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MODERN CLASSICS.

◆

1. [illegible] Miles Standish. LONGFELLOW.
2. [illegible] LONGFELLOW.
3. [illegible] EMERSON.
   [illegible], [illegible]ality.
4. [illegible] B[illegible] WHITTIER.
   [illegible]
5. [illegible] Sir Launfal. LOWELL.
   [illegible]
   Favorite Poems.
6. [illegible] Out of Doors with Charles Dickens. FIELDS.
   [illegible]
   [illegible] Friends. FIELDS.
7. The Ancient Mariner. COLERIDGE.
   [illegible] Poems.
   Favorite Poems. WORDSWORTH.
8. [illegible]
   [illegible]
   Paul and Virginia. St. Pierre.
9. [illegible] Marjorie Fleming. DR. JOHN BROWN.
   [illegible]
   John Leech.
10. [illegible] Arden. TENNYSON.
    In Memoriam.
    Favorite Poems.

See page opposite inside of last cover.

This face can tell a funny tale
I would not tell it thro' the mail
So B. you'll wait until we meet
So nice it will be a treat.

July 21

Dear Flo
Your Mother gave me
this little book on on
of my birthdays.
I thought you would
like to have it on
that account, &
will make me happy
to know when it is
With love Ann

"That sweet young blonde, who arrives by most trains."

Modern Classics.

A DAY'S PLEASURE, AND OTHER SKETCHES.

By W. D. HOWELLS.

ILLUSTRATED.

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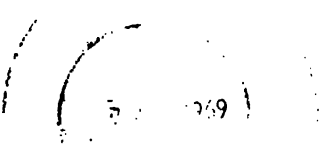

A DAY'S PLEASURE.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

THE MORNING.

I.

THE MORNING.

THEY were not a large family, and their pursuits and habits were very simple; yet the summer was lapsing toward the first pathos of autumn before they found themselves all in such case as to be able to take the day's pleasure they had planned so long. They had agreed often and often that nothing could be more charming than an excursion down the Harbor, either to Gloucester, or to Nahant, or to Nantasket Beach, or to Hull and Hingham, or to any point within the fatal bound beyond which is seasickness. They had studied the steamboat advertisements, day after day, for a long time, without making up their minds which of these charming excursions would be the most delightful; and when they had at last

fixed upon one and chosen some day for . that day was sure to be heralded by a lon train of obstacles, or it dawned upon weathe that was simply impossible. Besides, in th suburbs, you are apt to sleep late, unless th solitary ice-wagon of the neighborhood makes a very uncommon rumbling in going by; and I believe that the excursion was several times postponed by the tardy return of the pleasurers from dreamland, which, after all, is not the worst resort, or the least interesting — or profitable, for the matter of that. But at last the great day came, — a blameless Thursday alike removed from the cares of washing and ironing days, and from the fatigues with which every week closes. One of the family chose deliberately to stay at home; but the severest scrutiny could not detect a hindrance in the health or circumstances of any of the rest, and the weather was delicious. Everything, in fact, was so fair and so full of promise, that they could almost fancy a calamity of some sort hanging over its perfection, and possibly bred of it; for I suppose that we never have anything made perfectly easy for us without a certain reluctance and foreboding. That morning they all got up so early that they had time to waste

over breakfast before taking the 7.30 train for Boston; and they naturally wasted so much of it that they reached the station only in season for the 8.00. But there is a difference between reaching the station and quietly taking the cars, especially if one of your company has been left at home, hoping to cut across and take the cars at a station which they reach some minutes later, and you, the head of the party, are obliged, at a loss of breath and personal comfort and dignity, to run down to that station and see that the belated member has arrived there, and then hurry back to your own and embody the rest, with their accompanying hand-bags and wraps and sun-umbrellas, into some compact shape for removal into the cars, during the very scant minute that the train stops at Charlesbridge. Then when you are all aboard, and the tardy member has been duly taken up at the next station, and you would be glad to spend the time in looking about on the familiar variety of life which every car presents in every train on every road in this vast American world, you are oppressed and distracted by the cares which must attend the pleasure-seeker, and which the more thickly beset him the more deeply he plunges into enjoyment.

I can learn very little from the note-book of the friend whose adventures I am relating in regard to the scenery of Somerville, and the region generally through which the railroad passes between Charlesbridge and Boston; but so much knowledge of it may be safely assumed on the part of the reader as to relieve me of the grave responsibility of describing it. Still, I may say that it is not unpicturesque, and that I have a pleasure, which I hope the reader shares, in anything like salt meadows and all spaces subject to the tide, whether flooded by it or left bare with their saturated grasses by its going down. I think, also, there is something fine in the many-roofed, many-chimneyed highlands of Chelsea (if it is Chelsea), as you draw near the railroad bridge, and there is a pretty stone church on a hillside there which has the good fortune, so rare with modern architecture and so common with the old, of seeming a natural outgrowth of the spot where it stands, and which is as purely an object of æsthetic interest to me, who know nothing of its sect or doctrine, as any church in a picture could be; and there is, also, the Marine Hospital on the heights (if it is the Marine Hospital), from which I hope the inmates can

behold the ocean, and exult in whatever misery keeps them ashore.

But let me not so hasten over this part of my friend's journey as to omit all mention of the amphibious Irish houses which stand about on the low lands along the railroad-sides, and which you half expect to see plunge into the tidal mud of the neighborhood, with a series of hoarse croaks, as the train approaches. Perhaps twenty-four trains pass those houses every twenty-four hours, and it is a wonder that the inhabitants keep their interest in them, or have leisure to bestow upon any of them. Yet, as you dash along so bravely, you can see that you arrest the occupations of all these villagers as by a kind of enchantment; the children pause and turn their heads toward you from their mud-pies (to the production of which there is literally no limit in that region); the matron rests one parboiled hand on her hip, letting the other still linger listlessly upon the washboard, while she lifts her eyes from the suds to look at you; the boys, who all summer long are forever just going into the water or just coming out of it, cease their buttoning or unbuttoning; the baby, which has been run after and caught and suitably posed, turns its an-

guished eyes upon you, where also falls the mother's gaze, while her descending palm is arrested in mid-air. I forbear to comment upon the surprising populousness of these villages, where, in obedience to all the laws of health, the inhabitants ought to be wasting miserably away, but where they flourish in spite of them. Even Accident here seems to be robbed of half her malevolence; and that baby (who will presently be chastised with terrific uproar) passes an infancy of intrepid enjoyment amidst the local perils, and is no more affected by the engines and the cars than by so many fretful hens with their attendant broods of chickens.

When sometimes I long for the excitement and variety of travel, which, for no merit of mine, I knew in other days, I reproach myself, and silence all my repinings with some such question as, Where could you find more variety or greater excitement than abounds in and near the Fitchburg Depot when a train arrives? And to tell the truth, there is something very inspiring in the fine eagerness with which all the passengers rise as soon as the locomotive begins to slow, and huddle forward to the door, in their impatience to get out; while the sup-

pressed vehemence of the hackmen is also thrilling in its way, not to mention the instant clamor of the baggage-men as they read and repeat the numbers of the checks in strident tones. It would be ever so interesting to depict all these people, but it would require volumes for the work, and I reluctantly let them all pass out without a word,— all but that sweet young blonde who arrives by most trains, and who, putting up her eye-glass with a ravishing air, bewitchingly peers round among the bearded faces, with little tender looks of hope and trepidation, for the face which she wants, and which presently bursts through the circle of strange visages. The owner of the face then hurries forward to meet that sweet blonde, who gives him a little drooping hand as if it were a delicate flower she laid in his; there is a brief mutual hesitation long enough merely for an electrical thrill to run from heart to heart through the clasping hands, and then he stoops toward her, and distractingly kisses her. And I say that there is no law of conscience or propriety worthy the name of law — barbarity, absurdity, call it rather — to prevent any one from availing himself of that providential near-sightedness, and bestowing

himself upon those lips, — nothing to prevent it but that young fellow, whom one might not, of course, care to provoke.

Among the people who now rush forward and heap themselves into the two horse-cars and one omnibus, placed before the depot by a wise forethought for the public comfort to accommodate the train-load of two hundred passengers, I always note a type that is both pleasing and interesting to me. It is a lady just passing middle life; from her kindly eyes the envious crow, whose footprints are just traceable at their corners, has not yet drunk the brightness, but she looks just a thought sadly, if very serenely, from them. I know nothing in the world of her; I may have seen her twice or a hundred times, but I must always be making bits of romances about her. That is she in faultless gray, with the neat leather bag in her lap, and a bouquet of the first autumnal blooms perched in her shapely hands, which are prettily yet substantially gloved in some sort of gauntlets. She can be easy and dignified, my dear middle-aged heroine, even in one of our horse-cars, where people are for the most part packed like cattle in a pen. She shows no trace of dust or fatigue

from the thirty or forty miles which I choose to fancy she has ridden from the handsome elm-shaded New England town of five or ten thousand people, where I choose to think she lives. From a vague horticultural association with those gauntlets, as well as from the autumnal blooms, I take it she loves flowers, and gardens a good deal with her own hands, and keeps house-plants in the winter, and of course a canary. Her dress, neither rich nor vulgar, makes me believe her fortunes modest and not recent; her gentle face has just so much intellectual character as it is good to see in a woman's face; I suspect that she reads pretty regularly the new poems and histories, and I know that she is the life and soul of the local book-club. Is she married, or widowed, or one of the superfluous forty thousand? That is what I never can tell. But I think that most probably she is married, and that her husband is very much in business, and does not share so much as he respects her tastes. I have no particular reason for thinking that she has no children now, and that the sorrow for the one she lost so long ago has become only a pensive silence, which, however, a long summer twilight can yet deepen to tears. . . . .

Upon my word! Am I then one to give v
to this sort of thing? Madam, I ask pard
I have no right to be sentimentalizing y
Yet your face is one to make people dre
kind things of you, and I cannot keep m
reveries away from it.

But in the mean time I neglect the momen
tous history which I have proposed to write, and leave my day's pleasurers to fade into the background of a fantastic portrait. The truth is, I cannot look without pain upon the discomforts which they suffer at this stage of their joyous enterprise. At the best, the portables of such a party are apt to be grievous embarrassments: a package of shawls and parasols and umbrellas and india-rubbers, however neatly made up at first, quickly degenerates into a shapeless mass, which has finally to be carried with as great tenderness as an ailing child; and the lunch is pretty sure to overflow the hand-bags and to eddy about you in paper parcels; while the bottle of claret, that bulges the side of one of the bags, and

"That will show itself without,"

defying your attempts to look as if it were cold tea, gives a crushing touch of disreputability

to the whole affair. Add to this the fact that but half the party have seats, and that the others have to sway and totter about the car in that sudden contact with all varieties of fellow-men, to which we are accustomed in the cars, and you must allow that these poor merry-makers have reasons enough to rejoice when this part of their day's pleasure is over. They are so plainly bent upon a sail down the Harbor, that before they leave the car they become objects of public interest, and are at last made to give some account of themselves.

"Going for a sail, I presume?" says a person hitherto in conversation with the conductor. "Well, I would n't mind a sail myself to-day."

"Yes," answers the head of the party, "going to Gloucester."

"Guess not," says, very coldly and decidedly, one of the passengers, who is reading that morning's "Advertiser"; and when the subject of this surmise looks at him for explanations, he adds, "The City Council has chartered the boat for to-day."

Upon this the excursionists fall into great dismay and bitterness, and upbraid the City Council, and wonder why last night's "Tran-

script" said nothing about its oppressive action, and generally bewail their fate. But at last they resolve to go somewhere, and, being set down, they make up their warring minds upon Nahant, for the Nahant boat leaves the wharf nearest them; and so they hurry away to India Wharf, amidst barrels and bales and boxes and hacks and trucks, with interminable string-teams passing before them at every crossing.

"At any rate," says the leader of the expedition, "we shall see the Gardens of Maolis, — those enchanted gardens which have fairly been advertised into my dreams, and where I 've been told," he continues, with an effort to make the prospect an attractive one, yet not without a sense of the meagreness of the materials, "they have a grotto and a wooden bull"

Of course, there is no reason in nature why a wooden bull should be more pleasing than a flesh-and-blood bull, but it seems to encourage the company, and they set off again with renewed speed, and at last reach India Wharf in time to see the Nahant steamer packed full of excursionists, with a crowd of people still waiting to go aboard. It does not look in-

viting, and they hesitate. In a minute or two their spirits sink so low that if they should see the wooden bull step out of a grotto on the deck of the steamer, the spectacle could not revive them. At that instant they think, with a surprising singleness, of Nantasket Beach, and the bright colors in which the Gardens of Maolis but now appeared fade away, and they seem to see themselves sauntering along the beautiful shore, while the white-crested breakers crash upon the sand, and run up

"In tender-curving lines of creamy spray,"

quite to the feet of that lotus-eating party.

"Nahant is all rocks," says the leader to Aunt Melissa, who hears him with a sweet and tranquil patience, and who would enjoy or suffer anything with the same expression; "and as you 've never yet seen the open sea, it 's fortunate that we go to Nantasket, for, of course, a beach is more characteristic. But now the object is to get there. The boat will be starting in a few moments, and I doubt whether we can walk it. How far is it," he asks, turning toward a respectable-looking man, "to Liverpool Wharf?"

"Well, it 's consid'able ways," says the man, smiling.

"Then we must take a hack," says the pleasurer to his party. "Come on."

"I've got a hack," observes the man, in a casual way, as if the fact might possibly interest.

"O, you have, have you? Well, then, put us into it, and drive to Liverpool Wharf; and hurry."

Either the distance was less than the hackman fancied, or else he drove thither with unheard-of speed, for two minutes later he set them down on Liverpool Wharf. But swiftly as they had come the steamer had been even more prompt, and she now turned toward them a beautiful wake, as she pushed farther and farther out into the harbor.

The hackman took his two dollars for his four passengers, and was rapidly mounting his box, — probably to avoid idle reproaches. "Wait!" said the chief pleasurer. Then, "When does the next boat leave?" he asked of the agent, who had emerged with a compassionate face from the waiting-rooms on the wharf.

"At half past two."

"And it's now five minutes past nine," moaned the merrymakers.

"Why, I'll tell you what you can do," said the agent; "you can go to Hingham by the Old Colony cars, and so come back by the Hull and Hingham boat."

"That 's it! chorused his listeners, "we 'll go"; and "Now," said their spokesman to the driver, "I dare say you did n't know that Liverpool Wharf was so near; but I don't think you 've earned your money, and you ought to take us on to the Old Colony Depot for half-fares at the most."

The driver looked pained, as if some small tatters and shreds of conscience were flapping uncomfortably about his otherwise dismantled spirit. Then he seemed to think of his wife and family, for he put on the air of a man who had already made great sacrifices, and "I could n't, really, I could n't afford it," said he; and as the victims turned from him in disgust, he chirruped to his horses and drove off.

"Well," said the pleasurers, "we won't give it up. We will have our day's pleasure after all. But what *can* we do to kill five hours and a half? It 's miles away from everything, and, besides, there 's nothing even if we were there." At this image of their remoteness and the inherent desolation of Bos-

ton they could not suppress some sighs, and in the mean time Aunt Melissa stepped into the waiting-room, which opened on the farther side upon the water, and sat contentedly down on one of the benches; the rest, from sheer vacuity and irresolution, followed, and thus, without debate, it was settled that they should wait there till the boat left. The agent, who was a kind man, did what he could to alleviate the situation: he gave them each the advertisement of his line of boats, neatly printed upon a card, and then he went away.

All this prospect of waiting would do well enough for the ladies of the party, but there is an impatience in the masculine fibre which does not brook the notion of such prolonged repose; and the leader of the excursion presently pretended an important errand up town, — nothing less, in fact, than to buy a tumbler out of which to drink their claret on the beach. A holiday is never like any other day to the man who takes it, and a festive halo seemed to enwrap the excursionist as he pushed on through the busy streets in the cool shadow of the vast granite palaces wherein the genius of business loves to house itself in this money-making land, and inhaled the odors of great

heaps of leather and spices and dry goods as he passed the open doorways, — odors that mixed pleasantly with the smell of the freshly watered streets. When he stepped into a crockery store to make his purchase a sense of pleasure-taking did not fail him, and he fell naturally into talk with the clerk about the weather and such pastoral topics. Even when he reached the establishment where his own business days were passed some glamour seemed to be cast upon familiar objects. To the disenchanted eye all things were as they were on all other dullish days of summer, even to the accustomed bore leaning up against his favorite desk and transfixing his habitual victim with his usual theme. Yet to the gaze of this pleasure-taker all was subtly changed, and he shook hands right and left as he entered, to the marked surprise of the objects of his effusion. He had merely come to get some newspapers to help pass away the long moments on the wharf, and when he had found these, he hurried back thither to hear what had happened during his absence.

It seemed that there had hardly ever been such an eventful period in the lives of the family before, and he listened to a minute account

of it from Cousin Lucy. "You know, Frank," says she, "that Sallie's one idea in life is to keep the baby from getting the whooping-cough, and I declare that these premises have done nothing but re-echo with the most dolorous whoops ever since you've been gone, so that at times, in my fear that Sallie would think I'd been careless about the boy, I've been ready to throw myself into the water, and nothing's prevented me but the doubt whether it would n't be better to throw in the whoopers instead."

At this moment a pale little girl, with a face wan and sad through all its dirt, came and stood in the doorway nearest the baby, and in another instant she had burst into a whoop so terrific that, if she had meant to have his scalp next it could not have been more dreadful. Then she subsided into a deep and pathetic quiet, with that air peculiar to the victims of her disorder of having done nothing noticeable. But her outburst had set at work the mysterious machinery of half a dozen other whooping-coughers lurking about the building, and all unseen they wound themselves up with appalling rapidity, and in the utter silence which followed left one to think they had died at the climax.

"Why, it's a perfect whooping-cough factory, this place," cries Cousin Lucy in a desperation. "Go away, do, please, from the baby, you poor little dreadful object you," she continues, turning upon the only visible operative in the establishment. "Here, take this"; and she bribes her with a bit of sponge-cake, on which the child runs lightly off along the edge of the wharf. "That's been another of their projects for driving me wild," says Cousin Lucy, — "trying to take their own lives in a hundred ways before my face and eyes. Why *will* their mothers let them come here to play?"

Really, they were very melancholy little figures, and might have gone near to make one sad, even if they had not been constantly imperilling their lives. Thanks to its being summer-time, it did not much matter about the scantiness of their clothing, but their squalor was depressing, it seemed, even to themselves, for they were a mournful-looking set of children, and in their dangerous sports trifled silently and almost gloomily with death. There were none of them above eight or nine years of age, and most of them had the care of smaller brothers, or even babes in arms, whom they were thus early inuring to the perils of

the situation. The boys were dressed in pantaloons and shirts which no excess of rolling up in the legs and arms could make small enough, and the incorrigible too-bigness of which rendered the favorite amusements still more hazardous from their liability to trip and entangle the wearers. The little girls had on each a solitary garment, which hung about her gaunt person with antique severity of outline; while the babies were multitudinously swathed in whatever fragments of dress could be tied or pinned or plastered on. Their faces were strikingly and almost ingeniously dirty, and their distractions among the coal-heaps and cord-wood constantly added to the variety and advantage of these effects.

"Why do their mothers let them come here?" muses Frank aloud. "Why, because it's so safe, Cousin Lucy. At home, you know, they'd have to be playing upon the sills of fourth-floor windows, and here they're out of the way and can't hurt themselves. Why, Cousin Lucy, this is their park, — their Public Garden, their Bois de Boulogne, their Cascine. And look at their gloomy little faces! Are n't they taking their pleasure in the spirit of the very highest fashion? I was

at Newport last summer, and saw the famous driving on the Avenue in those pony phaetons, dog-carts, and tubs, and three-story carriages with a pair of footmen perching like storks upon each gable, and I assure you that all those ornate and costly phantasms (it seems to me now like a sad, sweet vision) had just the expression of these poor children. We 're taking a day's pleasure ourselves, cousin, but nobody would know it from our looks. And has nothing but whooping-cough happened since I 've been gone?"

"Yes, we seem to be so cut off from every-day associations that I 've imagined myself a sort of tourist, and I 've been to that Catholic church over yonder, in hopes of seeing the Murillos and Raphaels; but I found it locked up, and so I trudged back without a sight of the masterpieces. But what 's the reason that all the shops hereabouts have nothing but luxuries for sale? The windows are perfect tropics of oranges, and lemons, and belated bananas, and tobacco, and peanuts."

