ne se gêne [p. 215] pas plus que ça! We went in deputation to-day to beg mercy, and he granted it at once. What a blessing to have no devoirs to copy to-morrow! And to think that in four days time we shall be in Touraine! Hip hurrah, to get away from Fontainebleau and its eternal forest for a little while. The de Beriots have gone, and Frances Hawkshaw, a new pupil, has just arrived. I get so sick of doing the amiable.

**Tuesday 16th**

It is just two years to-day since we came here. How slowly the time has passed, and yet so quickly for a few things. I wonder if we shall be here this time next year? I wish I knew for certain. We are going to start for Touraine on Thursday morning. I for one rejoice heartily at the idea of a change. [In pencil here: see small book for this 'à travers la Touraine']

**Wednesday 24th**

We came back yesterday evening, very dusty, dirty, sunburnt and fattened. It has been a delightful trip. We spent six days in sightseeing, visiting all the châteaux and ruins on the banks of the Loire and its tributaries: we saw eight castles in all. Those I liked best were Chinon, Loches, and Blois.

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61 Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), author of historical novels, who became a proponent of 'Art for Art's sake' and a member of the Baudelaire group of French poets.
62 He did not hesitate to do so!
63 The south-western area of the Paris Basin, including the Loire Valley, forms the Département of Indre-et-Loire.
64 We have confirmation here that the White sisters arrived at Les Ruches on 16 April 1887.
65 The fortress of Chinon dated back to the reign of Henry Plantagenet, King of England in the twelfth century. Abandoned by the court, it was bought by Richelieu in the seventeenth century.
66 A small town on the south bank of the Indre. It has a castle dating back to the eleventh century.
67 Blois castle was built in the thirteenth century and was regularly expanded until the seventeenth century. It was the scene of the murder of the Due de Guise, at Henri III's command, in 1588.
We stayed from Thursday to Monday at Tours,\(^{68}\) going on long drives every day to the different places worth seeing, and taking our lunch with us. We breakfasted and dined at the Hôtel du Faisan, and all the rest of the day were out of doors. We passed all Monday and part of Tuesday at Blois, and got back here in time for dinner on Tuesday.

**Sunday 28th**

Mlle. Jones has left for England with Valérie and Frances. Most of the other girls are staying with their friends or relations at Paris. For the moment there are only the three Graves, May, Julie, three of the little ones, Florence Cloves and we two at Les Ruches. The Graves, Julie and Florence spend their time in playing with Coca, hunting snails in the garden, talking gossip (in English, or rather American) and sniggling idiotically at each other’s sallies of wit—*lesquelles sont des plus brillantes*.\(^{69}\) I never saw girls of seventeen or eighteen behave so stupidly. Dorothy, May and I spend our time in writing letters, reading, or kitchening. I am already devouring my second book since our return from Touraine. We had a packet from Australia to-day—a letter from Father, from Cecily and Mab. The drought seems to be breaking up, and Father has given me permission to begin taking riding lessons—to my great joy. Hunter has had typhoid fever, poor fellow, but he is getting well now, and they say the attack was very slight. I wish Em would make haste and write to us; she must have had a hard time of it all this hot summer at the hospital.

**May 1st Wednesday**

Nella and Natalie have come back to-day—thank goodness I shall have someone to talk to now. A new mistress has just come. Mlle. Nordheim is going to America as [p. 217] governess of the little Barneys; she went away the day after our departure for Touraine. This new governess is tall, thin, and ladylike. She has a very pretty way of speaking, and is rather nice-looking; I hope she will answer to our expectations.

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\(^{68}\) Traditionally, the capital of Touraine, Tours is 225 kilometres from Paris and has over 130 000 inhabitants; its interesting historical buildings attract a large number of tourists to the Loire Valley each year.

\(^{69}\) which are most brilliant.
May 5th
All Paris is 'en fête'; it is the anniversary of the opening of the Etats Généraux, mai 1789. They are giving a monster dinner at Versailles for all the deputies, and to-morrow The Exhibition opens. It will be a great success, they say.

May 6th
We have been hearing by échappées all about the fête at Paris. It seems that the crowd at the Exhibition was so great that bread and wine ran out altogether at Paris. There are always a great many strangers at Paris during the spring, but this year it will be something phenomenal. Some old lunatic has been shooting at the President. It wasn’t a Boulangiste; they say the maniac comes from Réunion, and only shot to call himself to the President’s bon souvenir. On Thursday (May 2nd) we went to the theatre at Fontainebleau. There were 10 of us in all, so that we occupied all the seats in the first row of the amphitheatre. We had officers to right of us, officers to left of us, officers behind and in front; they could have described the trimming of everyone of our hats minutely, I’m sure, for they stared at us with an interest—des yeux ...! They played: A quoi rêvent les Jeunes Gens, Il ne faut jurer de rien, M. Scapin. Féraudy, Deneubourg, and Mlle. Laine are the best actors of the troupe. It is so amusing to see them playing ‘en famille’; I enjoy myself as much in this little box of a théâtre as at the Français. The theatre always goes up into my head.

