

Berlin December 19th 02.

AL | 3817

My dear Kelly, Xmas again, and it seems
a long time since I last heard from you.
It is to wish you a good time and to beg
for an account of your doings before very long.
My short holidays have just begun and
to-morrow we expect my sister Gaily with her
stepson Gustav, who will stay with us over
Xmas-day, while Ellen remains with us till
March. "We" of course means myself and
Lise, who came back from Brunnhellen in
November to keep house and company for me.
She has been very busy besides, with getting
ready her contributions to the Artists - Fair
and has sold off most of them to our great
satisfaction. There is little else to tell besides,
these bare outlines of our life; you will easily

believe that the memory of our dear mother is
always with us. I never read a book or even
a newspaper without thinking of the impression
they would have made on her. Maurice

Maeterlinck's book *La vie des abeilles*
would have delighted her, and also the novels
of a very recent ^{German} author, Gustav Frenssen.

He is considered quite a new line and very
much superior to all our contemporary writers.

Have you heard of him in England?

In the intervals of lectures and lessons I have
lately taken up some old-fashioned English
novels, like *Clarissa Harlowe* and *Evilina*,
and have actually been fascinated in parts
by them to a degree I should never have
thought possible.

I wonder where and how you will spend
your Xmas. holidays; may it be in good
health and spirits, wherever you are. If at
Brighton, I suppose you will have a great
family gathering again, which must ~~scarcely~~
necessarily increase in numbers and interest
from year to year. I hope your mother is
continuing in pretty good health. Your last
account of her sounded so much better that
I feel confident, the complaint is not as
serious and fatal as you seemed to suppose
at first. Please give her my love and re-
member me kindly to those of your sisters who
retain any recollection of me.

We shall of course spend Xmas in a very
quiet way, though we too enjoy the meeting

of a growing-up family at the house of
Leo Götz, my sister's youngest stepson. They
are still at Berlin and their five children, of
whom the eldest is turned thirteen, are decidedly
a cheering element. You know, I dare say, that
Moritz Götz too is married since about 4 years
and the darling father of 3 successive babies.
They live at Dresden.

Did I tell you that the proctorate of the
Victoria-Lyceum had passed to the present
Inspector and that she attended our opening
ceremony in the autumn? The lectures are
very well attended on the whole and the estab-
lishment proceeding on satisfactory lines.

Goodbye, dear friend. The boys to be kindly
remembered to you and I very much look
forward to a letter. Always yours affably
Alfred Cobden.

AL/3817 ^{W11K} 24 December. OZ
In my chimney I find his letter of Dec. 20th in its
cover and ready address, but look among papers on my
writing-table — a week's delay, while I thought
it posted over so long. But I have nothing to add
to its contents. We spend Xmas time very
quietly, but in a pleasant way. A happy New Year
to you now.
Yours affectly Alison Colth.



Fröhliche
Weihnachten!

1871(6)