"Well, the poor really seem to use more of those luxuries than anybody else. I don't blame them. I should n't care for the necessaries of life myself, if I found them so hard to get."

"When I came back here," says Cousin Lucy, without heeding these flippant and heartless words, "I found an old gentleman who has something to do with the boats, and he sat down, as if it were a part of his business, and told me nearly the whole history of his life. Is n't it nice of them, keeping an Autobiographer? It makes the time pass so swiftly when you 're waiting. This old gentleman was born — who 'd ever think it? — up there in Pearl Street, where those pitiless big granite stores are now; and, I don't know why, but the idea of any human baby being born in Pearl Street seemed to me one of the saddest things I 'd ever heard of."

Here Cousin Lucy went to the rescue of the nurse and the baby, who had got into one of their periodical difficulties, and her interlocutor turned to Aunt Melissa.

"I think, Franklin," says Aunt Melissa, "that it was wrong to let that nurse come and bring the baby."

"Yes, I know, Aunty, you have those old-established ideas, and they 're very right," answers her nephew; "but just consider how much she enjoys it, and how vastly the baby adds to the pleasure of this charming excursion."

Aunt Melissa made no reply, but sat looking thoughtfully out upon the bay. "I presume you think the excursion is a failure," she said, after a while; "but I 've been enjoying every minute of the time here. Of course, I 've never seen the open sea, and I don't know about it, but I feel here just as if I were spending a day at the seaside."

"Well," said her nephew, "I should n't call this exactly a watering-place. It lacks the splendor and gayety of Newport, in a certain degree, and it has n't the illustrious seclusion of Nahant. The surf is n't very fine, nor the beach particularly adapted to bathing; and yet, I must confess, the outlook from here is as lovely as anything one need have."

And, to tell the truth, it was very pretty and interesting. The landward environment was as commonplace and mean as it could be: a yardful of dismal sheds for coal and lumber, and shanties for offices, with each office its safe and its desk, its whittled arm-chair and its spittoon, its fly that shooed not, but buzzed desperately against the grimy pane, which, if it had really had that boasted microscopic eye, it never would have mistaken for the unblemished daylight. Outside of this yard was the

usual wharfish neighborhood, with its turmoil of trucks and carts and fleet express-wagons, its building up and pulling down, its discomfort and clamor of every sort, and its shops for the sale, not only of those luxuries which Lucy had mentioned, but of such domestic refreshments as lemon-pie and hulled-corn.

When, however, you turned your thoughts and eyes away from this aspect of it, and looked out upon the water, the neighborhood gloriously retrieved itself. There its poverty and vulgarity ceased; there its beauty and grace abounded. A light breeze ruffled the face of the bay, and the innumerable little sailboats that dotted it took the sun and wind upon their wings, which they dipped almost into the sparkle of the water, and flew lightly hither and thither like gulls that loved the brine too well to rise wholly from it; larger ships, farther or nearer, puffed or shrank their sails as they came and went on the errands of commerce, but always moved as if bent upon some dreamy affair of pleasure; the steamboats that shot vehemently across their tranquil courses seemed only gayer and vivider visions, but not more substantial; yonder, a black, sea-going steamer passed out between

the far-off islands, and at last left in the sky above those reveries of fortification, a whiff of sombre smoke, dark and unreal as a memory of battle; to the right, on some line of railroad, long-plumed trains arrived and departed like pictures passed through the slide of a magic-lantern; even a pile-driver, at work in the same direction, seemed to have no malice in the blows which, after a loud clucking, it dealt the pile, and one understood that it was mere conventional violence like that of a Punch to his baby.

"Why, what a lotus-eating life this is!" said Frank, at last. "Aunt Melissa, I don't wonder you think it 's like the seaside. It 's a great deal better than the seaside. And now, just as we 've entered into the spirit of it, the time 's up for the 'Rose Standish' to come and bear us from its delights. When will the boat be in?" he asked of the Autobiographer, whom Lucy had pointed out to him.

"Well, she 's *ben* in half an hour, now. There she lays, just outside the 'John Romer.'"

There, to be sure, she lay, and those pleasure-takers had been so lost in the rapture of waiting and the beauty of the scene as never to have noticed her arrival.

II.

THE AFTERNOON.

II.

THE AFTERNOON.

IT is noticeable how many people there are in the world that seem bent always upon the same purpose of amusement or business as one's self. If you keep quietly about your accustomed affairs, there are all your neighbors and acquaintance hard at it too; if you go on a journey, choose what train you will, the cars are filled with travellers in your direction. You take a day's pleasure, and everybody abandons his usual occupation to crowd upon your boat, whether it is to Gloucester, or Nahant, or to Nantasket Beach you go. It is very hard to believe that, from whatever channel of life you abstract yourself, still the great sum of it presses forward as before: that business is carried on though you

are idle, that men amuse themselves though you toil, that every train is as crowded as that you travel on, that the theatre or the church fills its boxes or pews without you perfectly well. I suppose it would not be quite agreeable to believe all this; the opposite illusion is far more flattering; for if each one of us did not take the world with him now at every turn, should he not have to leave it behind him when he died? And that, it must be owned, would not be agreeable, nor is the fact quite conceivable, though ever so many myriads in so many million years have proved it.

When our friends first went aboard the "Rose Standish" that day they were almost the sole passengers, and they had a feeling of ownership and privacy which was pleasant enough in its way, but which they lost afterwards; though to lose it was also pleasant, for enjoyment no more likes to be solitary than sin does, which is notoriously gregarious, and I dare say would hardly exist if it could not be committed in company. The preacher, indeed, little knows the comfortable sensation we have in being called fellow-sinners, and what an effective shield for his guilt each makes of his neighbor's hard-heartedness.

Cousin Frank never felt how strange was a lonely transgression till that day, when in the silence of the little cabin he took the bottle of claret from the hand-bag, and prepared to moisten the family lunch with it. "I think, Aunt Melissa," he said, "we had better lunch now, for it 's a quarter past two, and we shall not get to the beach before four. Let 's improvise a beach of these chairs, and that water-urn yonder can stand for the breakers. Now, this is truly like Newport and Nahant," he added, after the little arrangement was complete; and he was about to strip away the bottle's jacket of brown paper, when a lady much wrapped up came in, and, reclining upon one of the opposite seats, began to take them all in with a severe serenity of gaze that made them feel for a moment like a party of low foreigners, — like a set of German atheists, say. Frank kept on the bottle's paper jacket, and as the single tumbler of the party circled from mouth to mouth, each of them tried to give the honest drink the false air of a medicinal potion of some sort; and to see Aunt Melissa sipping it, no one could have put his hand on his heart and sworn it was not elderberry wine, at the worst. In spite of these efforts, they all knew

that they had suffered a hopeless loss of repute; yet, after the loss was confessed, I am not sure that they were not the gayer and happier through this "freedom of a broken law." At any rate, the lunch passed off very merrily, and when they had put back the fragments of the feast into the bags, they went forward to the bow of the boat, to get good places for seeing the various people as they came aboard, and for an outlook upon the bay when the boat should start.

I suppose that these were not very remarkable people, and that nothing but the indomitable interest our friends took in the human race could have enabled them to feel any concern in their companions. It was, no doubt, just such a company as goes down to Nantasket Beach every pleasant day in summer. Certain ones among them were distinguishable as sojourners at the beach, by an air of familiarity with the business of getting there, an indifference to the prospect, and an indefinable touch of superiority. These read their newspapers in quiet corners, or, if they were not of the newspaper sex, made themselves comfortable in the cabins, and looked about them at the other passengers with looks of lazy surprise,

and just a hint of scorn for their interest in the boat's departure. Our day's pleasurers took it that the lady whose steady gaze had reduced them, when at lunch, to such a low ebb of shabbiness, was a regular boarder, at the least, in one of the beach hotels. A few other passengers were, like themselves, mere idlers for a day, and were eager to see all that the boat or the voyage offered of novelty. There were clerks and men who had book-keeping written in a neat mercantile hand upon their faces, and who had evidently been given that afternoon for a breathing-time; and there were strangers who were going down to the beach for the sake of the charming view of the harbor which the trip afforded. Here and there were people who were not to be classed with any certainty, — as a pale young man, handsome in his undesirable way, who looked like a steamboat pantry-boy not yet risen to be bar-tender, but rapidly rising, and who sat carefully balanced upon the railing of the boat, chatting with two young girls, who heard his broad sallies with continual snickers, and interchanged saucy comments with that prompt up-and-coming manner which is so large a part of non-humorous humor, as Mr. Lowell calls it, and now and then pulled

and pushed each other. It was a scene worth study, for in no other country could anything so bad have been without being vastly worse; but here it was evident that there was nothing worse than you saw; and, indeed, these persons formed a sort of relief to the other passengers, who were nearly all monotonously well-behaved. Amongst a few there seemed to be acquaintance, but the far greater part were unknown to one another, and there were no words wasted by any one. I believe the English traveller who has taxed our nation with inquisitiveness for half a century is at last beginning to find out that we do not ask questions because we have the still more vicious custom of not opening our mouths at all when with strangers.

It was a good hour after our friends got aboard before the boat left her moorings, and then it was not without some secret dreads of sea-sickness that Aunt Melissa saw the seething brine widen between her and the familiar wharf-house, where she now seemed to have spent so large a part of her life. But the multitude of really charming and interesting objects that presently fell under her eye soon distracted her from those gloomy thoughts.

There is always a shabbiness about the wharves of seaports; but I must own that as soon as you get a reasonable distance from them in Boston, they turn wholly beautiful. They no longer present that imposing array of mighty ships which they could show in the days of Consul Plancus, when the commerce of the world sought chiefly our port, yet the docks are still filled with the modester kinds of shipping, and if there is not that wilderness of spars and rigging which you see at New York, let us believe that there is an aspect of selection and refinement in the scene, so that one should describe it, not as a forest, but, less conventionally, as a gentleman's park of masts. The steamships of many coastwise freight lines gloom, with their black, capacious hulks, among the lighter sailing-craft, and among the white, green-shuttered passenger-boats; and behind them those desperate and grimy sheds assume a picturesqueness, their sagging roofs and crooked gables harmonizing agreeably with the shipping; and then growing up from all rises the mellow-tinted brick-built city, roof, and spire, and dome, — a fair and noble sight, indeed, and one not surpassed for a certain quiet and cleanly beauty by any that I know.

Our friends lingered long upon this pretty prospect, and, as inland people of light heart and easy fancy will, the ladies made imagined voyages in each of the more notable vessels they passed,— all cheap and safe trips, occupying half a second apiece. Then they came forward to the bow, that they might not lose any part of the harbor's beauty and variety, and informed themselves of the names of each of the fortressed islands as they passed, and forgot them, being passed, so that to this day Aunt Melissa has the Fort Warren rebel prisoners languishing in Fort Independence. But they made sure of the air of soft repose that hung about each, of that exquisite military neatness which distinguishes them, and which went to Aunt Melissa's housekeeping heart, of the green, thick turf covering the escarpments, of the great guns loafing on the crests of the ramparts and looking out over the water sleepily, of the sentries pacing slowly up and down with their gleaming muskets.

"I never see one of those fellows," says Cousin Frank, "without setting him to the music of that saddest and subtlest of Heine's poems. *You* know it, Lucy"; and he repeats: —

"Mein Herz, mein Herz ist traurig,
Doch lustig leuchtet der Mai;
Ich stehe gelehnt an der Linde
Hoch auf der alten Bastei.

. . . . .

"Am alten grauen Thurme
Ein Schilderhäuschen steht;
Ein rothgeröckter Bursche
Dort auf und nieder geht.

"Er spielt mit seiner Flinte,
Sie funkelt im Sonnenroth,
Er präsentirt, und schultert,—
Ich wollt', er schösse mich todt."

"Oh!" says Cousin Lucy, either because the poignant melancholy of the sentiment has suddenly pierced her, or because she does not quite understand the German,— you never can tell about women. While Frank smiles down upon her in this amiable doubt, their party is approached by the tipsy man who has been making the excursion so merry for the other passengers, in spite of the fact that there is very much to make one sad in him. He is an old man, sweltering in rusty black, a two days' gray beard, and a narrow-brimmed, livid silk hat, set well back upon the nape of his neck.

He explains to our friends, as he does to every one whose acquaintance he makes, that he was in former days a seafaring man, and that he has brought his two little grandsons here to show them something about a ship; and the poor old soul helplessly saturates his phrase with the rankest profanity. The boys are somewhat amused by their grandsire's state, being no doubt familiar with it; but a very grim-looking old lady who sits against the pilot-house and keeps a sharp eye upon all three, and who is also doubtless familiar with the unhappy spectacle, seems not to find it a joke. Her stout matronly umbrella trembles in her hand when her husband draws near, and her eye flashes; but he gives her as wide a berth as he can, returning her glare with a propitiatory drunken smile and a wink to the passengers to let them into the fun. In fact, he is full of humor in his tipsy way, and one after another falls the prey of his free sarcasm, which does not spare the boat or any feature of the excursion. He holds for a long time, by swiftly successive stories of his seafaring days, a very quiet gentleman, who dares neither laugh too loudly nor show indifference for fear of rousing that terrible wit at his ex-

pense, and finds his account in looking down at his boots.

"Well, sir," says the deplorable old sinner, "we was forty days out from Liverpool, with a cargo of salt and iron, and we got caught on the Banks in a calm. 'Cap'n,' says I, — I 'us scc'n' mate, — 's they any man aboard this ship knows how to pray?' 'No,' says the cap'n; 'blast yer prayers!' 'Well,' says I, 'cap'n, I 'm no hand at all to pray, but I 'm goin' to see if prayin' won't git us out 'n this.' And I down on my knees, and I made a first-class prayer; and a breeze sprung up in a minute and carried us smack into Boston.

At this bit of truculent burlesque the quiet man made a bold push, and walked away with a somewhat sickened face, and as no one now intervened between them, the inebriate laid a familiar hand upon Cousin Frank's collar, and said with a wink at his late listener: "Looks like a lerigious man, don't he? I guess I give him a good dose, if he *does* think himself the head-deacon of this boat." And he went on to state his ideas of religion, from which it seemed that he was a person of the most advanced thinking, and believed in nothing worth mentioning.

It is perhaps no worse for an Infidel to be drunk than a Christian, but my friend found this tipsy blasphemer's case so revolting, that he went to the hand-bag, took out the empty claret-bottle, and seeking a solitary corner of the boat, cast the bottle into the water, and felt a thrill of uncommon self-approval as this scapecoat of all the wine at his grocer's bobbed off upon the little waves. "Besides, it saves carrying the bottle home," he thought, not without a half-conscious reserve, that if his penitence were ever too much for him, he could easily abandon it. And without the reflection that the gate is always open behind him, who could consent to enter upon any course of perfect behavior? If good resolutions could not be broken, who would ever have the courage to form them? Would it not be intolerable to be made as good as we ought to be? Then, admirable reader, thank Heaven even for your lapses, since it is so wholesome and saving to be well ashamed of yourself, from time to time.

"What an outrage," said Cousin Frank, in the glow of virtue, as he rejoined the ladies, "that that tipsy rascal should be allowed to go on with his ribaldry. He seems to pervade

the whole boat, and to subject everybody to his sway. He 's a perfect despot to us helpless sober people, — I would n't openly disagree with him on any account. We ought to send a Round Robin to the captain, and ask him to put that religious liberal in irons during the rest of the voyage."

In the mean time, however, the object of his indignation had used up all the conversable material in that part of the boat, and had deviously started for the other end. The elderly woman with the umbrella rose and followed him, somewhat wearily, and with a sadness that appeared more in her movement than in her face; and as the two went down the cabin, did the comical affair look, after all, something like tragedy? My reader, who expects a little novelty in tragedy, and not these stale and common effects, will never think so.

"You 'll not pretend, Frank," says Lucy, "that in such an intellectual place as Boston a crowd as large as this can be got together, and no distinguished literary people in it. I know there are some notables aboard: do point them out to me. Pretty near everybody has a literary look."

"Why, that 's what we call our Boston look,

Cousin Lucy. You need n't have written a thing to have it, — it 's as general as tub cular consumption, and is the effect of o universal culture and habits of reading. I hea a New-Yorker say once that if you went into corner grocery in Boston to buy a codfish, th man would ask you how you liked 'Lucile, whilst he was tying it up. No, no; you must n't be taken in by that literary look; I 'm afraid the real literary men don't always have it. But I *do* see a literary man aboard yonder," he added, craning his neck to one side, and then furtively pointing, — "the most literary man I ever knew, one of the most literary men that ever lived. His whole existence is really bound up in books; he never talks of anything else, and never thinks of anything else, I believe. Look at him, — what kind and pleasant eyes he 's got! There, he sees me!" cries Cousin Frank, with a pleasurable excitement. "How d' ye do?" he calls out.

"O Cousin Frank, introduce us," sighs Lucy.

"Not I! He would n't thank me. He does n't care for pretty girls outside of books; he 'd be afraid of 'em; he 's the bashfullest man alive, and all his heroines are fifty years old, at

the least. But before I go any further, tell me solemnly, Lucy, you 're not interviewing me? You 're not going to write it to a New York newspaper? No? Well, I think it 's best to ask, always. Our friend there — he 's everybody's friend, if you mean nobody's enemy, by that, not even his own — is really what I say, — the most literary man I ever knew. He loves all epochs and phases of literature, but his passion is the Charles Lamb period and all Lamb's friends. He loves them as if they were living men; and Lamb would have loved him if he could have known him. He speaks rapidly, and rather indistinctly, and when you meet him and say Good day and you suppose he answers with something about the weather, ten to one he 's asking you what you think of Hazlitt's essays on Shakespeare, or Leigh Hunt's Italian Poets, or Lamb's roast pig, or Barry Cornwall's songs. He could n't get by a bookstall without stopping — for half an hour, at any rate. He knows just when all the new books in town are to be published, and when each bookseller is to get his invoice of old English books. He has no particular address, but if you leave your card for him at any bookstore in Boston, he 's sure to get

it within two days; and in the summer-time you're apt to meet him on these excursions. Of course, he writes about books, and very tastefully and modestly; there's hardly any of the brand-new immortal English poets, who die off so rapidly, but has had a good word from him; but his heart is with the older fellows, from Chaucer down; and, after the Charles Lamb epoch, I don't know whether he loves better the Elizabethan age or that of Queen Anne. Think of him making me stop the other day at a bookstall, and read through an essay out of the "Spectator"! I did it all for love of him, though money couldn't have persuaded me that I had time; and I'm always telling him lies, and pretending to be as well acquainted as he is with authors I hardly know by name, — he seems so fondly to expect it. He's really almost a disembodied spirit as concerns most mundane interests; his soul is in literature, as a lover's in his mistress's beauty; and in the next world, where, as the Swedenborgians believe, spirits seen at a distance appear like the things they most resemble in disposition, as doves, hawks, goats, lambs, swine, and so on, I'm sure that I shall see his true and kindly soul in the guise of a

noble old Folio, quaintly lettered across his back in old English text, *Tom. I.*"

While our friends talked and looked about them, a sudden change had come over the brightness and warmth of the day; the blue heaven had turned a chilly gray, and the water looked harsh and cold. Now, too, they noted that they were drawing near a wooden pier built into the water, and that they had been winding about in a crooked channel between muddy shallows, and that their course was overrun with long, dishevelled sea-weed. The shawls had been unstrapped, and the ladies made comfortable in them.

"Ho for the beach!" cried Cousin Frank, with a vehement show of enthusiasm. "Now, then, Aunt Melissa, prepare for the great enjoyment of the day. In a few moments we shall be of the elves

> 'That on the sand with printless foot
> Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
> When he comes back.'

Come! we shall have three hours on the beach, and that will bring us well into the cool of the evening, and we can return by the last boat."

"As to the cool of the evening," said Aunt

Melissa, "I don't know. It's quite cool enough for comfort at present, and I'm sure that anything more would n't be wholesome. What's become of our beautiful weather?" she asked, deeply plotting to gain time.

"It's one of our Boston peculiarities, not to say merits," answered Frank, "which you must have noticed already, that we can get rid of a fine day sooner than any other region. While you 're saying how lovely it is, a subtle change is wrought, and under skies still blue and a sun still warm the keen spirit of the east-wind pierces every nerve, and all the fine weather within you is chilled and extinguished. The gray atmosphere follows, but the day first languishes in yourself. But for this, life in Boston would be insupportably perfect, if this is indeed a drawback. You 'd find Bostonians to defend it, I dare say. But this is n't a regular east-wind to-day; it 's merely our nearness to the sea."