Thursday 9th
We have passed a killing day at Paris. We breakfasted at seven o’clock, arrived at Paris at nine, and went straight to the Salon. It took a good 2 hours and a half to see all that was to be seen; some of the paintings there were really good, especially the portraits: one of the best was of a rather ugly woman with very pretty arms and a lovely red velvet dress; the artist had rendered the changing reflections of the stuff admirably; there was only one portrait of a...
pretty woman, all in black lace, Empire style, with a large brimmed hat and a cane; she had a sweet little face with her hair tumbling in golden curls about her shoulders. Several sea-scapes were very good, what I like the best were two rather small pictures—the portrait of a very old woman, bending over a lantern; the red light that falls strongly on her face and shows all the lines and wrinkles is as rich and warm as a Flemish painting; the other is the Combat de Coqs en Belgique. Two splendid cocks tearing each other to pieces, and all around coarse common-looking men crowded together, some smoking, others yawning, several shouting and gesticulating. The faces are saisie sur le vif, the expression, the movements, the very thoughts are all translated, and the yellow light that struggles down from above lights up all these hard wrinkled faces and shabby clothes wonderfully. Of course Carolus Duran’s picture was very good, [p. 219] two sweet little yellow-haired boys in dark blue sailor suits with big white collars. Some one else—one of his pupils, I think—had sent a lovely picture to the salon, Le Petit Marquis, a fair-haired boy in Louis XV costume, all white satin and lace ruffles. It makes a charming little picture. Cabanal’s picture is Le jour des funérailles—a Moor is lying stretched out on a rich carpet, clothed in his white bernous and his rich trousers and arms, dead. The walls are ornamented with arabesques, and through the open window, shaded by thick-clustering vines, comes a soft mellow twilight that half shows three or four brown-skinned women in the floating white dress, crouching along the wall. The colours are very rich and the forms are clear and delicate. We had our déjeuner at the Rond Point in a pastry cook’s, and after having nearly cleared out the shop we went up to the Exhibition. It will be splendid when it’s finished. The Galerie des machines is enormous, very long and large and high; the roof goes across in one great arch without supports of any kind; the other salles are all very big, and the whole affair is fairy-like. The Tour Eiffel is not ugly or ungraceful: on the contrary, seen from a distance it is like a piece of lacework against the sky, and when you come up close, you feel almost crushed by its immensity.
are 4 huge arches at the base, up to the 1st storey and then four columns shoot up into the air, nearing more and more till they join at the second storey. and so form a single [p. 220] arrow up to the top. There is a collection of paintings that we didn't stop to examine, but which seems to me much better than the Salon. The foreign sections seem the most interesting, England and Austro-Hungary are very well represented; the Tunisian and Algerian quarters are very interesting; there are any quantity of Arabs squatting in all sorts of queer little box-like rooms, smoking, selling, weaving gay-coloured carpets, or staring vacantly before them. We raced all over the place, and got a pretty good general idea of the whole concern. We went away an hour sooner than we need have done, because everyone was ready to drop with fatigue.

**Friday 10th**

All the girls are back to-day. Mlle. Jones has brought two new English girls with her, whom of course I have to tote about, as per usual. I'm not so very glad of the Reutte, for with Nella here to chatter to I didn't find time at all heavy on my hands. *En avons nous eu, de causeries, pendant ces derniers jours.*

**Sunday 12th**

Em wrote to me to-day, announcing her definitive engagement to Mr. Ross; she is six and twenty, and he about 44, so there is a good deal of difference in their age. I would have liked a younger husband for my darling sister. The letter upset me a good deal, but after looking at the question on all sides I'm glad of it. She will be happier in the long run, I hope, than if she had stayed on at the hospital. If only I could go home and see her! She says that very likely she will live near Germanton, near Mrs Walker. [p. 221] Mamma wrote to me also. After she had expressed her lively regret at missing the Melbourne races on account of Hunter's illness—the poor fellow is just getting over a slight attack of typhoid—and given me all the local gossip of Mudgee. She wrote of Em's projected marriage in affectionate and motherly terms. Of course she is in high glee over so rare an event as a marriage in the family, especially as the picture is, I fancy, a rather good party. I wish to goodness George Simpson will so be able to earn his living, and that he will then come and carry off Cecily in the teeth of all opposition. Dear old Cecily; how sweet and patient she is! I should have gone raving mad on the régime she has been following these last two years and a half. Whatever will

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86 How we chatted during the last few days!

87 John Ross of 'Kinross' was born in 1846 and died in 1929. The marriage that took place on 11 September 1889 was a happy one and there were eight children.

88 The name 'Germanton', (now Holbrook) NSW, was officially gazetted in 1876. A telephone exchange was installed on the property of John and Emily Ross in 1898. 'Kinross' still exists and their descendants still live in the area.
home be like without my two favorite sisters? I shall never, never forget that last fortnight we five spent there with Father before leaving for Europe. We shall never be all together again like that at ‘Havilah’, and I do so love the place. It pains me so to think that very likely when I go back there it won’t be home any more.

**Thursday 23rd**

Mme. Bourdil, after giving no signs of life for two years, dropped down suddenly from the clouds this afternoon. She wrote me a note yesterday to say she was coming, and I thought that Mamma must have written to her because of Emily’s marriage, and that we should go home, or to school in Germany, or be condemned to two years more in Europe. *Mais non!* She brought us a big packet of most delicious *bon-bons*, and chatted most amiably to us all the time. Mme. Geisler thought it must have been some project of marriage between M. Bourdil and me. I shrieked with laughter when Dorothy told me that. He’s about old enough to be my father. I remember seeing him at “Fiona” when I was seven or eight years old, and he was a tall young man of five or seven and twenty.

**Sunday 26th**

We had to go to Paris to-day. You may imagine it was nothing pleasant when I say ‘had to go’. *En effet,* that Mlle. de la Perriere wanted us to come and recite in one of her classes, and so four or five unwilling *victimes* were dragged off to the sacrifice. Three of us were with Mme. Geisler, who took us to the Louvre. We went back to see my peerless, marble Venus with her beautiful little head and round pure throat. Then we passed along the great Italian gallery, hung with pictures full of warmth and colour, of rumpled silks and brocades, rich armours, gleaming pearls, and full fleshy muscles. These men are splendid in their nudity, beautiful strongly-built, free limbs and trunks all flooded with light. But after all I like Rembrandt’s somber portraits far better, or those little Dutch pictures, rather vulgar subjects, it is true, but so realistic and so rich in colours and shadows. I could live in a picture gallery. We saw one most delicious little head—*toute ce qu’il y a de plus moderne, par exemple*—a girl of about eighteen or nineteen, taken side face; the profile stands out clear and beautifully delicate in a sort of half-light against a sombre

