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AND
SHAWL-STRAPS

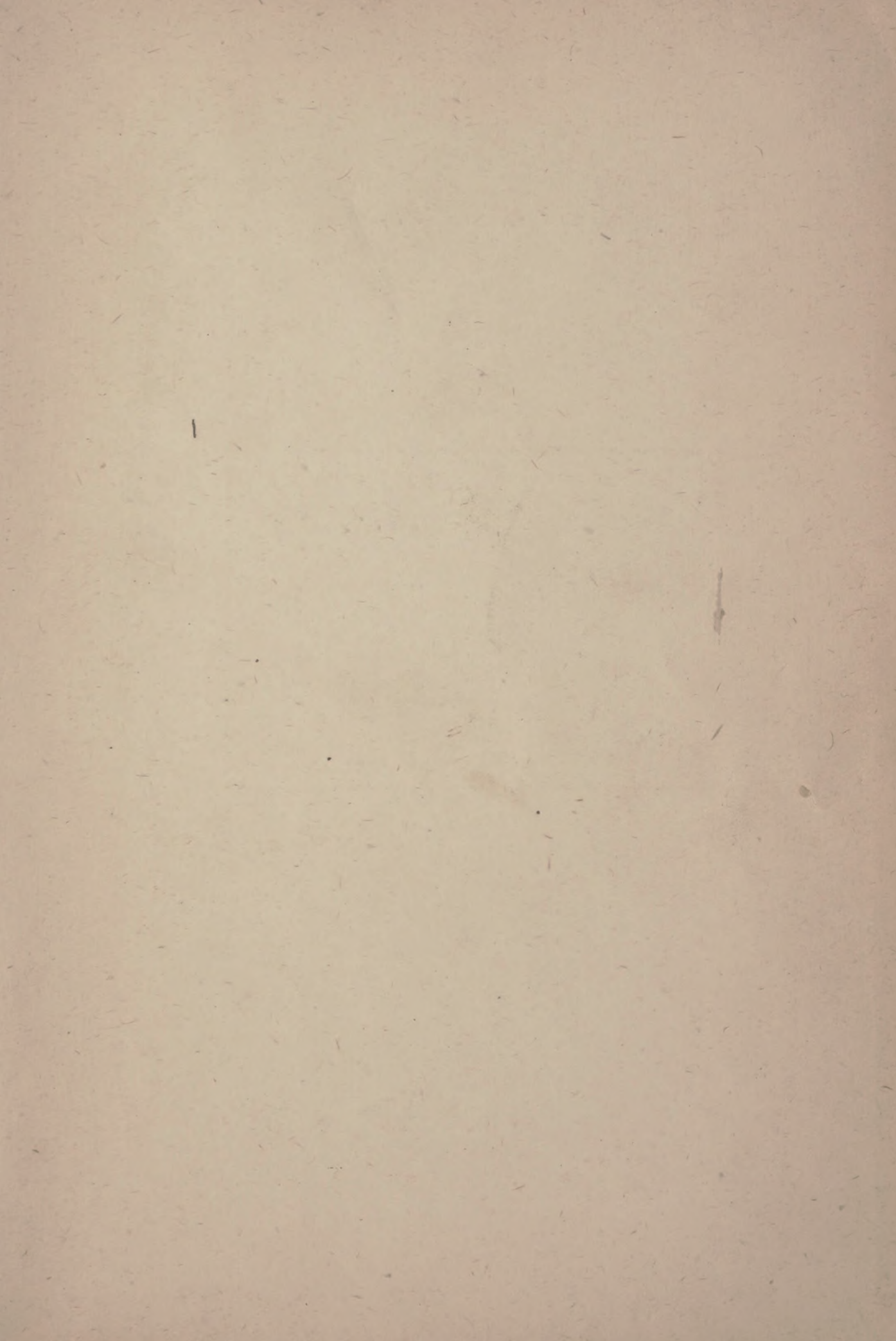


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LOVE AND SHAWL-STRAPS

BY

ANNETTE L. NOBLE

AUTHOR OF
"UNCLE JACK'S EXECUTORS"

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF
PEARL CLEMENT COANN



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LOVE AND SHAWL-STRAPS.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE TOUR PROPOSED.

IN the winter of 1889 Doctor Thomas Bruce had forty-nine patients with the *grippe*. Some died and some got well. He was wondering if there was to be a fiftieth case, when he became it—that is in so far as he was his own patient. His sister, Mrs. Kate Thorne, was the better doctor about that time. She nursed him through the weakness that followed his illness, so that he was on his feet again toward spring. Doctor Tom was a bachelor, in good and regular standing, “fair to middling” in his profession, and as his obituary may put it hereafter, beloved by many and respected by all. He realized that his widowed sister Kate had twice his wit and wisdom. She was his silent partner; silent when it was his place to speak, having always previously said her say. She it was who gave him in private the impetus that

impelled him on certain occasions when the public called him "a go-ahead fellow."

One day in February Mrs. Kate seated herself in Tom's office for a consultation not professional. She was a tall, trim lady, thirty-five years old, wore nice gloves and a tailor-made gown; had been teacher of literature in a young ladies' seminary.

"Tom," she said, "you ought to go abroad; a man is not half educated who has never crossed the ocean. Go this summer."

"I can't afford it; don't know enough to get around alone, and no tourist parties for me."

"I want to go again."

"You—why you have been to Europe twice."

"That is just why I could go so easily a third time. I have a plan by which we might both go cheaply and pleasantly."

"Speak for state-rooms at once."

"There is a great deal to be done first, Tom, but I am equal to it. I like girls. I know all about them. We will take with us five or six young ladies whose parents cannot go with them, or delicate ladies (friends of yours) who would go if they need have no care or worry and could be in the charge of a doctor."

"A sort of combination of private boarding-school and floating hospital," put in Tom, looking doubtful.

"Not at all; only a little party of lovely young

people and refined women travelling together. I will make out an itinerary."

"A *what?*"

"The plan of our tour and places to see."

"Oh, I thought you were going to rope in a Methodist minister for chaplain, may be.—No other man but me?"

"Certainly not—any other would be a nuisance—if not improper. I will calculate expenses and then have printed a little paper for private circulation among our acquaintances. By managing the party I can get a reduction at hotels on account of our numbers. It will cost each only what she would pay if she went alone, and she will have delightful companionship—(mine, in short)—and some one to tell her just what she ought to see——"

("You this time," put in Tom.)

"By making any arrangements you like with patients in your care, we can save something on our own expenses."

Tom's face grew cloudier yet. "Fancy me keeper in general of half a dozen cranky, hysterical invalids—a travelling bear garden would be a saints' rest in comparison."

"That is not my idea at all," expostulated his sister. "We will not take one really sickly person, only timid ones who fear to cross the ocean."

"Do I agree before sailing to save every one of them and your boarding school besides in case "the

complicated machinery of one of our magnificent ocean steamers *busts up* on the way?"

"You are to do as I say, and enjoy the result of my ideas."

"It suggests St. Paul and his perils by land and perils by sea, and I bet before it is over I will remember fighting with beasts at——"

"Be still, you irreverent creature," said Kate, going to a bookcase and taking from an upper shelf half a dozen red-covered Baedekers and a big atlas. With these she retired to her own part of the house, merely adding: "We will probably sail about the middle of May."

Tom grinned as he returned to his medical journal.

It was three weeks before Kate again spoke at length of the trip. Tom knew that in the meantime she had caused to be printed a concise and elegant leaflet, telling the how, where, and when of the projected tour, with terms and conditions. She had asked of him the names of any of his patients who happened to be either intelligent spinsters of means, or agreeable widows without children and able to travel. Tom worked over his address book one whole rainy afternoon, and then gave her a list like the catalogue of a flourishing seminary. To his surprise, out of these seventy or eighty maids and "widows indeed," Kate, after much laughing, eyebrow lifting, delicate sniffing, and open derision, chose six or eight to whom she sent notes and leaflets. She had already

attended to her own invitations, which were given to "nice girls" of her acquaintance.

"Of course, I have invited a good many more than I want, because probably only a few that are asked can go," she explained to Tom one night when she was ready to talk things over.

"Then why did you not send papers to all my list?" asked Tom, turning around in his office chair.

"Because *any* of mine would surely be all right, but *yours*.—Oh, Kilkenny cats, Tom! Little you know about women!"

"Who knows more of them than a doctor?"

"After he is fifty, he knows some things. You are thirty-six and unmarried; you understand lungs and livers, but tempers and consciences—divil a bit—if they are feminine," retorted Kate, who let herself go a little when alone with Tom, by way of relaxation after long public propriety.

"Well, what have you done up to date?" asked the Doctor, amicably.

"A vast amount of letter writing and letter reading. If, according to Doctor Holmes, a child's education should begin a hundred years before it is born, the proper tourist should also be trained long before he begins to *tour*. Mine *must* know what to see, and how to behave while seeing it. I have had endless letters, all more or less characteristic. My answers are equal to a course of parlor lectures, but there must be a perfect understanding at the outset."

“About what, for instance?”

“About the sort of girl I will take. I do not want any who load their fingers with rings, or who wear soiled party gloves, or, worse still, pull off travel-soiled gloves for the sake of showing diamonds—no girls capable of hiding behind smoke-pipes to flirt with chance acquaintances, when it is ten bells, or whatever bells means bedtime on shipboard.”

“My gracious, Kate! How can you tell beforehand about flirts and smoke-pipes?”

“I can not, invariably. It will be your duty to hunt behind the pipes before we turn in. You see, there are many things involved in taking care of the young and innocent, but you will learn in good time, Tom.”

The Doctor sucked the top of his penholder, and looked as contemplative as a statue of Buddha, but not as serene.

“Girls’ letters are amusing,” said Kate. “Every identical girl says it ‘has been the dream of her life’ to go abroad.”

“Humph!” muttered Tom; “like that one who yearned to get on the Grand Canal, and ‘drink it all in.’”

“Exactly—each one speaks of the Rialto, the Bridge of Sighs, and hopes to practise ‘my *French*. It may not be *very* fluent, but the Prof. says my accent is quite perfect.’ All of them ask to have a few days in Paris *just* for shopping, you know.”

“But they can’t bring any great amount of finery

through the custom-house, especially as you allow them so little luggage," remarked Tom.

"Oh, a really conscientious girl with one little trunk will do wonders. She will declare two eighty-cent souvenir spoons, and all the sleeves of her gowns will be full of the laces and the gloves that she knows the law would allow her, only she does not want them mussed over by handling."

Tom appeared to be reflecting on some new phase of the subject, for he presently said: "It would be only fair to take some young men and a few old bachelors to balance things. All this feminine atmospheric pressure on my poor square inches, and you free as a bird."

"Oh, your heart is of the guttapercha order, Tom. It is not hard, it will yield perhaps to pressure; but it will be good as new when pressure is removed."

"But guttapercha can melt, Kate. I have carefully kept out of emotionally hot spots."

"And so you shall, old fellow, or I will cool you down when you need it; besides, you just now intimated that you were used to womankind."

"Of course, as a doctor I am. When dangers threaten I order them to the seaside, send in a very big bill, or, if worst comes to worst, I say lots of my ancestors were insane, and I shall never marry. But this tour is different—is what what's-his-name declared was 'what you may call it.'"

Kate stared at the lucid quotation, and then translated it.

“Oh, you mean propinquity producing matrimony; but you are safe enough, being bald, and getting on in years. You will be nothing to them compared with the sight of something interesting and new every day.” And with this sisterly cruelty she ended, saying, “Get your note-book, and I will tell you some things you are to see to at once.”

They were dictated, copied, and Tom went to bed with what in polite literature are called mingled emotions, a little sweet, a little sour, on the whole like mixed pickles, stimulating and not unpleasant. He realized that he was going abroad.

CHAPTER SECOND.

EMBARKED.

A CERTAIN Tuesday in May was very fatiguing for Mrs. Thorne, and very trying for her brother. It was a warm, rainy, sticky day. Doctor Tom longed to drink lemonade and to lie on the back-parlor sofa pretending that his rest had been broken up by patients the previous night. He could not indulge in any commonplace idleness. He had to pack his valise, to run on errands, to write on cardboard tags "Wanted in State-room No. —." Most bewildering of all, he was often called to the parlor. Here Kate would want to introduce him to some of the ladies who were to be later in their care. Each one had with her several relatives and friends variously sympathetic or enthusiastic about the tour. He constantly assured the ones who were to stay home that they were not likely to be sea-sick, or said they looked as if the voyage would do them good. He received a vague impression that one girl was to be exposed to the sea breezes in the hope of having blown away from her the melancholy vapors of an

unhappy love affair. At least he gathered as much from the tearful mother's whisper and the mysterious father's wink when the girl's back was turned—if she was the girl meant. He gave another gentleman reason to believe that he would go with his daughter to Marchbunk Skipwig on the Grange or Skipmarch Bunkwig in the Moors (anyway the place was in England) to hunt up an estate belonging to the gentleman's ancestors. It would naturally revert to him if the records, deeds, etc., were found by Tom and properly proved. He explained to each family group why, under European conditions then existing, war was impossible, and cholera not to be thought of. He agreed to go to a great many cities Kate had no intention of visiting. He left a great many apt things unsaid which she said for him. He finally began to say a great many more that he ought not to have said, but some of these he flattened out as thin as possible after she got a chance to look him a look that he understood. This was good in him, for what he longed to say was: "How in thunder can I tell which of the gang is going with us?" and yet all he said when the last one departed was: "I am afraid I will not know them again when I see them on the steamer."

"You will after the first day," replied Kate, blithely. "Now have you painted our names in plain sight on each portmanteau? There is no check system over there, you know, and you will

have to keep your eyes open to know if porters collect them all at the stations."

"About how many will there be?"

"I have allowed each person two, because two bags cost less and are easier managed than one trunk. Then, besides these, every one has a valise or steamer trunk, to leave in England to store things in or to fill with purchases. Let me see! Eight of us in all makes——"

"*Twenty-four* pieces of luggage for one man's eyes! Why, Kate Bruce Thorne, if I were a whole paper of hooks and eyes, I could not keep that number fastened together. I tell you this contract is going to be too big for us."

"Go get your dinner, Tom; take a strong cup of coffee. You will know more, and so feel more sure of yourself, after a week of travel."

About seven that night the Doctor and his sister took a carriage to the pier. The steamer did not sail until eight the next morning, but passengers were allowed to stay on board overnight. As they neared the pier it seemed as if half the people in the city were to embark on the vessel, whose huge bulk loomed up against the ferry-house, dark and indistinct, except for the brilliant port-holes. Many lines of street cars were disgorging, from the fast-arriving cars, scores of elbowing, perspiring passengers. Trucks, top-heavy with luggage, were blocking the way for cabs and coaches covered with new folding-

chairs, steamer-trunks, and rolls of wraps. From the carriage windows were looking people in smart travelling attire. If the progress of vehicles was slow, that of pedestrians was not much faster. Jews, Germans, Irish, and Italians were everywhere under foot, with dogs, babies, tin boxes, stew-pans, pillows, feather-beds, and the very fuzzy carpet-bags, and hide-covered, brass-nailed trunks that lived long ago in our grandmother's garret. Vociferous police officers, baggage agents, and sailors were everywhere, except where certain excited women were looking for them—the women whose bonnets are never firmly anchored, and who have always lost their one treasure, be it husband, baby, or trunk.

A sort of "will I be thus when I am dead" feeling came over Tom as he heard a baggage-man bawl, "Folks as can't see to trunks must expect to lose 'em!" But once up the gangway, over moist, shadowy decks odorous of new paint, tar, fish, salt sea waves, and machinery oil, past civil stewards in blue coats with brass buttons, they found their way—Tom and Kate—to the electric splendor of the saloons and dining-room. There the chintz covers were all off the blue satin and red velvet upholstery. The long tables were parterres of magnificent flowers, so uniquely made up it seemed as if a florist's stock in trade must have married into a milliner's department and issued innumerable cards. Every bud and blossom had a ribbon streamer or a

satin bow. The fast-coming people were moving up and down the aisles, reading the cards. Some young ladies (Tom shunned them) discovering floral offerings for themselves, called: "Oh, Pa!" "Oh, Ma!" or "Just see, Charlie!"

Others, after a careful scrutiny unrewarded, became scoffers, and grumbled about "having to eat with pyramids of roses decaying under our noses." In general, however, all the passengers or friends who came to see the boat were in good spirits.

Tom lost Kate the first thing, but, knowing they had come to stay a week at least, he gave himself up to watching the crowd. Half-grown boys and girls were careering about, hunting up state-rooms and squabbling about who should sleep on the top shelf. Full-grown girls and boys were slipping into alcoves, and certain bits of dialogue recalled possible "smoke-pipe" duties to the Doctor's mind. ("This is the photograph—it is horrid, but if you will have it," etc., etc.—"You have the address; Brown & Shipley, bankers, forward the letters."—"Nonsense, Jim! 'Sh! somebody will hear!" or "I could n't help his sending those roses, you need n't be so cross!") Mothers began to ingratiate themselves with the stewardess. Fathers interviewed the head steward to make sure of good seats at the first table;—that bland fellow who gave everybody a clear title, well knowing half would never put in a claim.

The Doctor finally remembered that Kate had

told him that "their six" were not coming on board until morning, so he was relieved from the fear of passing them without a recognition. Kate at the same time had explained to Tom that he was never to use the word *party*, but was always to say "our six" or "we eight." She said *party* suggested vulgar "conducted tours," or erratic folk of assorted styles and sizes, with note-books and linen dusters, always doing cities in a day by ceaselessly climbing in and out of band wagons—wagons driven by fat men in scarlet, blowing tally-ho horns. Tom, with masculine density, failed to see that the use of what seemed to him a nice convenient word would photograph on anybody's mind this sort of a picture of Kate, himself, and six ladies, but he promised not to say "our party."

No one slept much that night. There was an incessant banging, pounding, rushing back and forth, putting in of freight and blowing off of steam. Both Kate and Tom were wide-awake until daylight, when they dozed off into confused dreams. She was trying to rescue her damsels from a mediæval baron who had them in a tower on the Rhine, while Tom was laboriously crossing the Alps on a threshing machine. Neither awoke until the ship was moving from the pier. Kate hastened to dress, fearing to be late to breakfast the first morning, and hoping Tom had been on deck to greet new-comers. He had not, for they met at the dining-room door.

“Oh, Tom, did you not see any of the relatives?”