"I think, Franklin," said Aunt Melissa, "that we won't go down to the beach this afternoon," as if she had been there yesterday, and would go to-morrow. "It 's too late in the day; and it would n't be good for the child, I 'm sure."

"Well, aunty, it was you determined us to wait for the boat, and it's your right to say whether we shall leave it or not. I'm very willing not to go ashore. I always find that, after working up to an object with great effort, it's surpassingly sweet to leave it unaccomplished at last. Then it remains forever in the region of the ideal, amongst the songs that never were sung, the pictures that never were painted. Why, in fact, should we force this pleasure? We've eaten our lunch, we've lost the warm heart of the day; why should we poorly drag over to that damp and sullen beach, where we should find three hours very long, when by going back now we can keep intact that glorious image of a day by the sea which we've been cherishing all summer? You're right, Aunt Melissa; we won't go ashore; we will stay here, and respect our illusions."

At heart, perhaps, Lucy did not quite like this retreat; it was not in harmony with the youthful spirit of her sex, but she reflected that she could come again, — O beneficent cheat of Another Time, how much thou sparest us in our over-worked, over-enjoyed world! — she was very comfortable where she was, in a seat

commanding a perfect view for the return trip; and she submitted without a murmur. Besides, now that the boat had drawn up to the pier, and discharged part of her passengers, and was waiting to take on others, Lucy was interested in a mass of fluttering dresses and wide-rimmed straw hats that drew down toward the "Rose Standish," and gracefully thronged the pier, and prettily hesitated about, and finally came aboard with laughter and little false cries of terror, attended through all by the New England disproportion of that sex which is so foolish when it is silly. It was a large picnic party which had been spending the day upon the beach, as each of the ladies showed in her face, where, if the roses upon her cheeks were somewhat obscured by the imbrowning seaside sun, a bright pink had been compensatingly bestowed upon the point of her nose. A mysterious quiet fell upon them all when they were got aboard and had taken conspicuous places, which was accounted for presently when a loud shout was heard from the shore, and a man beside an ambulant photographic machine was seen wildly waving his hat. It is impossible to resist a temptation of this kind, and our party all yielded, and posed them-

selves in striking and characteristic attitudes, even Aunt Melissa sharing the ambition to appear in a picture which she should never see, and the nurse coming out strong from the abeyance in which she had been held, and lifting the baby high into the air for a good likeness. The frantic gesticulator on the shore gave an impressive wave with both hands, took the cap from the instrument, turned his back, as photographers always do, with that air of hiding their tears, for the brief space that seems so long, and then clapped on the cap again, while a great sigh of relief went up from the whole boat-load of passengers. They were taken.

But the interval had been a luckless one for the "Rose Standish," and when she stirred her wheels, clouds of mud rose to the top of the water, and there was no responsive movement of the boat. She was aground in the falling tide.

"There seems a pretty fair prospect of our spending some time here, after all," said Frank, while the ladies, who had reluctantly given up the idea of staying, were now in a quiver of impatience to be off. The picnic was shifted from side to side; the engine groaned

and tugged, Captain Miles Standish and his crew bestirred themselves vigorously, and at last the boat swung loose, and strode down the sea-weedy channels; while our friends, who had already done the great sights of the harbor, now settled themselves to the enjoyment of its minor traits and beauties. Here and there they passed small parties on the shore, which, with their yachts anchored near, or their boats drawn up from the water, were cooking an out-door meal by a fire that burned bright red upon the sands in the late afternoon air. In such cases, people willingly indulge themselves in saluting whatever craft goes by, and the ladies of these small picnics, as they sat round the fires, kept up a great waving of handkerchiefs, and sometimes cheered the "Rose Standish," though I believe the Bostonians are ordinarily not a demonstrative race. Of course, the large picnic on board fluttered multitudinous handkerchiefs in response, both to these people ashore and to those who hailed them from vessels which they met. They did not refuse the politeness even to the passengers on a rival boat when she passed them, though at heart they must have felt some natural pangs at being passed. The

water was peopled everywhere by all sorts of sail lagging slowly homeward in the light evening breeze; and on some of the larger vessels there were family groups to be seen, and a graceful smoke, suggestive of supper, curled from the cook's galley. I suppose these ships were chiefly coasting craft, of one kind or another, come from the Provinces at farthest; but to the ignorance and the fancy of our friends, they arrived from all remote and romantic parts of the world, — from India, from China, and from the South Seas, with cargoes of spices and gums and tropical fruits; and I see no reason why one should ever deny himself the easy pleasure they felt in painting the unknown in such lively hues. The truth is, a strange ship, if you will let her, always brings you precious freight, always arrives from Wonderland under the command of Captain Sindbad. How like a beautiful sprite she looks afar off, as if she came from some finer and fairer world than ours! Nay, we will not go out to meet her; we will not go on board; Captain Sindbad shall bring us the invoice of gold-dust, slaves, and rocs' eggs to-night, and we will have some of the eggs for breakfast; or if he never comes, are we not just as rich? But I

think these friends of ours got a yet keener pleasure out of the spectacle of a large and stately ship, that with all sails spread moved silently and steadily out toward the open sea. It is yet grander and sweeter to sail toward the unknown than to come from it; and every vessel that leaves port has this destination, and will bear you thither if you will.

"It may be that the gulf shall wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew,"

absently murmured Lucy, looking on this beautiful apparition.

"But I can't help thinking of Ulysses' cabin-boy, yonder," said Cousin Frank, after a pause; "can you, Aunt Melissa?"

"I don't understand what you're talking about, Franklin," answered Aunt Melissa, somewhat severely.

"Why, I mean that there is a poor wretch of a boy on board there, who 's run away, and whose heart must be aching just now at the thought of the home he has left. I hope Ulysses will be good to him, and not swear at him for a day or two, or knock him about with a belaying-pin. Just about this time his mother,

up in the country, is getting ready his supper, and wondering what 's become of him, and torturing herself with hopes that break one by one; and to-night when she goes up to his empty room, having tried to persuade herself that the truant 's come back and climbed in at the window —"

"Why, Franklin, this is n't true, is it?" asks Aunt Melissa.

"Well, no, let 's pray Heaven it is n't, in this case. It 's been true often enough to be false for once."

"What a great, ugly, black object a ship is!" said Cousin Lucy.

Slowly the city rose up against the distance, sharpening all its outlines, and filling in all its familiar details, — like a fact which one dreams is a dream, and which, as the mists of sleep break away, shows itself for reality.

The air grows closer and warmer, — it is the breath of the hot and toil-worn land.

The boat makes her way up through the shipping, seeks her landing, and presently rubs herself affectionately against the wharf. The passengers quickly disperse themselves upon shore, dismissed each with an appropriate sarcasm by the tipsy man, who has had the means

of keeping himself drunk throughout, and who now looks to the discharge of the boat's cargo.

As our friends leave the wharf-house behind them, and straggle uneasily, and very conscious of sunburn, up the now silent length of Pearl Street to seek the nearest horse-cars, they are aware of a curious fidgeting of the nurse, who flies from one side of the pavement to the other and violently shifts the baby from one arm to the other.

"What's the matter?" asks Frank; but before the nurse can answer, "Thim little divils," he perceives that the whooping-coughers of the morning have taken the occasion to renew a pleasant acquaintance, and are surrounding the baby and nurse with an atmosphere of whooping-cough.

"I say, friends! we can't stand this, you know," says the anxious father. "We must part some time, and this is a favorable moment. Now I'll give you all this, if you don't come another step!" and he empties out to them, from the hand-bags he carries, the fragments of lunch which the frugal mind of Aunt Melissa had caused her to store there. Upon these the whooping-coughers hurl themselves

"Frank and Lucy stalked ahead, with shawls dragging from their arms."

in a body, and are soon left round the corner. Yet they would have been no disgrace to our party, whose appearance was now most disreputable: Frank and Lucy stalked ahead, with shawls dragging from their arms, the former loaded down with hand-bags and the latter with india-rubbers; Aunt Melissa came next under a burden of bloated umbrellas; the nurse last, with her hat awry, and the baby a caricature of its morning trimness, in her embrace. A day's pleasure is so demoralizing, that no party can stand it, and come out neat and orderly.

"Cousin Frank," asked Lucy, awfully, "what if we should meet the Mayflowers now?" — the Mayflowers being a very ancient and noble Boston family whose acquaintance was the great pride and terror of our friends' lives.

"I should cut them dead," said Frank, and scarcely spoke again till his party dragged slowly up the steps of their minute suburban villa.

At the door his wife met them with a troubled and anxious face.

"Calamities?" asked Frank, desperately.

"O, calamities upon calamities! We've

got a lost child in the kitchen," answered Mrs. Sallie.

"O good heavens!" cried her husband. "Adieu, my dreams of repose, so desirable after the quantity of active enjoyment I've had! Well, where is the lost child?"

III.

THE EVENING.

III.

THE EVENING.

"WHERE is the lost child?" repeats Frank, desperately. "Where have you got him?"

"In the kitchen."

"Why in the kitchen?"

"How's baby?" demands Mrs. Sallie, with the incoherent suddenness of her sex, and running half-way down the steps to meet the nurse. "Um, um, um-m-m-m," sounds, which may stand for smothered kisses of rapture and thanksgiving that baby is not a lost child. "Has he been good, Lucy? Take him off and give him some cocoa, Mrs. O'Gonegal," she adds in her business-like way, and with a little push to the combined nurse and baby, while Lucy answers, "O beautiful!" and from that

moment, being warned through all her being by something in the other's tone, casts aside the matronly manner which she has worn during the day, and lapses into the comfortable irresponsibility of young-ladyhood.

"What kind of a time did you have?"

"Splendid!" answers Lucy. "Delightful, *I* think," she adds, as if she thought others might not think so.

"I suppose you found Gloucester a quaint old place."

"O," says Frank, "we did n't go to Gloucester; we found that the City Fathers had chartered the boat for the day, so we thought we 'd go to Nahant."

"Then you 've seen your favorite Gardens of Maolis! What in the world *are* they like?"

"Well; we did n't see the Gardens of Maolis; the Nahant boat was so crowded that we could n't think of going on her, and so we decided we 'd drive over to the Liverpool Wharf and go down to Nantasket Beach."

"That was nice. I 'm so glad on Aunt Melissa's account. It 's much better to see the ocean from a long beach than from those Nahant rocks."

"That 's what *I* said. But, you know, when we got to the wharf the boat had just left."

"You *don't* mean it! Well, then, what under the canopy *did* you do?"

"Why, we sat down in the wharf-house, and waited from nine o'clock till half past two for the next boat."

"Well, I 'm glad you did n't back out, at any rate. You did show pluck, you poor things! I hope you enjoyed the beach after you *did* get there."

"Why," says Frank, looking down, "we never got there."

"Never got there!" gasps Mrs. Sallie. "Did n't you go down on the afternoon boat?"

"Yes."

"Why did n't you get to the beach, then?"

"We did n't go ashore."

"Well, that 's *like* you, Frank."

"It 's a great deal more like Aunt Melissa," answers Frank. "The air felt so raw and chilly by the time we reached the pier, that she declared the baby would perish if it was taken to the beach. Besides, nothing would persuade her that Nantasket Beach was at all different from Liverpool Wharf."

"Never mind, never mind!" says Mrs.

Sallie. "I don't wish to hear anything more. That 's your idea of a day's pleasure, is it? I call it a day's disgrace, a day's miserable giving-up. There, go in, go in; I 'm ashamed of you all. Don't let the neighbors see you, for pity's sake. — We keep him in the kitchen," she continues, recurring to Frank's long unanswered question concerning the lost child, "because he prefers it as being the room nearest to the closet where the cookies are. He 's taken advantage of our sympathies to refuse everything but cookies."

"I suppose that 's one of the rights of lost childhood," comments Frank, languidly; "there 's no law that can compel him to touch even cracker."

"Well, you 'd better go down and see what *you* can make of him. He 's driven *us* all wild."

So Frank descends to the region now redolent of the preparing tea, and finds upon a chair, in the middle of the kitchen floor, a very forlorn little figure of a boy, mutely munching a sweet-cake, while now and then a tear steals down his cheeks and moistens the grimy traces of former tears. He and baby are, in the mean time, regarding each other with a steadfast

glare, the cook and the nurse supporting baby in this rite of hospitality.

"Well, my little man," says his host, "how did you get here?"

The little man, perhaps because he is heartily sick of the question, is somewhat slow to answer that there was a fire; and that he ran after the steamer; and a girl found him and brought him up here.

"And that 's all the blessed thing you can get out of him," says cook; and the lost boy looks as if he felt cook to be perfectly right.

In spite of the well-meant endeavors of the household to wash him and brush him, he is still a dreadfully travel-stained little boy, and he is powdered in every secret crease and wrinkle by that dust of old Charlesbridge, of which we always speak with an air of affected disgust, and a feeling of ill-concealed pride in an abomination so strikingly and peculiarly our own. He looks very much as if he had been following fire-engines about the streets of our learned and pulverous suburb ever since he could walk, and he certainly seems to feel himself in trouble to a certain degree; but there is easily imaginable in his bearing a conviction that after all the chief care is with

others, and that, though unhappy, he is not responsible. The principal victim of his sorrows is also penetrated by this opinion, and after gazing forlornly upon him for a while, asks mechanically, "What 's your name?"

"Freddy," is the laconic answer.

"Freddy — ?" trying with an artful inflection to lead him on to his surname.

"Freddy," decidedly and conclusively.

"O, bless me! What 's the name of the street your papa lives on?"

This problem is far too deep for Freddy, and he takes a bite of sweet-cake in sign that he does not think of solving it. Frank looks at him gloomily for a moment, and then determines that he can grapple with the difficulty more successfully after he has had tea. "Send up the supper, Bridget. I think, my dear," he says, after they have sat down, "we 'd better all question our lost child when we 've finished."

So, when they have finished, they have him up in the sitting-room, and the inquisition begins.

"Now, Freddy," his host says, with a cheerful air of lifelong friendship and confidence, "you know that everybody has got two names. Of course your first name is Freddy, and it 's

a very pretty name. Well, I want you to think real hard, and then tell me what your other name is, so I can take you back to your mamma."

At this allusion the child looks round on the circle of eager and compassionate faces, and begins to shed tears and to wring all hearts.

"What 's your name?" asks Frank, cheerfully, — "your *other* name, you know?"

"Freddy," sobbed the forlorn creature.

"O good heaven! this 'll never do," groaned the chief inquisitor. "Now, Freddy, try not to cry. What is your papa's name,— Mr. — ?" with the leading inflection as before.

"Papa," says Freddy.

"O, that 'll never do! Not Mr. Papa?"

"Yes," persists Freddy.

"But, Freddy," interposes Mrs. Sallie, as her husband falls back baffled, "when ladies come to see your mamma, what do they call her? Mrs. —" adopting Frank's alluring inflection.

"Mrs. Mamma," answers Freddy, confirmed in his error by this course; and a secret dismay possesses his questioners. They skirmish about him with every sort of query; they try to entrap him into some kind of revelation by

apparently irrelevant remarks; they plan ambuscades and surprises; but Freddy looks vigilantly round upon them, and guards his personal history from every approach, and seems in every way so to have the best of it that it is almost exasperating.

"Kindness has proved futile," observes Frank, "and I think we ought as a last resort, before yielding ourselves to despair, to use intimidation. Now, Fred," he says, with sudden and terrible severity, "what's your father's name?"

The hapless little soul is really moved to an effort of memory by this, and blubbers out something that proves in the end to resemble the family name, though for the present it is merely a puzzle of unintelligible sounds."

"Blackman?" cries Aunt Melissa, catching desperately at these sounds.

On this, all the man and brother is roused in Freddy's bosom, and he roars fiercely, "No! he ain't a black man! He 's white!"

"I give it up," says Frank, who has been looking for his hat. "I 'm afraid we can't make anything out of him; and I 'll have to go and report the case to the police. But, put him to bed, do, Sallie; he 's dropping with sleep."

"They skirmish about him with every sort of query."

So he went out, of course supported morally by a sense of duty, but I am afraid also by a sense of adventure in some degree. It is not every day that, in so quiet a place as Charles-bridge, you can have a lost child cast upon your sympathies; and I believe that when an appeal is not really agonizing, we like so well to have our sympathies touched, we favorites of the prosperous commonplace, that most of us would enter eagerly into a pathetic case of this kind even after a day's pleasure. Such was certainly the mood of my friend, and he unconsciously prepared himself for an equal interest on the part of the police; but this was an error. The police heard his statement with all proper attention, and wrote it in full upon the station-slate, but they showed no feeling whatever, and behaved as if they valued a lost child no more than a child snug at home in his own crib. They said that no doubt his parents would be asking at the police-stations for him during the night, and, as if my friend would otherwise have thought of putting him into the street, they suggested that he should just keep the lost child till he was sent for. Modestly enough Frank proposed that they should make some inquiry for his parents, and was answered

by the question whether they could take a man off his beat for that purpose; and remembering that beats in Charlesbridge were of such vastness that during his whole residence there he had never yet seen a policeman on his street, he was obliged to own to himself that his proposal was absurd. He felt the need of reinstating himself by something more sensible, and so he said he thought he would go down to the Port and leave word at the station there; and the police tacitly assenting to this he went.

I who have sometimes hinted that the Square is not a centre of gayety, or a scene of the greatest activity by day, feel it right to say that it has some modest charms of its own on a summer's night, about the hour when Frank passed through it, when the post-office has just been shut, and when the different groups that haunt the place in front of the closing shops have dwindled to the loungers fit though few who will keep it well into the night, and may there be found, by the passenger on the last horse-car out from Boston, wrapt in a kind of social silence, and honorably attended by the policeman whose favored beat is in that neighborhood. They seem a feature of the bygone village life of Charlesbridge, and accord pleas-

antly with the town-pump and the public horse-trough, and the noble elm that by night droops its boughs so pensively, and probably dreams of its happy younger days when there were no canker-worms in the world. Sometimes this choice company sits on the curbing that goes round the terrace at the elm-tree's foot, and then I envy every soul in it, — so tranquil it seems, so cool, so careless, so morrowless. I cannot see the faces of that luxurious society, but there I imagine is the local albino, and a certain blind man, who resorts thither much by day, and makes a strange kind of jest of his own, with a flicker of humor upon his sightless face, and a faith that others less unkindly treated by nature will be able to see the point apparently not always discernible to himself. Late at night I have a fancy that the darkness puts him on an equality with other wits, and that he enjoys his own brilliancy as well as any one.

At the Port station Frank was pleased and soothed by the tranquil air of the policeman, who sat in his shirt-sleeves outside the door, and seemed to announce, by his attitude of final disoccupation, that crimes and misdemeanors were no more. This officer at once

showed a desirable interest in the case. He put on his blue coat that he might listen to the whole story in a proper figure, and then he took down the main points on the slate, and said that they would send word round to the other stations in the city, and the boy's parents could hardly help hearing of him that night.

Returned home, Frank gave his news, and then he and Mrs. Sallie went up to look at the lost child as he slept. The sumptuous diet to which he had confined himself from the first seemed to agree with him perfectly, for he slept unbrokenly, and apparently without a consciousness of his woes. On a chair lay his clothes, in a dusty little pathetic heap; they were well-kept clothes, except for the wrong his wanderings had done them, and they showed a motherly care here and there, which it was not easy to look at with composure. The spectators of his sleep both thought of the curious chance that had thrown this little one into their charge, and considered that he was almost as completely a gift of the Unknown as if he had been following a steamer in another planet, and had thence dropped into their yard. His helplessness in accounting for himself was as affecting as that of the sublimest metaphysician;

and no learned man, no superior intellect, no subtle inquirer among us lost children of the divine, forgotten home, could have been less able to say how or whence he came to be just where he found himself. We wander away and away; the dust of the roadside gathers upon us; and when some strange shelter receives us, we lie down to our sleep, inarticulate, and haunted with dreams of memory, or the memory of dreams, knowing scarcely more of the past than of the future.

"What a strange world!" sighed Mrs. Sallie; and then, as this was a mood far too speculative for her, she recalled herself to practical life suddenly. "If we should have to adopt this child, Frank —"

"Why, bless my soul, we're not obliged to adopt him! Even a lost child can't demand that."