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89 The five were: Emily, Cecil, Hunter, Dorothy and Daisy herself. She does not mention her brother, Frederick George Hunter White, who would have been 12 in 1887, having been born in 1875 when Isabella White died in childbirth.
90 Helen White’s friend from Paris.
91 A property at Double Bay where Gwendolen Mab White was born in 1878. Young Bourdil had therefore visited New South Wales.
92—in the most modern style, amazing—
back ground; the wavy blue-black hair looped up off the white warm nape and shoulders is flooded with a rich light. The face is so proud and aristocratic, yet so infinitely tender, sweet, and dreamy, a little bit bent forward, as if she were dreaming that she still felt the clasp of some handsome dancer's arm about her waist, and the caress of his eyes looking into hers. The whole is as finely and 'savamment' executed as it is graceful and pleasing to the eye; a very little chef-d'oeuvre of French taste and talent. There are two splendid Delacroix—The Taking of Constantinople by the Crusaders, and the Massacres at Scio—both glowing, peopled, covered with glancing spear-heads and clinking spurs, snorting horses and brown Crusaders with keen black eyes. The Massacre is horrible; those lifeless mothers lying in a pool of blood where their babies paddle is ghastly, and those Turks have faces cold and proud and full of hate as demons. I nearly expired of ennui at Mlle. de Laperriere's. We were huddled in a little room—which was offal, offal hot and stuffy—where we could hear nothing. After I had said my Malade Imaginaire with Loulou (and very badly) I sat with the invites and heard what was going on. Several recited very well.

**Thursday 6th** [p. 224]

I had three long letters from home to-day. It seems that father objects to Mr. Ross on the ground of his being a rough cut diamond; so the engagement is a very undecided affair as yet. I hope and trust that she will marry him, for she is fond of him and he would make her life far happier than hospitaleering. Cecily seems to be leaning in favour of Mr. Wynne. I wish that nasty little man were drowned or hanged or out of the way. For the last fortnight or thereabouts we have been having lovely summer weather, with hot sunny days and cool nights. It is the most delicious part of the year in these climates. I have got a beastly cold somewhere; for about three weeks past I have had hay-fever and sneezing fits, and now it has gone down into my chest, and I'm in for an attack of asthma in a few days.

**Thursday 13th**

We have been out picnicking to-day; we started in two big brakes at about 10 o'clock. We had our dinner at the Carrefour des Becassières, and afterwards we went off to Franchard and spent the rest of the afternoon in wandering up and down the road. Mlle. Sarah Grant has just arrived here; she is going to stay here for a couple of months.

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93 'skilfully', or 'knowingly'
94 Eugène Delacroix's Scene des massacres de Scio (1824) and Entree des croisés à Constantinople (1840).
Sunday 16th

It is the second anniversary of Mlle. Dussaut’s death. We have just been to the cemetery to take heaps of flowers to her grave. It is by far the prettiest grave in the church-yard. Poor little Mlle. Jones! She looked so white and wretched.

Tuesday 18th [p. 225]

I have had my first riding lesson, with Jeanne Laurent. May Barron lent me her habit, till I get leave from Father to get one made. I had ‘Chicane’, an old beast that slept nearly all the time, till Jeanne’s pony began nibbling his tail, and then he danced about a little. M. Lazare had an accident a few weeks ago, so it is the écuier who gives the lessons now.

Thursday 20th

Mlle. Grant and I have passed the day at Paris. We shopped a little in the morning, lunched at Chiboust’s and at 12.30 were at the Exhibition. We spent two hours among the pictures. The French pictures are very pretty. There were three splendid Benjamin Constins—two scenes in the harem, and a portrait. I love his painting; the colours are so rich, and warm and harmonious that it gladdens my heart to look at them; he heaps up jewels, oriental stuffs and carpets, marble steps, sunny windows; and amongst all these glowing tints sweet Eastern faces with broad low brows and delicately cut features, rounded arms and jewelled ankles. The portrait was that of some great lady, in a white lace ball dress with a long green velvet train; she is standing looking over her shoulder, and all the light strikes on her back; the white skirt is all drowned in rich sea-greenish tints from the velvet. I saw a splendid Andromache; the background is formed by a high granite wall, to the right a steep stair is cut out in the stone, and against the sky one sees a strange lurid figure watching the scene below. Andromache is struggling on the steps. One man has seized her by the waist, another has taken her child, and she holds his mantle in turning her face towards him with a look of mute anguish and hate: all along the walls are hung corpses, and at the foot of the stairway, all splashed and dripping with blood, are a heap of heads, of women’s dead bodies, and over all the scarlet glow of the burning town. I saw a lovely little Turkish girl, sitting on the rampart, and looking down over the town: you could see the brownish glow of her flesh through her thin chemise, and all about her waist

95 riding master
96 Jean-Joseph Benjamin Constant (1845–1902), French painter and printmaker. Daisy is perhaps referring to his Riffian Women of Morocco (1873) or to Harou Women in Morocco (1875).
was wound a great silken scarf crossed and barred with bright colours. In the English sections there are some really lovely pictures—Millais' Cinderella, Cherry Ripe, Bubbles, A Thorn between the Roses. Then—almost the loveliest thing there—we saw A Soul's Awakening: a girl's head, about 17 years old, with great masses of curling chestnut hair falling on her shoulders; she is looking up with such a heavenly expression on her sweet, proud face, with her soul looking out of her lovely hazel eyes: she makes me think of those girls of whom Taine speaks, who 'have the sovereignty of a pure soul'. The Venitiens is a delicious little picture, and there are some very pretty Watts: the two I like best are Endymion and Hope. Samson and Dalilah is splendid: he is fighting with a crowd of Philistines who are holding down his arms; Dalilah is standing against a great yellow curtain, shaking the black curls in her hand. Her hair falls to her eyebrows and throws all her face in the shadow; the light falls on the white of her eye and on her teeth; she has the head of a little frie. We saw a very pretty Captive Andromache, and Marianne Condemned. At last when we were about dead we dragged ourselves off, and went to see the Rue du Caire. We entered into all the little shops—where I made a famous collection of chamois—and saw queer arms, prayer carpets, embroidered scarves, and Arabs who paid me flowery oriental compliments to induce us to buy something.