“Nary a one! They had all wiped their weeping eyes and been ordered off the gang-plank before I got up. Now, how will our par—our six find us?”

“The head steward will send them all to Alcove A, where we have a table to ourselves. You sit at one end and I at the other, with three on each side.”

It was a cheerful place, and animated with arriving groups of lively talking people. American sunshine (soon to be left behind) was streaming in at port-holes and sifting down through the gorgeous skylight. Flowers and fruit made gay the tables resplendent with bright silver, crystal, and snowy linen.

“Speak their names out loud as they come so I shall know which is which,” hoarsely whispered Tom, crowding between the sofa-seat and the table.

Down the aisle with a rapid little strut advanced a lady that made him think of a full-breasted bantam. She bustled up to the steward, who was more than busy, then espying Mrs. Thorne, she sped toward her and secured the seat at her right hand. Kate greeted her cordially as Mrs. Bushby. She had a stylish top-knot of greyish-sandy hair, twinkling grey eyes, dimples and a double chin; also a shrewd expression and a breezy manner. Her neat travelling dress was so very snug around her plump figure that she needs must puff a trifle when she talked. Tom

fixed her fast in his mind. She was the widow of a general in the United States Army. Mrs. Bushby had but seated herself when Miss Harriet Dwight moved serenely into place. She bowed to the Doctor, bade them all good-morning, and began to read the *menu* quite as if she had ordered her oatmeal in that spot since her earliest years.

“Dwight? Dwight?” thought Tom. “Oh, I know now—a Smith College graduate, home in Boston, very superior girl, friend of Kate’s Boston relatives. He noticed that she had a clear-cut face, very fine complexion, calm grey eyes, black hair simply arranged, and a beautiful mouth. Tom decided “she was all there,” whatever he meant by that judgment.

The head steward presently escorted two more ladies to the alcove, and Mrs. Thorne greeted them as Mrs. Pollock and Mrs. Florida Pollock.

“Mother and her daughter-in-law,” was Tom’s silent comment. “‘*Widdies* all two of them,’ as the French say; rich, I believe Kate said.”

The older Mrs. Pollock would suggest at once to a frivolous-minded person what a fine ghost she would be for private theatricals. She was very tall, thin, and ashy white, with deep-set eyes and a nervously hesitant manner. She tried to speak to both ends of the table at once, while greatly perplexing the attendant steward, who, attempting to fit her into one chair, found her halting by another.

The daughter glided instantly to the place by Doctor Bruce, when, to the surprise of the steward, the mother again escaped him and seated herself by "Flori," as she called her.

Mrs. Pollock, Jr., was a sort of animated anachronism. Computing dates by her attire and voice she was twenty; by her jet-black eyes and glittering teeth she was thirty; by her complexion—that is, examining a delicate embroidery of drawn-work artistically executed by Time at the corners of her eyelids and her lips—she was—well, older. She beamed on everybody graciously, while, in an off-hand way, she selected a big orange for her mother and a bigger for herself. She shot a keen glance at Miss Dwight, and seemed not disquieted at the result; then arrived the last two young ladies, and the seats were full.

Of course, there was a polite interchange of commonplace remarks between the coming and going of waiters with omelettes, steaks, fried potatoes, and coffee; but every one was watching all the rest, and especially the last to come. Miss Dorothy Coxe was barely out of her teens. When you gazed at her you fancied just how she looked when she was five years old, and she had not gotten over that look yet. She was angelically sweet. Such velvety pink cheeks, such a puckered rosebud of a mouth! Hair silky brown with moist little rings curling every which way, and eyes so very blue. Now, after childhood,

such big, wide-open, sky-blue eyes are almost never known, except in the chromo-girls given away with pounds of tea. But eyes can't be "made up" like other manageable human features, and this blueness was as wonderful as it was genuine. Kate called her "Dolly" in a most affectionate way. She had been a former pupil. Dolly wore a white blouse, also a diamond and turquoise ring on her pretty plump hand. She had a silvery laugh with such a tinkle of wickedness in it the awful thought occurred to Tom that he might some day (fancying she was one of his little pet patients) take her up and hug her. Not that the sin *per se*, as theologians say, seemed awful to him, but its consequences in a par—considering the six he meant. After Miss Cox came Miss Bilton, a brunette with a pleasant face and nothing at once noticeable either in person or manner. She was the niece of a friend of Kate's, received on the strength of that relationship. "Nice, inoffensive girl," Tom decided.

After breakfast everybody who never had crossed before was on deck admiring the bay, declaring no other bay equalled it; old travellers grinned but assented. Fathers, brothers, and lovers were busy getting best places for chairs. Ladies with crisp new veils, new gloves, new novels, and new steamer rugs, were being tucked into these new chairs from whose depth they smiled serenely on sky and sea, on Brooklyn Bridge, and bronze Liberty. They were

pathetically oblivious of certain new sensations awaiting them, when liberty like life and the pursuit of happiness would seem a birthright inalienable only on land.

Mrs. Bushby, who declared she never could be "swaddled up in that way," engaged Kate in a lively conversation. The Pollocks retired below, to emerge later in grey ulsters and knitted woollen head coverings. The ghostly one carried a bag, with salts, six handkerchiefs, lemon drops, and two pairs of blue spectacles. Florida only carried her head higher than at breakfast. She had reflected that they probably had more money than Mrs. Bushby, but that possibly she herself had made a blunder in bringing so many old clothes to wear out on the tour. Homestayors had advised the plan as sensible; she had considered it to be economical.

Tom was soon making the circuit of the deck with Dolly Coxe. He had not asked her to walk, neither had she invited him. It seemed to do itself as children say. Acts of what a specialist might call unconscious cerebration often accomplished themselves when Dolly was at hand.

Harriet Dwight passed them, smiling brightly.

"*She* has taken lessons in physical culture," said Dolly, craning her neck to look back at Harriet. "Don't you see she walks Delsarte fashion?"

"She walks remarkably well," said Tom, bluntly, "so many women nip or waddle or totter."

“So they do unless they are young and good dancers—though some Delsarte walkers stride ridiculously. It makes a *petite* girl look as if she were playing grenadier. Oh, my prophetic soul! You are a *doctor* are n't you? You will be forever diagnosing us 'with a critic's eye,' the whole trip around. I don't care; I never was ill in my life, and I am just as much of a society girl as I can manage to be. It agrees with me; almost everything does agree with me.”

“And almost everybody, no doubt,” suggested Doctor Tom.

“Well, yes, sooner or later. Here is Miss Dwight again. I know what she is doing, making hay while the sun shines. She is the sort of girl who makes no fuss, asks few questions, but before night she will know all about six bells, ship logs, taking the sun, and all the other nautical performances. To-morrow she will get down to the engines, and the day after the Captain will invite her on the bridge. There is a little note-book in her pocket. I have one in mine. Before we land I will have the addresses of a few howling sw——” (She bit off the last words so that Tom heard only the amendment) “Holborn tailor-made suit shops; and Miss Dwight will have facts in hers that will interest her astronomical professor when she marries him years hence. Oh! that must be the steerage deck at this end of the boat; let us go look down there!”

Miss Dwight met Miss Bertha Bilton dawdling about the door, and fancying that she might be lonely she spoke cheerily to her. Miss Bilton replied with effusion. The sea breeze flushed her cheeks and brightened her eyes. She looked rather pretty. She was shorter and stouter than Miss Dwight; though her mouth was large, her lips were very red, her teeth white, and she had dark, luxuriant hair. Kate, in speaking of her to Tom, said she had a heavy face and was the kind of a brunette to turn olive green if she were sea sick. She added that Miss Bilton was amiable and pious.

“I do not care to walk, Miss Dwight, until I get used to the motion. Don't you want to sit down here awhile?”

They were near one of the fixed benches which many preferred to chairs. Miss Dwight seated herself to watch with interest whatever went on about them. Miss Bilton looking her companion full in the face fluently poured out her emotions at leaving home, her present reflections and vivid anticipations. She invited her hearer's confidence in return, but at the end of twenty minutes Miss Bilton knew that Miss Dwight came into New York the day before on the Fall River boat, while Miss Dwight had learned that Bertha's mother (she begged to be called Bertha) idolized her—that she “had been engaged but that was all over now,” that she “loved society,” and “revelled in the best literature,” admiring na-

ture too in such a degree that summers she "could take Emerson's Essays and sit under the trees for hours just lost in thoughts"—either her own or Emerson's, or half and half. She was "very sensitive and could not live without love." She hoped the party would love her, she felt drawn to Miss Dwight already.

Miss Dwight was about to excuse herself to go below for a warmer wrap when Miss Bilton spoke of Rome. Goethe says it is only in Rome that one can prepare to see Rome, but Miss Bilton was an exception. Miss Dwight admired nothing more than thoroughness in anything. Soon she saw that Bertha was "up" in Roman history—not crammed, but really instructed and enthusiastic. She had also made her own a fund of antique lore, of facts about art, artists, and architecture, all of which she poured out as guilelessly and as little for effect as she had given forth her personal confidences. Miss Dwight qualified her secret verdict that Miss Bilton was a fool and was at a loss what to label her.

"I am troubled about my steamer chair," suddenly said Bertha, looking off to sea past a man who had seated himself near. Her voice had an unctuous blandness of tone, though she spoke rapidly. "It was plainly marked before it was sent on board, but I do not find it with the others."

Miss Dwight started to say that Doctor Bruce would speak to the deck steward about it, when the man at the right hand said:

“Beg pardon—but I will hunt your chair if you like—if you tell me how it is marked.”

“With my full name: ‘Miss Bertha Bilton, Room 270.’”

He bowed and was off at once. “I should have snubbed him,” said Miss Dwight, frigidly.

“Why! why! Is there anything wrong in letting him get my chair?” cried Miss Bertha, plaintively.

“It may not be wicked. I must go below,” replied Miss Harriet, disappearing down the gangway. When she came up Miss Bilton did not see her. She was supine in her recovered chair with the man’s plush rug across her lap. He was leaning on the near rail listening to her. Harriet heard something about life being “intolerable without congenial friends.”

“She looks now as if she were full of love to everybody,” was the Smith College graduate’s secret comment.

There were three days when the waves swept the deserted decks, and the dining-room stewards swept the almost equally deserted saloon. Following that came a calm which was beautiful beyond words. The sea was a vast mirror for the reflection of an azure sky, both framed in golden sunrises and sunsets. Again the chairs (no longer new but weather-stained) were filled with limp human creatures in various phases of recovery, all starch gone from them. A few hours of beef tea and convalescence

followed, then for almost every one a mighty appetite and wondrous vigor. Sea life was joy, not torture. There was time for gossip, flirtation, games. Kate had a new book always in her hand. She read much, but not between covers. She knew a great deal of her "six" from *tête-à-têtes* in the saloon or in shady nooks on deck. Doctor Tom came around at intervals and exercised Mrs. Bushby, Kate, and Miss Dwight (if he found her), but the Pollocks declined to "stir themselves up unnecessarily." They communed together behind their blue glasses, gave continual orders for between-meal delicacies, talking often in low tones of what was "included in the trip."

Dolly Coxe found old friends on board; a most unexceptionable family: the Van Broeks. By Mr. Van Broek she was made much of; Mrs. Van Broek smiling complacently, and later introducing to Dolly three young fellows, distant relatives of her own. Dorothy after that was taken care of from early morn to dewy eve. Tom assured Kate that Dolly was a flirt. Mrs. Thorne only smiled and limited her attentions as chaperon to warnings that Welsh rarebits at ten o'clock at night would give Dolly the nightmare. Kate sipped lemonade at another table when Dolly held court in the purser's corner.

"Do you see Miss Bilton on deck, Tom?" asked Kate one day, adding: "I hope she is well and happy."

“Yes. She is talking now to her friend.”

“What friend?”

“Oh, the man from Reading, Pennsylvania, the architect, has n't she told you his entire history; she told it to me the second day out. Probably they are engaged.”

“Well, I am glad there is some one on board whom she knows, but I hope no engaged girls have given permission to their *fiancés* to dog our steps about Europe. ‘No followers allowed’ should have been on my itinerary.”

“Oh, Miss Bilton will not prove obstreperous. She opens up a little too profusely, that is all. To-day she gave me full details of her Sunday-school class, her mission work, and I don't know what all.”

“There she comes now,” said Kate, dropping into a seat.

Tom started on a “constitutional,” while Miss Bertha sank rather weakly into a place behind Kate, leaving so many loose ends of rugs and wraps floating windward that the first man who passed stopped and tucked her up snugly. She took kindly to such attentions.

“Are you feeling well?” asked Mrs. Thorne, and soon wished she had not, for Bertha seemed to think each one of her internal organs called up for minute discussion and inspection. People with troublesome stomachs talk on a voyage like the parents of dis-

agreeable children, as if the worse both pests behave the more interesting topics are they for conversation.

“My brother tells me, Miss Bilton, that you have a friend on board. That makes it pleasant for you?”

“Yes, delightful! And I should like so much to introduce him to you; he is very well read, and we have many interests in common. He is very refined and *so particular* about me. He does not want me to walk with many of the men who ask us to go around the deck for exercise.”

“But you never would think of doing that with strangers?”

Miss Bilton gazed dreamily seaward, then brought her rather bright dark eyes to bear caressingly on Kate, murmuring with much sweetness: “Dear Mrs. Thorne, I want to ask something of you. I am sure you are so lovely you will grant it. I told mamma I was drawn to you the first time I ever saw you.”

“Keep your skirts off that rope or you will get tar all over them,” remarked Kate, with a grimness peculiar to her on occasions.

Miss Bilton languidly reefed her own sails, for she had become unfurled since her late tucking up.

“Mr. Popham says he would dearly love to call and take me to the theatre while we are in London.—What hotel will we be at?”

“May be one, perhaps another. It depends,” said Kate.

“ Well, I was sure you would let me go. He said he should be lonely, and I know you will like him. I almost feel as if I ought to be more friendly for he is so easily influenced for good. He smokes too much, but when I reasoned with him he threw his cigar away, and he says he shall always think of me as a sort of good angel.”

“ Are you engaged to him, Miss Bilton ? ”

“ O dear, no,” blushed the smiling maiden, writhing in agreeable embarrassment, adding a second after : “ Don’t you tell the girls, will you ? But he did say (we were leaning over the rail looking at the phosphorescence just after dark last night) that he should *have* to love me, he just could not help it.”

“ Well, Miss Bilton, if he is a worthy young man, and—”

“ He is not young, he is forty. I like mature men ; that one I was engaged to was not. He never had suffered. I think men have to suffer before they can be strong. Don’t you, Mrs. Thorne ? ”

“ And if your parents think him a desirable husband for you that takes all question of your future out of any one else’s consideration ; but I regret that your mother did not speak of his crossing on the steamer. Now, about the theatre. Young ladies abroad never go to theatres with gentlemen without a chaperon.”

“ He said he would pay for you if I could not go without his doing it,” remarked Bertha, with the simplicity of an infant in arms.

“If you were engaged I should allow you to go,” continued Kate, with dignity, “provided Mrs. Bushby or Mrs. Pollock with some of the young ladies in their care made up a party. As it is—well, perhaps, if you expect to be engaged and can assure me your mother will approve, you might go with a party.”

“But mamma never heard of Mr. Popham.”

“Never heard of him!”

“Why, how *could* she when I never saw him until I was looking for my steamer chair just after I got on deck the first morning?” said Miss Bilton, who was nothing if not truthful. “Then about noon I saw him sitting all alone. I felt sorry for him, he looked sad. I had not begun myself to be sea-sick—it was that ailed him. He answered me so mournfully (looking back at the shore) it reminded me of lines in *Childe Harold* and I quoted them. We got acquainted after that.”

“And you have talked by the hour and walked the deck?” gasped Mrs. Thorne.

“Just as Miss Coxe and Miss Dwight have.”

“But every person they have been with has been introduced as a personal friend of Mrs. Van Broek whom Miss Coxe has known all her life. Mrs. Van Broek is the soul of propriety—and Miss Bilton,” groaned Kate, really as shocked as she appeared to be, “you have discussed your personal affairs, and his, made plans to meet this total stranger who may

be a perfect blackleg—a barber—a butcher—a—a—the vilest of the vile.”

“Why—why—I did not think I was doing anything wrong,” said Miss Bilton, softening toward a tearful condition.

“He actually—only four days out—told you he loved you—not knowing where you yourself came from!”

“O I had told him all that and he—he said he could not help loving me or he could not if things went on.”

“Went on!” echoed Kate, in scorn ineffable. “My brother will see the puppy, and if he dares to speak to you again I will have him thrown overboard,” said Kate, who when thoroughly aroused was never satisfied with half measures. “Why, Miss Bilton, you astonish me! For a girl brought up in a city, from a family used to refined society—if you came from the remote country and knew nothing of life—!”

“Now really, Mrs. Thorne—he never talked that way—only that night we hung over the rail, and the sparks were flying every which way, I thought of that verse about man being born to trouble like sparks flying up, you know, and I quoted it, and he said this was a world of trouble and loving, sympathetic natures were rare. You know yourself they are. I am sensitive. I should just die without tenderness—mamma always said so. He was always just

as respectful as could be and we have talked about religious things; he promised to go to church if I wanted him to."

"For all you know he is a married man with ten children," said Kate; "in fact he may have a wife in New York and another in Liverpool."

Miss Bilton's mouth stayed half open after she asked, "Do they ever?"

"Certainly, it is a peculiarity of that sort of man. Don't you know anything of the world?"

"Not of such folks. Mamma is a perfect lady and all our friends are very nice," said the truly innocent young woman, and for an instant Mrs. Thorne felt as if challenged to make clear her own social status. Instead, she gave a very explicit yet kindly exposition of what was and was not wise or proper for travelling damsels absent from their mothers.

Miss Bilton received all with great docility. She seemed one of the most amiable and truthful persons that Kate ever had encountered, and in many complicated experiences Kate never had reason to change her opinion.

Loud sounded the gong from one end of the ship to the other. Lunch was ready; so were troops of laughing, wind-blown voyagers who went gaily to the dining-room. When Mrs. Thorne and Bertha were half way down the stairs they were momentarily hindered by an eager crowd about the blackboard, on which was marked the rate of speed since the previous noon.

Bertha suddenly grasped Mrs. Thorne's arm. "If Doctor Bruce finds out Mr. Popham is all right, can I go to the theatre with him?"

"*Never* without your mother's knowledge or consent to your having him as an acquaintance."