"We shall adopt him, if they don't come for him. And now, I want to know" (Mrs. Sallie spoke as if the adoption had been effected) "whether we shall give him our name, or some other?"

"Well, I don't know. It 's the first child I 've ever adopted," said Frank; "and upon my word, I can't say whether you have to give

him a new name or not. In fact, if I 'd thought of this affair of a name, I 'd never have adopted him. It 's the greatest part of the burden, and if his father will only come for him, I 'll give him up without a murmur."

In the interval that followed the proposal of this alarming difficulty, and while he sat and waited vaguely for whatever should be going to happen next, Frank was not able to repress a sense of personal resentment towards the little vagrant sleeping so carelessly there, though at the bottom of his heart there was all imaginable tenderness for him. In the fantastic character which, to his weariness, the day's pleasure took on, it seemed an extraordinary unkindness of fate that this lost child should have been kept in reserve for him after all the rest; and he had so small consciousness of bestowing shelter and charity, and so profound a feeling of having himself been turned out of house and home by some surprising and potent agency, that if the lost child had been a regiment of Fenians billeted upon him, it could not have oppressed him more. While he remained perplexed in this perverse sentiment of invasion and dispossession, "Hark!" said Mrs. Sallie, "what 's that?"

It was a noise of dragging and shuffling on the walk in front of the house, and a low, hoarse whispering.

"I don't know," said Frank, "but from the kind of pleasure I 've got out of it so far, I should say that this holiday was capable of an earthquake before midnight."

"Listen!"

They listened, as they must, and heard the outer darkness rehearse a raucous dialogue between an unseen Bill and Jim, who were the more terrible to the imagination from being so realistically named, and who seemed to have in charge some nameless third person, a mute actor in the invisible scene. There was doubt, which he uttered, in the mind of Jim, whether they could get this silent comrade along much farther without carrying him; and there was a growling assent from Bill that he *was* pretty far gone, that was a fact, and that maybe Jim *had* better go for the wagon; then there were quick, retreating steps; and then there was a profound silence, in which the audience of this strange drama sat thrilled and speechless. The effect was not less dreadful when there rose a dull sound, as of a helpless body rubbing against the fence, and at last lowered heavily to the ground.

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Sallie. "Do go out and help. He 's dying!"

But even as she spoke the noise of wheels was heard. A wagon stopped before the door; there came a tugging and lifting, with a sound as of crunching gravel, and then a "There!" of great relief.

"Frank!" said Mrs. Sallie very solemnly, "if you don't go out and help those men, I 'll never forgive you."

Really, the drama had grown very impressive; it was a mystery, to say the least; and so it must remain forever, for when Frank, infected at last by Mrs. Sallie's faith in tragedy, opened the door and offered his tardy services, the wagon was driven rapidly away without reply. They never learned what it had all been; and I think that if one actually honors mysteries, it is best not to look into them. How much finer, after all, if you have such a thing as this happen before your door at midnight, not to throw any light upon it! Then your probable tipsy man cannot be proved other than a tragical presence, which you can match with any inscrutable creation of fiction; and if you should ever come to write a romance, as one is very liable to do in this age, there is

your unknown, a figure of strange and fearful interest, made to your hand, and capable of being used, in or out of the body, with a very gloomy effect.

While our friends yet trembled with this sensation, quick steps ascended to their door, and then followed a sharp, anxious tug at the bell.

"Ah!" cried Frank, prophetically, "here 's the father of our adopted son"; and he opened the door.

The gentleman who appeared there could scarcely frame the question to which Frank replied so cheerfully: "O yes; he 's here, and snug in bed, and fast asleep. Come up stairs and look at him. Better let him be till morning, and then come after him," he added, as they looked down a moment on the little sleeper.

"O no, I could n't," said the father, *con expressione;* and then he told how he had heard of the child's whereabouts at the Port station, and had hurried to get him, and how his mother did not know he was found yet, and was almost wild about him. They had no idea how he had got lost, and his own blind story was the only tale of his adventure that ever became known.

By this time his father had got the child partly awake, and the two men were dressing him in men's clumsy fashion; and finally they gave it up, and rolled him in a shawl. The father lifted the slight burden, and two small arms fell about his neck. The weary child slept again.

"How has he behaved?" asked the father.

"Like a little hero," said Frank, "but he 's been a cormorant for cookies. I think it right to tell you, in case he should n't be very brilliant to-morrow, that he would n't eat a bit of anything else."

The father said he was the life of their house; and Frank said he knew how that was, — that he had a life of the house of his own; and then the father thanked him very simply and touchingly, and with the decent New England self-restraint, which is doubtless so much better than any sort of effusion. "Say good night to the gentleman, Freddy," he said at the door; and Freddy with closed eyes murmured a good-night from far within the land of dreams, and then was borne away to the house out of which the life had wandered with his little feet.

"I don't know, Sallie," said Frank, when he had given all the eagerly demanded particu-

lars about the child's father, — "I don't know whether I should want many such holidays as this, in the course of the summer. On the whole, I think I 'd better overwork myself and not take any relaxation, if I mean to live long. And yet I 'm not sure that the day 's been altogether a failure, though all our purposes of enjoyment have miscarried. I did n't plan to find a lost child here, when I got home, and I 'm afraid I have n't had always the most Christian feeling towards him; but he 's really the saving grace of the affair; and if this were a little comedy I had been playing, I should turn him to account with the jaded audience, and advancing to the foot-lights, should say, with my hand on my waistcoat, and a neat bow, that although every hope of the day had been disappointed, and nothing I had meant to do had been done, yet the man who had ended at midnight by restoring a lost child to the arms of its father, must own that, in spite of adverse fortune, he had enjoyed A Day's Pleasure."

BUYING A HORSE.

BUYING A HORSE.

IF one has money enough, there seems no reason why one should not go and buy such a horse as he wants. This is the commonly accepted theory, on which the whole commerce in horses is founded, and on which my friend proceeded.

He was about removing from Charlesbridge, where he had lived many happy years without a horse, farther into the country, where there were charming drives and inconvenient distances, and where a horse would be very desirable, if not quite necessary. But as a horse seemed at first an extravagant if not sinful desire, he be-

gan by talking vaguely round, and rather hinting than declaring that he thought somewhat of buying. The professor to whom he first intimated his purpose flung himself from his horse's back to the grassy border of the sidewalk where my friend stood, and said he would give him a few points. "In the first place don't buy a horse that shows much daylight under him, unless you buy a horse-doctor *with* him; get a short-legged horse; and he ought to be short and thick in the barrel," — or words to that effect. "Don't get a horse with a narrow forehead: there are horse-fools as well as the other kind, and you want a horse with room for brains. And look out that he 's *all right forward.*"

"What 's that?" asked my friend, hearing this phrase for the first time.

"That he is n't tender in his fore-feet, — that the hoof is n't contracted," said the professor, pointing out the well-planted foot of his own animal.

"What ought I to pay for a horse?" pursued my friend, struggling to fix the points given by the professor in a mind hitherto unused to points of the kind.

"Well, horses are cheap, now; and you ought to get a fair family horse — You want a family horse?"

"Yes."

"Something you can ride and drive both? Something your children can drive?"

"Yes, yes."

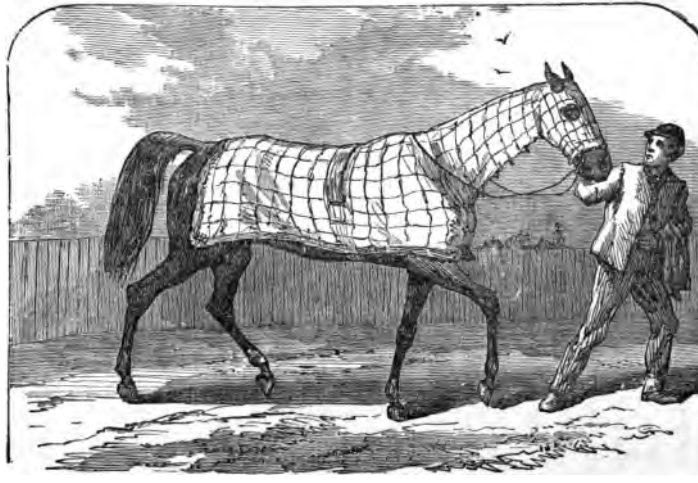
"Well, you ought to get such a horse as that for a hundred and twenty-five dollars."

This was the figure my friend had thought of; he drew a breath of relief. "Where did you buy your horse?"

"Oh, I always get my horses" — the plural abashed my friend — "at the Chevaliers'. If you throw yourself on their mercy, they 'll treat you well. I 'll send you a note to them."

"Do!" cried my friend, as the professor sprang upon his horse, and galloped away.

My friend walked home encouraged; his purpose of buying a horse had not seemed so monstrous, at least to this hardened offender. He now began to announce it more boldly; he said right and left that he wished to buy a horse, but that he would not go above a hundred. This was not true, but he wished to act prudently, and to pay a hundred and twenty-five only in extremity. He carried the professor's note to the Chevaliers', who duly honored it, understood at once what my friend wanted, and said they would look out for him. They were sorry he had not happened in a little sooner, — they had just sold the very horse he wanted. I may as well say here that they were not able to find him a horse, but that they used him with the strictest honor, and that short of supplying his want they were perfect.



His premises at certain hours of the morning presented the effect of a Horse-Fair.

In the mean time the irregular dealers began to descend upon him, as well as amateurs to whom he had mentioned his wish for a horse, and his premises at certain hours of the morning presented the effect of a horse-fair, or say rather a museum of equine bricabrac. At first he blushed at the spectacle, but he soon became hardened to it, and liked the excitement of driving one horse after another round the block, and deciding upon him. To a horse, they had none of the qualities commended by the professor, but they had many others which the dealers praised. These persons were not discouraged when he refused to buy, but cheerfully returned the next day with others differently ruinous. They were men of a spirit more obliging than my friend has found in other walks. One of them, who paid him a prefatory visit in his library, in five minutes augmented from six to seven hundred and fifty pounds the weight of a pony-horse,

which he wished to sell. ("What you want," said the Chevaliers, "is a pony-horse," and my friend, gratefully catching at the phrase, had gone about saying he wanted a pony-horse. After that, hulking brutes of from eleven to thirteen hundred pounds were every day brought to him as pony-horses.) The same dealer came another day with a mustang, in whom was no fault, and who had every appearance of speed, but who was only marking time as it is called in military drill, I believe, when he seemed to be getting swiftly over the ground; he showed a sociable preference for the curbstone in turning corners, and was condemned, to be replaced the next evening by a pony-horse that a child might ride or drive, and that especcially would not shy. Upon experiment, he shied half across the road, and the fact was reported to the dealer. He smiled compassionately. "What did he shy *at?*"

"A wheelbarrow."

"Well! I never see the hoss *yet* that *would n't* shy at a wheelbarrow."

My friend owned that a wheelbarrow was of an alarming presence, but he had his reserves respecting the self-control and intelligence of this pony-horse. The dealer amiably withdrew him, and said that he would bring next day a horse — if he could get the owner to part with a family pet — that *would* suit; but upon investigation it appeared that this treasure was what is called a calico-horse, and my friend, who was without the ambition to figure in the popular eye as a stray circus-rider, declined to see him.

These adventurous spirits were not squeamish. They thrust their hands into the lathery mouths of their brutes to show the state of their teeth, and wiped their fingers on their trousers or grass afterwards, without a tremor, though my friend could never forbear a shudder at the sight. If sometimes they came with a desirable

animal, the price was far beyond his modest figure; but generally they seemed to think that he did not want a desirable animal. In most cases, the pony-horse pronounced sentence upon himself by some gross and ridiculous blemish; but sometimes my friend failed to hit upon any tenable excuse for refusing him. In such an event, he would say, with an air of easy and candid comradery, "Well, now, what's the matter with him?" And then the dealer, passing his hand down one of the pony-horse's fore-legs, would respond, with an upward glance of searching inquiry at my friend, "Well, he's a leetle mite tender for'a'd."

I am afraid my friend grew to have a cruel pleasure in forcing them to this exposure of the truth; but he excused himself upon the ground that they never expected him to be alarmed at this tenderness forward, and that their truth was not a tribute to virtue, but was contempt of his

ignorance. Nevertheless, it was truth; and he felt that it must be his part thereafter to confute the common belief that there is no truth in horse-trades.

These people were not usually the owners of the horses they brought, but the emissaries or agents of the owners. Often they came merely to show a horse, and were not at all sure that his owner would part with him on any terms, as he was a favorite with the ladies of the family. An impenetrable mystery hung about the owner, through which he sometimes dimly loomed as a gentleman in failing health, who had to give up his daily drives, and had no use for the horse. There were cases in which the dealer came secretly, from pure zeal, to show a horse whose owner supposed him still in the stable, and who must be taken back before his absence was noticed. If my friend insisted upon knowing the owner and conferring with him, in any of these instances, it was

darkly admitted that he was a gentleman in the livery business over in Somerville or down in the Lower Port. Truth, it seemed, might be absent or present in a horse-trade, but mystery was essential.

The dealers had a jargon of their own, in which my friend became an expert. They did not say that a horse weighed a thousand pounds, but ten hundred; he was not worth a hundred and twenty-five dollars, but one and a quarter; he was not going on seven years old, but was coming seven. There are curious facts, by the way, in regard to the age of horses which are not generally known. A horse is never of an even age: that is, he is not six, or eight, or ten, but five, or seven, or nine years old; he is sometimes, but not often, eleven; he is *never* thirteen; his favorite time of life is seven, and he rarely gets beyond it, if on sale. My friend found the number of horses brought into the world in 1871 quite beyond computation.

He also found that most hard-working horses were sick or ailing, as most hard-working men and women are; that perfectly sound horses are as rare as perfectly sound human beings, and are apt, like the latter, to be vicious.

He began to have a quick eye for the characteristics of horses, and could walk round a proffered animal and scan his points with the best. "What," he would ask, of a given beast, "makes him let his lower lip hang down in that imbecile manner?"

"Oh, he's got a parrot-mouth. Some folks like 'em." Here the dealer would pull open the creature's flabby lips, and discover a beak like that of a polyp; and the cleansing process on the grass or trousers would take place.

Of another. "What makes him trot in that spread-out, squatty way, behind?" he demanded, after the usual tour of the block.

"He travels wide. Horse men prefer that."

They preferred any ugliness or awkwardness in a horse to the opposite grace or charm, and all that my friend could urge, in meek withdrawal from negotiation, was that he was not of an educated taste. In the course of long talks, which frequently took the form of warnings, he became wise in the tricks practiced by all dealers except his interlocutor. One of these, a device for restoring youth to an animal nearing the dangerous limit of eleven, struck him as peculiarly ingenious. You pierce the forehead, and blow into it with a quill; this gives an agreeable fullness, and erects the drooping ears in a spirited and mettlesome manner, so that a horse coming eleven will look for a time as if he were coming five.

After a thorough course of the volunteer dealers, and after haunting the Chevaliers' stables for several weeks, my friend found

that not money alone was needed to buy a horse. The affair began to wear a sinister aspect. He had an uneasy fear that in several cases he had refused the very horse he wanted with the *aplomb* he had acquired in dismissing undesirable beasts. The fact was he knew less about horses than when he began to buy, while he had indefinitely enlarged his idle knowledge of men, of their fatuity and hollowness. He learned that men whom he had always envied their brilliant omniscience in regard to horses, as they drove him out behind their dashing trotters, were quite ignorant and helpless in the art of buying; they always got somebody else to buy their horses for them. "Find a man you can trust," they said, "and then put yourself in his hands. And *never* trust anybody about the health of a horse. Take him to a veterinary surgeon, and have him go all over him."

My friend grew sardonic; then he grew melancholy and haggard. There was some-

thing very strange in the fact that a person unattainted of crime, and not morally disabled in any known way, could not take his money and buy such a horse as he wanted with it. His acquaintance began to recommend men to him. "If you want a horse, Captain Jenks is your man." "Why don't you go to Major Snaffle? He'd take pleasure in it." But my friend, naturally reluctant to trouble others, and sickened by long failure, as well as maddened by the absurdity that if you wanted a horse you must first get a man, neglected this really good advice. He lost his interest in the business, and dismissed with lack-lustre indifference the horses which continued to be brought to his gate. He felt that his position before the community was becoming notorious and ridiculous. He slept badly; his long endeavor for a horse ended in nightmares.

One day he said to a gentleman whose turn-out he had long admired, "I wonder if you could n't find me a horse!"

"Want a horse?"

"Want a horse! I thought my need was known beyond the sun. I thought my want of a horse was branded on my forehead."

This gentleman laughed, and then he said, "I've just seen a mare that would suit you. I thought of buying her, but I want a match, and this mare is too small. She'll be round here in fifteen minutes, and I'll take you out with her. Can you wait?"

"Wait!" My friend laughed in his turn.

The mare dashed up before the fifteen minutes had passed. She was beautiful, black as a coal; and kind as a kitten, said her driver. My friend thought her head was rather big. "Why, yes, she's a *pony*-horse; that's what I like about her."

She trotted off wonderfully, and my friend felt that the thing was now done.

The gentleman, who was driving, laid

his head on one side, and listened. "Clicks, don't she?"

"She *does* click," said my friend obligingly.

"Hear it?" asked the gentleman.

"Well, if you ask me," said my friend, "I *don't* hear it. What *is* clicking?"

"Oh, striking the heel of her fore-foot with the toe of her hind-foot. Sometimes it comes from bad shoeing. Some people like it. I don't myself." After a while he added, "If you can get this mare for a hundred and twenty-five, you 'd better buy her."

"Well, I will," said my friend. He would have bought her, in fact, if she had clicked like a noiseless sewing-machine. But the owner, remote as Medford, and invisibly dealing, as usual, through a third person, would not sell her for one and a quarter; he wanted one and a half. Besides, another Party was trying to get her; and now ensued a negotiation which for

intricacy and mystery surpassed all the others. It was conducted in my friend's interest by one who had the difficult task of keeping the owner's imagination in check and his demands within bounds, for it soon appeared that he wanted even more than one and a half for her. Unseen and inaccessible, he grew every day more unmanageable. He entered into relations with the other Party, and it all ended in his sending her out one day after my friend had gone into the country, and requiring him to say at once that he would give one and a half. He was not at home, and he never saw the little mare again. This confirmed him in the belief that she was the very horse he ought to have had.

People had now begun to say to him, "Why don't you advertise? Advertise for a gentleman's pony-horse and phaeton and harness complete. You 'll have a perfect procession of them before night." This proved true. His advertisement, mystically

worded after the fashion of those things found abundant response. But the establishments which he would have taken he could not get at the figure he had set, and those which his money would buy he would not have. They came at all hours of the day; and he never returned home after an absence without meeting the reproach that *now* the very horse he wanted had just been driven away, and would not be brought back, as his owner lived in Billerica, and only happened to be down. A few equipages really appeared desirable, but in regard to these his jaded faculties refused to work: he could decide nothing; his volition was extinct; he let them come and go.

It was at this period that people who had at first been surprised that he wished to buy a horse came to believe that he had bought one, and were astonished to learn that he had not. He felt the pressure of public opinion.

He began to haunt the different sale-stables in town, and to look at horses with a view to buying at private sale. Every facility for testing them was offered him, but he could not make up his mind. In feeble wantonness he gave appointments which he knew he should not keep, and, passing his days in an agony of multitudinous indecision, he added to the lies in the world the hideous sum of his broken engagements. From time to time he forlornly appeared at the Chevaliers', and refreshed his corrupted nature by contact with their sterling integrity. Once he ventured into their establishment just before an auction began, and remained dazzled by the splendor of a spectacle which I fancy can be paralleled only by some dream of a mediæval tournament. The horses, brilliantly harnessed, accurately shod, and standing tall on burnished hooves, their necks curved by the check rein and their black and blonde manes flowing over the proud arch, lustrous

and wrinkled like satin, were ranged in a glittering hemicycle. They affected my friend like the youth and beauty of his earliest evening parties; he experienced a sense of bashfulness, of sickening personal demerit. He could not have had the audacity to bid on one of those superb creatures, if all the Chevaliers together had whispered him that here at last was the very horse.