Sunday 7th July

It was Marianne Pavie's birthday to-day; we walked down to the Platerries with Mlle. Jones, all the 'abeilles', and Mlle. Jones gave the bee to Marianne: poor little soul, she was very much touched, and nearly had a fit of hysterics. M. Pavie has been very unwell lately; his heart is very feeble, and for the last month they have been expecting him to die from one day to the other. He is pretty nearly out of danger now.

97 Sir John Everett Millais (1829–1896); Cherry Ripe (1879) is a picture of a little girl in a mob-cap; Bubbles (1886) is the portrait of the artist's grandson, Willie James (Dictionary of Art, Vol. 21, ed. J. Turner, London: Macmillan, 1996, p. 693).
98 Hippolyte Taine (1828–1893), French philosopher, historian and critic. I have been unable to locate the source of this quotation.
99 Captive Andromache by Frederic Leighton (c.1886–1888), inspired by Homer's Iliad. See: http://www.loggia.com/art/19th/leighton02.html
101 This street starts at the Boulevard Sébastopol (3rd arrondissement) and ends at the Rue de Dannemarie (6th arrondissement). It derives its name from the entry of Napoleon's army into Cairo in 1799.
Monday 8th

M. Benoist has to pass his *aggrégation*\(^{102}\) to-day, so we have *congé*.\(^{103}\) Mlle. Jones took advantage of the occasion to organise a picnic in the forest. We drove down to the Seine, not far from the Platreries, the Pavies came in a rowboat. Margot, Natalie and I helped Mlle. Laine with the kitchen, and when we had finished the luncheon one of M. Pavie's \([p. 228]\) friends photographed us. We went over to Champagne,\(^{104}\) a little village where there was a fair and a merry-go-round. We got back here for the dinner, and we danced all the evening.

July 14th 1889

The 'fête nationale'. M. Millet and Mlle. de la Perrière are here for a couple of days. We were all in red, blue and white for dinner, and when it began to get dark they decorated all the front of the house with paper lanterns; it was very pretty, those reddish lanterns hanging before the dark windows. Mlle. de la Perrière recited two or three pieces of poetry in the evening before going to bed.

July 15th

As yesterday was Sunday we danced this evening; I had three or four heavenly waltzes, and enjoyed myself a great deal. Things have been rather lively here of late. Mlle. Constantin is quite out of Mlle. Jones's good books. It is decided that she leaves here on the 1st of August and she knows very well that we are all jubilating over it. I cannot stand that woman, for of all the underhand, low-minded creatures I have ever seen, she is the one that *horripiles*\(^{105}\) me the most. She is simply sugary to us all at present. I wonder what it means. Jenny Baar is in despair at leaving Les Ruches; she is very fond of me, and that is the chief reason why she wants to stay. I think. Happily her engagement is broken off; her fiancé can't be worth much, for he doesn't seem to care about her, and she is sick of him; \([p. 229]\) it was too absurd to engage two children, of fifteen and nineteen. I'm very fond of Jenny, she is a bright, merry, loveable girl, with something so naïve and childlike in her character in spite of all her worldly experience, for she has been a good deal in society and has had some success. I never saw such an outrageous little flirt.

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\(^{102}\) The *Aggrégation* is a high-level competitive examination for the recruitment of secondary school teachers and university lecturers in France.

\(^{103}\) a day off

\(^{104}\) Champagne is 10 kilometres from Fontainebleau and is on the same railway line. From the village, one has a magnificent view of Thomery, another village in the forest, some 8 kilometres from Fontainebleau and 64 from Paris.

\(^{105}\) Another Gallicism: *horripiler* in French means 'to exasperate'.
**July 20th**

Em’s marriage is decided. She says that Father has given a reluctant consent, but says that we shall never go to see her. But Em has hopes that after her marriage Father will relent, and at all events she is sure to be happy with Mr. Ross. Cecily has broken off all relations with George Simpson. Poor fellow! He hadn’t got a ‘rouge liard’\(^{106}\) to bless himself with so she might have waited till the ‘semaine des quatre jeudis’\(^{107}\) before marrying him. I haven’t a very high opinion of mankind, and I think that in spite of the assertions\(^{108}\) of poets, love is no more immortal than any other human passion: one must finish by weary of loving continually with the same force, especially when one is separated from the ‘objet aimé’. Howsumdевer all my philosophising hasn’t prevented my poor old Cecily from having many a heart-ache. Mamma talks of coming here next year to bring Ivy to school and to take me home. \(^{109}\) It’s so queer, we haven’t heard a single word about Alice\(^{110}\) for months, and in one of her letters Cecily, [p. 230] who is usually so mild and gentle with everyone, used the strongest terms in speaking of that brute of a Paddy.\(^{111}\) I wonder if it is only a coincidence, or if there has really passed anything between them. I know for a certainty that for years and years past they have had some secret relationship, though to what point they were bound to each other I’m not able to guess; when I was six years old, up at ‘Glenalvon’,\(^{112}\) I remember perfectly that Dorothy and I used to discuss the chances and probabilities of their marriage. In any case, I’m not as curious as Alice, and so long as she has disappeared for good and all it’s all that I want. Good riddance to bad rubbish!

**Tuesday 23rd**

The exams! It’s all finished now, thank heaven, at all events for M. Wéver. I feel awfully tired and nervous now, and to think that before next Monday we have eighteen questions to prepare for M. Benoist! I was scared out of my wits before the exam., for we all thought that he was going to make us hold forth quite alone and without any sort of help. While I was reciting Lamartine’s *Crucifix*\(^{113}\) my mouth was perfectly dry, and my hands shook so that I didn’t know what to do. After M. Wéver had questioned Margot I had quite

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\(^{106}\) ‘a cent’

\(^{107}\) ‘Cela aura lieu la semaine des quatre jeudis’ in French means ‘Never in a month of Sundays!’

\(^{108}\) A Gallicism: ‘asservir’ means to enslave.