"How decided you are, Mrs. Thorne, but you are perfectly sweet. I shall not write mamma a word about him. She would worry her life out."

"Which shows you that she would agree with me."

"If I could not talk her over to my opinion; usually I can."

The crowd swept on, and soon the tables were full. Everybody had the abnormal appetite peculiar to the last days of the trip, when game gets high and fruit stale. The waiters sped about with countless dishes; champagne corks popped. In spots the fun was fast and furious. Miss Bilton ate an uncommonly heavy meal, gazing pensively through the near port-hole at such times as the attentive waiter was absent for supplies.

Immediately after lunch Kate took her brother to a retired corner, and after rehearsing Miss Bilton's confidences, evidently expected him to brain Mr. Popham without delay. He merely tittered in an exasperating manner, remarking, "Miss Bilton is a trifle soft, Kate, and probably the man meant no harm. Perhaps he is another of the same sort. Nature often turns them out in pairs. I can't agree to kill him, but I will hunt him up and give him a

hint. Seems to me though that you have been rather remiss as chaperon. In matters like this prevention is better than cure."

"You gave me to understand, Tom, that Miss Bilton had found an old acquaintance. It is all *your* fault."

Tom discovered a school of "porpuses" just then. No one else could sight them, so he joined the purser who happened to come by, and Kate saw him no more until the preparatory gong for dinner. She was deep in a novel of Kingsley and had forgotten Miss Bilton's existence. The Doctor remarked: "The purser pointed out Brother Popham and I drew him into a conversation. He is not 'so devil as he is black,' as the Portuguese proverb has it. We were talking about Americans abroad, and I asked him if he would like his boys educated in foreign schools. He fell into the trap and said no—that the common schools at home were better. Actually he quoted *Mrs. Popham's* opinion on the subject. I brought it around rather neatly about my connection with "our six." He is no fool. He will not tenderly commune with Miss Bilton in the future."

"Well, I hope Miss Bilton will profit by this experience—Tom, hereafter at night you need not mind the smoke-stacks, but go along the rail and watch for *sparks*."

Tom's amazement caused him to look almost idiotic.

“For the *phosphorescence*, and who is watching it.”

“O, I thought you were rather slangy.”

Mrs. Thorne did not deign to reply, but returned to *Hypatia*.

The days went by one much like another, until at last the voyage was ended.

CHAPTER THIRD.

HOW DOCTOR TOM CONDUCTED.

“**N**OW, Kate, you are old enough to exercise common-sense,” said Dr. Bruce, with the affectionate directness of a near relative.

“You must go to bed and sleep off that nervous headache. Jupiter, what a horrid, chilly climate! It is the first of June, yet cold shivers are running up my spine. Here, I will ring for somebody to remove all that frizzled tissue paper in the grate, and you shall have a fire to cheer drooping spirits.”

“I must not stay at home to enjoy it,” said Mrs. Thorne, looking longingly at the huge bed that resembled in size and hangings the catafalque of some departed hero. Tom’s glance following his sister’s, he muttered: “Wretched object—all those curtains—unwholesome to the last degree.”

“Yes, so they must be, though I was not thinking of germs, but of all the stuff that dreams are made of lurking in their folds. Fancy the nightmares that might materialize and descend on me—left over, you know, from the nocturnal menageries of former tourists.”

“The beds themselves need not be better. Here, Kate, swallow this powder, and you will soon feel well.”

While Tom measured it out, Kate looked anxiously at her hat and gloves. Tom remarked: “You are *not* going, Kate. Tell me where to take them, and we will be off at once. There can be no easier city on earth than London to get about in. New York is a labyrinth in comparison.”

The hotel room seemed just then such a haven of rest to Mrs. Thorne that she yielded, saying: “They have done a good bit (as these English say) of sight-seeing since arriving. The Pollocks suggested to-day that something lighter would be agreeable.”

“They are never stingy with suggestions,” grinned Tom. “You ought to have seen Polly, Senior, to-day. She sent a hall boy with thripence for a tuppence ha’ penny stamp, and he thought she meant him to keep the ha’ penny. Her face was a study, as fine writers say.”

“I never shall join you in these strictures on our friends,” said Kate, virtuously.

“I don’t ask you to, dear. I’m equal to the thing all alone. If you do the correct, I will agree to supply the purely human element in our partnership. Yes, let us see—if they had the British Museum this morning they do need relaxation. You have done Madame Tussaud’s—and feeding monkeys in the Zoo is plebeian.”

“Look in the morning paper. Here is one,” said Kate.

The Doctor scanned its columns, while a deft maid quickly took the ornamental paper from the grate, put wood and coal in its place, secretly reflecting that Americans were all extravagant and cold-blooded. When the door shut behind her, Tom exclaimed: “Here is the very thing! It will take them all off your hands until bedtime. It is one of those spectacular performances. Don’t you remember I took you over to Jersey once to see the siege of Jerusalem?”

“Yes, that would amuse them.”

“But this is different, better possibly; at any rate, it reads well,” said Tom, reading:

VENICE AT OLYMPIA.

IMRE KIRALFY’S SUPERB SPECTACLE.

VENICE : THE BRIDE OF THE SEA.

GRAND SPECTACULAR DRAMA.

HISTORIC. ROMANTIC. POETIC. OPERATIC.

1400 PERFORMERS.

THRILLING HISTORICAL EPISODES.

TRIUMPHAL CHORUSES. IMPOSING PROCESSIONS.

BEAUTIFUL DANCES.

LOVELY ITALIAN MUSIC. AQUATIC CARNIVALS.

REAL CANALS AND GONDOLAS.

GORGEOUS STATE BARGES.

VIVID REALISMS. MARVELLOUS EFFECTS.

IMRE KIRALFY, OF "NERO" FAME, AUTHOR AND
PRODUCER.

"That will do," said Kate. "Now, you go down to the hall porter and find out the how, the when, and the where, then come back for final instructions."

The Doctor arose, yawned prodigiously, then surveyed himself in the long mirror on the wardrobe door. He gave an especially complacent glance at the last creation of a Bond Street tailor in the form of a new coat.

"It is rather becoming and a good fit, Tom."

"Yes, madam, I flatter myself it is. Well, now I go forth, and with me go feminine airs and graces by the half dozen. It may seem liberal measure for one man."

"Oh, no," said his sister, malevolently. "Everybody will take Mrs. Flori for your wife, Mrs. Pollock, Senior, for your mother, and then there are your three lovely daughters."

Tom sat abruptly down.

"I won't play."

“Nonsense! Hurry right along! The afternoon is half gone now; and, Tom, remember several things: don't you dare to be one shade more polite to one of the six than you are to another, unless you are especially attentive to the old lady.”

Tom was guilty of a grimace.

“If I find you can learn to take them about in my stead sometimes, it will be an immense relief. But, Thomas, whatever you do, *don't* use your judgment when you have n't got any. Just ask somebody what you want to know. Self-confidence is your 'upsetting sin.'”

In a withering tone which withered not a bit Tom compared this slow-going old town with his busy native city, and thought he would not get lost, then he departed. He came back soon with full details, The show was out Kensington way. It took time, and the gorgeous part was in the evening. They could start from the St. James station of the Metropolitan road, which was close by their hotel.

“That is nice, for none of them have been on the underground,” said Kate. “They were asking me about it to-day; as a rule I always avoid it, but they must know what it is like.”

“Of course, only I shall not begin by answering no end of questions about it, as you do, Kate. It is enough merely to announce that we are going to a place of amusement which will please and surprise them.”

“I answer questions because I ought to give them the benefit of any more knowledge I have than they may possess,” she meekly added. “Oh, Tom, tell the Pollocks at the outset that it is not an ‘extra,’ like operas or theatres, or they won’t be real happy about going. Now start! They were all to meet me in the drawing-room. You must take the blame of my staying home.”

“O, we don’t need you,” returned the Doctor, cheerfully, “and I don’t want Baedeker either, do I? I have all my wits and ‘*ici on parle*’ English without any fail.”

“Stop, Tom, to tell the head waiter—Well, what will you tell him?”

“Why, the porter says there are fine restaurants out there, so I will remark to that Pomposity who presides in the dining-hall that we will be conspicuously absent from the evening banquet.”

“Yes, good-by, dear!”

“Adieu, beloved—now go to bed.”

“Say, Tom, you must buy first-class tickets, and take good care of them all.”

“Of course; what do you take me for? I am aware it is their funeral. My own fun is not the motive power that is setting my works going just now.”

“Tom, you must be as lively as you are on the elevated at home.”

“Of course.”

“And ask if you change trains.”

“All right,” and the door closed after a man who felt virtuous that he had not growled. Women fuss so endlessly over trifles.

The ladies were all in the drawing-room, where every one else knew them to be Americans by the fit of their trim gowns and their dainty shoes. Tom approved of them. The Pollocks expressed deep regret at Mrs. Thorne's headache, but Florida, in a sprightly tone, promised to make the Doctor's cares as light as possible.

“Where are we going, Doctor Bruce?” asked Dolly Coxe, pushing her finger into her Barraitz glove.

“I will take you a trip on the underground, then I've a fine plan, nothing heavy.”

“Buffalo Bill?” quoth Dolly. “That is what the aristocracy rave about over here, they say.”

“No, but it is a place of amusement. Ready, ladies?”

Mrs. Pollock, Senior, fell into place with Mrs. Bushby. With common consent the three girls joined forces, and Mrs. Florida fell to Tom. She always stalked with a singular stiffness, except about her neck and head. She seemed able to turn her head quite around on her flexible neck, so she seldom lost sight of anything going on in any quarter.

“Where do you find a station?” asked Harriet

Dwight, but no one knew save Tom, who was looking sharply for any sign of one. He turned so suddenly in at a wide door that no more questions were asked. They quickly followed him down a long staircase into what seemed a great, dimly lighted tunnel. By each wall was a wide platform, having benches, paper stands, and between the platforms were railway tracks.

“Now, ladies there need not be the least confusion if you only act quickly. I will buy the tickets, find out which train we take, then when it rolls up here dart immediately for a car with first-class on the door. *Be sure every one of you gets in* for you can see what trouble it would make if one were left behind. It is very simple.”

Kate had often remarked how easily she could conduct these six, because in an emergency, or in fact at any time, they did instantly what she told them, asking why afterwards. She got them into carriages, trains, and trams as if the six were one.

Tom strolled up to the office to buy seven first-class tickets. He could not yet reckon rapidly in English currency, but he put down ten shillings gold, and was glad it proved more than enough.

“What train do I take for—for—Venice?” he stammered, and expected the crowd behind him would roar.

“Venice at Olympia,” cheerfully repeated the ticket agent. “Guard will tell you! By some

trains you change, by others not. There comes one train now."

Tom clutched his tiny tickets and rushed to his charge. In rolled the train, and his flock were exactly opposite dirty third-class carriages full of workmen and smokers.

"Hurry—down there!" cried Dolly Coxe. "We should have stood under the placard marked '1st class.'"

Down the platform fled the seven, Tom thinking: "True Yankee girl that! She had been one minute down here and found out the ropes."

Doors were slamming as they reached the first-class carriages. All were more or less full, but like lightning the ladies darted in, and when Tom saw Mrs. Pollock, Senior, nearly seat herself in the lap of a frigid, side-whiskered Briton he could have cried: "Bravo!"

A second after he was in the seat of another compartment which though two or three removed from the rest was entirely empty. It was second-class in fact, but for that he did not care. While the train moved smoothly along in the semi-darkness odorous of coal gas, Tom leaned back muttering approvingly: "The chickens pretty quickly cooped *that* time if Kate was not along! I vow I never asked if we changed trains; but when the guard opens the door and yells the name of the next station I will find out."

He mused serenely about various matters until the train began to go slower, nearing another long platform full of hurrying people. Tom heard men shouting, but no guard, no porters appeared. He looked eagerly for the name of the station, but only to see in huge letters, "Stephen's Ink," then "Beecham's Pills," and as doors slammed and the train moved, "Fry's Cocoa."

"Confound it! How will I know when to get out; I may be taken past the station where we should change."

This was the first of Tom's rapidly succeeding unpleasant reflections. The second was: "Kate told me that whenever we had to separate I was to see that every young girl had a chaperon, and I vow I saw Dolly Coxe dart one way all alone and little Bilton another. The Pollocks fled together, and where Miss Dwight or Mrs. Bushby is passes me to tell."

Later came more surprising facts to mind.

Mrs. Pollock arose from the Briton's lap in tremulous horror, and reseating herself nearly effaced the smallest of four small boys in charge of a pretty nurse-maid. Florida let down the window and revolved her head in a vain effort to see Doctor Bruce or any of the others. She fancied she caught a glimpse of Mrs. Bushby's hat just being withdrawn from another window.

Dolly Coxe had popped into a carriage occupied

by a ponderous British matron massively attired, a pink-and-white maiden gravely timid, evidently her daughter, and a proper maid who carried their bags, and who breathed respectful decorum from every pore. An old man, two dull-looking younger ones, and another in the obscurity of a corner filled the carriage. All studied Dolly with ruminant stolidity, the matron glancing apprehensively at her daughter, as if it was slightly improper in Dolly to open such exceedingly blue eyes, to wear so "smart" a gown, and to have it fit her like a glove. Dolly perked and preened a second, after the manner of our girls when they first alight in a public place; then she leaned back as if equal to what the gods would send. Soon after she too discovered that no guard appeared, although she detected the name of the stations on bench-back, lamp, and wall. Trust those blue eyes to miss nothing.

Suddenly she looked in the palm of her grey glove, in her lap, down to the tips of her kid boots.

"Have you lost your ticket?" asked the old man, who liked her crisp prettiness.

"Why—well—I have lost it if I ever had any. I really can't tell if I had. What difference does it make?"

"Not much, miss, only you will 'ave to pay the ticket man as you go up at the station you stop at."

"But I don't know where I am going to," explained Dolly, and at the thought burst into laughter.

“What is your station?” the old man asked gruffly.

“How can I tell? Nobody told me. I’m going to some place of amusement.” And she shook with fun, her eyes getting brighter, her cheeks redder, while the blood seemed to freeze in the veins of the matron opposite. There was silence full of disapproval. The young lady looked in her lap, the prim companion turned her virtuous countenance toward the outer darkness.

Her gay laugh out, Dolly nonchalantly enlightened them: “The friends I am going with are in some other carriage. I missed them by getting in here.”

“Oh,” grunted the old man, “then they’ll look you up all right.”

At that the feminine part of the company again allowed their gaze to rest upon her—on every detail of her person and attire. She was of course another type of the wild West, for was not Buffalo Bill making known to them everything American? Perhaps she was not depraved but merely un-English, though with mothers like this one it amounted to much the same thing.

“Suppose I miss them again, what will I do then?” suddenly questioned Dolly, turning to the old man with the same off-hand confidence she would have shown to her grandfather. He weakly allowed himself to believe in her (his wife being

absent), and so he said: "Well, miss—in that case you had better go back where you came from."

"Good gracious!" cried Dolly, in a perfect convulsion of giggles. "I have not the remotest idea where that was!"

This was the last straw that broke the back of that indignant maternal animal opposite. She resolved to remove her blushing offspring at the next station.

A creature without paying for her passage to enter a train, not knowing where she was going—actually daring to pretend she knew not whence she came! The mother applied her lavender salts to her daughter's modest little nose, while the maid seemed trying to shrink into a state where sight and hearing could not obtain. Dolly laughed until she must wipe tears out of eyes like wild violets wet with dew. Not until she tucked away her French-worked handkerchief into her elegant belt-bag did she take the trouble to leisurely remark: "You see that we are at a hotel, and I never was on the underground road before, so I just followed Doctor Bruce." The old man was about to speak again, when she gurgled out laughingly: "If I only knew what place of amusement we had started for, I would go there *alone*. I could have a regular lark letting him think he had lost me."

The lady being now in an almost unconscious state, the old man said rather ironically: "Is

it too much to suppose that you can tell the name of your hotel?"

"Yes, that I do know; for in New York we would think it a one-horse sort of an establishment, though as hotels over here go I presume it is fair. The Westminster Palace Hotel—by no means palatial."

"Humph!" ejaculated her questioner, with an air of touching ground at last. "Then you got on at the St. James station, no doubt, and the best thing you can do is to get off and go back there. It is but a bit of a walk to your hotel."

"Yes, I suppose so, but in the meantime I shall just go right on. If they don't find me, at least I will go far enough to pay for the bother and have some fun."

"But let me tell you, miss," said the old man, with the solemn air of one who utters a clincher, "that every station you pass increases the price of your ticket when you have to return."

"Oh, that is nothing!" said Dolly, who never dreamed from his earnestness that the question was one of pence; so she added lightly, "I have two or three pounds in my purse; that will be enough, I guess."

Nothing short of profanity could have produced more of an impression. It was scarcely possible for the inmates of the carriage after that to realize that Providence had made of one blood them and the race of "guessing" money-wasters.

No one said anything more. They rolled along now in darkness, now emerging into half light. The dark figure in the corner of the carriage on Dolly's side leaned forward and studied her carefully. The matron became convinced that he had designs on the funds before mentioned so recklessly. If he had it was none of her business, or did duty compel her to warn this singularly improper young person? As she was about to remove her daughter from demoralizing influences, she ought, perhaps, to act conscientiously. The train halted, madam arose, waved out her child, dispatched her Abigail, then in passing Dolly uttered, with the affability of a Sphinx, these words: "Beware of pickpockets."

Dolly never knew what a triumph of principle over prejudice that cast-iron, yet heroic, woman made.

At the next station Dolly put out her head, saw nobody she knew, experienced a little spasm of homesickness at the thought of being all alone in London—a stranger among *millions*. Yes, that item regarding London's inhabitants (one of the few facts of Dolly's school days not already dislodged from memory) caused her suddenly to spring up and out on the platform. She was fully resolved now to go directly back to the Westminster Palace Hotel, seek Mrs. Thorne, and tell her that her brother might be able to deal out pills and plasters, but was an egregious failure as a pilot.

Springing after her, not one second too soon,

leaped the "end man" of the compartment; then the train left them stranded in the twilight and coal gas of the tunnel. Dolly's follower (shades of Mrs. Thorne!) was a tall, clean-shaven, clear-cut-faced young man, who looked a cross between a clergyman and an actor.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Coxe, but can I be of any help to you? Perhaps you remember that your friend Mrs. Van Broek was kind enough to introduce me to you on the steamer."