I pass over an unprofitable interval in which he abandoned himself to despair, and really gave up the hope of being able ever to buy a horse. During this interval he removed from Charlesbridge to the country, and found himself, to his self-scorn and self-pity, actually reduced to hiring a livery horse by the day. But relief was at hand. The carpenter who had remained to finish up the new house after my friend had gone into it bethought himself of a firm in his place who brought on horses from the West, and had the practice of selling a

horse on trial, and constantly replacing it with other horses till the purchaser was suited. This seemed an ideal arrangement, and the carpenter said that he *thought* they had the very horse my friend wanted.

The next day he drove him up, and upon the plan of successive exchanges till the perfect horse was reached, my friend bought him for one and a quarter, the figure which he had kept in mind from the first. He bought a phaeton and harness from the same people, and when the whole equipage stood at his door, he felt the long-delayed thrill of pride and satisfaction. The horse was of the Morgan breed, a bright bay, small and round and neat, with a little head tossed high, and a gentle yet alert movement. He was in the prime of youth, of the age of which every horse desires to be, and was just coming seven. My friend had already taken him to a horse-doctor, who for one dollar had gone all over him, and pronounced him sound as

a fish, and complimented his new owner upon his acquisition. It all seemed too good to be true. As Billy turned his soft eye on the admiring family group, and suffered one of the children to smooth his nose while another held a lump of sugar to his dainty lips, his amiable behavior restored my friend to his peace of mind and his long-lost faith in a world of reason.

The ridiculous planet, wavering bat-like through space, on which it had been impossible for an innocent man to buy a suitable horse was a dream of the past, and he had the solid, sensible old earth under his feet once more. He mounted into the phaeton and drove off with his wife; he returned and gave each of the children a drive in succession. He told them that any of them could drive Billy as much as they liked, and he quieted a clamor for exclusive ownership on the part of each by declaring that Billy belonged to the whole family. To this day he cannot look back

to those moments without tenderness. If Billy had any apparent fault, it was an amiable indolence. But this made him all the safer for the children, and it did not really amount to laziness. While on sale he had been driven in a provision cart, and had therefore the habit of standing unhitched. One had merely to fling the reins into the bottom of the phaeton and leave Billy to his own custody. His other habit of drawing up at kitchen gates was not confirmed, and the fact that he stumbled on his way to the doctor who pronounced him blameless was reasonably attributed to a loose stone at the foot of the hill; the misstep resulted in a barked shin, but a little wheel-grease, in a horse of Billy's complexion, easily removed the evidence of this.

It was natural that after Billy was bought and paid for, several extremely desirable horses should be offered to my friend by their owners, who came in person,

stripped of all the adventitious mystery of agents and middle-men. They were gentlemen, and they spoke the English habitual with persons not corrupted by horses. My friend saw them come and go with grief; for he did not like to be shaken in his belief that Billy was the only horse in the world for him, and he would have liked to purchase their animals, if only to show his appreciation of honor and frankness and sane language. Yet he was consoled by the possession of Billy, whom he found increasingly excellent and trustworthy. Any of the family drove him about; he stood unhitched; he was not afraid of cars; he was as kind as a kitten; he had not, as the neighboring coachman said, a voice, though he seemed a little loively in coming out of the stable sometimes. He went well under the saddle; he was a beauty, and if he had a voice, it was too great satisfaction in his personal appearance.

One evening after tea, the young gentle-

man, who was about to drive Billy out, stung by the reflection that he had not taken blackberries and cream twice, ran into the house to repair the omission, and left Billy, as usual, unhitched at the door. During his absence, Billy caught sight of his stable, and involuntarily moved towards it. Finding himself unchecked, he gently increased his pace; and when my friend, looking up from the melon-patch which he was admiring, called out, "Ho, Billy! Whoa, Billy!" and headed him off from the gap, Billy profited by the circumstance to turn into the pear orchard. The elastic turf under his unguided hoof seemed to exhilarate him; his pace became a trot, a canter, a gallop, a tornado; the reins fluttered like ribbons in the air; the phaeton flew ruining after. In a terrible cyclone the equipage swept round the neighbor's house, vanished, reappeared, swooped down his lawn, and vanished again. It was incredible.

My friend stood transfixed among his melons. He knew that his neighbor's children played under the porte-cochère on the other side of the house which Billy had just surrounded in his flight, and probably . . . . My friend's first impulse was not to go and see, but to walk into his own house, and ignore the whole affair. But you cannot really ignore an affair of that kind. You must face it, and commonly it stares you out of countenance. Commonly, too, it knows how to choose its time so as to disgrace as well as crush its victim. His neighbor had people to tea, and long before my friend reached the house the host and his guests were all out on the lawn, having taken the precaution to bring their napkins with them.

"The children!" gasped my friend.

"Oh, they were all in bed," said the neighbor, and he began to laugh. That was right; my friend would have mocked at the calamity if it had been his neigh-

bor's. "Let us go and look up your phaeton." He put his hand on the naked flank of a fine young elm, from which the bark had just been stripped. "Billy seems to have passed this way."

At the foot of a stone-wall four feet high lay the phaeton, with three wheels in the air, and the fourth crushed flat against the axle; the willow back was broken, the shafts were pulled out, and Billy was gone.

"Good thing there was nobody in it," said the neighbor.

"Good thing it did n't run down some Irish family, and get you in for damages," said a guest.

It appeared, then, that there were two good things about this disaster. My friend had not thought there were so many, but while he rejoiced in this fact, he rebelled at the notion that a sorrow like that rendered the sufferer in any event liable for damages, and he resolved that he never

would have paid them. But probably he would.

Some half-grown boys got the phaeton right-side up, and restored its shafts and cushions, and it limped away with them towards the carriage-house. Presently another half-grown boy came riding Billy up the hill. Billy showed an inflated nostril and an excited eye, but physically he was unharmed, save for a slight scratch on what was described as the off hind-leg; the reader may choose which leg this was.

"The worst of it is," said the guest, "that you never can trust 'em after they 've run off once."

"Have some tea?" said the host to my friend.

"No, thank you," said my friend, in whose heart the worst of it rankled; and he walked home embittered by his guilty consciousness that Billy ought never to have been left untied. But it was not this self-reproach; it was not the muti-

lated phaeton; it was not the loss of Billy, who must now be sold; it was the wreck of settled hopes, the renewed suspense of faith, the repetition of the tragical farce of buying another horse, that most grieved my friend.

Billy's former owners made a feint of supplying other horses in his place, but the only horse supplied was an aged veteran with the scratches, who must have come seven early in our era, and who, from his habit of getting about on tiptoe, must have been tender for'a'd beyond anything of my friend's previous experience. Probably if he could have waited they might have replaced Billy in time, but their next installment from the West produced nothing suited to his wants but a horse with the presence and carriage of a pig, and he preferred to let them sell Billy for what he would bring, and to trust his fate elsewhere. Billy had fallen nearly one half in value, and he brought

very little — to his owner; though the new purchaser was afterwards reported to value him at much more than what my friend had paid for him. These things are really mysteries; you cannot fathom them; it is idle to try. My friend remained grieving over his own folly and carelessness, with a fond hankering for the poor little horse he had lost, and the belief that he should never find such another. Yet he was not without a philanthropist's consolation. He had added to the stock of harmless pleasures in a degree of which he could not have dreamed. All his acquaintance knew that he had bought a horse, and they all seemed now to conspire in asking him how he got on with it. He was forced to confess the truth. On hearing it, his friends burst into shouts of laughter, and smote their persons, and stayed themselves against lamp-posts and house-walls. They begged his pardon, and then they began again,

and shouted and roared anew. Since the gale which blew down the poet ——'s chimneys and put him to the expense of rebuilding them, no joke so generally satisfactory had been offered to the community. My friend had, in his time, achieved the reputation of a wit by going about and and saying, "Did you know ——'s chimneys had blown down?" and he had now himself the pleasure of causing the like quality of wit in others.

Having abandoned the hope of getting anything out of the people who had sold him Billy, he was for a time the prey of an inert despair, in which he had not even spirit to repine at the disorder of a universe in which he could not find a horse. No horses were now offered to him, for it had become known throughout the trade that he had bought a horse. He had therefore to set about counteracting this impression with what feeble powers were left him. Of the facts of that period he

remembers with confusion and remorse the trouble to which he put the owner of the pony-horse Pansy, whom he visited repeatedly in a neighboring town, at a loss of time and money to himself, and with no result but to embarrass Pansy's owner in his relations with people who had hired him and did not wish him sold. Something of the old baffling mystery hung over Pansy's whereabouts; he was with difficulty produced, and when *en evidence* he was not the Pansy my friend had expected. He paltered with his regrets; he covered his disappointment with what pretenses he could; and he waited till he could telegraph back his adverse decision. His conclusion was that, next to proposing marriage, there was no transaction of life that involved so many delicate and complex relations as buying a horse, and that the rupture of a horse-trade was little less embarrassing and distressing to all concerned than a broken engagement. There was a

terrible intimacy in the affair; it was alarmingly personal. He went about sorrowing for the pain and disappointment he had inflicted on many amiable people of all degrees who had tried to supply him with a horse.

"Look here," said his neighbor, finding him in this low state, "why don't you get a horse of the gentleman who furnishes mine?" This had been suggested before, and my friend explained that he had disliked to make trouble. His scruples were lightly set aside, and he suffered himself to be entreated. The fact was he was so discouraged with his attempt to buy a horse that if any one had now given him such a horse as he wanted he would have taken it.

One sunny, breezy morning his neighbor drove my friend over to the beautiful farm of the good genius on whose kindly offices he had now fixed his languid hopes. I need not say what the landscape was in mid-August, or how, as they drew near the

farm, the air was enriched with the breath of vast orchards of early apples, — apples that no forced fingers rude shatter from their stems, but that ripen and mellow untouched, till they drop into the straw with which the orchard aisles are bedded; it is the poetry of horticulture; it is Art practicing the wise and gracious patience of Nature, and offering to the Market a Summer Sweeting of the Hesperides.

The possessor of this luscious realm at once took my friend's case into consideration; he listened, the owner of a hundred horses, with gentle indulgence to the shapeless desires of a man whose wildest dream was *one* horse. At the end he said, "I see you want a horse that can take care of himself."

"No," replied my friend, with the inspiration of despair. "I want a horse that can take care of me."

The good genius laughed, and turned the conversation. Neither he nor my

friend's neighbor was a man of many words, and like taciturn people they talked in low tones. The three moved about the room and looked at the Hispano-Roman pictures; they had a glass of sherry; from time to time something was casually murmured about Frank. My friend felt that he was in good hands, and left the affair to them. It ended in a visit to the stable, where it appeared that this gentleman had no horse to sell among his hundred which exactly met my friend's want, but that he proposed to lend him Frank while a certain other animal was put in training for the difficult office he required of a horse. One of the men was sent for Frank, and in the mean time my friend was shown some gaunt and graceful thoroughbreds, and taught to see the difference between them and the plebeian horse. But Frank, though no thoroughbred, eclipsed these patricians when he came. He had a little head, and a neck gallantly

arched; he was black and plump and smooth, and though he carried himself with a petted air, and was a dandy to the tips of his hooves, his knowing eye was kindly. He turned it upon my friend with the effect of understanding *his* case at a glance.

It was in this way that for the rest of the long, lovely summer peace was re-established in his heart. There was no question of buying or selling Frank; there were associations that endeared him beyond money to his owner; but my friend could take him without price. The situation had its humiliation for a man who had been arrogantly trying to buy a horse, but he submitted with grateful meekness, and with what grace Heaven granted him; and Frank gayly entered upon the peculiar duties of his position. His first duty was to upset all preconceived notions of the advantage of youth in a horse. Frank was not merely not coming seven or nine,

but his age was an even number, — he was sixteen; and it was his owner's theory, which Frank supported, that if a horse was well used he was a good horse till twenty-five.

The truth is that Frank looked like a young horse; he was a dandy without any of the ghastliness which attends the preservation of youth in old beaux of another species. When my friend drove him in the rehabilitated phaeton he felt that the turn-out was stylish, and he learned to consult certain eccentricities of Frank's in the satisfaction of his pride. One of these was a high reluctance to be passed on the road. Frank was as lazy a horse — but lazy in a self-respectful, æsthetic way — as ever was; yet if he heard a vehicle at no matter how great distance behind him (and he always heard it before his driver), he brightened with resolution and defiance, and struck out with speed that made competition difficult. If my friend found that

the horse behind was likely to pass Frank, he made a merit of holding him in. If they met a team, he lay back in his phaeton, and affected not to care to be going faster than a walk, any way.

One of the things for which he chiefly prized Frank was his skill in backing and turning. He is one of those men who become greatly perturbed when required to back and turn a vehicle; he cannot tell (till too late) whether he ought to pull the right rein in order to back to the left, or *vice versa;* he knows, indeed, the principle, but he becomes paralyzed in its application. Frank never was embarrassed, never confused. My friend had but to say, "Back, Frank!" and Frank knew from the nature of the ground how far to back and which way to turn. He has thus extricated my friend from positions in which it appeared to him that no earthly power could relieve him.

In going up hill Frank knew just when

to give himself a rest, and at what moment to join the party in looking about and enjoying the prospect. He was also an adept in scratching off flies, and had a precision in reaching an insect anywhere in his van with one of his rear hooves which few of us attain in slapping mosquitoes. This action sometimes disquieted persons in the phaeton, but Frank knew perfectly well what he was about, and if harm had happened to the people under his charge my friend was sure that Frank could have done anything short of applying arnica and telegraphing to their friends. His varied knowledge of life and his long experience had satisfied him that there were very few things to be afraid of in this world. Such womanish weaknesses as shying and starting were far from him, and he regarded the boisterous behavior of locomotives with indifference. He had not, indeed, the virtue of one horse offered to my friend's purchase, of standing, unmoved,

with his nose against a passing express train; but he was certainly not afraid of the cars.

Frank was by no means what Mr. Emerson calls a mush of concession; he was not merely amiable; he had his moments of self-assertion, his touches of asperity. It was not safe to pat his nose, like the erring Billy's; he was apt to bring his handsome teeth together in proximity to the caressing hand with a sharp click and a sarcastic grin. Not that he ever did, or ever would really bite. So, too, when left to stand long under fly-haunted cover, he he would start off afterwards with alarming vehemence; and he objected to the saddle. On the only occasion when any of my friend's family mounted him, he trotted gayly over the grass towards the house, with the young gentleman on his back; then, without warning, he stopped short, a slight tremor appeared to pass over him, and his rider continued the ex-

cursion some ten feet farther, alighting lump-wise on a bunch of soft turf which Frank had selected for his reception.

The summer passed, and in the comfort of Frank's possession my friend had almost abandoned the idea of ever returning him to his owner. He had thoughts of making the loan permanent, as something on the whole preferable to a purchase. The drives continued quite into December, over roads as smooth and hard as any in June, and the air was delicious. The first snow brought the suggestion of sleighing; but that cold weather about Christmas dispersed these gay thoughts, and restored my friend to virtue. Word came from the stable that Frank's legs were swelling from standing so long without going out, and my friend resolved to part with an animal for which he had no use. I do not praise him for this; it was no more than his duty; but I record his action in order to account for the fact that he is again

without a horse, and now, with the opening of the fine weather, is beginning once more to think of buying one.

But he is in no mood of arrogant confidence. He has satisfied himself that neither love nor money is alone adequate to the acquisition: the fates also must favor it. The horse which Frank's owner has had in training may or may not be just the horse he wants. He does not know; he humbly waits; and he trembles at the alternative of horses, mystically summoned from space, and multitudinously advancing upon him, parrot-mouthed, pony-gaited, tender for'a'd, and traveling wide behind.

FLITTING.

FLITTING.

I WOULD not willingly repose upon the friendship of a man whose local attachments are weak. I should not demand of my intimate that he have a yearning for the homes of his ancestors, or even the scenes of his own boyhood; that is not in American nature; on the contrary, he is but a poor creature who does not hate the village where he was born; yet a sentiment for the place where one has lived two or three years, the hotel where one has spent a week, the sleeping car in which one has ridden from Albany to Buffalo, — so much I should think it well to exact from my friend in proof

of that sensibility and constancy without which true friendship does not exist. So much I am ready to yield on my own part to a friend's demand, and I profess to have all the possible regrets for Benicia Street, now I have left it. Over its deficiencies I cast a veil of decent oblivion, and shall always try to look upon its worthy and consoling aspects, which were far the more numerous. It was never otherwise, I imagine, than an ideal region in very great measure; and if the reader whom I have sometimes seemed to direct thither, should seek it out, he would hardly find my Benicia Street by the city sign-board. Yet this is not wholly because it was an ideal locality, but because much of its reality has now become merely historical, a portion of the tragical poetry of the past. Many of the vacant lots abutting upon Benicia and the intersecting streets flourished up, during the four years we knew it, into fresh-painted wooden houses, and

the time came to be when one might have looked in vain for the abandoned hoop-skirts which used to decorate the desirable building-sites. The lessening pasturage also reduced the herds which formerly fed in the vicinity, and at last we caught the tinkle of the cow-bells only as the cattle were driven past to remoter meadows. And one autumn afternoon two laborers, hired by the city, came and threw up an earthwork on the opposite side of the street, which they said was a sidewalk, and would add to the value of property in the neighborhood. Not being dressed with coal-ashes, however, during the winter, the sidewalk vanished next summer under a growth of rag-weed, and hid the increased values with it, and it is now an even question whether this monument of municipal grandeur will finally be held by Art or resumed by Nature, — who indeed has a perpetual motherly longing for her own, and may be seen in all outlying and suburban

places, pathetically striving to steal back any neglected bits of ground and conceal them under her skirts of tattered and shabby verdure. But whatever is the event of this contest, and whatever the other changes wrought in the locality, it has not yet been quite stripped of the characteristic charms which first took our hearts, and which have been duly celebrated in these pages.

When the new house was chosen, we made preparations to leave the old one, but preparations so gradual, that, if we had cared much more than we did, we might have suffered greatly by the prolongation of the agony. We proposed to ourselves to escape the miseries of moving by transferring the contents of one room at a time, and if we did not laugh incredulously at people who said we had better have it over at once and be done with it, it was because we respected their feelings, and not because we believed them. We took

up one carpet after another; one wall after another we stripped of its pictures; we sent away all the books to begin with; and by this subtle and ingenious process, we reduced ourselves to the discomfort of living in no house at all, as it were, and of being at home in neither one place nor the other. Yet the logic of our scheme remained perfect; and I do not regret its failure in practice, for if we had been ever so loath to quit the old house, its inhospitable barrenness would finally have hurried us forth. In fact, does not life itself in some such fashion dismantle its tenement until it is at last forced out of the uninhabitable place? Are not the poor little comforts and pleasures and ornaments removed one by one, till life, if it would be saved, must go too? We took a lesson from the teachings of mortality, which are so rarely heeded, and we lingered over our moving. We made the process so gradual, indeed, that I do not feel myself all gone yet from the famil-

iar work-room, and for aught I can say, I still write there; and as to the guest chamber, it is so densely peopled by those it has lodged that it will never quite be emptied of them. Friends also are yet in the habit of calling in the parlor, and talking with us; and will the children never come off the stairs? Does life, our high exemplar, leave so much behind as we did? Is this what fills the world with ghosts?

In the getting ready to go, nothing hurt half so much as the sight of the little girl packing her doll's things for removal. The trousseaux of all those elegant creatures, the wooden, the waxen, the biscuit, the india-rubber, were carefully assorted, and arranged in various small drawers and boxes; their house was thoughtfully put in order and locked for transportation; their innumerable broken sets of dishes were packed in paper and set out upon the floor, a heart-breaking little basketful. Nothing real in this world is so affecting

as some image of reality, and this travesty of our own flitting was almost intolerable. I will not pretend to sentiment about anything else, for everything else had in it the element of self-support belonging to all actual afflictions. When the day of moving finally came, and the furniture wagon, which ought to have been only a shade less dreadful to us than a hearse, drew up at our door, our hearts were of a Neronian hardness.