\(^{109}\) Ivy White would have been 10 years old in 1890, having been born on 20 October 1980. An extraordinary decision by Helen White, but this is very much in keeping with her usual practice.

\(^{110}\) Note in pencil: ‘Alice MacMillan and Paul Hunt who was Irish’.

\(^{111}\) That is, Paul Hunt.

\(^{112}\) For the Whites’ connection with ‘Glenalvon’ near Murrurundi, see Introduction.

\(^{113}\) Alphonse de Lamartine’s *Le Crucifix*, a long poem of 24 stanzas, was published in the *Nouvelles méditations poétiques* (1823).
forgotten all about my fear. I had the 'Caractères généraux de la littérature française au XVII et XVIIIe siècle au temps de l'Empire'.\textsuperscript{114} I had a good deal of luck in falling on it, as I knew it well; M. Wéver [p. 231] wouldn’t let me say two words together; he kept on asking all sorts of questions more or less 'out of the question'.

\textbf{Monday 29th}

We have had what might be called a day of it. It’s the last day of the exams, and we are all awfully knocked up. I am not very tired, as I spent yesterday resting and to-day I did not feel inclined to work this morning; M. Benoist is always as nice as can be with us in the exams and I haven’t the least fear of him. The Roman history went off swimmingly, I had les Guerres Puniques,\textsuperscript{115} which I knew sur le bout des doigts;\textsuperscript{116} M. Benoist was very pleased with it and I had 10, the maximum; poor little Dorothy was in such a funk that she made rather a hash of the Antonins; in French history I had Richelieu—which I didn’t know—but with a good deal of help from M. Benoist and a little cheek I got through pretty well: we had nearly finished, and Nella was just struggling through \textit{Pierre le Grand}, when all of a sudden the door opened and in came an old pepper and salt Cyclops and M. Benoist leapt up from his chair as if he had had an electric shock, received the unknown very affably, and invited him to take his chair. The stranger begged him to go on, and so M. Benoist turned to Nella: she was dumb! I hadn’t even prepared the question; M. Benoist said that didn’t matter, so I had to go on: I was hot and cold with fright, but I got through somehow: afterwards we found out that the mysterious stranger was M. Perrault, Director of the Ecole Normale\textsuperscript{117} [p. 232] and a friend of M. Benoist; he came back again to the geography, and questioned me again; he made me all sorts of compliments which made me very hot and uncomfortable. M. Benoist was in a fright lest I should lose me head, and he thanked me—great compliment from him—after M. Perrault’s departure. It seems that the Director was very pleased with my answers and praised me up to the skies to Mlle. Jones and M. Pavie. I only hope he won’t come back next year. Next year, who knows? I may be at 'Havilah'.

\textsuperscript{114} ‘General aspects of French Literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and during the Empire.’
\textsuperscript{115} The Punic Wars
\textsuperscript{116} like the back of my hand
\textsuperscript{117} The Ecole Normale was a training college for primary teachers; one such college was set up in Melun in 1879 and received 35 students in 1880 for a three-year course.
We acted our quadrille yesterday evening, a pretty little German comedy also, Jenny Baar is going away this afternoon, broken-hearted at leaving me. She is with her mother in the drawing-room, and I have spent the last hour in wandering like an ‘âme en peine’ all over the house: if the holidays continue like this I'll go crazy: Jenny has become so necessary to me that I don’t know what I shall do without her. She is the first person since Edith Sanderson that I have been able to talk to. Nella is quite different; there are so many things in her character I don’t like and can’t understand; she is hard and fearfully cynical for a girl of 17. I’m sick and tired of school-girls. When I go home I'll ride about with Father and look after the station. It’s a man’s work, and will rest me from all the French finnikineries that one has to put up with here.

[End of diary]
EPILOGUE

The diary as a trusted confidant

Women travellers, more than their male counterparts, tend to be ‘assiduous recorders’ of their peregrinations.¹ Not only does Daisy write her chronicle regularly when she has something to say, but she also tries to make sense of her new experiences. She finds a certain amount of artistic fulfilment in all things French. She tells us that she ‘enjoyed [herself] royally’ at the Théâtre Français [p.156] and proclaims: ‘The theatre is for me what champagne is for most people. It goes to my head and excites me like a heady wine’. [p. 212] Moving on from her initial suspicion of the French nation, she becomes gradually more open to French influences and the appeal of Europe, except for the area of politics where she seems to retain a mistrust typical of many Australians. This attitude was not shared by some of her uncles, notably the Honourable James White and Francis White, but it was to be echoed some time later by her second cousin, Patrick White, who wrote at the end of his life: ‘I no longer trust any politician’.² Nor did the Nobel Laureate, though fluent in French, admire French culture as much as Daisy, in spite of the fact that most of his works were translated into French: ‘I don’t understand how rigidly the French are governed by formality and how much swayed by sentiments of the moment in their relationships’.³

However well-integrated into her French environment Daisy was, the initial and persisting pain of exile from her spiritual home gives to the diary the essential ingredients of narratives that deal with the ‘rite of passage’ to adulthood and a European identity. On the other hand, Daisy’s Australianness remains visible in her constant use of Australian words and expressions. In this respect, Daisy’s experiences lend weight to K.S. Inglis’s assertion that many

colonial ‘birds of passage’ in Europe, more particularly in England, discovered early on ‘how firmly they were connected to their Australian homeland’. As is often the case with narratives of this kind, Daisy has moments of epiphany and realises that her period of exile on foreign soil brings tangible benefits in her self-development: ‘These last two years have been the most eventful of my life’; [p. 210] ‘I think my character is a good deal older and more formed than it was a while ago’, [p. 68] Her stay in Fontainebleau turned out to be the most exciting interlude in an otherwise unexceptional, short life that came to a premature end, 14 years after her return to Australia. Clearly, the diary belongs to the realm of autobiography; Daisy would have agreed with the need for absolute truth in journals and autobiographies, as Patrick White was to say of his own self-portrait: ‘I wrote my self-portrait Flaws in the Glass to try to show people what I am.’ There is no attempt at concealment of her opinions of others, nor of self-delusion, on Daisy’s part. Early on, embittered by the fact that she felt abandoned by her parents in a ‘cold climate’ and in the confines of a disciplinarian establishment, Daisy soon realised the importance of self-reliance for survival, as summed up by Samuel Smiles: ‘The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual.’ The lover of poetry in Daisy initially found consolation in the verses of recognised poets, which she relied upon rather self-consciously, but it was not long before she graduated to expressing her own thoughts more creatively and in her own individualistic manner.