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Dolly, with charming cordiality. "You came up at lunch time on deck one rough day. The steward had just asked me if I 'would take something,' and before I could answer I took a pickle up my sleeve and a cup of chicken broth down my back. Was n't he the clumsiest fellow! Do you know, Mr.——"

"Edgecomb."

"Mr. Edgecomb, that I am *lost*?"

"I do. I heard the harrowing tale from your own lips not ten minutes ago."

"Really! Was that you in the corner? Now, do you know, I think those stiff old creatures in that place thought there was something *queer* about me. I am sure I look as well as they did. That bonnet the lady wore went out of date in New York two seasons ago; but is n't it utterly absurd to start for a place of amusement and have to go forlornly poking home again?"

“Miss Coxe, may I venture a suggestion? I would not embarrass you by speaking in the carriage, but——”

“I should not have minded it in the least.”

“Well, I fancy that I know where Doctor Bruce was taking you. (By the way, I got tolerably well acquainted with the Doctor in the smoking-room coming over.) There is nothing out this way so likely to be the place of amusement you speak of as ‘Venice.’ It is the rage now, and they tell me every one ought to see it. I am on my way there. It is a spectacular drama, quite elegant, really classical.—Yes, I am studying for the ministry,” he interpolated, seeing her glance at his clerical coat.—“Now it would give me great pleasure to accompany you to the place. It is more than likely you will find your friends there, but if we do not, I think you can trust a life-long friend of Mrs. Van Broek to bring you safely back to the Westminster.”

“I will go in a minute. I know it will be fun,” quoth Dorothy, pocketing the small card of “J. Everett Edgecomb,” and cheerfully waiting while he interviewed some one who could tell him about trains. He was back in a moment, and two seconds later Miss Coxe and her escort were smilingly taking seats in another first-class carriage; both ignoring, or both happily oblivious of the fact that an order of beings called chaperons existed in polite society. If J. Everett Edgecomb knew, he consid-

ered them luxuries, not necessities, to a free-born American.

And now let us return on the track of our story and also of the underground railroad.

When the Pollocks awoke to the realization of no tickets, no guide, and no knowledge of their ultimate goal they were very wroth. Florida's use of vigorous Saxon would have startled Tom, especially in the descriptive epithets she applied to him. But she talked in an undertone, only giving to the other persons in the carriage the impression that the old lady must have been guilty of some outrageous offense. Still Mrs. Pollock, Junior, was not dismayed, for she knew the revolving flash-light of her black eye would serve her well. No Tom would alight at any station and she not know it. She had not found out the names of stations, but no ink, pills, or cocoa could divert her attention. So at every halt one half her body protruded from the carriage door.

Mrs. Bushby was a jolly soul in the main; she had a good laugh all to herself, and then keeping silence about her dilemma she watched as keenly as Florida.

Harriet Dwight and Bertha Bilton found themselves together. It never would have occurred to Bertha that she had no ticket until asked for it, and she would have waited to be told to get off before leaving the train. Miss Dwight reviewed the situation coolly before she explained it to her companion, who moaned in horror: "Lost! What would mamma

say! She relied on Mrs. Thorne to take care of me. What can we do!"

"I don't mind being lost, nor losing the Doctor, nor having no ticket, but it is idiotic not to know where one is going. If I knew that, I could take care of myself; then I do not understand these trains. I read in my guide-book that some go round what is called the inner circle and some go around an outer circle."

"How awful that sounds," suddenly blubbered Bertha, adding in her own irrelevant way, "it is just like the beginning of Dante in the translation, you know."

"What is?"

"Why the inner and the outer circles, and spirits forever sweeping around them, lovers in torment, and Virgil and Beatrice ——"

"Nonsense, I don't propose to sweep around forever on this underground road. At least we can go home. We started from the station near the Westminster Palace Hotel, but I don't mean to go home."

With entire composure Harriet turned to an intelligent lady near her and summed up matters in the fewest words possible, asking if there was any one place of amusement or interest out this way more frequented than any other. In case they missed their friends on the way, they might by going on meet them at such a place.

"Well, Kensington Museum is out here farther

on, but I scarcely think that the attraction— Oh, I fancy you are started for Venice at Olympia! Get out at the next station but one; directly you stop you will find another train; tell the guard you are bound for Venice and you will get along beautifully. If you find no friends the two of you can look about a bit and get back home then before dark.”

Harriet Dwight thanked her. Bertha looked still apprehensive of circles; the train rushed on.

When Tom had reached the point of doubt bordering on imbecility—doubt as to whether he would do better to get out or to stay in, a man entered the carriage. In answer to Tom's queries he told him he must get off the train at the next station and board another.

“Let me see,” thought the Doctor, “all the six are back of me. I must spring out, make a rush, and call out every one from whatever carriage she may be; that will fetch it beautifully.”

Now no plan would have worked more perfectly had not Tom been mistaken. All the six were in carriages ahead of his. Before the train stopped, in defiance of rules, he leaped out to speed nimbly down the platform, every instant farther from his charge.

“Mother! Mother, fly!” cried Florida, and like a falcon from a mediæval gauntlet went Flori for her prey, “Mother” in pursuit, and Mrs. Bushby hard behind, puffing yet triumphant.

Tom reached the end of the train as that end was removing itself, melting into the smoke of the beyond.

“Lost! Lost! I’ve lost every soul of them!” he gasped, a cold perspiration starting out all over him. Then he turned to find himself almost in the outstretched arms of three widows. Even as he read the joy on their three faces he grew more weak-kneed, for here, gray-haired, able to take care of themselves, were all his chaperons—and the young ones, where were they?

“Now, Doctor Bruce! You did not give us the slip that time,” prattled Flori. “We might have given *you* the chance to escape us if only you had expressed us through, properly labelled, or supplied us with tickets.”

“Where on earth are those girls?” groaned the Doctor, gazing at the hole in the far end of the tunnel into which they must have vanished. “They ought to have changed trains here—that is if they had known where they were going.”

“Which not one of them does know,” put in Mrs. Bushby, merrily. “And so they may keep right on to the very limit of this tight little island—go to Liverpool or to Wales.”

“Don’t you worry one bit, Doctor!” cried Flori. “Dolly Coxe will never come to grief. She is as sharp as a bamboo briar. That Bilton girl might not come to hand again if Miss Dwight was not with her,

but she is, and she is twenty-four (almost as old as I am) and can act as chaperon just as well. She is so self-possessed she could go around the world; no doubt they will all get together and go home."

"Then perhaps we ought to return and—and—prepare Mrs. Thorne."

"Not at all, Doctor," put in Mrs. Florida. "If—I mean when they get there she will understand and will never worry about *us*; but if we get back first she would die of fright about them."

"Then again, they may find out where we are going and go," said Mrs. Bushby.

"That is impossible."

"For a man it would be, but not for Dolly or Harriet. You can't lose a girl unless she wants to get lost. I agree with Mrs. Pollock that we might better just go on."

The three ladies turned as if the thing was settled and promptly inquired, "What train next?"

They made by tacit consent a triangle about Tom, out of whose imaginary sides he would do well if he escaped. They heard the guard who told him what to do, and on the arrival of a train they ensconced themselves, one at each of his elbows and one opposite. He felt sure of himself—and of them but not really happy. He thought of Kate ill at home with a headache—of certain vainglorious words he had spoken.

The three ladies, however, were in the very best

of spirits. They catechised the Doctor, and he told them in full all he knew about Venice, which was really not much. It was nearly dark when they arrived at the station and came out once more into the air. Mrs. Pollock, Junior, suggested that it might be best for them to get their dinner at once and "have done with it," then they "could take things as they came."

The motion was carried by acclamation just near a very elegant-looking restaurant towards which Tom felt himself being conducted. He resolved to yield to circumstances. The dining hall was as pretty as a jewel box, the small tables elegantly laid. At least half a dozen differently shaped wine glasses were by each cover, and for each person's delectation was a tiny gilded gondola freighted with English violets.

The Doctor chose a seat commanding a view of the pavement made bright by electric lights. The ladies studied the *menu* and consulted with the attendants in evening dress elaborate enough for a wedding.

The appearance of some delicious un-English-looking chicken croquettes made Tom basely forgetful of his late shortcoming. He resolved to enjoy his dinner, and later let Fate do her worst.

It was a cosy retreat and the ladies were very entertaining. Mrs. Bushby had plenty of stories of war times, as she had been in camp with the "Gen-

eral"; Florida was quite funny and frivolous. The old lady took a glass of wine to ward off a chill. Two little red spots came in her white countenance and a bright and genial flush on the tip of her frosty nose. The three ladies discussed the matter of the lost girls so variously during the courses that Tom was temporarily convinced that it was the best thing that could have happened to them. The *contretemps* would teach them self-reliance. So soothed and sustained he enjoyed his dinner, settled a bill as imposing in its way as the attire of the waiters, and once more all started. They had not far to go. Within a stone's throw were bought the tickets which let them into—moonlight and Italy: an electric moon mildly beaming from a plausible blue firmament. Canals there were, too, as broad, as winding, and every bit as watery as if their source was the Adriatic. Softly slopping around in them were veritable black gondolas propelled by Italian craftsmen as gracefully skilful and much more cleanly picturesque than if they were at home. The ladies were enchanted, for all about them were brilliantly lighted bazaars—Salviati's full of exquisite glass, every shelf and table glowing as if countless rainbows and myriads of tinted bubbles were heaped up or shattered in glories of golden, blue, crimson, amber, and purple. The contents of all the shops around the square of San Marco seemed transported hither. Mrs. Bushby went suddenly daft over a window full of mosaic jewelry

and paper weights. The Pollocks were filled with delight in the presence of gorgeous Roman silk blankets—with amaze at the fact that certain yellow and scarlet ones were not quite two dollars.

“Doctor,” exclaimed Flori, excitedly, “think of it! Only eight liars!”

“Where? Who?” he asked with a wild fancy that she meant the party was made up of one Ananias and seven Sapphiras.

“This lovely blanket! I can read Italian money, I studied it coming over. One liar is twenty cents—they spell it lira—so eight liars is one sixty. These would make beautiful drapery for couches at home. We could even use them for wraps as we travel.”

A sudden mental snap-shot left on Tom’s mind a picture of Mrs. Pollock, Junior, striding along wrapped in one like a Sioux squaw. He promptly advised: “Don’t buy them here, they are made in Italy, and only cost a—what you call it or two there.”

This seemed reasonable, and just then the three espied a bazaar full of souvenir spoons. Five seconds after the lively salesman had out his velvet show-cloth, and on it big spoons and little spoons with the Florentine devil, the lion of St. Mark, the tower of Pisa, even the wolf with Romulus and Remus imbibing nourishment in a small way on the tip end of the handle. Tom waited impatiently for them to buy a half dozen and come along. He was patheti-

cally unconscious as he leaned against the doorway, opposite a life-size painted and gilded wooden satyr, that this was the small beginning. They were acquiring facts about spoons, not buying them. He would assist in this sort of educational shopping times without number all over the continent. Having examined several dozen critically, the Pollocks thought it advisable to return if they cared to purchase, but on coming out by the Rialto all three agreed the silver was light weight and sharp-edged.

"Oh, mamma, there it is just as we have seen it in pictures, and Shylock had his butcher shop under the Rialto, did n't he, Doctor?"

"His what, Mrs. Pollock?"

"Oh, have I got all mixed up thinking about a pound of meat? Well, you know what I mean, Othello and Desdemona are in it—that play of Shakespeare's."

"Yes, this is the Rialto. Shylock the Jew had his place near by; he was a money lender. Really the illusion is wonderful. I am afraid we will be disappointed in Venice the original," Tom managed to remark, pretending not to see the face Mrs. Bushby made at him.

They were now close to the water's edge, and a brigandish-looking gondolier marked them for his own. The long black boat swept along by their side, and he helped in the ladies, Tom wisely thinking he would refrain from help lest he cast some-

body overboard. Then off they went, slowly moving past the gay bazaars, in front of very creditable palaces, which, if one were in the believing mood of the marchioness with her lemonade, might pass for the ancient abode of Grimani, Camerlengi, or Papadopole. The ladies were enchanted. They gave little squeals of rapture when out from a bridge came another boat gay with colored lanterns, full of musicians playing flutes, fiddles, and guitars. These glided away under the Bridge of Sighs, and then from beneath a balcony burst forth the chorus known to every Venetian and every lover of boat songs: "*Funicula: I'amo!—I'amo!*"

"Doctor! Doctor Bruce!" cried Mrs. Flori. "Do you see that house that looks as if there was a faded pink patchwork bedspread down the side—the big one!"

"*Palazzo Ducale—Riva degli Shiavoni,*" gurgled the gondolier, thinking she sought information.

"As sure as I am alive that is Bertha Bilton in the boat near it, and Harriet Dwight, and a *man.*"

Long after the women saw, Tom, man-like, was gazing all abroad, from the sham clock tower to the artificial heavens above and pipe-conducted waters below. He did get one glimpse of Miss Dwight's serene countenance, but only as her gondolier swept her around one corner and Tom's shot easily around another.

"I believe I saw the man she is with on the

steamer. He sat by me the night of the entertainment for the Sailors' Orphan Asylum," deposed Mrs. Bushby.

"That explains it all," said Mrs. F. Pollock. "I had a friend who crossed last year and got acquainted with a lot of folks, especially gentlemen, on the steamer. She said you were forever meeting them. It was like Pharaoh's frogs and the children of Israel—always just everywhere—turning up with tallow candles in the catacombs, on camels' backs in the desert, in the next berth on the Channel if you were sea-sick, and forever meeting you in their best clothes if you ever looked particularly dilapidated."

"Two of them heard from," mused the Doctor, "or at least known to be in existence at the present moment."

"We told you so," said Flori.

"But you did not know the facts."

"But I knew women, and they rise superior to facts at any time."

"I hear an orchestra, and people are crowding over the main bridge," suggested Mrs. Bushby. "Don't you think the performance, whatever it is, may be about to begin."

"Yes, it is nearly time," answered Tom, looking at his tickets. "Our seats are reserved, but ought we not to look up the girls?"

"We will be most likely to see them among the people if all are seated," said Mrs. Pollock, Senior.

This being reasonable, Tom paid the boatman, and they followed the crowd. They entered an immense amphitheatre easily capable of holding five thousand people, and the seats were filling fast. Opposite was a wide long stage, showing the square of San Marco, the Doge's Palace, and between the spectators and the other shore rolled the broadest part of the Grand Canal. Almost immediately the performance began. It seemed to be a medley of *The Merchant of Venice*, scenes from ancient Venetian life, the marriage of the Doge to the Adriatic, and, in short, every sort of a show which could be connected with Venice. There were at times a thousand actors on the land and water. Gorgeous triumphal processions of state gondolas; everything that the programme promised. The ladies settled themselves to undisturbed enjoyment, but the Doctor studied the audience with reproachful thoughts of the youngest and prettiest of his flock. He recalled a pathetic hymn slightly altered to "Where is my wandering girl to-night?"

Suddenly, far down the building, he caught sight of a fluttering handkerchief, then a girlish figure half rising from her seat. It was Dorothy Coxe! She saw him, bowed, smiled—and, turning, made laughing explanations to a *gentleman. Another!* What *would* Kate say!

"Well, she is alive and apparently happy," said Tom. "I will rush out before the thing closes and

nab her and the others as they pass the door into the street." Then he yielded to the gymnastic fascinations of six or seven hundred Venetian girls done in all the colors of the rainbow, and dancing to a wonderful rhythmic measure.

Time passed. The Pollocks declared themselves delighted. The show was over.

Doctor Bruce explained to the ladies his proposed tactics, and hastening ahead got himself to the main exit. There he stood scanning every person who passed. His party purposely lingered at the bazaars. Hundreds had gone out before Flori came shaking her head as if to say, "Not a trace of them."

They loitered until a policeman as large as Goliath forbade any one blocking the way.

"Those girls *always* carry their purses. They know they came from the Westminster Palace Hotel and they are as sure to come home as cats," said Mrs. Bushby.

"Yes, and it is our duty to go home and prepare Mrs. Thorne's mind," put in Florida.

Tom had a dim recollection that she had seen their duty in another light before the entertainment, but he followed the procession of three who started promptly for the station. They reached the hotel in good order. Tom turned in the vestibule to consult how they had best break the news to Kate. A porter had stopped him a second to ask if a telegram was his. They were all ascending in

the elevator. A fleeting view of Florida's boots nearly to the ceiling was the last he saw of any of them that evening. A pang went through his manly breast. Human beings ought to stand by one another in trouble.

Kate was looking very bright. Gaslight and fire-light made the room brilliant.

"You don't know how well I feel now I have slept my headache off. The maid brought me a dainty little supper, and I have been reading Hare's *Walks about Rome*, getting ideas to put in practice. Was the thing good?"

"Grand."

"Did they enjoy it?"

"Oh, famously!"

"Have any trouble?"

"Well—we all got there—but that underground is a beastly mode of locomotion."

"How—why—are not any of them coming in to talk it over?"

When a man clears his throat and runs his fingers through his hair, looking past a woman at bureaus or pictures, that woman scents treason, stratagem or—some sort of masculine iniquity. A few questions, and Kate had the facts. She sprang from her chair, seized her bonnet, exclaimed: "We must go right back. I will wait at the nearest station. You must return—then come back, and we will consult the police."

There was a tap at the door. Tom opened. Dorothy Coxe entered, rosy, dimpling, giggling.

“O Mrs. Thorne! Such fun! We lost Dr. Bruce” — (Tom could have hugged her for making him objective, instead of the subject of her sentence); “but you know the wind always is tempered to the shorn lamb! Before I had bleated out a single baa! who should appear but Mr. J. Everett Edgecomb. I knew him through the Van Broeks. Don’t look distressed, Mrs. Thorne, he is awfully good and pious, though in a real swell way—going to be a clergyman. Not that he was solemn; we did not have time; for I wanted some fun and I knew it was all right and proper; for when you have the benefit of the clergy things *always* are. We saw everything. I brought you the dearest little spoon, with a gold gondola on top, because you, poor thing, could not go. Was not the performance gorgeous, Doctor? Mr. Edgecomb said tell you, Mrs. Thorne, he would give himself the pleasure of calling on you, if you would honor him with your acquaintance, or words to that elegant effect. He is kind of Lord Chesterfield and Johnsonian if you don’t take the airs out of him. I did it pretty well in the time allowed me. Oh, you missed lots, Mrs. Thorne! Where are the rest?”