"Were I Diogenes," says wrathful Charles Lamb in one of his letters, "I would not move out of a kilderkin into a hogshead, though the first had nothing but small beer in it, and the second reeked claret." I fancy this loathing of the transitionary state came in great part from the rude and elemental nature of the means of moving in Lamb's day. In our own time, in Charlesbridge at least, everything is so perfectly contrived, that it is in some ways a pleasant excitement to move;

though I do not commend the diversion to any but people of entire leisure, for it cannot be denied that it is, at any rate, an interruption to work. But little is broken, little is defaced, nothing is heedlessly outraged or put to shame. Of course there are in every house certain objects of comfort and even ornament which in a state of repose derive a sort of dignity from being cracked, or scratched, or organically debilitated, and give an idea of ancestral possession and of long descent to the actual owner; and you must not hope that this venerable quality will survive their public exposure upon the furniture wagon. There it instantly perishes, like the consequence of some country notable huddled and hustled about in the graceless and ignorant tumult of a great city. To tell the truth, the number of things that turn shabby under the ordeal of moving strikes a pang of unaccustomed poverty to the heart which, loving all manner of

makeshifts, is rich even in its dilapidations. For the time you feel degraded by the spectacle of that forlornness, and if you are a man of spirit, you try to sneak out of association with it in the mind of the passer-by; you keep scrupulously indoors, or if a fancied exigency obliges you to go back and forth between the old house and the new, you seek obscure byways remote from the great street down which the wagon flaunts your ruin and decay, and time your arrivals and departures so as to have the air of merely dropping in at either place. This consoles you; but it deceives no one; for the man who is moving is unmistakably stamped with transition.

Yet the momentary eclipse of these things is not the worst. It *is* momentary; for if you will but plant them in kindly corners and favorable exposures of the new house, a mould of respectability will gradually overspread them again, and they will

once more account for their presence by the air of having been a long time in the family; but there is danger that in the first moments of mortification you will be tempted to replace them with new and costly articles. Even the best of the old things are nothing to boast of in the hard, unpitying light to which they are exposed, and a difficult and indocile spirit of extravagance is evoked in the least profuse. Because of this fact alone I should not commend the diversion of moving save to people of very ample means as well as perfect leisure; there are more reasons than the misery of flitting why the dweller in the kilderkin should not covet the hogshead reeking of claret.

But the grosser misery of moving is, as I have hinted, vastly mitigated by modern science, and what remains of it one may use himself to with no tremendous effort. I have found that in the dentist's chair, — that ironically luxurious seat, cushioned

in satirical suggestion of impossible repose, — after a certain initial period of clawing, filing, scraping, and punching, one's nerves accommodate themselves to the torment; and one takes almost an objective interest in the operation of tooth-filling; and in like manner, after two or three wagon-loads of your household stuff have passed down the public street, and all your morbid associations with them have been desecrated, you begin almost to like it. Yet I cannot regard this abandon as a perfectly healthy emotion, and I do not counsel my reader to mount himself upon the wagon and ride to and fro even once, for afterwards the remembrance of such an excess will grieve him.

Of course, I meant to imply by this that moving sometimes comes to an end, though it is not easy to believe so while moving. The time really arrives when you sit down in your new house, and amid whatever disorder take your first meal there. This

meal is pretty sure to be that gloomy tea, that loathly repast of butter and toast, and some kind of cake, with which the soul of the early-dining American is daily cast down between the hours of six and seven in the evening; and instinctively you compare it with the last meal you took in your old house, seeking in vain to decide whether this is more dispiriting than that. At any rate that was not at all the meal which the last meal in any house which has been a home ought to be in fact, and is in books. It was hurriedly cooked; it was served upon fugitive and irregular crockery; and it was eaten in deplorable disorder, with the professional movers waiting for the table outside the dining-room. It ought to have been an act of serious devotion; it was nothing but an expiation. It should have been a solemn commemoration of all past dinners in the place, an invocation to their pleasant apparitions. But I, for my part, could not

recall these at all, though now I think of them with the requisite pathos, and I know they were perfectly worthy of remembrance. I salute mournfully the companies that have sat down at dinner there, for they are sadly scattered now; some beyond seas, some beyond the narrow gulf, so impassably deeper to our longing and tenderness than the seas. But more sadly still I hail the host himself, and desire to know of him if literature was not somehow a gayer science in those days, and if his peculiar kind of drolling had not rather more heart in it then. In an odd, not quite expressible fashion, something of him seems dispersed abroad and perished in the guests he loved. I trust, of course, that all will be restored to him when he turns — as every man past thirty feels he may when he likes, and has the time — and resumes his youth. Or if this feeling is only a part of the great tacit promise of eternity, I am all the more certain of his getting back his losses.

I say that now these apposite reflections occur to me with a sufficient ease, but that upon the true occasion for them they were absent. So, too, at the first meal in the new house, there was none of that desirable sense of setting up a family altar, but a calamitous impression of irretrievable upheaval, in honor of which sackcloth and ashes seemed the only wear. Yet even the next day the Lares and Penates had regained something of their wonted cheerfulness, and life had begun again with the first breakfast. In fact, I found myself already so firmly established that, meeting the furniture cart which had moved me the day before, I had the face to ask the driver whom they were turning out of house and home, as if my own flitting were a memory of the far-off past.

Not that I think the professional mover expects to be addressed in a joking mood. I have a fancy that he cultivates a serious spirit himself, in which he finds it easy to

sympathize with any melancholy on the part of the moving family. There is a slight flavor of undertaking in his manner, which is nevertheless full of a subdued firmness very consoling and supporting; though the life that he leads must be a troubled and uncheerful one, trying alike to the muscles and the nerves. How often must he have been charged by anxious and fluttered ladies to be very careful of that basket of china, and those vases! How often must he have been vexed by the ignorant terrors of gentlemen asking if he thinks that the library-table, poised upon the top of his load, will hold! His planning is not infallible, and when he breaks something uncommonly precious, what does a man of his sensibility do? Is the demolition of old homes really distressing to him, or is he inwardly buoyed up by hopes of other and better homes for the people he moves? Can there be any ideal of moving? Does he, perhaps, feel a pride in an artfully con-

structed load, and has he something like an artist's pang in unloading it? Is there a choice in families to be moved, and are some worse or better than others? Next to the lawyer and the doctor, it appears to me that the professional mover holds the most confidential relations towards his fellow-men. He is let into all manner of little domestic secrets and subterfuges; I dare say he knows where half the people in town keep their skeleton, and what manner of skeleton it is. As for me, when I saw him making towards a certain closet door, I planted myself firmly against it. He smiled intelligence; he knew the skeleton was there, and that it would be carried to the new house after dark.

I began by saying that I should wish my friend to have some sort of local attachment; but I supposed it must be owned that this sentiment, like pity, and the modern love-passion, is a thing so largely produced by culture that nature

seems to have little or nothing to do with it. The first men were homeless wanderers; the patriarchs dwelt in tents, and shifted their place to follow the pasturage, without a sigh; and for children — the pre-historic, the antique people, of our day — moving is a rapture. The last dinner in the old house, the first tea in the new, so doleful to their elders, are partaken of by them with joyous riot. Their shrill trebles echo gleefully from the naked walls and floors; they race up and down the carpetless stairs; they menace the dislocated mirrors and crockery; through all the chambers of desolation they frolic with a gayety indomitable save by bodily exhaustion. If the reader is of a moving family, — and so he is as he is an American, — he can recall the zest he found during childhood in the moving which had for his elders — poor victims of a factitious and conventional sentiment! — only the salt and bitterness of tears. His spirits never

fell till the carpets were down; no sorrow touched him till order returned; if Heaven so blessed him that his bed was made upon the floor for one night, the angels visited his dreams. Why, then, is the mature soul, however sincere and humble, not only grieved but mortified by flitting? Why cannot one move without feeling the great public eye fixed in pitying contempt upon him? This sense of abasement seems to be something quite inseparable from the act, which is often laudable, and in every way wise and desirable; and he whom it has afflicted is the first to turn, after his own establishment, and look with scornful compassion upon the overflowing furniture wagon as it passes. But I imagine that Abraham's neighbors, when he struck his tent, and packed his parlor and kitchen furniture upon his camels, and started off with Mrs. Sarah to seek a new camping-ground, did not smile at the procession, or find it worthy of ridicule or

lament. Nor did Abraham, once settled, and reposing in the cool of the evening at the door of his tent, gaze sarcastically upon the moving of any of his brother patriarchs.

To some such philosophical serenity we shall also return, I suppose, when we have wisely theorized life in our climate, and shall all have become nomads once more, following June and October up and down and across the continent, and not suffering the full malice of the winter and summer anywhere. But as yet, the derision that attaches to moving attends even the goer-out of town, and the man of many trunks and a retinue of linen-suited womankind is a pitiable and despicable object to all the other passengers at the railroad station and on the steamboat wharf.

This is but one of many ways in which mere tradition oppresses us. I protest that as moving is now managed in Charlesbridge, there is hardly any reason

why the master or mistress of the household should put hand to anything; but it is a tradition that they shall dress themselves in their worst, as for heavy work, and shall go about very shabby for at least a day before and a day after the transition. It is a kind of sacrifice, I suppose, to a venerable ideal; and I would never be the first to omit it. In others I observe that this vacant and ceremonious zeal is in proportion to an incapacity to do anything that happens really to be required; and I believe that the trully sage person would devote moving-day to paying visits of ceremony in his finest clothes.

As to the house which one has left, I think it would be preferable to have it occupied as soon as possible after one's flitting. Pilgrimages to the dismantled shrine are certainly to be avoided by the friend of cheerfulness. A day's absence and emptiness wholly change its character, though the familiarity continues, with a

"Vacant and ceremonious zeal."

ghastly difference, as in the beloved face that the life has left. It is not at all the vacant house it was when you came first to look at it: for then hopes peopled it, and now memories.. In that golden prime you had long been boarding, and any place in which you could keep house seemed utterly desirable. How distinctly you recall that wet day, or that fair day, on which you went through it and decided that this should be the guest chamber and that the family room, and what could be done with the little back attic in a pinch! The children could play in the dining-room; and to be sure the parlor was rather small if you wanted to have company; but then, who would ever want to give a party? and besides, the pump in the kitchen was a compensation for anything. How lightly the dumb waiter ran up and down, —

"Qual piuma al vento!"

you sang, in very glad-heartedness. Then estimates of the number of yards of carpet-

ing; and how you could easily save the cost from the difference between boarding and house-keeping. Adieu, Mrs. Brown! henceforth let your "desirable apartments, *en suite* or single, furnished or unfurnished, to gentlemen only!"—this married pair is about to escape forever from your extortions.

Well, if the years passed without making us sadder, should we be much the wiser for their going? Now you know, little couple, that there are extortions in this wicked world beside Mrs. Brown's; and some other things. But if you go into the empty house that was lately your home, you will not, I believe, be haunted by these sordid disappointments, for the place should evoke other regrets and meditations. Truly, though the great fear has not come upon you here, in this room you may have known moments when it seemed very near, and when the quick, fevered breathings of the little one timed your own heart-beats. To

that door, with many other missives of joy and pain, came haply the dispatch which hurried you off to face your greatest sorrow — came by night, like a voice of God, speaking and warning, and making all your work idle and your aims foolish. These walls have answered, how many times, to your laughter; they have had friendly ears for the trouble that seemed to grow by utterance. You have sat upon the threshold so many summer days; so many winter mornings you have seen the snows drifted high about it; so often your step has been light and heavy upon it. There is the study, where your magnificent performances were planned, and your exceeding small performances were achieved; hither you hurried with the first criticism of your first book, and read it with the rapture that nothing but a love-letter and a favorable review can awaken. Out there is the well-known humble prospect, that was commonly but a vista into dream-land; on the other hand is the pretty grove,—

its leaves now a little painted with the autumn, and faltering to their fall.

Yes, the place must always be sacred, but painfully sacred; and, I say again, one should not go near it unless as a penance. If the reader will suffer me the confidence, I will own that there is always a pang in the past which is more than any pleasure it can give, and I believe that he, if he were perfectly honest, — as Heaven forbid I or any one should be,—would also confess as much. There is no house to which one would return, having left it, though it were the hogshead out of which one had moved into a kilderkin; for those associations whose perishing leaves us free, and preserves to us what little youth we have, were otherwise perpetuated to our burden and bondage. Let some one else, who has also escaped from his past, have your old house; he will find it new and untroubled by memories, while you, under another roof, enjoy a present that borders only upon the future.

THE MOUSE.

THE MOUSE.

WISHING to tell the story of our Mouse, because I think it illustrates some amusing traits of character in a certain class of Italians, I explain at once that he was not a mouse, but a man so called from his wretched, trembling little manner, his fugitive expression, and peaked visage.

He first appeared to us on the driver's seat of that carriage in which we posted so splendidly one spring-time from Padua to Ponte Lagoscuro. But though he mounted to his place just outside the city gate, we did not regard him much, nor, indeed, observe what a mouse he was until the

driver stopped to water his horses near Battaglia, and the Mouse got down to stretch his forlorn little legs. Then I got down too, and bade him good-day, and told him it was a very hot day — for he was a mouse apparently so plunged in wretchedness that I doubted if he knew what kind of day it was.

When I had spoken, he began to praise (in the wary manner of the Venetians when they find themselves in the company of a foreigner who does not look like an Englishman) the Castle of the Obizzi near by, which is now the country-seat of the ex-Duke of Modena; and he presently said something to imply that he thought me a German.

"But I am not a German," said I.

"As many excuses," said the Mouse sadly, but with evident relief; and then began to talk more freely, and of the evil times.

"Are you going all the way with us to Florence?" I asked.

"No, signor, to Bologna; from there to Ancona."

"Have you ever been in Venice? We are just coming from there."

"Oh, yes."

"It is a beautiful place. Do you like it?"

"Sufficiently. But one does not enjoy himself very well there."

"But I thought Venice interesting."

"Sufficiently, signor. *Ma!*" said the Mouse, shrugging his shoulders, and putting on the air of being luxuriously fastidious in his choice of cities, "the water is so bad in Venice."

The Mouse is dressed in a heavy winter overcoat, and has no garment to form a compromise with his shirt-sleeves, if he should wish to render the weather more endurable by throwing off the surtout. In spite of his momentary assumption of consequence, I suspect that his coat is in the Monte di Pietà. It comes out directly

that he is a ship-carpenter who has worked in the Arsenal of Venice, and at the ship-yards in Trieste.

But there is no work any more. He went to Trieste lately to get a job on the three frigates which the Sultan had ordered to be built there. *Ma!* After all, the frigates are to be built in Marseilles instead. There is nothing. And everything is so dear. In Venetia you spend much and gain little. Perhaps there is work at Ancona.

By this time the horses are watered; the Mouse regains his seat, and we almost forget him, till he jumps from his place, just before we reach the hotel in Rovigo, and disappears — down the first hole in the side of a house, perhaps. He might have done much worse, and spent the night at the hotel, as we did.

The next morning at four o'clock, when we start, he is on the box again, nibbling bread and cheese, and glancing furtively

back at us to say good morning. He has little twinkling black eyes, just like a mouse, and a sharp mustache, and sharp tuft on his chin — as like Victor Emanuel's as a mouse's tuft can be.

The cold morning air seems to shrivel him, and he crouches into a little gelid ball on the seat beside the driver, while we wind along the Po on the smooth gray road; while the twilight lifts slowly from the distances of field and vineyard; while the black boats of the Po, with their gaunt white sails, show spectrally through the mists; while the trees and the bushes break into innumerable voice, and the birds are glad of another day in Italy; while the peasant drives his mellow-eyed, dun oxen afield; while his wife comes in her scarlet bodice to the door, and the children's faces peer out from behind her skirts; while the air freshens, the east flushes, and the great miracle is wrought anew.

Once again, before we reach the ferry of the Po, the Mouse leaps down and disappears as mysteriously as at Rovigo. We see him no more till we meet in the station on the other side of the river, where we hear him bargaining long and earnestly with the ticket-seller for a third-class passage to Bologna. He fails to get it, I think, at less than the usual rate, for he retires from the contest more shrunken and forlorn than ever, and walks up and down the station, startled at a word, shocked at any sudden noise.

For curiosity, I ask how much he paid for crossing the river, mentioning the fabulous sum it had cost us.

It appears that he had paid sixteen soldi only. "What could they do when a man was in misery? I had nothing else."

Even while thus betraying his poverty, the Mouse did not beg, and we began to respect his poverty. In a little while we pitied it, witnessing the manner in which

he sat down on the edge of a chair, with a smile of meek desperation.

It is a more serious case when an artisan is out of work in the Old World than one can understand in the New. There the struggle for bread is so fierce and the competition so great; and then, a man bred to one trade cannot turn his hand to another as in America. Even the rudest and least skilled labor has more to do it than are wanted. The Italians are very good to the poor, but the tradesman out of work must become a beggar before charity can help him.

We, who are poor enough to be wise, consult foolishly together concerning the Mouse. It blesses him that gives, and him that takes — this business of charity. And then, there is something irresistibly relishing and splendid in the consciousness of being the instrument of a special providence! Have I all my life admired those beneficent characters in novels and come-

dies who rescue innocence, succor distress, and go about pressing gold into the palm of poverty, and telling it to take it and be happy; and now shall I reject an occasion, made to my hand, for emulating them in real life?

"I think I will give the Mouse five francs," I say.

"Yes, certainly."

"But I will be prudent," I continue. "I will not *give* him this money. I will tell him it is a loan which he may pay me back again whenever he can. In this way I shall relieve him now, and furnish him an incentive to economy."

I call to the Mouse, and he runs tremulously toward me.

"Have you friends in Ancona?"

"No, signor."

"How much money have you left?"

He shows me three soldi. "Enough for a coffee."

"And then?"

"God knows."

So I give him the five francs, and explain my little scheme of making it a loan, and not a gift; and then I give him my address.

He does not appear to understand the scheme of the loan; but he takes the money, and is quite stunned by his good fortune. He thanks me absently, and goes and shows the piece to the guards, with a smile that illumines and transfigures his whole person. At Bologna, he has come to his senses; he loads me with blessings, he is ready to weep; he reverences me, he wishes me a good voyage, endless prosperity, and innumerable days; and takes the train for Ancona.

"Ah, ah!" I congratulate myself, — "is it not a fine thing to be the instrument of a special providence?"

It is pleasant to think of the Mouse during all that journey, and if we are never so tired, it rests us to say, "I won-

der where the Mouse is by this time?" When we get home, and coldly count up our expenses, we rejoice in the five francs lent to the Mouse. "And I know he will pay it back if ever he can," I say. "That was a Mouse of integrity."

Two weeks later comes a comely young woman, with a young child — a child strong on its legs, a child which tries to open everything in the room, which wants to pull the cloth off the table, to throw itself out of the open window — a child of which I have never seen the peer for restlessness and curiosity. This young woman has been directed to call on me as a person likely to pay her way to Ferrara.

"But who sent you? But, in fine, why should I pay your way to Ferrara? I have never seen you before."

"My husband, whom you benefited on his way to Ancona, sent me. Here is his letter and the card you gave him."

I call out to my fellow-victim, — "My dear, here is news of the Mouse!"

"Don't *tell* me he 's sent you that money already!"

"Not at all. He has sent me his wife and child, that I may forward them to him at Ferrara, out of my goodness, and the boundless prosperity which has followed his good wishes — I, who am a great signor in his eyes, and an insatiable giver of five-franc pieces — the instrument of a perpetual special providence. The Mouse has found work at Ferrara, and his wife comes here from Trieste. As for the rest, I am to send her to him, as I said."

"You are deceived," I say solemnly to the Mouse's wife. "I am not a rich man. I lent your husband five francs because he had nothing. I am sorry; but I cannot spare twenty florins to send you to Ferrara. If *one* will help you?"

"Thanks the same," said the young woman, who was well dressed enough; and blessed me, and gathered up her child, and went her way.

But her blessing did not lighten my heart, depressed and troubled by so strange an end to my little scheme of a beneficent loan. After all, perhaps the Mouse may have been as keenly disappointed as myself. With the ineradicable idea of the Italians, that persons who speak English are wealthy by nature, and *tutti originali*, it was not such an absurd conception of the case to suppose that if I had lent him five francs once, I should like to do it continually. Perhaps he may yet pay back the loan with usury. But I doubt it. In the mean time, I am far from blaming the Mouse. I merely feel that there is a misunderstanding, which I can pardon if he can.

A YEAR IN A VENETIAN PALACE.

A YEAR IN A VENETIAN PALACE.

THE last of four years which it was our fortune to live in the city of Venice was passed under the roof of one of her most beautiful and memorable palaces, namely, the Palazzo Giustiniani, whither we went, as has been told in an earlier chapter of this book, to escape the encroaching nepotism of Giovanna, the flower of serving-women. The experience now, in Cambridge, Mass., refuses to consort with ordinary remembrances, and has such a fantastic preference for the company of rather vivid and circumstantial dreams, that it is with no very strong hope

of making it seem real that I shall venture to speak of it.

