

ARTEMIS TO ACTÆON

By Edith Wharton



THOU couldst not look on me and live : so runs
The mortal legend—thou that couldst not live
Nor look on me (so the divine decree) !
That sawst me in the cloud, the wave, the bough,
The clod commoved with April, and the shapes
Lurking 'twixt lid and eye-ball in the dark.
Mocked I thee not in every guise of life,
Hid in girls' eyes, a naiad in her well,
Woody through their laughter, and like echo fled,
Luring thee down the primal silences
Where the heart hushes and the flesh is dumb ?
Nay, was not I the tide that drew thee out
Relentlessly from the detaining shore,
Forth from the home-lights and the hailing voices,
Forth from the last faint headland's failing line,
Till I enveloped thee from verge to verge
And hid thee in the hollow of my being ?
And still, because between us hung the veil,
The myriad-tinted veil of sense, thy feet
Refused their rest, thy hands the gifts of life,
Thy heart its losses, lest some lesser face
Should blur mine image in thine upturned soul
Ere death had stamped it there. This was thy thought.
And mine ?

The gods, they say, have all : not so !
This have they—flocks on every hill, the blue
Spirals of incense and the amber drip
Of lucid honey-comb on sylvan shrines,
First-chosen weanlings, doves immaculate,
Twin-cooing in the osier-plaited cage,
And ivy-garlands glaucous with the dew :
Man's wealth, man's servitude, but not himself !
And so they pale, for lack of warmth they wane,
Freeze to the marble of their images,
And, pinnacled on man's subserviency,
Through the thick sacrificial haze discern
Unheeding lives and loves, as some cold peak
Through icy mists may enviously descry
Warm vales unzoned to the all-fruitful sun.
So they along an immortality
Of endless-vistaed homage strain their gaze,
If haply some rash votary, empty-urned,
But light of foot, with all-adventuring hand,
Break rank, fling past the people and the priest,
Up the last step, on to the inmost shrine,
And there, the sacred curtain in his clutch,
Drop dead of seeing—while the others prayed !
Yea, this we wait for, this renews us, this

Artemis to Actæon

Incarnates us, pale people of your dreams,
 Who are but what you make us, wood or stone,
 Or cold chryselephantine hung with gems,
 Or else the beating purpose of your life,
 Your sword, your clay, the note your pipe pursues,
 The face that haunts your pillow, or the light
 Scarce visible over leagues of laboring sea!
*O thus through use to reign again, to drink
 The cup of peradventure to the lees,
 For one dear instant disimmortalized
 In giving immortality!*
 So dream the gods upon their listless thrones.
 Yet sometimes, when the votary appears,
 With death-affronting forehead and glad eyes,
*Too young, they rather muse, too frail thou art,
 And shall we rob some girl of saffron veil
 And nuptial garland for so slight a thing?*
 And so to their incurious loves return.

Not so with thee; for some indeed there *are*
 Who would behold the truth and then return
 To pine among the semblances—but I
 Divined in thee the questing foot that never
 Revisits the cold hearth of yesterday
 Or calls achievement home. I from afar
 Beheld thee fashioned for one hour's high use,
 Nor meant to slake oblivion drop by drop.
 Long, long hadst thou inhabited my dreams,
 Surprising me as harts surprise a pool,
 Stealing to drink at midnight; I divined
 Thee rash to reach the heart of life, and lie
 Bosom to bosom in occasion's arms,
 And said: *Because I love thee thou shalt die!*

For immortality is not to range
 Unlimited through vast Olympian days,
 Or sit in dull dominion over time;
 But this—to drink fate's utmost at a draught,
 Nor feel the wine grow stale upon the lip,
 To scale the summit of some soaring moment,
 Nor know the dulness of the long descent,
 To snatch the crown of life and seal it up
 Secure forever in the vaults of death!

And this was thine: to lose thyself in me,
 Relive in my renewal, and become
 The light of other lives, a quenchless torch
 Passed on from hand to hand, till men are dust
 And the last garland withers from my shrine.

ON A BALTIC SEA SLOOP

By James B. Connolly

ILLUSTRATIONS BY M. J. BURNS



TWO hours in an express going north from Berlin brings one to Stettin, and three hours down the Oder River on a steamer not over-fast brings one to the port of Swinemünde, from which we were to make light incursions to observe the ways of German fishermen in the Baltic Sea.

Some fifty or sixty sloop-rigged craft made up the fishing-fleet of Swinemünde, which, so far as this one side of its maritime life goes, may be rated a typical fishing-port of Germany, in which country are no large ports given over almost exclusively to fishing—nothing to compare with Gloucester in the United States, with Grimsby in England, or Svolvær, to mention one of several in Norway.

For the careless wanderer, who may see in fishing life merely one form of many in the way of diversion, Swinemünde affords other recreation; and it is to enjoy this recreation that many people regularly come from Berlin, from Hanover, and from even more distant cities when the warm weather is at hand. It is rather a resort of well-to-do people, this little port on the Baltic. Here is good bathing and all that goes with a well-regulated beach-life in summer; there is good yachting along the neighboring coast, with safe anchorage up the river, and on both sides of the harbor are extensive fortifications with their attendant garrisons.

Where the dark water of the Oder mingles with the white surf of the beach of Swinemünde, there is located on the west side a small, picturesque light-house, and on the east side a prominent stone pier-head. On summer evenings people walk the beach to the light-house, look across, shout "How goes it?" to anybody they may recognize over on the pier, turn about, and sedately walk the beach back again. Nobody seems ever to

think of making a ferry of it and extending the conversation beyond the words of greeting.

It was down this River Oder, between the little light-house and the broad pier-head, that we came sailing one beautiful summer morn at sun-up, in one of the "flounder fleet," which were, at this season, the busiest lot, possibly, that we had run across in our Baltic sojournings. Up the river, when we had been making ready to depart, they were blowing reveille at the garrison, and ten minutes later, while we were yet quite a little distance from the river's outlet, we passed soldier torsos just above the jetties on the east bank, squads of soldiers with long loaves of bread hugged to their sides, and on the other bank, swinging heavily but happily down the tree-shaded road that edged the jetty, a whole platoon in column of fours, these last giving voice lustily to one of those soulful things that were indubitably written to be sung only by a body of moving men, by soldiers more particularly, and by German soldiers yet more particularly, for it is they that have the proper guttural tones and the meal-time enthusiasm. The first lot, the scattered squads, were coming, as we understood it, from drawing rations; and the second lot, the solid platoon, had drawn and eaten rations, and were on their way to relieve the guard.

The night before, from the high-walled brick fortifications on one side to the lower earthen defences on the other side, and back again, there had been a great cannonading that puzzled us not a little. Not being able to account for it off-hand, we set it down as some kind of a sham-battle to mark the visit of some commanding general, or some sort of a routine thing to keep the troops up to the mark and at the same time to burn up a lot of black powder that otherwise might cake beyond usefulness. That was what we thought the night before, but now, by