Unlike the journals kept by many Australian women travellers who, in Ros Pesman’s estimation, ‘unaccustomed to writing, [resorted] to cliche’, Daisy’s diary does not exhibit an ‘element of artifice’, or suffer from a lack of eloquence or the artful manipulation of the narrative that Hassam notices in accounts of England by Australian visitors. The highly personal use of language is striking: Houdon’s sculpture of Voltaire at the Comédie Française is described by Daisy humorously as ‘a sardonic-looking old villain in a dressing-gown’; [p. 14] Les Ruches is ‘so different from the loneliness of the bush; there the silence and the pauses seem like the momentary rest of some Titanic power, of which every quiver and simultaneous wave of the forest is the breathing; you can feel the mighty heart beating beneath the repose; here it looks like a weary nature, fainting beneath the labour of summer days, falling, sinking into an everlasting slumber; it makes me feel weird’. [p. 169]

5 P. White, Letters, p. 556.
7 R. Pesman et al., Ditty Free, p. 15.
The road to achieving what the Australian writer Henry Handel Richardson described as her goal in Europe, ‘a person in my own right’, is arduous for Daisy, but her rebellious spirit never allows her to give in. The ‘glory of lonely freedom’, as experienced by Janet Mitchell and which left her without ‘all security except what was in myself’, transformed a pastoralist’s daughter into a self-sufficient pragmatist and an independent thinker.

In this internal voyage of discovery towards self-assertiveness, the Diary has a philosophical and moral function. Our diarist finds a creditable balance between introspection, social commentary, and insights into the life and activities of the eccentric teachers and students of Les Ruches. Above all, she gives us, not a tourist’s chronicle of her visits to Paris, Fontainebleau or the Loire Valley, but her private and thoughtful reactions to, and perceptions of, what she sees, one example being her description of Napoleon’s ostentatious resting place. [p. 17] A marked interest in French and European politics, insights into the French character and French village life, among many other things, raise the diary above the level of mere narrative and suggest that Daisy would have been a competent journalist in Australia, had she chosen that path.

The diary remains, throughout the two years of exile, Daisy’s trusted companion and tangible proof of her self-enrichment. Had she been able to re-read it in middle age, she would not have been embarrassed by her words.

In Diaries and Journals of Literary Women from Fanny Burney to Virginia Woolf, Judy Simons has labelled diarists ‘those secret exhibitionists’.11 The diarist’s awareness of who might read the diary, declares Simons, has a marked impact on the choice of subject-matter and on the tone of the entries. Kathleen Mansfield, who by coincidence is buried in Avon Cemetery not far from Daisy’s school, commented on the indecency of publishing diaries: ‘I don’t mean that any eye but mine should read this. This is—really private.’12 The paradox of both the need for privacy, and the primary importance of leaving an authentic record of events to avoid misinterpretation, has occurred to Daisy. She requires absolute secrecy in what is often a subversive activity: ‘How I should catch it if somebody got hold of this book, so full of treason, strategy etc’ [p. 32] There is a sense of excitement, too, as the diarist revels in the clandestine nature of the activity: ‘The blue ink means something very wicked, namely that I write in bed at night’ [p. 29] As a very private person, Daisy is worried that her candid observations on members of the White family, in particular her stepmother, could fall into the wrong hands: ‘If ever I

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want to let a living soul read this diary, I’ll tear out this page and burn it up to ashes.’ [p. 204] The feeling of having transgressed, and the apprehension of being found out, can be explained by Daisy’s strict moral values that also lead her to condemn the boisterous American students for their lack of manners and their swearing at Les Ruches.

There is evidence that Daisy kept a first diary during the crossing to Europe and for the first few months at the school, but unfortunately this has not been located. The writing of the second diary, presented here, would have been all the more necessary, since it satisfied the heart-felt need for a confidant, sorely lacking at Les Ruches, where Daisy was surrounded for the most part by immature students: ‘[my] longings and loves and hates ... There is nothing to vent all that on but French compositions and 30 little school girls!’ [p. 193] Her sister, Dorothy, was younger and, accordingly, unsuitable for the role of confidante. Letters dispatched home could fall into the wrong hands (and, on one occasion, did). The intended audience of the diary appears to have been Daisy’s older sisters, Emily and Cecily, back home in the Hunter Valley. It is with them that the diarist shares a joke about her unexpected progress at dancing lessons: ‘Fancy your clumsy, square sister dancing “joliment bien” (pretty well). I couldn’t help grinning, it seems so rum.’ [p. 37] It was a convention of diary writing that the subversive activity of articulating clandestine thoughts should be shared, more often than not, with a close friend or sibling. The point is well made by Judy Simons in her analysis of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century diaries as ‘often covert in their expressions of personal identity’ and as a means of ‘self-definition’ requiring an audience appointed by the woman writer, even if this person is the diarist herself.13

Daisy is clearly not the intended reader of her own diary, nor does she plan to publish it. Her jottings hold a ‘confessional’ value, but the journal also purports to be an authentic record, first of the consequences of an act of what she perceives to be great injustice by her stepmother, then as a rite of passage narrative. Daisy willingly takes on the role of family historian, for she is in charge of her younger sister, and she reports regularly on Dorothy’s state of health, academic progress and activities. Moreover, events in the family and in the ‘home country’ are relayed to her in letters from home. By incorporating this information into her diary, she transforms the journal into a small contemporary saga of the White family, written from afar, and a historical chronicle that records the major political and cultural events of Europe.