The Giustiniani were a family of patricians very famous during the times of a Republic that gave so many splendid names to history, and the race was preserved to the honor and service of Saint Mark by one of the most romantic facts of his annals. During a war with the Greek Emperor in the twelfth century every known Giustiniani was slain, and the heroic strain seemed lost forever. But the state that mourned them bethought itself of a half forgotten monk of their house, who was wasting his life in the Convent of San Nicolò; he was drawn forth from this seclusion, and, the permission of Rome being won, he was married to the daughter of the reigning doge. From them descended the Giustiniani of after times, who still exist; indeed, in the year 1865 there came one day a gentleman of the family,

and tried to buy from our landlord that part of the palace which we so humbly and insufficiently inhabited. It is said that as the unfrocked friar and his wife declined in life they separated, and as if in doubt of what had been done for the state through them, retired each into a convent, Giustiniani going back to San Nicolò, and dying at last to the murmur of the Adriatic waves along the Lido's sands.

Next after this Giustiniani I like best to think of that latest hero of the family, who had the sad fortune to live when the ancient Republic fell at a threat of Napoleon, and who alone among her nobles had the courage to meet with a manly spirit the insolent menaces of the conqueror. The Giustiniani governed Treviso for the Senate; he refused, when Napoleon ordered him from his presence, to quit Treviso without the command of the Senate; he flung back the taunts of bad faith cast upon the Venetians; and when Napoleon

changed his tone from that of disdain to one of compliment, and promised that in the general disaster he was preparing for Venice, Giustiniani should be spared, the latter generously replied that he had been a friend of the French only because the Senate was so; as to the immunity offered, all was lost to him in the loss of his country, and he should blush for his wealth if it remained intact amidst the ruin of his countrymen.

The family grew in riches and renown from age to age, and, some four centuries after the marriage of the monk, they reared the three beautiful Gothic palaces, in the noblest site on the Grand Canal, whence on one hand you can look down to the Rialto Bridge, and on the other far up towards the church of the Salute, and the Basin of Saint Mark. The architects were those Buoni, father and son, who did some of the most beautiful work on the *Ducal* Palace, and who wrought in an

equal inspiration upon these homes of the Giustiniani, building the delicate Gothic arches of the windows, with their slender columns and their graceful balconies, and crowning all with the airy battlements.

The largest of the three palaces became later the property of the Foscari family, and here dwelt with his father that unhappy Jacopo Foscari, who after thrice suffering torture by the state for a murder he never did, at last died in exile; hither came the old Doge Foscari, who had consented to this cruel error of the state, and who after a life spent in its service was deposed and disgraced before his death; and hither, when he lay dead, came remorseful Venice, and claimed for sumptuous obsequies the dust which his widow yielded with bitter reproaches. Here the family faded away generation by generation, till (according to the tale told us) early in this century, when the ultimate male survivor of the line had died, under

a false name, in London, where he had been some sort of obscure actor, there were but two old maiden sisters left, who, lapsing into imbecility, were shown to strangers by the rascal servants as the last of the Foscari; and here in our time was quartered a regiment of Austrian troops, whose neatly pipe-clayed belts decorated the balconies on which the princely ladies of the house had rested their jeweled arms in other days.

The Foscari added a story to the palace to distinguish it from the two other palaces Giustiniani, but these remain to the present day as they were originally planned. That in which we lived was called Palazzo Giustiniani of the Bishops, because one of the family was the first patriarch of Venice. After his death he was made a saint by the Pope; and it is related that he was not only a very pious, but a very good man. In his last hours he admitted his beloved *people to* his chamber, where he meekly

lay upon a pallet of straw, and at the moment he expired, two monks in the solitude of their cloister, heard an angelical harmony in the air: the clergy performed his obsequies not in black, funereal robes, but in white garments, and crowned with laurel, and bearing gilded torches, and although the patriarch had died of a malignant fever, his body was miraculously preserved incorrupt during the sixty-five days that the obsequies lasted. The other branch of the family was called the Giustiniani of the Jewels, from the splendor of their dress; but neither palace now shelters any of their magnificent race. The edifice on our right was exclusively occupied by a noble Viennese lady, who as we heard, — vaguely, in the right Venetian fashion, — had been a ballet-dancer in her youth, and who now in her matronly days dwelt apart from her husband, the Russian count, and had gondoliers in blue silk, and the finest gondola on the Grand Canal, but was

a plump, florid lady, looking long past beauty, even as we saw her from our balcony.

Our own palace — as we absurdly grew to call it — was owned and inhabited in a manner much more proper to modern Venice, the proprietorship being about equally divided between our own landlord and a very well known Venetian painter, son of a painter still more famous. This artist was a very courteous old gentleman, who went with Italian and clock-like regularity every evening in summer to a certain caffè, where he seemed to make it a point of conscience to sip one sherbet, and to read the "Journal des Débats." In his coming and going we met him so often that we became friends, and he asked us many times to visit him, and see his father's pictures, and some famous frescos with which his part of the palace was adorned. It was a characteristic trait of our life, that though *we constantly* meant to avail ourselves of

this kindness, we never did so. But we continued in the enjoyment of the beautiful garden, which this gentleman owned at the rear of the palace and on which our chamber windows looked. It was full of oleanders and roses, and other bright and odorous blooms, which we could enjoy perfectly well without knowing their names; and I could hardly say whether the garden was more charming when it was in its summer glory, or when, on some rare winter day, a breath from the mountains had clothed its tender boughs and sprays with a light and evanescent flowering of snow. At any season the lofty palace walls rose over it, and shut it in a pensive seclusion which was loved by the old mother of the painter and by his elderly maiden sister. These often walked on its moss-grown paths, silent as the roses and oleanders to which one could have fancied the blossom of their youth had flown; and sometimes there came to them there, grave, black-

gowned priests, — for the painter's was a devout family, — and talked with them in tones almost as tranquil as the silence was, save when one of the ecclesiastics placidly took snuff, — it is a dogma of the Church for priests to take snuff in Italy, — and thereafter, upon a prolonged search for his handkerchief, blew a resounding nose. So far as we knew, the garden walls circumscribed the whole life of these ladies; and I am afraid that such topics of this world as they touched upon with their priests must have been deplorably small.

Their kinsman owned part of the story under us, and both of the stories above us; he had the advantage of the garden over our landlord; but he had not so grand a gondola-gate as we, and in some other respects I incline to think that our part of the edifice was the finer. It is certain that no mention is made of any such beautiful hall in the property of the painter as is *noted* in that of our landlord, by the his-

torian of a "Hundred Palaces of Venice," — a work for which I subscribed, and then for my merit was honored by a visit from the author, who read aloud to me in a deep and sonorous voice the annals of our temporary home. This hall occupied half the space of the whole floor; but it was altogether surrounded by rooms of various shapes and sizes, except upon one side of its length, where it gave through Gothic windows of vari-colored glass, upon a small court below, — a green-mouldy little court, further dampened by a cistern, which had the usual curb of a single carven block of marble. The roof of this stately *sala* was traversed by a long series of painted rafters, which in the halls of nearly all Venetian palaces are left exposed, and painted or carved and gilded. A suite of stately rooms closed the hall from the Grand Canal, and one of these formed our parlor; on the side opposite the Gothic windows was a vast aristocratic kitchen, which, with

its rows of shining coppers, its great chimney-place well advanced toward the middle of the floor, and its tall gloomy windows, still affects my imagination as one of the most patrician rooms which I ever saw; at the back of the hall were those chambers of ours overlooking the garden of which I have already spoken, and another kitchen, less noble than the first, but still sufficiently grandiose to make most New World kitchens seem very meekly minute and unimpressive. Between the two kitchens was another court, with another cistern, from which the painter's family drew water with a bucket on a long rope, which, when let down from the fourth story, appeared to be dropped from the clouds, and descended with a noise little less alarming than thunder.

Altogether the most surprising object in the great *sala* was a sewing-machine, and we should have been inconsolably outraged *by its* presence there, amid so much that

was merely venerable and beautiful, but for the fact that it was in a state of harmonious and hopeless disrepair, and, from its general contrivance, gave us the idea that it had never been of any use. It was, in fact, kept as a sort of curiosity by the landlord, who exhibited it to the admiration of his Venetian friends.

The reader will doubtless have imagined, from what I have been saying, that the Palazzo Giustiniani had not all that machinery which we know in our houses here as modern improvements. It had nothing of the kind, and life there was, as in most houses in Italy, a kind of permanent camping out. When I remember the small amount of carpeting, of furniture, and of upholstery we enjoyed, it appears to me pathetic; and yet, I am not sure that it was not the wisest way to live. I know that we had compensation in things not purchasable here for money. If the furniture of the principal bedroom was some-

what scanty, its dimensions were unstinted, the ceiling was fifteen feet high, and was divided into rich and heavy panels, adorned each with a mighty rosette of carved and gilded wood, two feet across. The parlor had not its original decorations in our time, but it had once had so noble a carved ceiling that it was found worth while to take it down and sell it into England; and it still had two grand Venetian mirrors, a vast and very good painting of a miracle of St. Anthony, and imitation-antique tables and arm-chairs. The last were frolicked all over with carven nymphs and cupids; but they were of such frail construction that they were not meant to be sat in, much less to be removed from the wall against which they stood; and more than one of our American visitors was dismayed at having these proud articles of furniture go to pieces upon his attempt to use them like mere arm-chairs of ordinary life. *Scarcely* less impressive or useless than

these was a monumental plaster-stove, surmounted by a bust of Æsculapius; when this was broken by accident, we cheaply repaired the loss with a bust of Homer (the dealer in the next campo being out of Æsculapiuses) which no one could have told from the bust it replaced; and this and the other artistic glories of the room made us quite forget all possible blemishes and defects. And will the reader mention any house with modern improvements in America which has also windows, with pointed arches of marble, opening upon balconies that overhang the Grand Canal?

For our new apartment, which consisted of six rooms, furnished with every article necessary for Venetian housekeeping, we paid one dollar a day, which, in the innocence of our hearts we thought rather dear, though we were somewhat consoled by reflecting that this extravagant outlay secured us the finest position on the Grand Canal. We did not mean to keep house

as we had in Casa Falier, and perhaps a sketch of our easier *ménage* may not be out of place. Breakfast was prepared in the house, for in that blessed climate all you care for in the morning is a cup of coffee, with a little bread and butter, a musk-melon, and some clusters of white grapes, more or less. Then we had our dinners sent in warm from a cook's who had learned his noble art in France; he furnished a dinner of five courses for three persons at a cost of about eighty cents; and they were dinners so happily conceived and so justly executed, that I cannot accuse myself of an excess of sentiment when I confess that I sigh for them to this day. Then as for our immaterial tea, we always took that at the Caffè Florian in the Piazza of Saint Mark, where we drank a cup of black coffee and ate an ice, while all the world promenaded by, and the Austrian bands made heavenly music.

Those bands no longer play in Venice,

and I believe that they are not the only charm which she has lost in exchanging Austrian servitude for Italian freedom; though I should be sorry to think that freedom was not worth all other charms. The poor Venetians used to be very rigorous (as I have elsewhere related), about the music of their oppressors, and would not come into the Piazza until it had ceased and the Austrian promenaders had disappeared, when they sat down at Florian's, and listened to such bands of strolling singers and minstrels as chose to give them a concord of sweet sounds, without foreign admixture. We, in our neutrality, were wont to sit out both entertainments, and then go home well toward midnight, through the sleepy little streets, and over the bridges that spanned the narrow canals, dreaming in the shadows of the palaces.

We moved with half conscious steps till we came to the silver expanse of the Grand

Canal, where, at the ferry, darkled a little brood of black gondolas, into one of which we got, and were rowed noiselessly to the thither side, where we took our way toward the land-gate of our palace through the narrow streets of the parish of San Barnabà, and the campo before the ugly façade of the church; or else we were rowed directly to the water-gate, where we got out on the steps worn by the feet of the Giustiniani of old, and wandered upward through the darkness of the stairway, which gave them a far different welcome of servants and lights when they returned from an evening's pleasure in the Piazza. It seemed scarcely just; but then, those Giustiniani were dead, and we were alive, and that was one advantage; and besides, the loneliness and desolation of the palace had a peculiar charm, and were at any rate cheaper than its former splendor could have been. I am afraid that people who *live abroad* in the palaces of extinct nobles

do not keep this important fact sufficiently in mind; and as the Palazzo Giustiniani is still let in furnished lodgings, and it is quite possible that some of my readers may be going to spend next summer in it, I venture to remind them that if they have to draw somewhat upon their fancy for patrician accommodations there, it will cost them far less in money than it did the original proprietors, who contributed to our selfish pleasure by the very thought of their romantic absence and picturesque decay. In fact, the Past is everywhere like the cake of proverb: you cannot enjoy it and have it.

And here I am reminded of another pleasure of modern dwellers in Venetian palaces, which could hardly have been indulged by the patricians of old, and which is hardly imaginable by people of this day, whose front doors open upon dry land: I mean to say the privilege of sea-bathing from one's own threshold. From the be-

ginning of June till far into September all the canals of Venice are populated by the amphibious boys, who clamor about in the brine, or poise themselves for a leap from the tops of bridges, or show their fine, statuesque figures, bronzed by the ardent sun, against the façades of empty palaces, where they hover among the marble sculptures, and meditate a headlong plunge. It is only the Venetian ladies, in fact, who do not share this healthful amusement. Fathers of families, like so many plump, domestic drakes, lead forth their aquatic broods, teaching the little ones to swim by the aid of various floats, and delighting in the gambols of the larger ducklings. When the tide comes in fresh and strong from the sea the water in the Grand Canal is pure and refreshing; and at these times it is a singular pleasure to leap from one's door-step into the swift current and spend a half-hour, very informally, among one's *neighbors* there. The Venetian bathing-

dress is a mere sketch of the pantaloons of ordinary life; and when I used to stand upon our balcony, and see some bearded head ducking me a polite salutation from a pair of broad, brown shoulders that showed above the water, I was not always able to recognize my acquaintance, deprived of his factitious identity of clothes. But I always knew a certain stately consul-general by a vast expanse of baldness upon the top of his head; and it must be owned, I think, that this form of social assembly was, with all its disadvantages, a novel and vivacious spectacle. The Venetian ladies, when they bathed, went to the Lido, or else to the bath-houses in front of the Ducal Palace, where they saturated themselves a good part of the day, and drank coffee, and, possibly, gossiped.

I think that our balconies at Palazzo Giustiniani were even better places to see the life of the Grand Canal from than the balcony of Casa Falier, which we had just

left. Here at least we had a greater stretch of the Canal, looking, as we could, up either side of its angle. Here, too, we had more gondola stations in sight, and as we were nearer the Rialto, there was more picturesque passing of the market-boats. But if we saw more of this life, we did not see it in greater variety, for I think we had already exhausted this. There was a movement all night long. If I woke at three or four o'clock, and offered myself the novel spectacle of the Canal at that hour, I saw the heavy-laden barges go by to the Rialto with now and then also a good-sized coasting schooner making lazily for the lagoons, with its ruddy fire already kindled for cooking the morning's meal, and looking very enviably cosey. After our own breakfast we began to watch for the gondolas of the tourists of different nations, whom we came to distinguish at a glance. Then the boats of the various artisans went by, the carpenter's, the ma-

son's, the plasterer's, with those that sold fuel, and vegetables and fruit, and fish, to any household that arrested them. From noon till three or four o'clock the Canal was comparatively deserted; but before twilight it was thronged again by people riding out in their open gondolas to take the air after the day's fervor. After nightfall they ceased, till only at long intervals a solitary lamp, stealing over the dark surface, gave token of the movement of some gondola bent upon an errand that could not fail to seem mysterious or fail to be matter of fact. We never wearied of this oft-repeated variety, nor of our balcony in any way; and when the moon shone in through the lovely arched window and sketched its exquisite outline on the floor, we were as happy as moonshine could make us.

Were we otherwise content? As concerns Venice, it is very hard to say, and I do not know that I shall ever be able to

say with certainty. For all the entertainment it afforded us, it was a very lonely life, and we felt the sadness of the city in many fine and not instantly recognizable ways. Englishmen who lived there bade us beware of spending the whole year in Venice, which they declared apt to result in a morbid depression of the spirits. I believe they attributed this to the air of the place, but I think it was more than half owing to her mood, to her old, ghostly, aimless life. She was, indeed, a phantom of the past, haunting our modern world, — serene, inexpressibly beautiful, yet inscrutably and unspeakably sad. Remembering the charm that was in her, we often sigh for the renewal of our own vague life there, — a shadow within the shadow; but remembering also her deep melancholy, an involuntary shiver creeps over us, and we are glad not to be there. Perhaps some of you who have spent a summer day or a summer week in Venice do not recog-

nize this feeling; but if you will remain there, not four years as we did, but a year or six months even, it will ever afterwards be only too plain. All changes, all events, were affected by the inevitable local melancholy; the day was as pensive amidst that populous silence as the night; the winter not more pathetic than the long, tranquil, lovely summer. We rarely sentimentalized consciously, and still more seldom openly, about the present state of Venice as contrasted with her past glory. I am glad to say that we despised the conventional poetastery about her; but I believe that we had so far lived into sympathy with her, that, whether we realized it or not, we took the tone of her dispiritedness, and assumed a part of the common experience of loss and of hopelessness. History, if you live where it was created, is a far subtler influence than you suspect; and I would not say how much Venetian history, amidst the monuments of her

glory and the witnesses of her fall, had to do in secret and tacit ways with the prevailing sentiment of existence, which I now distinctly recognize to have been a melancholy one. No doubt this sentiment was deepened by every freshly added association with memorable places; and each fact, each great name and career, each strange tradition as it rose out of the past for us and shed its pale lustre upon the present, touched us with a pathos which we could neither trace nor analyze.

I do not know how much the modern Venetians had to do with this impression, but something I have no question. They were then under Austrian rule; and in spite of much that was puerile and theatrical in it, there was something very affecting in their attitude of what may best be described as passive defiance. This alone made them heroic, but it also made them tedious. They rarely talked of anything but politics; and as I have elsewhere said,

they were very jealous to have every one declare himself of their opinion. Hemmed in by this jealousy on one side, and by a heavy and rebellious sense of the wrongful presence of the Austrian troops and the Austrian spies on the other, we forever felt dimly constrained by something, we could not say precisely what, and we only knew what, when we went sometimes on a journey into free Italy, and threw off the irksome caution we had maintained both as to patriotic and alien tyrants. This political misery circumscribed our acquaintance very much, and reduced the circle of our friendship to three or four families, who were content to know our sympathies without exacting constant expression of them. So we learned to depend mainly upon passing Americans for our society; we hailed with rapture the arrival of a gondola distinguished by the easy hats of our countrymen and the pretty faces and pretty dresses of our countrywomen. It

was in the days of our war; and talking together over its events, we felt a brotherhood with every other American.

Of course, in these circumstances, we made thorough acquaintance with the people about us in the palace. The landlord had come somehow into a profitable knowledge of Anglo-Saxon foibles and susceptibilities; but his lodgings were charming, and I recognize the principle that it is not for literature to make its prey of any possibly conscious object. For this reason, I am likewise mostly silent concerning a certain *attaché* of the palace, the right-hand man and intimate associate of the landlord. He was the descendant of one of the most ancient and noble families of Italy, — a family of popes and cardinals, of princes and ministers, which in him was diminished and tarnished in an almost inexplicable degree. He was not at all worldly-wise, but he was a man of great learning, and of a capacity for acquiring

knowledge that I have never seen surpassed. He possessed, I think, not many shirts on earth; but he spoke three or four languages, and wrote very pretty sonnets in Italian and German. He was one of the friendliest and willingest souls living, and as generous as utter destitution can make a man; yet he had a proper spirit, and valued himself upon his name. Sometimes he brought his great-grandfather to the palace; a brisk old gentleman in his nineties, who had seen the fall of the Republic and three other revolutions in Venice, but had contrived to keep a government pension through all, and now smiled with unabated cheerfulness upon a world which he seemed likely never to leave.