“Dorothy,” groaned Mrs. Thorne, who secretly was lighter-hearted, “*he lost all the younger ones.*”

Dolly’s laughter had not ceased to peal forth when

again there came a tap on the door. She flew to open it. Miss Dwight entered, followed by Miss Bilton.

Miss Dwight went to the heart of the matter at once after a glance at the Doctor.

“ Doctor Bruce has told you how we got separated. Miss Bilton and I met a gentleman who was on the steamer. I knew him there for a friend and classmate of my cousin in Amherst. He was introduced to me once at a Boston symphony concert. He is to be trusted. He took care of us. I wish you had gone, so you could have told us if it really looked anything like Venice.”

“ Oh, it was exquisite,” broke forth Bertha. “ I kept whispering :

“ ‘ There is a glorious city in the sea,
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets
Ebbing and flowing, and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces. . . . ’ ”

“ Oh, girls, did you have any supper ? ” cried Dolly. “ Did you get into that heavenly restaurant where the salad was trimmed with lobster claws and the little chops were all in tissue-paper upper skirts ! I was ravenous ! Mr. Edgecomb would pay my bill, and I only hope he has a big letter of credit.”

“ Miss Dwight’s friend was very polite,” said Bertha. “ His name is Leroy Heath, and he means to call on you, Mrs. Thorne, because his route often touches ours, he said.”

“Any friend of Miss Dwight would naturally be unobjectionable,” said Kate, amiably, adding: “I was terribly worried about you.”

“And I assured her you could take care of yourselves,” said Tom, nonchalantly.

“So they can,” said Kate, “but it still remains to be seen if you can take care of them. That was what you undertook to do.”

“I have not had a smoke to-day,” remarked the Doctor, letting himself out of the door and the discussion.

The girls’ tongues were then unloosed and they talked over every detail of their adventures.

“It is great fun belonging to a conducted party,” exclaimed Dolly. “You will let us go again, won’t you? Don’t scold Doctor Bruce. Mrs. Florida had her business eye on him—and we could look out for ourselves, as he says.”

“I seldom have headaches,” smiled Mrs. Thorne, “this will be the last of the season. Good-night, girls.”

CHAPTER FOURTH.

THE TOUR BEGINS.

DURING the rest of their stay in London, Tom simply took care of himself. Kate said she was able to attend to her flock if she was not bothered with a man, or, as she explained, a man whose whims led him to propose going off into fascinating byways. Duty pointed her straight to the Abbey, museums, galleries, and all those edifices mentioned in capitals on itineraries and fully decorated with festoons of adjectives like "grand," "glorious," and "historic." True, Mrs. Thorne weakened sometimes when she happened to hear Mrs. Pollock whisper to Mrs. Florida about "the small of my back," but Florida was of sterner stuff. She always replied :

"*Mother*, do you want to go home and have people ask you about things you did not see?"

Miss Coxe overheard Miss Bilton talking to the Doctor one day, and broke into the conversation.

"Oh, Mrs. Thorne is a perfect leader; but I believe *you* have lots more fun. What, for instance, have you done to-day?"

“Let me see! I have done so much it is hard to tell. I started for the British Museum and got there. They were all home; every old Rameses, every Karnak ram’s head, every old battered Egyptian was ready for me, and I got into their quarters first. There was the prettiest little mummy of a princess in sackcloth knickerbockers strapped with brown tape. She had worn her hair banged for almost three thousand years and she had her family coat-of-arms worked on her knees, elbows, and cheek-bones in a sort of Kensington stitch. There was real style about her. Close by was the sarcophagus of a ‘Bard’; no doubt he was in love with her and wrote her poems all in hieroglyphics.”

“Why you have ever so much sentiment, have n’t you, Doctor?” cried Dolly; “I did not think it of you.”

“I am steeped in sentiment; all doctors are,” said Tom. “Well, then a guide asked if I wanted to see the Portland *Wahz*, and I did, not knowing if it were fish, flesh, fowl, man, or beast. I paid a sixpence and saw a pretty little vase cracked by a lunatic who was maddened probably to find the *Wahz* such a trifle of a thing.”

“It is an antique treasure of great—” began Miss Bilton, but Dolly said, “What else did you see, Doctor?”

“I went for a walk and saw the Seven Dials, then a lot of curiosity shops, a sixpenny museum, several

churchyards; met a row of butchers' boys with trays of pork-pies on their heads, took a 'bus and got off by Smithfield where they roasted the martyrs in Bloody Mary's day."

"Oh, how perfectly lovely!" cried Dolly.

"There was an old church there (oldest Norman one in London),—antique odor of sanctity perfectly overpowering,—and better still St. Bartholomew's Hospital, very old and rich. My professional card let me in and I had a fine two hours, saw a splendid operation for—well, you would not understand if I told you. It was entirely successful, only the poor fellow died just after it; they often do. Then I walked to Blackfriars Bridge, and came home on the Thames."

Dolly was in raptures. "Oh, Doctor Bruce! How perfectly heavenly!"

Dolly always emphasized each syllable of *perfectly* and put a hyphen between.

"It must be awfully instructive to go about with you. Do take me just *once!* Mrs. Thorne is angelic and ever so intellectual, but your way of learning appeals to me. I'm sure we got on all right going to Venice with you. I don't wish to be frivolous in the least, don't you know, only sometimes—just a little—I like to frivole."

Tom looked intelligent, but he gravely asked how she had filled her day.

"We spent the most of it in the Abbey," viva-

ciously cried Bertha, turning up her eyes and the palms of her fat hands. "It surpasses everything! I held my breath!"—"Not long," whispered Dolly,)—"All I ever read came rushing over me"—(DOLLY: Sort of circulating-library sensation that must be)—"I could spend months there," continued Bertha, in sincere rapture.

DOLLY: Well, I could not. When the organ plays I fairly hear the dead men's bones in the walls rattle. I liked best of all the royal waxworks up garret; the point lace on the cuffs of the King Charles dummy made my mouth water.

BERTHA: Then we had an hour or two for the National Gallery.

DOLLY: And Polly, Junior, thanks her stars in such places.

TOM: What do you mean?

DOLLY: The famous pictures have stars to them in the guide-book. Doesn't she go for them and stand there to study the quotations from Vassari, and Ruskin, and Kugler! She buzzes to herself like a little boy swinging his heels over his spelling lesson, and I hear her mumbling about feeling, atmosphere, tender conception, and chiaro—what you may call it.

And suddenly Dolly was contorted with laughter.

BERTHA: What does ail you? I am sure *I* read every note and hunt up stars. It is the way to learn.

TOM: So it is, Miss Bilton.

DOLLY: But Bertha enjoys it. Polly does it as the Irishman said he played the fiddle, "Nayther by ear or by note, but by main strangth." She broke Miss Dwight all up to-day, though Harriet went to pieces properly in a corner after Polly left. She asked her in what room was the wonderful fiskey, and she was hunting up a Psyche.

When Miss Bilton received a joke it took severe hold of her. She now became so rubicund and agitated that the Doctor felt called upon to say:

"Mrs. Thorne reproves me sternly whenever I indulge in any personalities, Miss Dolly."

"Then I advise you not to indulge in them when she is present. I never do. Doctor, won't you take a few of us on top a 'bus? It must be next to the bliss of being the Goddess of Liberty on top of a circus chariot, and how I do want to be out in a London fog!"

"Fogs are out of season, and 'bus tops are only for cherubs like me, and perches for the 'lower middle class.'"

"Nonsense! I mean to go on one. Miss Dwight says she shall go 'as an experience.' She is always correct, but not stupid. I like her. She thinks I am superficial, and I am, so that is all right. I presume we 'll be intimate friends soon."

Bertha suddenly inquired if "Ben Jonson really was buried upright in the North Aisle."

Tom did not know. Dolly asked if Ben or Sam wrote a dictionary, and which of them had an "h" in him; then thanklessly checked Bertha in a full flow of biographical instruction. They were awaiting dinner in the drawing-room, were getting impatient, when Mrs. Florida put her head in at the door and tartly remarked: "We've been ten minutes at the table." When she noted the aggravatingly pretty dinner gown Dolly wore she added: "Mrs. Thorne does not expect to tell us that our meals are ready."

Dolly tossed her head, like a young colt in a clover field, remarking: "Dr. Bruce was so entertaining we forgot everything." Tom grinned. He reflected that Dolly, like Bertha, never was ill-natured, but unlike Miss Bilton she seemed to know what might ruffle another's tranquillity. Each of the eight were in those days learning the peculiarities of the rest.

That night, after each had gone to her room, Miss Dwight heard a soft tap at her door, and prudently asked at the keyhole: "Who is it?"

"Me, Bertha—I—at home mamma always kisses me good-night. Don't you feel lonesome?"

"Not especially so."

"Please call me Bertha—and—don't think I'm queer—but—do you love me a little? Could you open the door?"

"The key turns very hard."

“Oh, then, don't mind—but—tell me what I asked.”

“I see things—to—to respect in you, Miss Bilton. I never love anybody on such short notice.”

“Well, I hope you will. I just can't live unless people love me. Mrs. Thorne is so lovely, but rather cold.”

“You will get cold yourself standing there; good-night.”

“Good-by, dear; I'm *drawn* to you.”

(At Dolly's door, raps.)

“It is me.”

(Dolly) “Good gracious, Bertha Bilton!—Is the hotel on fire?”

“Oh, no—no, certainly not—I just came to kiss you good-night.”

“O—ooh—Well, you couldn't—not to edification, for I—I—am greasing my whole face with cold cream,” and Dolly seized a little box before opening to her guest—“I'm afraid my nose may peel after burning so on the ocean.”

“It does not look so—May I sit down?”

“If you can find a chair. Dump all those parcels on the floor. They are the sweetest scarfs from Liberty's, awfully cheap, considering what they cost at home.”

“Will you see them soon again?”

Dolly stared at her before asking: “Who is going to steal them?”

“Oh, you don't understand. I was thinking of those young men, Mr. Edgecomb and Mr. Heath.”

“Oh, yes, as likely as not.”

“Would n't it be delightful! Was Mr. Edgecomb's conversation suggestive?”

“He suggested supper, which was good of him, for I was simply ravenous, and it would have been awkward for me to do the suggesting.”

“Mr. Heath is very interesting and cynical, or Harriet made him so; she has such decided opinions. I have, too, but I am sympathetic. I touch people on that line more perhaps. When do you think we will see them?”

“I have no idea.”

“I like gentlemen's society, don't you, Miss Coxe?”

“Oh, I worry along with it. Shall I order another candle, this one is going out? Aren't you awfully sleepy?”

“No, but I must go—That man on the steamer that paid me some attention seemed really like a church member. Mrs. Thorne did not like him one bit—he talked very nicely about his grandmother; she was a seven-day Baptist when she was alive—I would be ashamed to tell you what he said about my eyes.”

Bertha waited a second, then made a move forward. Dolly applied a large dab of cold cream to her cheek, and swept it about her rosy lips.

Bertha retreated as the candle gave its last flicker, saying: "Good-night. Sweet dreams. Perhaps they may call to-morrow."

She had to pass the Pollocks' door, but she did not halt there. By Mrs. Thorne's she hesitated; all was quiet within. Heaving a gentle sigh Miss Bilton went to bed unkissed. She was not, however, without consolation. No one of the eight save Mrs. Thorne herself would get so much out of Europe and what it had of the aforesaid "grand, historic, and inspiring." She *really* knew and loved what she said "she adored." The gods dispense their gifts justly.

Mr. Edgecomb called to see Mrs. Thorne and Miss Coxe, only to learn that they had gone to Windsor. Mr. Heath also left his card one day, and found no one "at home."

It was a golden afternoon in early June when our pilgrims started for Canterbury. All the way they had raptures over green fields, trim hedges, stone bridges, and wild flowers; over red brick farm-houses, ivy-covered ruins, and neat railway stations. At Rochester Dolly suddenly produced a kodak, and snapped a British soldier strutting on the platform. He struck a pigeon-breasted pose, and winked at her. She said that would not affect the picture, and regretted that she could not take the all-over-redness of his coat, his face, his hair, and the saucer-cap over one ear held by a strap across his chin.

Then they steamed away again through fields gay

with red poppies, stretching on until they seemed to meet the tender blue sky.

“I shall give you as little of the modern as possible in Canterbury,” said Kate. “It would be out of keeping with Chaucer, Thomas á Becket, and the Black Prince. You shall have every comfort, but the hotel is centuries old. I chose it for antiquity’s sake.”

“I hope Aunt Iquity is clean and can cook,” muttered Tom.

When they issued from the train, Kate led them to a “custard-colored coach,” or rather an omnibus, lined throughout with buff wall-paper and having blue hollyhocks and pink buttercups running over its sides and roof in most fantastic patterns. The eight just filled it, while all their bags went on top,—those spic-and-span new Gladstone bags that every porter, loungee, or stray traveller gaped at admiringly. They were so much “smarter” than the boxes, tin bread-cases, and bloated bundles of short-trip passengers.

The girls laughed at the vehicle, but Mrs. Thorne said: “We ought not to come in on wheels anyway, but as chroniclers say the pilgrims used to arrive: ‘Some on foot, some on horseback with music, with song and merry bells, so that with their pipings and janglings, and the barking of dogs after them, they made more noise than if the king came with all his clarions and music.’”

Miss Bilton asked questions until they drew up

and presented the end door of the 'bus to the portal of a low, dark, small-windowed inn, out of which bustled a modern waiter in a spotless shirt-front and white tie.

Every girl began to gaze at the window-ledges full of geraniums in bloom, at the queer twists and turns in the low broad stairs going up, down, and to my lady's chamber—at the doors with latches, the hall tables covered with brightly scoured candlesticks holding tall white candles.

“How old is the Blue Columbine Inn?” cried Bertha, seizing the elbow of a brisk maid who led their way roomward.

“Well, miss, the records do speak of a Blue Columbine here in thirteen hundred. 'T is likely it is this one. Will these rooms please you, madam?”

She flitted along, opening door after door into chambers so deliciously cool and quaint that soon each inmate was eager to prove her own the best.

“I've got a big four-poster with a white dimity canopy and a ruffled valance,” cried Dolly, “and I'll have to go to bed up a young step-ladder that lives at the foot of the concern.”

“Oh, you ought to come here to see the ornaments on my tall mantelpiece, my picture of Queen Anne in her coronation robes, and the old gilded bellows I have got,” called Florida, from across the hall.

“That is tame to a secret closet, its door covered with wall-paper and its shelves full of jam-pots and

currant jelly! That is what I have in my room!" retorted Miss Dwight; "and I look out on a garden with a sun-dial in it and the jolliest old chimney-pots."

"Wash your faces," calmly called out Mrs. Thorne, "and we will have several hours in the cathedral before dinner."

This process did not take long, then Kate and her charge went forth.

"In the course of a few hours," said she, "one learns that everything in Canterbury (except the grocer and haberdasher) connects itself with St. Augustine, à Becket, Henry the Eighth, the Black Prince, or the *Canterbury Tales*. As for the cathedral here—we would spend the summer in and about it if I had my way. Come here down old Chancery Lane!"

They followed her, looking curiously right and left, on through the great gate into the cathedral yard. The huge trees were making designs of light and shade on the soft turf, the rooks were wheeling about away up where the towers were outlined against the summer sky, and by the doorway the weather-worn kings, queens, and saints awaited their new-world wonder as patiently as they had done without it in centuries when tourists were unknown. Then they (the eight, not the saints) spilled their insignificant little selves into the cool, white immensity of the nave, and for a quarter hour had to let them-

selves receive a sort of baptism of silence and solemnity. The cathedral does that for every one not a fool.

In due course of time a statistical guide took them in tow, and swarming about him they went feeling of archbishops' effigies, gazing at shrines, peeping into chapels, cloisters, chapter-houses, and taking in a hotch-potch of facts about all sorts of architecture since the tower of Babel. They were squeezed into the little newly opened chapels of St. John and St. Gabriel, looking at the old frescos, when Dolly, who eschewed instruction too copiously administered, stole off to find an effigy on a tomb that really interested her.

"I declare," she murmured, "so box-pleated skirts were all the style for ladies in 1305, and Jersey waists with big buttons down the front!"

"There is nothing new under the sun, you know," said somebody over her shoulder, "and what repose of manner Lady de Oshun has!"

Dolly glanced up, nodding pleasantly as she asked: "Do you suppose, Mr. Edgecomb, that it is the friction of time that has rubbed off the end of her nose?"

"Yes—unless some Puritan snubbed her; they reformed the noses of the dead aristocracy if ever it came handy. May I ask when you reached Canterbury, Miss Coxe?"

"Well, since we met that guide in there I can not

be sure in what century it was—but we have not eaten dinner here yet. I am as hungry as I was that day I got lost.”

“I came yesterday and am at the Blue Columbine.”

“Why, so are we!” said Dolly. “Is it not curious there? Here comes Mrs. Thorne: let me present you.”

Kate was pleased with Mr. Edgecomb. In view of her cares as a chaperon, it was considerate of him to be a clergyman elect and so a suitable companion for her lambs. They had a brief chat over the mediæval lady in the jersey. Miss Bilton smiled to her utmost capacity, devoured Mr. Edgecomb’s utterances, struggling meanwhile to keep the guide’s elbows within graspable proximity. In the next pause she said: “Don’t forget to show us that old window you spoke of.”

“No, miss, for ’t is the holdest in Hengland, I’m told.”

“That interests me,” said Mr. Edgecomb. “I am studying up church architecture and art of the middle ages.”

“Are you going to be high church?” asked Bertha, with one eye on the guide. “We are Congregationalists at home; but if I were in the ministry it would just inspire me to pace up to the altar with a white scarf and a scarlet hood on my back, a verger (don’t you call him?) ahead with a silver stick, and a

long train of white-robed cherubs chanting slow music behind."

"Cherubs!" giggled Dolly. "There was half a dozen of those choir boys in the cloister at Westminster scuffling into those holy night-gowns they wear, and squabbling for all they were worth. But I am a Methodist, you know, and *we* like simplicity."

"Yes, you are a Methodist of the Methodists," said the Doctor, strolling over to Dolly as they moved off.

She said: "Miss Dwight will approve of Mr. Edgecomb, he is brainy I suppose. I hope this Mr. Heath will be a little *levitous*. Oh, I am simply famished! What more must we see, Mrs. Thorne?"

"Nothing before dinner. At midnight (it being Friday) the ghost of Nell Cook walks in a corridor over here. You can read about her in the *Ingoldsby Legends*."

