which depended, for its entire length, thousands of strings of a delicate flame-colored nasturtium, so that it was the most bewitching vista possible of glow and grace. Every kind of fruit and vegetable was being "forced" for the ducal table—strawberries (in pots), cucumbers and string beans, as well as figs and pineapples. In the centre of a beautiful copper-wire hot-house (which alone cost $25,000) was a tree-fern, the first I ever saw, and the most fascinating thing to stand under in the world; its ~~delicate~~ feathery fronds branching out, one over another, from its stout little trunk in a perfect cone, seemed to shade one differently from anything else.

As we were going away, the gardener who had been showing us about confidentially informed us that the family had that day gone up to London, and that he would smuggle us in to look at a portion of the house that was nearly completed. He took us in at the "grand" entrance into the great hall, where the workmen were still in force. One little feature alone of this apartment was three huge white marble chimney-pieces, each of which cost £3000! Across each one was a scene from the ducal family history, carved in alto-relievo, in figures about a foot high. We went up the palatial staircase which was to be reserved for the visits of royalty, and we saw, also, the unfinished library and the reception rooms. The ceilings of the latter were decorated in the most sumptuous modern-antique manner — backgrounds of gold, with all sorts of animals and birds and foliage illuminated upon them. The mantelpiece in the drawing-room was still more magnificent than those in the hall, being in Venetian mosaic, and the ceiling looked like an ancient missal, such was its splendor. I remember in particular a peacock in one corner whose tail was hanging down the wall in the most life-like gorgeousness. The chandelier of the apartment was illuminated to match. But the noble duke had changed his mind about the size of the room after all this had been done, and already part of this precious ceiling was torn away like so much common plaster! "He can afford it," said his gardener quietly.

All along the facade of the house there was a "grand" terrace, of course, and an "Italian garden" laid out in the "taste of a former generation," and looking very stately, with its arabesques and fountains and statues stretching

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