The palace-servants were two, the gondolier and a sort of housekeeper, — a handsome, swarthy woman, with beautiful white teeth and liquid black eyes. She was the mother of a pretty little boy, who was going to bring himself up for a priest, and whose

chief amusement was saying mimic masses to an imaginary congregation. She was perfectly statuesque and obliging, and we had no right, as lovers of the beautiful or as lodgers, to complain of her, whatever her faults might have been. As to the gondolier, who was a very important personage in our palatial household, he was a handsome, bashful, well-mannered fellow, with a good-natured blue eye and a neatly waxed mustache. He had been ten years a soldier in the Austrian army, and was, from his own account and from all I saw of him, one of the least courageous men in the world; but then no part of the Austrian system tends to make men brave, and I could easily imagine that before it had done with one it might give him reasons enough to be timid all the rest of his life. Piero had not very much to do, and he spent the greater part of his leisure in a sort of lazy flirtation with the women about the kitchen-fire, or in the gondola, in which

he sometimes gave them the air. We always liked him; I should have trusted him in any sort of way, except one that involved danger. It once happened that burglars attempted to enter our rooms, and Piero declared to us that he knew the men; but before the police, he swore that he knew nothing about them. Afterwards he returned privately to his first assertion, and accounted for his conduct by saying that if he had borne witness against the burglars, he was afraid that their friends would jump on his back (*saltarmi adosso*), as he phrased it, in the dark; for by this sort of terrorism the poor and the wicked have long been bound together in Italy. Piero was a humorist in his dry way, and made a jest of his own caution; but his favorite joke was, when he dressed himself with particular care, to tell the women that he was going to pay a visit to the Princess Clary, then the star of Austrian society. This mild pleasantry was repeated indefinitely with never failing effect.

More interesting to us than all the rest was our own servant, Bettina, who came to us from a village on the main-land. She was very dark, so dark and so Southern in appearance as almost to verge upon the negro type; yet she bore the English-sounding name of Scarbro, and how she ever came by it remains a puzzle to this day, for she was one of the most pure and entire of Italians. I mean this was her maiden name; she was married to a trumpeter in the Austrian service, whose Bohemian name she was unable to pronounce, and consequently never gave us. She was a woman of very few ideas indeed, but perfectly honest and good-hearted. She was pious, in her peasant fashion, and in her walks about the city did not fail to bless the baby before every picture of the Madonna. She provided it with an engraved portrait of that Holy Nail which was venerated in the neighboring church of San Pantaleon; and she apparently

aimed to supply it with playthings of a religious and saving character like that piece of ivory, which resembled a small torso, and which Bettina described as "A bit of the Lord, Signor," — and it was, in fact, a fragment of an ivory crucifix, which she had somewhere picked up. To Bettina's mind, mankind broadly divided themselves into two races, Italians and Germans, to which latter she held that we Americans in some sort belonged. She believed that America lay a little to the south of Vienna, and in her heart I think she was persuaded that the real national complexion was black, and that the innumerable white Americans she saw at our house were merely a multitude of exceptions. But with all her ignorance, she had no superstitions of a gloomy kind: the only ghost she seemed ever to have heard of was the spectre of an American ship captain which a friend of Piero's had seen at the Lido. She was perfectly kind and obedient, and

was deeply attached in an inarticulate way to the baby, which was indeed the pet of the whole palace. This young lady ruled arbitrarily over them all, and was forever being kissed and adored. When Piero went out to the wine-shop for a little temperate dissipation, he took her with him on his shoulder, and exhibited her to the admiring gondoliers of his acquaintance; there was no puppet-show, no church festival, in that region to which she was not carried; and when Bettina, and Giulia, and all the idle women of the neighborhood assembled on a Saturday afternoon in the narrow alley behind the palace (where they dressed one another's thick black hair in fine braids soaked in milk, and built it up to last the whole of the next week), the baby was the cynosure of all hearts and eyes. But her supremacy was yet more distinguished when, late at night, the household gave itself a feast of snails stewed in oil and garlic, in the vast

kitchen. There her anxious parents have found her seated in the middle of the table with the bowl of snails before her, and armed with a great spoon, while her vassals sat round, and grinned their fondness and delight in her small tyrannies; and the immense room, dimly lit, with the mystical implements of cookery glimmering from the wall, showed like some witch's cavern, where a particularly small sorceress was presiding over the concoction of an evil potion or the weaving of a powerful spell.

From time to time we had fellow-lodgers, who were always more or less interesting and mysterious. Among the rest there was once a French lady, who languished, during her stay, under the disfavor of the police, and for whose sake there was a sentinel with a fixed bayonet stationed day and night at the palace gate. At last, one night, this French lady escaped by a rope-ladder from her chamber

window, and thus no doubt satisfied alike the female instinct for intrigue and elopement and the political agitator's love of a mysterious disappearance. It was understood dimly that she was an author, and had written a book displeasing to the police.

Then there was the German baroness and her son and daughter, the last very beautiful and much courted by handsome Austrian officers; the son rather weak-minded, and a great care to his sister and mother, from his propensity to fall in love and marry below his station; the mother very red-faced and fat, a good-natured old creature who gambled the summer months away at Hombourg and Baden, and in the winter resorted to Venice to make a match for her pretty daughter.

Then, moreover, there was that English family, between whom and ourselves there was the reluctance and antipathy, personal and national, which exists between all right-

minded Englishmen and Americans. No Italian can understand this just and natural condition, and it was the constant aim of our landlord to make us acquainted. So one day when he found a member of each of these unfriendly families on the neutral ground of the grand *sala*, he introduced them. They had, happily, the piano-forte between them, and I flatter myself that the insulting coldness and indifference with which they received each other's names carried to our landlord's bosom a dismay never before felt by a good-natured and well-meaning man.

The piano-forte which I have mentioned belonged to the landlord, who was fond of music and of all fine and beautiful things; and now and then he gave a musical *soirée*, which was attended, more or less surreptitiously, by the young people of his acquaintance. I do not think he was always quite candid in giving his invitations, for on one occasion a certain count, who had

taken refuge from the glare of the *sala* in our parlor for the purpose of concealing the very loud-plaided pantaloons he wore, explained pathetically that he had no idea it was a party, and that he had been so long out of society, for patriotic reasons, that he had no longer a dress suit. But to us they were very delightful entertainments, no less from the great variety of character they afforded than from the really charming and excellent music which the different amateurs made; for we had airs from all the famous operas, and the instrumentation was by a gifted young composer. Besides, the gayety seemed to recall in some degree the old, brilliant life of the palace, and at least showed us how well it was adapted to social magnificence and display.

We enjoyed our whole year in Palazzo Giustiniani, though some of the days were too long and some too short, as everywhere. From heat we hardly suffered at

all, so perfectly did the vast and lofty rooms answer to the purpose of their builders in this respect. A current of sea air drew through to the painter's garden by day; and by night there was scarcely a mosquito of the myriads that infested some parts of Venice. In winter it was not so well. Then we shuffled about in wadded gowns and boots lined with sheep-skin, — the woolly side in, as in the song. The passage of the *sala* was something to be dreaded, and we shivered as fleetly through it as we could, and were all the colder for the deceitful warmth of the colors which the sun cast upon the stone floor from the window opening on the court.

I do not remember any one event of our life more exciting than that attempted burglary of which I have spoken. In a city where the police gave their best attention to political offenders, there were naturally a great many rogues, and the Venetian rogues, if not distinguished for the

more heroic crimes, were very skillful in what I may call the *genre* branch of robbing rooms through open windows, and committing all kinds of safe domestic depredations. It was judged best to acquaint Justice (as they call law in Latin countries) with the attempt upon our property, and I found her officers housed in a small room of the Doge's Palace, clerkly men in velvet skull-caps, driving loath quills over the rough official paper of those regions. After an exchange of diplomatic courtesies, the commissary took my statement of the affair down in writing, pertinent to which were my father's name, place, and business, with a full and satisfactory personal history of myself down to the period of the attempted burglary. This, I said, occurred one morning about daylight, when I saw the head of the burglar peering above the window-sill, and the hand of the burglar extended to prey upon my wardrobe.

"Excuse me, Signor Console," inter-

rupted the commissary, "how could you see him?"

"Why, there was nothing in the world to prevent me. The window was open."

"The window was open!" gasped the commissary. "Do you mean that you sleep with your windows open?"

"Most certainly!"

"Pardon!" said the commissary, suspiciously. "Do *all* Americans sleep with their windows open?"

"I may venture to say that they all do, in summer," I answered; "at least, it 's the general custom."

Such a thing as this indulgence in fresh air, seemed altogether foreign to the commissary's experience; and but for my official dignity, I am sure that I should have been effectually browbeaten by him. As it was, he threw himself back in his arm-chair and stared at me fixedly for some moments. Then he recovered himself with another "Perdoni!" and, turning to his

clerk, said, "Write down that, *according to the American custom*, they were sleeping with their windows open." But I know that the commissary, for all his politeness, considered this habit a relic of the times when we Americans all abode in wigwams; and I suppose it paralyzed his energies in the effort to bring the burglars to justice, for I have never heard anything of them from that day to this.

The truth is, it was a very uneventful year; and I am the better satisfied with it as an average Venetian year on that account. We sometimes varied the pensive monotony by a short visit to the cities of the main-land; but we always came back to it willingly, and I think we unconsciously abhorred any interruption of it. The days, as they followed each other, were wonderfully alike, in every respect. For eight months of summer they were alike in their clear-skied, sweet-breathed loveliness; in the autumn, there where the mel-

auchoIy of the falling leaf could not spread its contagion to the sculptured foliage of Gothic art, the days were alike in their sentiment of tranquil oblivion and resignation which was as autumnal as any aspect of woods or fields could have been; in the winter they were alike in their dreariness and discomfort. As I remember, we spent by far the greater part of our time in going to the Piazza, and we were devoted Florianisti, as the Italians call those that lounge habitually at the Caffè Florian. We went every evening to the Piazza as a matter of course; if the morning was long, we went to the Piazza; if we did not know what to do with the afternoon, we went to the Piazza; if we had friends with us, we went to the Piazza; if we were alone, we went to the Piazza; and there was no mood or circumstances in which it did not seem a natural and fitting thing to go to the Piazza. There were all the prettiest shops; there

were all the finest caffès; there was the incomparable Church of St. Mark; there was the whole world of Venice.

Of course, we had other devices besides going to the Piazza; and sometimes we spent entire weeks in visiting the churches, one after another, and studying their artistic treasures, down to the smallest scrap of an old master in their darkest chapel; their history, their storied tombs, their fictitious associations. Very few churches escaped, I believe, except such as had been turned into barracks, and were guarded by an incorruptible Austrian sentinel. For such churches as did escape, we have a kind of envious longing to this day, and should find it hard to like anybody who had succeeded better in visiting them. There is, for example, the Church of San Giobbe, the doors of which we haunted with more patience than that of the titulary saint: now the sacristan was out; now the church was shut up for repairs;

now it was Holy Week and the pictures were veiled; we had to leave Venice at last without a sight of San Giobbe's three Saints by Bordone, and Madonna by Bellini, which, unseen, outvalue all the other Saints and Madonnas that we looked at; and I am sure that life can never become so aimless, but we shall still have the desire of some day going to see the church of San Giobbe. If we read some famous episode of Venetian history, we made it the immediate care of our lives to visit the scene of its occurrence; if Ruskin told us of some recondite beauty of sculpture hid away in some unthought-of palace court, we invaded that palace at once; if in entirely purposeless strolls through the city, we came upon anything that touched the fancy or piqued curiosity, there was no gate or bar proof against our bribes. What strange old nests of ruin, what marvelous homes of solitude and dilapidation, did we not wander into! What boarded-

up windows peer through, what gloomy recesses penetrate! I have lumber enough in my memory stored from such rambles to load the night-mares of a generation, and stuff for the dreams of a whole people. Does any gentleman or lady wish to write a romance? Sir or madam, I know just the mouldy and sunless alley for your villain to stab his victim in, the canal in which to plunge his body, the staircase and the hall for the subsequent wanderings of his ghost; and all these scenes and localities I will sell at half the cost price; as also, balconies for flirtation, gondolas for intrigue and elopement, confessionals for the betrayal of guilty secrets. I have an assortment of bad and beautiful faces and picturesque attitudes and effective tones of voice; and a large stock of sympathetic sculptures and furniture and dresses, with other articles too numerous to mention, all warranted Venetian, and suitable to every style of romance. Who bids? Nay, I

cannot sell, nor you buy. Each memory. as I hold it up for inspection, loses its subtle beauty and value, and turns common and poor in my hawker's fingers.

Yet I must needs try to fix here the remembrance of two or three palaces, of which our fancy took the fondest hold, and to which it yet most fondly clings. It cannot locate them all, and least of all can it place that vast old palace, somewhere near Cannaregio, which faced upon a campo, with lofty windows blinded by rough boards, and empty from top to bottom. It was of the later Renaissance in style, and we imagined it built in the Republic's declining years by some ruinous noble, whose extravagance forbade his posterity to live in it, for it had that peculiarly forlorn air which belongs to a thing decayed without being worn out. We entered its coolness and dampness, and wandered up the wide marble staircase, past the vacant niches of departed statuary, and

came on the third floor to a grand portal which was closed against us by a barrier of lumber. But this could not hinder us from looking within, and we were aware that we stood upon the threshold of our ruinous noble's great banqueting-hall, where he used to give his magnificent *feste da ballo*. Lustrissimo was long gone with all his guests; but there in the roof were the amazing frescos of Tiepolo's school, which had smiled down on them, as now they smiled on us; great piles of architecture, airy tops of palaces, swimming in summer sky, and wantoned over by a joyous populace of divinities of the lovelier sex that had nothing but their loveliness to clothe them and keep them afloat; the whole grandiose and superb beyond the effect of words, and luminous with delicious color. How it all rioted there with its inextinguishable beauty in the solitude and silence, from day to day, from year to year, while men died, and systems passed, and

nothing remained unchanged but the instincts of youth and love that inspired it! It was music and wine and wit; it was so warm and glowing that it made the sunlight cold; and it seemed ever after a secret of gladness and beauty that the sad old palace was keeping in its heart against the time to which Venice looks forward when her splendor and opulence shall be indestructibly renewed.

There is a ball-room in the Palazzo Pisani, which some of my readers may have passed through on their way to the studio of the charming old Prussian painter, Nerlÿ; the frescos of this are dim and faded and dusty, and impress you with a a sense of irreparable decay, but the noble proportions and the princely air of the place are inalienable while the palace stands. Here might have danced that Contarini who, when his wife's necklace of pearls fell upon the floor in the way of her partner, the king of Denmark, ad-

vanced and ground it into powder with his foot that the king might not be troubled to avoid treading on it; and here, doubtless, many a gorgeous masquerade had been in the long Venetian carnival; and what passion and intrigue and jealousy, who knows? Now the palace was let in apartments, and was otherwise a barrack, and in the great court, steadfast as any of the marble statues, stood the Austrian sentinel. One of the statues was a figure veiled from head to foot, at the base of which it was hard not to imagine lovers, masked and hooded, and forever hurriedly whispering their secrets in the shadow cast in perpetual moonlight.

Yet another ball-room in yet another palace opens to memory, but this is all bright and fresh with recent decoration. In the blue vaulted roof shine stars of gold; the walls are gay with dainty frescos; a gallery encircles the whole, and from this drops a light stairway, slim-

railed, and guarded at the foot by torch-bearing statues of swarthy Eastern girls; through the glass doors at the other side glimmers the green and red of a garden. It was a place to be young in, to dance in, dream in, make love in; but it was no more a surprise than the whole palace to which it belonged, and which there in that tattered and poverty-stricken old Venice was a vision of untarnished splendor and prosperous fortune. It was richly furnished throughout all its vast extent, adorned with every caprice and delight of art, and appointed with every modern comfort. The foot was hushed by costly carpets, the eye was flattered by a thousand beauties and prettinesses. In the grates the fires were laid and ready to be lighted; the candles stood upon the mantels; the toilet-linen was arranged for instant use in the luxurious chambers; but from basement to roof the palace was a solitude; no guest came there, no one dwelt there save

the custodian; the eccentric lady of whose possessions it formed a part abode in a little house behind the palace, and on her door-plate had written her *vanitas vanitatum* in the sarcastic inscription, "John Humdrum, Esquire."

Of course she was Inglese; and that other lady, who was selling off the furniture of her palace, and was so amiable a guide to its wonders in her curious broken English, was Hungarian. Her great pride and joy, amidst the objects of *vertu* and the works of art, was a set of "Punch," which she made us admire, and which she prized the more because she had always been allowed to receive it when the government prohibited it to everybody else. But we were Americans, she said; and had we ever seen this book? She held up "The Potiphar Papers," a volume which must have been inexpressibly amused and bewildered to find itself there, in that curious little old lady's hand.

Shall I go on and tell of the palace in which our strange friend Padre L—— dwelt, and the rooms of which he had filled up with the fruits of his passion for the arts and sciences: the anteroom he had frescoed to represent a grape-arbor with a multitude of clusters overhead; the parlor with his oil-paintings on the walls, and the piano and melodeon arranged so that Padre L—— could play upon them both at once; the oratory turned forge, and harboring the most alchemic-looking apparatus of all kinds; the other rooms in which he had stored his inventions in portable furniture, steam-propulsion, rifled cannon, and perpetual motion; the attic with the camera by which one could photograph one's self, — shall I tell of this, and yet other palaces? I think there is enough already; and I have begun to doubt somewhat the truth of my reminiscences, as I advise the reader to do.

Besides, I feel that the words fail to

give all the truth that is in them; and if I cannot make them serve my purpose as to the palaces, how should I hope to impart through them my sense of the glory and loveliness of Venetian art? I could not give the imagination and the power of Tintoretto as we felt it, nor the serene beauty, the gracious luxury of Titian, nor the opulence, the worldly magnificence of Paolo Veronese. There hang their mighty works forever, high above the reach of any palaverer; they smile their stately welcome from the altars and palace-walls, upon whoever approaches them in the sincerity and love of beauty that produced them; and thither you must thus go if you would know them. Like fragments of dreams, like the fleeting

"Images of glimmering dawn,"

I am from time to time aware, amid the work-day world, of some happiness from them, some face or form, some drift of a princely robe or ethereal drapery, some

august shape of painted architecture, some unnamable delight of color; but to describe them more strictly and explicitly, how should I undertake?

There was the exhaustion following every form of intense pleasure, in their contemplation, such a wear of vision and thought, that I could not call the life we led in looking at them an idle one, even if it had no result in after times; so I will not say that it was to severer occupation our minds turned more and more in our growing desire to return home. For my own part personally I felt keenly the fictitious and transitory character of official life. I knew that if I had become fit to serve the government by four years' residence in Venice, that was a good reason why the government, according to our admirable system, should dismiss me, and send some perfectly unqualified person to take my place; and in my heart also I knew that there was almost nothing

for me to do where I was, and I dreaded the easily formed habit of receiving a salary for no service performed. I reminded myself that, soon or late, I must go back to the old fashion of earning money, and that it had better be sooner than later. Therefore, though for some reasons it was the saddest and strangest thing in the world to do, I was on the whole rejoiced when a leave of absence came and we prepared to quit Venice.

Never had the city seemed so dream-like and unreal as in this light of farewell, — this tearful glimmer which our love and regret cast upon it. As in a maze, we haunted once more and for the last time the scenes we had known so long, and spent our final, phantasmal evening in the Piazza; looked, through the moonlight, our mute adieu to islands and lagoons, to church and tower; and then returned to our own palace, and stood long upon the balconies that overhung the Grand Canal.

There the future became as incredible and improbable as the past; and if we had often felt the incongruity of our coming to live in such a place, now, with tenfold force, we felt the cruel absurdity of proposing to live anywhere else. We had become part of Venice; and how could such atoms of her fantastic personality ever mingle with the alien and unsympathetic world?

The next morning the whole palace household bestirred itself to accompany us to the station: the landlord in his best hat and coat, our noble friend in phenomenal linen, Giulia and her little boy, Bettina shedding bitter tears over the baby, and Piero, sad but firm, bending over the oar and driving us swiftly forward. The first turn of the Canal shut the Palazzo Giustiniani from our lingering gaze, a few more curves and windings brought us to the station. The tickets were bought, the baggage was registered; the little oddly as-

sorted company drew itself up in a line, and received with tears our husky adieux. I feared there might be a remote purpose in the hearts of the landlord and his retainer to embrace and kiss me, after the Italian manner, but if there was, by a final inspiration they spared me the ordeal. Piero turned away to his gondola; the two other men moved aside; Bettina gave one long, hungering devouring hug to the baby; and as we hurried into the waiting-room, we saw her, as upon a stage, standing without the barrier, supported and sobbing in the arms of Giulia.

It was well to be gone, but I cannot say we were glad to be going.