"What an improper ghost—unless she brings her chaperon."

"She is all alone, and if you see her," put in the guide, solemnly, "you will not live out the twelve-month."

"Then in sightseeing let us draw the line at ghosts," said Mrs. Bushby, shuddering. "I don't like crypts, and ruins, and creepy places."

"I must go home," said Dolly, "and bring my diary up to date. I am away back in London. Bertha lets me copy hers for facts. I don't meddle with

her emotions. I mean to have some of my own if I ever catch up. I must have some in case it is ever published like Marie Bashkirtseff's you know."

Tom did not know, but he led the procession home to dinner, Mr. Edgecomb talking with Mrs. Thorne all the way.

"I am as hungry as a bear," said Mrs. Florida, when they neared the inn.

After dinner none of them cared to go out. All had letters to write, gloves to mend, or meant to go early to bed.

Miss Coxe, going to her room, dawdled before her mirror trying new effects with her "fringe"; in other words, brushing up, down, aside, the curly rings above her fair forehead. Then she punched the bed to see if it was soft, scoffed at the little pillows, finally decided to get out her Russian leather portfolio, after which she gazed at a half dozen fat envelopes, addressed in various styles of masculine chirography.

"I can't bother to answer half of them. Let them think they were never delivered on the steamer. How will I manage with the rest—let me see. I can keep my journal up to time; the facts are no more Bertha's property than mine. Some of her sentiments made a little Coxey might do, and then a neat copy of one letter could go the rounds where the receivers are not intimate. In the rest of the journal I can put everything purely personal that I want to remember."

Reaching for her silver-backed hair-brush, Dolly knocked loudly on the side wall.

“Bertha! Bertha Bilton, I want your journal right away.”

“Why, dear! I have pages on pages to write to-night.”

“Botheration! you ought to do them separate like manuscript, then you could hand them over handy. How can I tell what I have seen if you don’t? Well now who was it—St. Patrick or St. Peter that came to Canterbury from Jerusalem—was it? to ah—to build the cathedral?”

“*Oh!* Dolly,” cried a pained voice, and forthwith Bertha began the pretty tale of the young “Angles” in the Roman slave market.

“Never mind, never mind!” protested Dolly.

“And when St. Augustine saw them—though by the way, Dolly, he was not the other St. Augustine who——”

Wicked Dolly tiptoed across the room, stole away from the flood tide of instruction, and appeared to Miss Dwight, saying: “Let us go for a walk, just you and I.”

“Will Mrs. Thorne like it?”

“It is broad daylight, and England is not wicked like the continent. Poor Mrs. Thorne must be tired, she has seen it all.”

Miss Dwight, putting aside her writing, donned her hat and gloves.

“I like England,” said Harriet, when they were in the street. “It makes me think of Boston.”

“Yes, it is very respectable, and seems saying, ‘I always have been this way, I always expect to be. I don’t recognize any other way.’ I wonder,” added Dolly, “if this is a garrison town; I see lots of soldiers.”

They passed just then a fine-looking officer and a group of privates. Dorothy glanced that way. The officer whistled under his breath, one of the privates, red-nosed, pock-marked, and plebeian, turned and went the way the girls were going. Neither of them saw him. They walked until finding themselves in Castle Street, Harriet proposed they should keep on until they saw the castle itself.

“What an old box it is,” she exclaimed a little later, “but being so ancient it is awe-inspiring I suppose.”

“Humph—been there seven or eight hundred years you say,” muttered Dolly, gazing at it coldly, her only comment being: “How ridiculous!”

Miss Dwight might have challenged her adjective, but instead she whispered, “Dolly, don’t turn your head!—I believe one of those impudent soldiers has followed us. Let us go back where there are more people.”

In a minute there came a wheedling voice from the rear. “Pretty, ai’nt it, miss, but not so pretty as you! Would n’t you like a guide about ’ere?”

They paid no attention, walking briskly ahead, Dolly whispering, "I am not afraid! There are lots of people in sight."

"I hear him following, I would like to stop and *kill him*," breathed the young woman from Smith's College.

Dolly giggled, the footsteps gained on them. They suddenly turned and Mr. Edgecomb was for a second quite discomposed by the ferocity of their expression—and then the flash-light of pleasure succeeding, even more by their greetings: "We thought you were a wretch of a soldier!"

"Drunk and with the small-pox," added Dolly.

"Thank you," he laughed, "you really imply a preference for my society; may I ask why you await such an apparition?"

"Why, there was one here! There he goes down that lane."

"Have you been to the Dane John?"

"Not yet."

It is a beautiful promenade with flowers and terraces. It is near here, we might go that way home, if you will allow——"

"Yes, there is precisely where *we* were going," replied a gentle voice close behind the group.

Mr. Edgecomb turned quickly. "I beg your pardon, Mrs. Thorne, I did not see you before."

"No? I was studying the windows, and wondering about the castle."

They discussed the castle then with more intelligence and interest. That done all started for the Dane John. Dolly meekly explained in an undertone: "We thought we would be safe alone and need not disturb you."

"That was kind, but I meant to come here and am glad you wanted to see everything possible."

"She may be deep," mused Dolly, "but she is not pussy-cat-y—still she won't be caught napping very often, Dorothy Coxe."

"I wonder if you are as loth to leave England as I am. What do you enjoy the most here, Mrs. Thorne?" asked Mr. Edgecomb.

"Well, in London I like the streets and the Abbey; winter twilights are most weird there. In whatever mood one may be, the Abbey is responsive. Even as a monster museum it is rich in the grotesque."

"Do you want to know what I like the best there?" asked Dolly, flippantly.

"You said the old waxworks."

"No, Harriet, I forgot the tomb of that old Earl of Exeter. In his lifetime he put up a big monument—a flat top like a railway platform—and right in the middle he caused to be *sculpt* his lordly self. On his right side was put Mrs. Exeter in brownstone furbelows. He was a 'widdy-man' at the time, but he knew he should not stay so, accordingly he left a good wide berth for No. 2 on his left side. He married (I have no doubt she was half a

century newer), and later he died. At his funeral she took note of that big vacancy at the left, and wife No. 1 in the place of honor on his right. No. 2 could not stand *that*. When the time came she got herself nicely buried somewhere else, and that family monument will be one-sided till the crack of doom. No Yankee's wife would have done that."

"Would she have been meeker?" asked Mr. Edgecomb.

"She would have been brighter, and had the cover pried up, put herself on the right, and removed No. 1 to the left."

"I see, on the principle of he laughs best who laughs last," he commented.

"What do *you* like best in London, Mr. Edgecomb?" asked Miss Dwight.

"The things Mrs. Thorne spoke of: being jostled along the Strand, turning under an arch, and finding the greenness of Temple Garden, the Crusader's Church, Goldsmith's grave. You can look up to his chambers, where he hung blue curtains during a brief run of literary luck. Blackstone was under his rooms at work on his *Commentaries*. The noise above drove him almost wild, for Goldsmith gave parties, and danced Irish jigs with his wig on hind side before."

"I forgot Regent Street shops!" cried Dolly, "the East Indian ones. An embroidered crape I saw there was heavenly!"

"May I ask where your travels take you?" inquired Mr. Edgecomb.

Dolly being weak in geography dropped behind, and let Miss Dwight walk with the gentleman.

"We are going by way of Dover to Ostend, thence to Ghent, stopping at Bruges a day or two. Mrs. Thorne has a friend who is a nun in that wonderful *Grand Beguinage* that you probably know about. She says there are seven hundred women in that little town."

"I have read of it," said Edgecomb. "It was started more than—well, half a thousand years ago. The same sisters live there now, their souls are spotless, their bodies became spiritualized by prayer and penance, so they do not need to die. In time of wars no nation ever harmed them. I fancy they are as much like modern women as rose leaves shut into prayer books years ago are like fresh blossoms."

"On the contrary," remarked Mrs. Thorne from the rear, "these good sisters' average weight is from one hundred and fifty up. Their spotless little kitchens send out about dinner-time delicious odors of *potage*. They are Christians, but not winged ones."

"I have always longed to go there since the place was described to me," sighed Dorothy, with an especially seraphic look in her eyes. It prompted Edgecomb to persist.

"Still, Mrs. Thorne, we have to picture them in a

less realistic fashion. I venture to say that Miss Coxe is drawn to this mediæval abode of sanctity by visions of nuns not unlike Fra Angelico's angels, or what Taine calls 'fine and gentle figures on golden backgrounds, that breathe a mute repose like immaculate roses in Paradise.' "

"I—I think," said Dolly, sweetly, "Harriet may be after those, but my object is chiefly to buy enough fine *Duchesse* lace to trim an evening dress. They sell it awfully cheap in comparison to home prices."

"What did Miss Coxe come abroad to see?" asked Mr. Edgecomb, finding himself with Miss Dwight in advance of the others.

"You think," said Miss Dwight, with startling accuracy, "that she may have come abroad (as some people old and young do come) without ability to appreciate what she will see. This is not true. She will see, feel, learn, and appreciate, but nobody will be the wiser for it at the time."

"Is she sincere?"

Miss Dwight did not propose to analyze Miss Coxe's character, even if Mr. Edgecomb wished to amuse himself with the study, but to see justice done was one of Harriet's passions.

"She is sincere with herself."

"That is a cheap virtue."

"A cheaper one is the constant effort to do and to think what other people expect of us in the given

circumstances. Dorothy never tries; if she tries anything it is to keep her 'good spells,' as she calls them, to herself."

"That is selfish."

"It is her way of being sincere."

"I do not understand."

"Well, for instance, she told me that when she first saw Niagara Falls from the Canadian shore she wanted to get away alone and say her prayers, but as she could not, being with a clergyman at the time, she giggled and told him if 'there could only be a syndicate to turn the whole thing into an ice-cream soda fountain how nice it would be!' *That* man thinks Dolly put herself into that speech, when it was just her way of escaping from him."

"Why could she not be true to herself and say what she thought?"

This question was not unlike others which Miss Dwight herself was in the habit of asking at times, but addressed to herself she chose to think it priggish. She sharply retorted: "Do you always give your 'Sunday best' thoughts to Tom, Dick, and Harry because they happen to be at your elbow asking what you are thinking about?"

"No, but perhaps it would be better for Tom, Dick, Harry, and *me* if I did."

"It might and it might not," she coolly remarked, and a little later seemed to have forgotten all about him.

When Miss Coxe, getting confused, asked why they called this pleasant little park the "Demi-john," he talked with her a while. It piqued him just a trifle that Miss Dwight was not listening. At last he again addressed her directly.

"You know my friend Heath, Miss Dwight?"

"He was a classmate of a cousin of mine. I had met him several times in Boston before I saw him in London. I thought you were travelling together."

"We are when we happen to want the same thing. I shall go from Canterbury to Paris. You may meet him in Holland. He speaks of you as an old and valued friend. Acquaintance counts for more when Americans are this side the ocean. He wants to know Miss Coxe better."

"He does not know her at all."

"Oh—he—why he saw her so often on the boat. He pointed out a whale to her once (it was nothing but a porpoise, and small at that), and she asked him something about the coast of Ireland. She may not remember him, but he retains very clear impressions of her."

Miss Dwight gave him a searching glance in the clear evening light. He blushed a trifle, quite as if he had been making too much of some claims of his own instead of Heath's.

Harriet saw the faint color, and thought, "He has the face of a man who deals more with ideas than with things; that is why I should fancy him a

priest—only sometimes all he wants to speak he says with his features first, like an actor; or he does involuntarily what an actor learns to do. I never thought before about men being able to blush, so few ever seem to—but they should, I think,” and Miss Dwight studied her companion’s countenance. He knew she was doing it, but this time his features played him no trick. He merely realized he was warmly comfortable, though the evening air was growing sharp.

This last fact was soon evident to Mrs. Thorne, who advised retreat hotelward. Edgecomb, who at times had a whimsical conscience about trifles, and later repented obeying that conscience, fell behind to walk the rest of the way with Mrs. Thorne, chiefly because he was moved to hasten on alone with this girl whose grey eyes looked into a man and beyond, earnest with thoughts he did not know. He coveted them.

EDGECOMB TO HEATH.

PARIS, June 10th.

DEAR HEATH :

I have not written to you since we parted on the Thames Embankment, where you made your *confessio amantis* rather more like Oliver to Orlando than in the style of Gower, except that you could only speak for yourself. Possibly we were looking at the very scene of Richard the Second’s request to the poet after inveigling him into the royal barge : to “book some new thing.”

The confession of love is always a new thing whether booked or not. To confess love for a woman to any other person than herself, even to a prospective parson, is of doubtful wisdom—it is a secret for two to keep, of whom the knight should be one and the lady the other, until he wears her favor in his helm. Miss Dorothy, I should judge, will be as hard to win as the music of a brook or the forms of a summer cloud. But when won, if you are under tutelage to the fairies who know the magic for it, true as her own blue eyes.

In France I feel like a *described* traveller—sort of objective to myself. This must be the change of language, my mind pathetically “oversetting” itself into French idioms. However, this is rapidly wearing off, and in a short time I trust to become correctly Parisian by the grace of an imperial, a little more rotundity, and a Prince Albert buttoned high.

Of the men I have met in Paris, Alphonse Daudet pleases me best and gives me most ideas. He has the spirit of French literature in him, like his books. His wit has the brilliancy of a rain-drop rather than of a diamond, and is transient—born of the hour and no longer wit when cold, but while the sparkle remains it is richer than the wit which takes the fixed forms of humor as with us in America. His conversation is in detached flights, now a subject is made musical like a tree by a flock of birds, then like the tree suddenly barren and silent. Daudet is a handsome man, under the medium height—the smaller type of Frenchman,—eyes large and melancholy, black hair parted in the middle and hanging to his shoulders in the old Henry V. style of his youth,

when he became secretary to the Duc de Morny. He lives in a large sombre house, a house with a character totally at variance with his own. Were the house a book we would say it had been thumbed and cast aside. Were the house a coat, we would say it was threadbare. He has described it in one of his stories—*Un Reveillon dans le Marais*. I can never think of a Frenchman's house as partaking of or expressing his nature. In England and America, houses are quickly assimilated by those who live in them. The French, perhaps, have better taste, but it is not so individual. Two families could change homes and ways and one would be very like the other. In England and America every detail gets modified by "I like." French houses resemble the French conventional marriage—in which any one of several *partis* would suit the bride as well. What French poet could have written *The Hanging of the Crane*? French married felicity is founded on mutual forbearance. As those who are bound together till death doth them part come to know each other less, this becomes more easy and domestic life more smooth. But what right has one to "nationalize" like that? Why should this or the other selfish bourgeoisie or more selfish noble be France? Madame Adam, at whose salon I met Daudet, says that the American girl is like an onion, giving a peel to each acquaintance until there is nothing left for her husband. I might possibly think that true of one or two young ladies over-given to sentiment, but could not allow Madame Adam to generalize so far as to include—well, Miss Coxe, for instance, or Miss Dwight. I therefore deprecated the onion, but admitted that the American

girl may have a heart like a palimpsest on which love may have traced pure emotions and beautiful thoughts before a greater love erased them. It sometimes happens that the superscription is erased in turn and the original revived and found to be superior—but the heart of the American girl an *onion*? Perish the thought!

In Daudet's study, a room with maroon walls, simple furniture and no bric-a-brac except some Japanese bronzes, there is a picture I wish you could see. It is one of the last ones painted by Cabanel. You know the power of this painter lies in the wonderful skill and truth with which single feelings are represented in faces that otherwise might be portraits. Dante says:

“Quando per diletianze over per doglie
Che alcuna virtu nostra comprenda,
L'anima bene ad essa si raccoglie.”

In each face Cabanel represents the soul “collected.” This picture is *L'Amitie—L'Amour*. A man and a woman are looking at each other across a library table, on which are open books, and books form the background. In their faces is the knowledge that love has risen from friendship. In the man's is the ardent longing of hope, in the woman's inexpressible tenderness tempered with regret. His hand is opening a book; hers is closing one. It is an old, old story, as old as Plato. Dante has told it well in the fifth canto of the *Inferno*; but in these faces there is sinless joy. Love is not love till friendship crowns it: why should not love crown friendship?

For some reason this picture affects me more than anything in the Louvre, where I spend most of my mornings. But to discuss picture galleries makes my tongue feel like a palette knife, and besides, travellers should not venture to be as profoundly descriptive to other travellers as to those who credulously remain at home. Next week I go to Geneva. Hotel Beau Rivage will be the address.

Yours,

EDGECOMB.

DOROTHY COXE'S JOURNAL.

June 15th.

This journal of mine would be kept up in better shape if Billy (Miss Bilton) were not so pig-headed. I never have a little leisure when I could write it all out but she wants her own journal, and I must wait. All the solid facts and lofty sentiments, therefore, have to be jotted down in pencil at such times as I can borrow her book. My own original paragraphs are perpetrated in ink. This item may be of use to my future biographers. We left Canterbury one morning after breakfast. Mr. Edgecomb came to the station with us in the custard-colored coach and went as far as Dover, where he took a boat for Calais, *en route* to Paris. I wish we were going there at once, the summer styles are perfect dreams of beauty, and there is a something or other wonderful at the opera-house. Lots of the steamer people we met are there. Holland must be very Dutchy. What do we want of it—we who have been to Hoboken! We are in Antwerp

now. I have bought a ravishing white Spanish lace scarf at Diegerick's. A man ought always to have brown eyes if he wants to make love and escape suits for breach of promise. Brown eyes say his soul is full of adoration, regularly melting in a mush of emotion, when probably he is wondering where he can get the cheapest caramels with which to pay his philopena. [In pencil:] How strange to stand in this *Place de Meir* and realize that only three hundred years ago this street was packed with Antwerp citizens athirst for one another's blood! Calvinists and Catholics. Outside the gate a battle raged, and at the gate stood William of Orange. By his coolness he stayed the slaughter and united brave men in defence of their own homes. [Ink:] After writing I went out and realized this. Billy also conducted me into the cathedral and sat me down. A verger in a black Mother Hubbard made me pay a copper for using a kitchen chair, and thumped me until I got into the right angle with the high altar. Billy said the music was angelic, and that one lovely afternoon centuries ago the radiant sunshine streamed through these chapels from windows far more gorgeous than now exist. Suddenly a frantic mob thundered at the great doors. The terrified priests fled down the aisles with no thought of the priceless treasures left behind the altars. A moment more and the mob swarmed in, hurling down statues, dashing, breaking, ruining every work of art, every treasure of the ages. I let Billy go through one volume of Motley. It pleased her and did not bother me. We had cucumbers baked and stuffed with chopped meat at the *table d'hôte* last night. I am anxious to encounter peculiar dishes. I had

a German teacher once—or I did have until he fell in love about the fifth lesson and became so incoherent papa dismissed him. But how was it that stuffed pickle suggested him? Oh, I know. One day he said he longed for his home, fair Bingen, or some other town, on the Rhine, and a home supper. I asked what he would probably have for the evening meal, and he answered ecstatically: “Perhaps a beautiful baked fish stuffed with gingerbread and raisins, and nice sour beer sauce.” There is much of interest that I might say of Ghent and Bruges, but Billy wrote it all home in a letter instead of noting in her journal. I have told her that I would look over her letters hereafter. She has no objections. Mr. Edgecomb may write a letter to me. It was like this: Harriet Dwight said he was “not the sort of man to carry on a commonplace flirtation with a chance acquaintance, no matter how polite he might be when thrown with her.” I owe Harriet one for that. There is a little innocent French book adapted to youths, called *Thérèse*. I asked Mr. Edgecomb to see if a copy could be found in Paris. He promised to search the book-stores. Of course he will have to let me know with what success. All I want is just to flourish an envelope from J. Everett Edgecomb under Miss Harriet’s eyes. Humph! Chance acquaintance, indeed! . . .