Accordingly, psychological release goes hand in hand with a sense of being useful to others. Daisy, who shows a marked preference for history among her subjects, sums up historical events in Paris and Sydney at a turning point in the cultural lives of the two cities. In this way, the diary reflects the various purposes of women's diaries—to provide an autobiographical narrative, to act as an outlet for self-expression, to be an authentic chronicle of events, and sometimes to internalise thoughts.

In his own diary, Henry (Chips) Channon humorously mused: ‘What is more dull than a discreet diary? One might just as well have a discreet soul.’ Happily, Daisy’s diary is neither discreet nor dull. Almost inevitably, it reads in places like the musings and romantic notions of a 16-year-old who adopts a literary and romantic pose, by quoting Longfellow, the poet of youth. But more often than not, the diary is endowed with a freshness of vision that is rare in journals of girls of that age, an exception being the Diary of Anne Frank. Marie Bashkirtseff, the young Russian artist, made a provocative pronouncement, shortly before her death, that applies equally to Daisy’s diary: ‘The record of a woman’s life, written down day by day, without any attempt at concealment, as if no one in the world were ever to read it, yet with the purpose of being read, is always interesting.’

Whether publishing her intimate diary is an intrusion into her privacy depends on whether or not one believes in her need for an audience. As a lover of acting, Daisy would, I believe, have been gratified to know that her authentic record, her clandestine thoughts, her ‘longings and loves and hates’, her striving after self-knowledge, her journalistic reportage on life and events in two countries, and not least, her insightful and vivid tableau of life in a very special French finishing school, had finally been heard and shared by others. The bifocal cultural aspect of the diary is what initially attracted my attention. In Victor Turner’s analysis, travel is always ‘a supremely ambiguous or liminal experience where identities can be played with, where one is by definition betwixt and between, where new possibilities emerge, where cultures collide and where play is sanctioned’.

Upon seeing old Miss Turner in Paris, Daisy comments: ‘I should rather be killed straight away than die like that by inches.’ [p. 198] Ironically, Daisy’s life was brief. Her internal odyssey towards self-knowledge and the forging of a new identity was launched by others, but she soon took control of her own existence: ‘I must walk my own road alone, and rely on my own individual strength, and pick myself up when I am down.’ [p. 172] To recall some of the vital questions raised by Ros Pesman about women travellers: ‘What did their

14 Quoted in Oxford Concise Dictionary of Quotations, p. 87.
16 The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing, p. xvii.
journeys mean for the women? What did they make of the worlds they encountered, both interior and exterior? And what of the world they had left behind, which informed their perceptions?\textsuperscript{17} Daisy's answers are at least very much her own; her separation from her family enhanced her self-reliance. Her cousin, Patrick White, would have been proud of this independent spirit, akin to his: 'How right I am about families, if I am wrong about everything else. I am glad I have never allowed myself to submit to my particular octopus.'\textsuperscript{18} However, such wisdom is acquired early and at a price, if Shakespeare is to be believed: 'So wise so young, they say, do never live long.'\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{17} R. Pesman et al, \textit{Duty Free}, pp. 9–10.
\textsuperscript{18} P. White, \textit{Letters}, p. 140.
\textsuperscript{19} W. Shakespeare, \textit{Richard III}, act 3, scene 1.
APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

The Fontainebleau district and Les Ruches

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE REGION

Since time immemorial, the countryside to the east of Fontainebleau, between the forêt and the valley, going in the direction of the Seine, was crossed by the track named 'Provins', hereafter Provins Way, which led from the last few houses in the humble market town of Fontaine Belle Eau (Fontainebleau). This town was to develop at the same rate as the celebrated Château de Fontainebleau and continued to spread as far as the Seine, several kilometres away.

Two or three centuries ago, Provins Way crossed, and led to, a busy area divided into plots used for vegetable patches, fields, orchards and vineyards. In 1817, it is recorded that there were some 174 sub-divisions along Provins Way, on the side of Avon alone! Provins Way by-passed the village of Avon (which at the time was a parish in the Bière district) from west to east as it meandered high on the hill, followed the slopes that led to brooks in the depths of the valley and met Basses Loges that lay at the intersection of the road to Burgundy (formerly a Roman way, laid with cobblestones at this point), before reaching the Seine at Valvins.

In addition to the locals, numerous carriages and heavy carts pulled by oxen used Provins Way as it led to the busy port of Valvins, with its river traffic, and to the Provins ferry. It was only in 1835–1836 that the first wooden bridge was built to replace the ferry.

The advent of the railways: a major development

Local inhabitants had to wait until the second half of the nineteenth century for the humble Provins Way, by then a road, to acquire the status of an avenue. This was the direct result of the advent of the railways. Happily, engineers and
designers of the ‘Paris–Lyon Mediterranean’ line (PLM) chose to locate a station at Avon, on the edge of the plateau and overlooking the valley. Rumour has it that citizens of Fontainebleau refused a station on the grounds that it would cause accidents and a great deal of unwelcome noise. To make it possible for the train to cross the valley, the developers decided on an impressive engineering feat, the viaduct that is still standing today (300 metres long and 21 metres high). Work on the construction of the station, the viaduct and the tracks progressed speedily between 1846 and 1848. The Fontainebleau–Avon station was officially opened with great pomp by Prince, later President, Napoleon III, under the aegis of Jean Fontenelle, Mayor of Avon. It clearly stands within the boundary of the Commune of Avon, although it is true that the boundaries of the communes of Avon and Fontainebleau overlap (according to the ‘Register of Land for the Plaine de Roussillon’) between the road to Bonne Dame and Provenceaux and the district called Les Villevesettes.

Prior to the opening of the station, the entire district retained a rather country ambience; there were practically no houses, except for a few rustic shelters and buildings. However, at the intersection of Basses Loges, there stood the St Nicholas Priory and one or two travellers’ inns, such as the ‘Inn of the Indissoluble Grain of Salt’!