HAARLEM, 22d.

We have arrived here in the middle of a *Kirmess*, or country festival. It is fun! The town is full of roystering peasants, pretty girls in red petticoats, parents just awful in circumference, boys in wooden shoes and baggy

trousers. They sing, embrace one another, and stop anywhere in the streets to dance to the tunes of the hand-organs. The big cathedral is in the centre of the market-place, which is crowded with booths, where they sell cheap jewelry and ribbons, smoked eels, hot waffles, and pancakes. We make our way over wares spread on the ground for sale—old furniture, old china, even old iron and copper. Mrs. Florida Pollock and I were strolling around together when we came on a frame building covered with gaudy pictures that I saw in a minute were of the Mikado. I heard the orchestra! I heard a Dutch Koko (how funny that sounds) singing the *Flowers that Bloom in the Spring*, and I implored Florida Pollock to go in with me. She had no change, and feared it was improper. I had plenty of money, so she consented. The music was pretty good, the costumes most comical, but the benches bent under the weight of the occupants, while the planks in the floor shook and squeaked frightfully. None of the men took off their hats. All of them smoked when not drinking beer. I knew they were not wicked, those fat fathers of dozens of assorted sizes of children—lots of these last squeezed under their elbows, between their feet, or behind their backs, but I wished I had not come. Florida got obstreperous and accused an old chap like Santa Claus of promenading on her toes. I thought he said something about “sour krout,” but I may have been mistaken. I said: “Oh, I wish the Doctor was here; I want to go home, and these monsters never will understand and make way for us.”

One of the very biggest, reddest, *Dutchyest* of those old fellows turned to me with a bow and said, in perfect

English : "I think you will be able to get out. I will move the monster just ahead of me."

I laughed. I would have to laugh if I had just insulted the ghost of my grandfather. Santa Claus laughed too, and made way for Florida. We exit-ed, but in the very act I looked toward an upper row of seats, and there was a person I saw on the steamer. I believe it was that Heath, Mr. Edgecomb's friend. He was amused. I saw it in his eyes, and along with that amusement I saw a design to get up and follow us. Well, should he have the satisfaction of meeting us after that impertinent amusement manifest to my naked eye? No, indeed. I whisked Florida in and out behind eel booths and around Punch and Judy shows until I had her safe at home. I never told Harriet Dwight that a "chance acquaintance" of hers was in town.

DELFT.

When we were on the train steaming toward this place I just mentioned that Mr. Heath was in Haarlem. Harriet did not seem to hear. On the way some one told Doctor Bruce of a comfortable and very interesting hotel in the "Groote-Maarkt." The Doctor was so sure he knew the name that he would not tell anybody what it was, and forgot it when we got to Delft. There were no cabs or 'buses at the station, and we sallied forth in search of the market. It was a delicious morning in this queer story-book-looking place. We trailed over bridges, along sleepy green canals bordered with lime trees. Placid women sat knitting in the sunshine that filtered between the leaves. I longed to push one of the fat,

tow-headed children playing about into the canal, just to see if any comfortable mother would get agitated, but Mrs. Thorne would not allow it. We came out into a big open square, and went twice around it, but whether the people talked high Dutch, low Dutch, or Dutch of every degree between, nobody understood the Doctor. Suddenly he saw a sign that recalled the hotel name. It was the place. We entered a wide hall. Opposite was a little reading-room, and there, writing a letter, I saw Mr. Heath, but he saw none of us. A landlady appeared, gazed at us in surprise, turning to delight. She said something. Mrs. Thorne tried German, French, and English. Florida interjected remarks in a dialect she begins to employ with what she thinks great success: "Rooms—dinner—good—*cheap*—us wants—quick!"

She always shouts louder and makes it more ungrammatical the less it is understood. The person talked to usually escapes and does something, often the right thing, and Mrs. Florida is proud. This time the woman pointed us into a neat salon with green furniture, house-plants in tubs, and a shelf on the wall filled with real Delft plates. She vanished, but two seconds later bounced back with a queer little beady-eyed man, whom really she seemed holding by the nape of his neck. The sight of us relieved his mind of some fear. Perhaps she caught him so suddenly he thought she had gone crazy. He did not seem either English or American, but he said he might be of use to us, for he spoke all the continental languages. He then interpreted for Mrs. Thorne with delightful exactness. He engaged our rooms, our dinner, supper, breakfast, and other matters of detail. He said

he was a commercial traveller. When he bowed himself out of the door he said that madame the landlady had a daughter, Louisa, who would soon be home, and who also talked "all the languages." Next we all went clattering after the landlady up the steepest flight of stairs that I ever climbed, into the funniest little rooms—beds hung with pink-and-white curtains, wash-bowls as big as small bath-tubs, and in the centre of each a ewer the size of a cream-pitcher. We were out all day, but at dinner-time we assembled in the dining-room and sent to ask if that gifted Louisa had returned. She appeared in pink muslin and gold beads. Her fat little nose turned up exactly like a pug's, and how she smiled! Perhaps she talked Russian, but she spoke no German; all her French was "*Oui, Oui.*" English she had none—the little fraud. I wanted hot chocolate, so I walked down to the front door and rang a bell I had seen in the hall. It brought the whole family, except the commercial traveller, whom I especially wished to use. By signs I entreated the landlady to produce him. She groaned, then waving her arms in the air she pointed to a stork which, with its legs crossed, was passing high over our heads. She evidently meant to imply that he had flown away in like manner. However, we had a good dinner. There was a beautiful inlaid pearl box put in the middle of the table, and all the spoons we wanted were in it—lovely antique-looking spoons, very curious in design. I tried to buy one later of Louisa as a souvenir, but she could not stop giggling and oui-oui-ing long enough to receive one rational idea.

HEATH TO EDGECOMB.

DELFT, June 24, 1889.

DEAR EDGECOMB :

Did it ever occur to you that I ought to be a painter? I never yearned to put on canvas attenuated Madonnas, or studies of anatomy, mis-called saints. I never stood before a Raphael and announced, "I too am a painter," etc., etc. But since coming into Holland I want to perpetuate my impressions. Their moral influence would be excellent. The serene phizes of these Dutch brothers would restrain my temper. I could never be melancholy if I could always look into a clean-scrubbed kitchen with blue tiles, gold and silver dish-pans, where a flaxen-haired maid forever dwelt in an atmosphere of peace, piety, and onions. Perhaps a homœopathic doctor would say that in my case a kodak was "indicated." Everybody has one; every third young woman you see has just broken hers or wants advice. Miss Coxe—By the way, thinking of angels and pictures, I saw a painting (early, awfully early) that would interest a theolog. like you. It shows that even in the Middle Ages the men were a bad lot in contrast to the women; that less of them went to church than do now. This thing of beauty, done in thirteen hundred and something, represented Heaven on top of a green hill, with high walls around. The blessed were out leaning on their elbows. Their heads were well developed, they had dark-blue wings waving in rapture, but there was nary a vertebra or a leg among them,—they lived wholly in the upper story. Trooping up the hill toward Paradise were no end of poor mortals. After every single

man were half a dozen capering imps with red-hot pokers and pitchforks, so that scarcely one got to the top. A long, orderly procession of ladies, as decorous as the inmates of a female seminary, meandered up the hill, streaming into the celestial gates without let or hindrance. It was all right, bless their hearts! If you yourself were *her* father confessor—by the way, do you go in for that line of business? some high-church fellows do, I believe,—if you were her confessor, you would find that her very worst sins were only too luxuriant virtues. She is here. I do not make much headway in her acquaintance. She is very elusive. Is it the shyness of one too inexperienced to know her power, or do you think she can have taken an aversion to me? Of course, I am not so conceited as to think this last fancy an impossibility. I saw her in Haarlem, but she did not know it. The banker told me they were going to Delft, so was I. There is no choice of hotels, and we are under the same roof.

That was a lofty sentiment you penned about the folly of number one confessing to number two his love for number three before he (number one) had paid for the solitaire diamond on number three's engagement finger, or, in mediæval lingo, a knight should not prance about the ring praising the lady whose favor he did not yet wear. True; but to drop figures of speech, who has been confessing love, or professing it either? Once I told my small brother I would thrash him for tale-bearing. He squirmingly pleaded: "If I don't know *nothing* I can't tell *anything*, so if I do tell *something*, why it won't be *nothing*, will it?" What are fancies, emotions, rhapsodies about

pretty girls? Do they not vanish into air like cigar smoke? I never confided anything to you. You take me seriously. I seldom take myself so. It does not agree with me. By the by, *you* were the knight who rescued the beauty from that fire-belching dragon of a locomotive that was running away with her. You yourself may have her love token hidden under your cassock. I bet you are jealous. All the same, I shall prance around her, exercising all my fascinations, and with the gods rests the issue. I like Miss Dwight. I admire her. Have you not heard of some garden over here, well trimmed, flower beds all correct, everything as it should be? It tires you a bit, so you drop down for a rest. It is not your garden, nobody asked you to make yourself at home. You realize the fact when a shower-bath comes cooling down on you, or suddenly the underpinning fails, and you are flat and sprawling. Finding Miss Dwight so sensible and well informed, yet so eager for knowledge, I have ventured once or twice to—well, as it were, take her tenderly by the hand to lead her into loftier realms of thought, going slowly, of course, in deference to her feminine limitations. We never get there. The shower-bath act or the heels-up scene takes place. It occurs so suddenly I always think it happens; then it comes to me that Miss Dwight is not teachable. I repeat that I am very fond of her, and I believe she feels affectionate toward me. Only to-day I told her I recognized in her that proclivity, and I begged her not to struggle against it. It was then I remembered those gardens I spoke of just now. Where are you—still in Paris? Have you been to any lectures in the Sorbonne?

I should imagine they would be in your line. What are you doing anyway? Your letters are not half personal enough. I never fancied you lacking in egoism until you began losing yourself out between the lines of your letters. There go Miss Coxe and Miss Dwight down the Groote-Maarkt. *She* has her kodak. I shall get one to-day if they grow in Dutch soil. Could there be an easier way to bring to pass what the poet meaneth by "Two souls with but a single thought"? Two kodakers snapping at the same castle, donkey—what you will. I too have business now in the Groote-Maarkt. Bless you, old chap, bless you, and in the meantime you may write to last address.

Yours,

HEATH.

P. S.—I really was going to write a letter when I began, but there is such a go-easy-ness about everything I forgot what I started to do. Wait until next time.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

BY RAIL AND RIVER.

IT was three o'clock in the afternoon. Mrs. Thorne had just said to her brother: "I think we have seen enough of Delft. We will go on to-morrow. That reminds me, Tom, there is not a timetable in the hotel that I can rely on, they are all too old. Won't you stroll over to the station and learn exactly when the trains go?"

The Doctor nodded, looked for his cap, and left his sister planning how to spend time in the next town. Dorothy Coxe was in the hall.

"Oh, Doctor Bruce, you are going somewhere! Let me go too. I forgot to take my kodak this morning, so I have not half enough street scenes."

"Come right along, Sissy."

"If you don't stop that 'Sissy,' Doctor, I will just watch you in your 'hours of ease' and snap you with your mouth open from ear to ear and your legs straight out like candle moulds. I will put that photograph on the market, and the woman will be 'uncertain and hard to please' who will not laugh when she sees it."

“Spiteful, are n’t you?” commented the Doctor, eyeing the trim little lady with her buff leather box-strap over her shoulder. “And that flavor of a quotation in your words suggests that somebody has been quoting poetry to you. Is it that chap who tells me that Mr. Edgcomb is his——”

“Hush, here he is,” whispered Dolly.

They were in the street by that time. Mr. Heath stopped to ask the Doctor the value of a Dutch coin that puzzled him. Tom mentioned that he was going to the station to find out about train times. Mr. Heath could tell him everything he wanted to know; then the last comer turned to Miss Coxe with a question about her photographs. They chatted for a minute or two, and Tom found himself soon after conducting Dolly (accompanied by Heath) to an old church that she had “overlooked,” she said. Tom had not known her hitherto very zealous in hunting them, but Heath explained that the stained glass was fine, and moreover in this *Oude Kerk* was buried old Admiral Tromp, who hoisted the broom to his mast-head when he swept the Channel clean of the English. Dorothy turned on him such a bewilderingly pretty face as he was glibly reciting what he had that day noted in his Baedeker, that the deluded gentleman instantly decided the shortest route to Dolly’s good graces might be along the line of history. He begged to be allowed to carry her kodak, and he proceeded to discourse in a style that

few local guides could have surpassed. Tom sauntered leisurely along, stopping to inspect whatever interested him.

"Now, this is a little more than I can stand," thought Dolly, with a wicked light in her blue eyes. "Billy is all the instructor of ancient and modern history I have any use for," and thereupon she made a slighting allusion to old warriors and their tombs.

"After all," said Heath, "I presume what really stirs in you the most intense emotion is the realization that from this sleepy old port went forth those men and women in whom we glory—from Delftshaven you know sailed the Pilgrims."

"The Pilgrims!" echoed Dolly. "Did they, indeed? Why, I always think of them trudging along on foot."

"You—ah—probably you fancy them after they landed, enduring hardship," said Heath, a trifle confused.

"Oh, the women had a pretty pleasant pilgrimage. I used to read about it Sundays, and was always so sorry for the little boys, who ate Beelzebub's apples."

It was Heath now who was at sea—and the Pilgrims, where were they in Dolly's ideas? She saw and richly enjoyed the expression of his face before she sweetly inquired: "Did Mr. Bunyan live in Delft? He did not write the lives of those Canterbury Pilgrims too, did he? I always want to learn all I *can*

when I fall in with a person who loves to instruct other people.”

Perhaps Heath, who had a smart little temper, might have cast her kodak on the paving stones if the Doctor had not asked: “What old church is this?”

It was the *Oude Kerk*. They went in, but Mr. Heath offered no more suggestions, proffered no more facts. He gave Miss Coxe her kodak, hoped she would have a pleasant afternoon, then lingering for a glance here and there, vanished. Dolly trotted around after the Doctor as docile and charming as ever, and more than usually happy.

“You can’t enjoy this sort of thing,” suddenly exclaimed the Doctor. “Let us go home. I have letters to write.”

Dorothy followed him out at once, but at the door said: “You go on, Doctor, I will come slowly. There are some queer booths and corner houses I want to snap.”

“You won’t get lost?—Remember Venice.”

“Lost in this dull, little place!” was Dolly’s pert reply. She was glad to be alone, to think of Heath’s chagrin, to wonder if Harriet would have cared about the Pilgrims (no doubt, being from Boston, she doated on them). Then she forgot everything but her occupation, while the Doctor, turning the corner, disappeared. She wanted to look in the funny shops, at the cheeses like golden cannon balls, and the

ginger-bread beasts and ships. Suddenly she resolved to take a long walk.

“I can’t possibly get lost, and the streets are very fascinating.” On she went by the edge of the green canals, past some fine mansions with open doors; looking in she saw carved oak stairs, elaborate ceilings, brass sconces, lanterns and brackets. She peeped into one parlor, where a fine old lady was dispensing afternoon tea. In the middle of her mahogany table was a copper pail with a brazier filled with coals, and on this a kettle like gold. Pretty blue and white teacups stood about. It all made Dorothy wish she might go in for a chat with a rosy girl who sat there embroidering. By and by she came to wider, very silent streets, where old women sat on stools picking out grass and weeds from between the stones. She took pictures of them. Next came a turn, a bridge, and she strolled along a canal, looking across into little summer-houses built out on the water from the bottoms of gardens. Here was more drinking of beer, coffee, tea, with more *koocken*. The cheerful laughter of the little groups made Dolly all at once lonesome. She put the strap of her kodak over her shoulder and started for Hotel Schaap in the Groote-Maarkt. It was a long way farther off than she supposed; in fact longer than otherwise it would have been had she not gone persistingly in the wrong direction. She began to be extremely tired. She asked

the way of old women who beamed on her and shook their heads like uncommonly dull cows. About five o'clock she came where she could see real cows—and the country. There was nothing dreadful about the flat green land, the long lines of low trees and the clean little homesteads; but Dorothy wanted to cry. She was far more depressed than when alone on the underground road. A very obese boy, in breeches like meal sacks, laughed to excess when she tried to ask him where was the "*Schaap*." She turned again and rushed back to the denser populated town.

It was a wofully weary, solemn Dolly that suddenly found herself, after a long tramp, by the house where she had seen the old lady and the copper kettle. She was tempted to go in; for possibly the lady spoke a little English. Just as she raised her eyes to survey the house Mr. Heath came around a corner close by the spot where she stood. She rushed at him with rapture: "Oh! *I am* so glad to see you! I lost myself! I am tired to death and *that* hungry! Oh, what good angel sent you here!—*Do* you know the way home?"

He had intended when he saw her again to ignore her utterly. What he did was to exclaim: "Why you poor girl, you look completely exhausted; give me that kodak—I will get a carriage."