The advent of the railways dramatically transformed the socio-economic life of the area between Fontainebleau and the PLM station. The road was widened, improved, and laid with strong and bumpy cobblestones. It became the Avenue du Chemin de Fer and was lined with a row of splendid plane trees on either side. As a result, the strips of land that lined the avenue, previously neglected, increased in value and were acquired in quick succession by speculators or wealthy individuals who amalgamated them into large estates (of two, three or four hectares) on which they built comfortable villas-châteaux. The avenue thus became a middle-class stronghold. On the plateau where the station stood, a great deal of commercial activity was generated by the arrival and departure of passengers, leading to hotels, cafés, restaurants, guesthouses, calèche hire firms, souvenir shops, and so on. The ‘rattling’ tramways of the Compagnie des Transports de Fontainebleau (CTF) did not start operating until 1896.

Postscript for Les Ruches

Les Ruches closed permanently in 1914 at the start of the Great War, whereupon the estate was purchased by a wealthy individual who transformed it into a luxurious country residence. In 1940, it was occupied by the German army, to the detriment of the property. In 1948, the estate was acquired by PIC (Préparation Industrielle des Combustibles), then in full expansion. The organisation used the building for its offices and had a tower and an annex erected to house additional personnel and, more particularly, its executives.
In 1962, when the PIC folded, SAGIFA (a company involved in developing property holdings and lands owned previously by PIC) remained. SAGIFA sold the building at 22 Avenue du Chemin de Fer and the front section of the gardens that looked onto the Avenue Franklin Roosevelt, to the Management of PTT (Postes-Télégrammes-Téléphone), which had the watchman's lodge and the outbuildings demolished. A head post office with a sorting centre for the area was built on the site, while the villa was used to house personnel on training courses. Since then, PTT has become 'La Poste'. The other, and more impressive, part of the former school, including the tower and annexed lodgings that stand in the middle of the 'petit parc' and look onto the Avenue des Carrosses and the Rue Bernard Palissy, is still known today as Les Ruches.

Bernard Pamart
(former deputy mayor of the Commune of Avon) 2003

Translated by M.S. Rivière
WHITE

Family trees
# WHITE FAMILY TREE 1

## James White m. 1825 – Sarah Jane Crossman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Name</th>
<th>Birth and Death Range</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Married To</th>
<th>Birth and Death Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henry Charles White</td>
<td>1837–1905</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>1826–1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hon) James White</td>
<td>1828–1890</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Emily Elizabeth Arndell</td>
<td>1856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis White</td>
<td>1830–1875</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mary Hannah Cobb</td>
<td>1853</td>
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<tr>
<td>George White</td>
<td>1831–1872</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Adelaide Cobb</td>
<td>m. 1860</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frances Corinda Bell</td>
<td>(2) m. 1871</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For marriages and issue

See Tables 2 and 3

For marriages and issue

See Tables 2 and 3

No issue

9 others and

Victor Martindale
1867–1937
m. 1910

Ruth Whithlycombe

Issue from both

Patrick Victor Martindale
1912–1990

Nobel prize (Lit) 1973

Suzanne Victoria Martindale
1915–1969
m. 1939 Geoffrey Peck
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Wife</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Edward White</td>
<td>1834-1913</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Amelia Una Cox</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward White</td>
<td>1839-1913</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Maria Susannah Bell</td>
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<td>Frederick Robert White</td>
<td>1835-1903</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Sarah Amelia Arndell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane White</td>
<td>1843-1934</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>William Skinner Wilson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>others</td>
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Issue Issue Issue
**WHITE FAMILY TREE 2**

Henry Charles White's children by his first marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Henry Charles White</th>
<th>Isabella Mary Ann Lowe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1837–1905</td>
<td>1836–1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Jane</td>
<td>Marion Cecil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863–1946</td>
<td>1865–1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 1889</td>
<td>(1) m. 1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ross of 'Kinross'</td>
<td>John Wynne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella Janet, John, Donald, Neil, Emily, Alister, Margaret, David</td>
<td>Marion Dulcie Wynne, Richard Owen Wynne, Constance, Peter, Henry</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) 1902</td>
<td>1867–1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 1897</td>
<td>Leila Arguinbeau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gregory MacAlister Mathews, ornithologist, 1876–1949

Alister Mathews

**WHITE FAMILY TREE 3**

Henry Charles White's children by his second marriage

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Henry Charles White</th>
<th>Mary Helen Macmillan</th>
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<tr>
<td>1837–1905</td>
<td>1857–1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Victoria</td>
<td>Hal Owena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880–1962</td>
<td>1901–1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 1900</td>
<td>1878–?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George McLachlan</td>
<td>Roy Mordaunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1881–1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Victoria</td>
<td>Nea Vivien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882–?</td>
<td>m. 1906, Charles Flemmich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 1900</td>
<td>1882–?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George McLachlan</td>
<td>1881–1921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helena Henrietta (Dorothy)  
1873–1938  
m. 1908  
Arthur Waddell

Frederick George Hunter  
1875–1953  
m. 1904  
Beatrice Voss

No issue  
Margaret, Roger,  
Hope, Janet
Fontainebleau, outside Paris, is almost as far from country Australia—spiritually and geographically—as a schoolgirl can get. But that is where Margaret Isabel White, known as Daisy, found herself for the final years of her education.

This charming, spirited, at times sad and always intensely personal, account of her teenage life on the other side of the world, has been thoughtfully annotated and studied in a long introduction by the editor, Marc Serge Rivière, Professor of French at the University of Limerick in Ireland and Visiting Professor at the University of Mauritius. Professor Rivière’s earlier book for the National Library, *A Woman of Courage* (1996), was a translation of the journal of the remarkable Rose de Freycinet who accompanied her husband on an around-the-world journey of scientific discovery from 1817 to 1820.

Daisy, a member of the large Australian grazing family that included the author Patrick White, died an untimely death in Sydney in 1903, 14 years after the close of the diary. Now, another member of the family, Dr Judy White of ‘Belltrees’, Scone introduces a family treasure to Australian readers.