That was easier said than done, and after he had looked toward every point in the compass for a cab,

he caught a glimpse of Dolly's face. She was laughing, but there were big tears trickling down her cheeks. She was an awful baby sometimes, but men never despised her for it. Heath might have proposed to carry her bodily home, so excited was he, but just at the moment a donkey-cart half filled with cheeses came rolling along, accompanied by a youth with amazing red hair and an eye to business, whether in the regular line or not. Heath pounced on the donkey and then addressed himself to the conductor of the affair. They came to a speedy understanding; Heath knowing some German and the boy knowing more. There was a clean board seat in the cart, the donkey was a sleek, little beast, Miss Dorothy, laughing now like a schoolgirl on a frolic, was induced to occupy the seat, while the boy and Heath walked by her side. The boy conversed with the donkey and Mr. Heath chatted amicably with Dolly. No one saw them when they stopped a little way from the hotel. Heath allowed her to bestow on the youth about a tenth part of what she proposed to give, then they went meekly hotelward. Just before entering the door Dorothy extended her hand saying: "Will you forget—this—this—that.—Of course I always knew 'how the breaking waves dashed high on a stern and rockbound coast, when a band of pilgrims' and all that—but really I could not help it, I often have such attacks. Some of the earlier Coxes must have been wicked—Good-night."

Heath did not have time to add that later Coxes were angelic, and afterwards reflected it was just as well. The Doctor asked Dorothy at dinner if she had enjoyed the afternoon. Mrs. Thorne looked up surprised, but when Dolly replied that she always enjoyed herself if the Doctor took care of her, the chaperon was satisfied and looked approval at her brother.

Thus far all things had gone very smoothly with Mrs. Thorne. The Pollocks had learned that even without "eternal vigilance" on their part pleasant rooms were given them, the window seats in coaches, and—well that no one had anything better than they received, therefore the Pollocks were amiable. Mrs. Bushby was always good-natured unless hungry, and Kate saw to it that such a state of things did not occur. Tom was doing as well as could be expected. He never paid for anything without being cheated, except on occasions when some particularly honest and courteous foreigner brought in a most reasonable bill. At such times he was sure to roar himself into a rage, bring around a crowd of spectators, and mortify his sister to the last degree, all because a hundred francs or thalers sounded "so confoundedly big" for the sum demanded. She paid most of the bills.

This last evening in Delft she was busy with accounts when Miss Bilton made a call. Bertha wore her best ruby-colored silk gown, and her fine hair,

elaborately arranged, was harpooned with two silver spears. She wished to know if it would be "quite proper" for her to look over a book that she had seen in the conversation room.

"Is any one of our number down there?" asked Mrs. Thorne.

"The Pollocks are writing letters in the room."

"Then of course you can," returned Kate, annoyed at being consulted. "You know I have only told you not to stay alone evenings in public drawing-rooms, or when they are occupied by men."

"Mrs. Thorne, don't you think it wrong to flirt? Mamma does."

"Your mother flirts?" said Kate, maliciously.

"Oh, gracious, no, she disapproves of it."

Kate went on calculating how many dollars were represented by her collection of Dutch coins.

"I wanted to speak about something so—so—you would not think I was *encouraging* anybody or *leading* any one on."

"What do you mean? Speak right out, Miss Bilton."

"Well—you know in London that night we went to Venice and met Mr. Heath, Harriet and I? He was very polite. He did not tell us then he was coming to Holland."

"Why should he?"

"He is not—that is, Harriet says *her* coming here had nothing to do with his being here."

“Certainly not, who would ever dream that it had?”

Bertha blushed, simpered, and prepared to take leave, saying: “*Then*, of course, you won’t accuse *me* of encouraging him to—to follow us. You know he never saw Dolly before—or only on the boat. Mrs. Thorne, Dolly Coxe is not a flirt either. She talks very seriously of the sin of it; it *is* a sin.”

“But one you need not confess until you are guilty.”

“Yes, of course; only I am so sensitive. Mamma is always soothing me. I care so much what those I love think of me. If, now, you thought——”

“I never think if I can help it—about nonsense. Do you know what a *stuiver*, ten *dubbeltzes* and *Gouten Hentzes* are?”

To her surprise, Miss Bilton did know. She gave her much clear information on Dutch coins, and then withdrew, studying the effect of the sleeve ruffle on her plump arm. After the door closed, Mrs. Thorne mused a moment or two on Mr. Heath, then forgot him wholly. She had not once looked at him in the light of a possible “follower” of her young people.

When Miss Bilton reached the conversation room, she found there nearly all of her companions. Mrs. Pollock and Florida were *tête-à-tête* in a corner, casting up accounts. It became each day vexatiously evident to them that various things were not “in-

cluded " that must be had ; postage-stamps, camphor, cough-drops for the old lady, and what she called "suveners" for Florida to display after their return. They amounted—the sum of them—to three francs this night, and she grew more ghostly white than ever, while Flori irritably insisted they "could not go on like that." They agreed to purchase the "suveners," and worry through colds uncamphorated. Then Flori became good-natured enough to confide a private matter to the old lady.

"I suppose, Ma, you think I don't know any French?"

"You don't, do you, Flori?"

"Of course I do, but being out of practice I have felt bashful. I studied it four terms at school. Now, don't you pretend to be surprised when I begin. I bought a little book to-day that at first will be a help. It gives the English, the French, and the correct pronunciation, so I can't go amiss ; but I don't want the rest to know that it is not all impromptu. It is none of their business. It is like this——"

Florida's sharp eyes noted that the others were not observant, then, drawing a primer from her pocket, she continued. "If, for instance, I want to ask: Give me pens, paper, ink, blotting-paper, envelopes, postage stamps. Is the post in? Are there any letters for me? all I need to do is to learn that the French for it is pronounced: *Donnay-mwă day pluhm, dhu păpyea dē launkr, dhu*

uvār, day taumbr-post. Lāh post ate ell āhreevay? Yāh teel day lettr poor mwā? "

"My land! Flori—Any one would say you had talked it all your life—But, will anybody understand?"

With a gesture of utter contempt for such simplicity, Florida arose and sauntered into the hall. At the office-window stood Mr. Heath. It was not an opportunity to be lost. She stepped vivaciously up to his elbow, and nodding toward the stolid porter, exclaimed: "I suppose he speaks French, they all do.—*Mongseer, Lah post ate ell ahreevay? Yah teel day letter poor mu-ah?*"

Mr. Heath recoiled, but the porter, after a stare of astonishment, echoed, "*post-letter—Oui! Oui!*"

Rapture was a faint name for Miss Pollock's triumph when the result of her linguistic effort was actually a half dozen letters thrust into her hands; henceforth she spoke only French in hotels.

The letters were not all for her. The porter gave them to her as one of the party, so she returned to rejoice the inmates of the conversation room. Miss Bilton had one from her mamma, Miss Dwight had one, and Miss Coxe two; Florida one. The girls were together, and greeted her so warmly, instantly seizing their letters, that she was forced to speak of her interview with the porter at a later date. No one heeded anything outside the contents of their envelopes. When a quarter hour had passed, each

one, flushed with happiness, could not resist telling the rest pleasant items of home news, although the facts concerned strangers. After chatting a while, Miss Bilton said: "Miss Coxe had more than her share; we had only one letter apiece."

"Oh, one of mine was from Mr. Edgecomb," returned Dolly, in the most straightforward manner.

Miss Bilton bridled and blushed, thinking the occasion required it of some one. Miss Dwight seemed uninterested, but civilly assented when Dolly asked if they would like to hear it.

June 21st.

MY DEAR MISS COXE :

I duly fulfilled your commission, and send you herewith the *Journal de Thérèse*. I do not know if you will find it a satisfactory substitute for the journal of Miss Bilton, which you confessed to treat as a quarry, or whether you will find Mlle. Thérèse a representative French maiden. I send you also the *Story of Colette*. I think she is a true type. I have one of those prosaic minds that love to hobble on crutches of reality in things imaginary, and would fain have a saint thrown at my head under Colette's castle walls, and would as soon go to Somerset and Devon to realize Lorna Doone as to Holyrood Palace and Fotheringay Castle to realize Mary Queen of Scots. In Rome I shall find as much pleasure in tracing the scenes of Hawthorne's *Marble Faun* as in repeopling the Coliseum with gladiators and an audience thumbs down. Thérèse, like Bernardin de St. Pierre's Virginia, is now extinct. Colette lives, and also

Balzac's *Modeste Mignon*. You told me you had read none of Balzac's stories, so I send you three books.

I was sorry to leave France, and did so slowly, going through Burgundy and Champagne on foot, and confining my acquaintance to the old-fashioned peasants. The new-fashioned peasants are all west of Paris, and have been quite spoiled by the artists and the nineteenth century. In Brittany every third peasant poses among his potatoes when the *angelus* sounds, and in Normandy every third peasant has a newspaper in his hand.

Do you think Mrs. Thorne will bring your party to Switzerland, or keep you all summer in Germany? I shall be in Geneva some time, it is a theological shrine, you know. Kindly remember me to Mrs. Thorne and the Doctor.

Sincerely yours,

J. E. EDGECOMB.

HOTEL BEAU RIVAGE, GENEVA.

"Is not that just an *ideal* letter!" murmured Miss Bilton, in a reverential tone, when Dolly ended. "It is so elevating to know a man who is not of the earth earthy."

"Humph!" said Dolly. "He weighs a good hundred and sixty, I will warrant, and has an appetite in proportion. I never care much to correspond with a man on purely literary matters. You must read these books conscientiously for me, Billy, and tell me what to say about them."

"I will, I surely will, and just at first, you know—"

you will—before there creeps in anything personal, you *will* read me his answers?”

“You goose! I would like to have you read and write the answers to half a dozen such letters I have to acknowledge.”

“I envy you,” said Mr. Heath, approaching the group. Among you, you monopolized everything the postman brought to-night.”

“What will I do?” suddenly asked Dolly, then turning to Mr. Heath she explained: “Mr. Edgecomb has dropped me a note to say he will send me a book I wanted from Paris. It has not come, and we go to-morrow.”

“You must leave your address with the porter, who will forward the book. Has not Mr. Edgecomb left Paris?” asked Heath.

“Yes—he has left France—but I will read you what he says of his walking tour.”

“Thank you, Miss Coxe,” returned Heath. He had looked rather dull when she first spoke of her letter, but seeing her treat it as in a way common property, he sank into a deep leather chair, remarking: “I deluge Edgecomb with my letters for the sake of getting his in return, though he never writes unless he sees fit, and he never really tells me anything about himself, while I confide to him every smile I shed and tear I smile—beg pardon, I have been talking various tongues to the porter. He—Edgecomb, not the porter—detests confidences,

never gives me a word of sympathy, only tantalizes me with a letter I would have twice as long."

"Why, I am surprised," bubbled over Miss Bilton, "I thought Mr. Edgecomb was what the Germans call 'soul-full.'"

Heath looked amused, but politely remarked: "His soul is full enough, I grant you, but he does not ladle it out on demand. When I first knew him I was fool enough to think he did."

"I wonder if he will be gone from Geneva when we get there?" said Miss Bilton.

"I think not. We will probably all meet there again. He half promised to wait for me," replied Mr. Heath.

The Pollocks joined the group. Conversation turned on the sights of Delft. Miss Bilton knew everything of which the rest were ignorant. Miss Dwight soon went to her room. Miss Coxe followed her, saying, "I will tell the porter about that book now, or I may forget it."

In the hall, however, she hastened lightly after Harriet, overtaking her on the stairs.

"No doubt you thought it was not nice in me to tell about or to read aloud Mr. Edgecomb's letter."

"You have a right to do what you like with your own letters."

"All the same, *you* would not have done it. I should not but for one thing: Florida Pollock studied that postmark when she saw it was not an

American stamp. In about twenty-four hours she would have ferreted out what she would think I wanted to keep secret. I could not let her have that satisfaction."

"Then you did not want to read it aloud?" asked Harriet, quickly.

Dorothy shot a keen glance at her, an amused expression crossed her mobile face, and she turned into her own room without answering. When she (Dorothy) had shut her door she drew from her pocket the letter in question, re-reading it carefully.

"Only one thing in it suggests that he expects I will answer. He asks where we are going and when we will get to Geneva. He may care to know that for several reasons, or it may be a chance question. I have the best reason for an answer in the fact that it is 'manners,' as children say, to thank him for the books. I won't tax Billy to write for me after all."

Miss Coxe next went about packing her Gladstone bag, soliloquizing after a while: "That poor, innocent Methodist minister up where grandmother lives! I did promise to write him what my first emotions were on seeing Mont Blanc, but Billy can work that up beautifully. He will use it in a sermon, then I will permanently efface everything sentimental between us. It is not right, though I never led matters with him. Some young ministers are emotional and—and—precipitate. Billy can fill the whole letter with Mont Blanc; it is big enough certainly,

and just the thing to chill him with. I will attend to Mr. Edgecomb myself."

Mr. Heath had not fully understood the route which Mrs. Thorne meant to take after leaving Delft. Within a day or two she had resolved to see more of Germany than was first proposed. Bright and early the next day, therefore, he made his appearance, to be rewarded by a seat at the same table with the eight.

"I have had a very bad night," he remarked to Dolly as he buttered his roll. "Your naughty joke about the Pilgrims was the theme, and, speaking musically, my dinner the motive. I partook freely of last night's chicken and salad, and pepper cake. and *pâtisserie*. In the silent midnight, a monster like Apollyon in *Pilgrim's Progress* descended on me. I was going under in the contest when I thought to exorcise him by singing *My Country, 't is of Thee*, The demon fled at my first note and I was greatly elated in my dream by the glorious victory, but by daylight I have reflected the fiend might have fled at the vocal not the spiritual part of the performance. May I ask you, Mrs. Thorne, where you are to be for the next few weeks?"

Mrs. Thorne told him in detail. When questioned about his own line of travel he was rather vague, replying: "A week ago I could have told you definitely, now, like you, I see good reason to modify and rearrange my plans. I shall perhaps go

from here to Hanover, Berlin, Dresden, and Vienna, before I join Mr. Edgecomb."

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Miss Bilton imparted to Miss Dwight her opinion that Mrs. Thorne was not "responsive." She (Miss Bilton) had been wont to tell her mamma or some friend every thought. When she approached Mrs. Thorne with such intentions, Kate took that time to instruct her about making out her washing list. Miss Dwight, on the contrary, found Mrs. Thorne very quick to meet any advances on her own part. Often an involuntary glance and a smile would pass between the two, and few words were necessary to bring them thoroughly *en rapport*. As time passed nothing was more interesting to Kate than to see what each made her own. The Pollocks greedily absorbed everything, from facts about art to queer dishes at the *table-d'hôte*. Florida assured her mother: "When you see in a gallery a fat woman on canvas, yellow hair, with skin looking like pink rouge—that is a Rubens—so it usually is, too, if a fiend as big as a blacksmith is falling through space head downwards, or a bloated tipsy old chap is marching along in a crowd of pretty little Cupids, as if a comic Valentine had gotten mixed up with a sentimental one—I know Rubens every time now."

Mrs. Florida belonged to a literary club in Hemlockville, her native town, and was amassing ma-

terial for future papers to be read before audiences not as travelled as herself.

From Delft our friends slowly made their way through Cologne, up the Rhine to Coblenz. They started one sunny afternoon, and sailing placidly along the flat banks stopped at Königswinter, a little hamlet on the water's edge under the ruins of the Drachenfels, where, as Miss Bilton found, once lived the heroine of Schiller's ballad of *Knight Toggenburg*. The convent where she died is near or it was (time and tense made no difference to Bertha), and not far away the lover's castle. Miss Bilton seemed to be in a dream while she ate on the balcony of the little hotel her supper of strawberries, cream, and various queer sorts of German cake-bread or bread-cake. That duty over she persuaded Mrs. Bushby to climb the Drachenfels with her. A few rods up Mrs. Bushby began to puff, remembered a neighbor who had apoplexy, unbuttoned her bodice, and sat herself on a near rock. She said views were not satisfactory from too high an elevation. Bertha, always good-natured, gave up the ascent, but consoled herself by lying awake nearly all night listening to a young man playing on a zither. He was really a tipsy imbecile, but it made her exquisitely happy to think of the sorrows of Werther, fancying her minstrel played because of some tender blight—some wound in his German soul.

Mrs. Thorne took them all in the afternoon at

Coblenz next day to an open-air concert by the military band in the Queen's Garden. They sat under the trees, watched the rippling waters of the Rhine, or if they preferred studied the mighty beer glasses on the tiny tables about which gathered happy family groups.

"I never before realized what I missed in being an old bachelor," exclaimed Doctor Tom, after watching one such scene. A white-faced, sweet old grandmother knitting, nodded in time to a waltz. The rotund father balanced on each knee twin girls with hair like corn silk. A rosy young mother beamed over the highly ornamental baby on her lap, who lived in a ruffled pillow with blue bows at the corners. Mrs. Florida was about to hint in a semi-playful manner that some mistakes could be rectified, when the Doctor added: "Bless me, does the baby wear a silver cap?"

A moment later, when the tiny head emerged from a bright beer mug, he understood that young Teutons begin to imbibe the national beverage at a tenderer age than he supposed possible.

From Coblenz to Mayence, thence to Nuremberg they journeyed, and from that city Kate thought she could never entice them onward. They fell in love with the statues of the saints, the angels, the imps, and the dragons. They were happy just to loiter about the fountains in the squares, watching the peasants, the white oxen, the booths of gilded gingerbread, the dovecots under the red-tiled roofs. They faith-

fully saw the sights of the castle, the cathedral, and all that sort of thing; but for once Mrs. Thorne saw that they needed no guidance. The spell of the old city wrought in them sincere enjoyment of all its charms.

One day Kate found her brother standing by the Beautiful Fountain lost in thought.

“What is it, Tom?” she asked.

“Well, I was thinking that five hundred years ago, when there were wigwams on Fifth Avenue and red men of the forests scalping one another in Commonwealth Avenue, Nuremberg aristocracy stopped on its way to church to admire this new fountain. *We* are rather new, are we not?—and what I can not make out is, how from a diet of sour-kraut and sausage is evolved the sentiment that has made these old Nurembergers keep fresh flowers on the grave of that minstrel up there in their ‘God’s Acre,’ as they call it—and it is *four* hundred years since the fellow sang his last song and went under the daisies.—I sort—of—like it—Kate.”

Kate silently withdrew. He so seldom had an attack of sentiment, she wished it to strike in as deeply as possible.

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DOROTHY COXE’S JOURNAL.

NUREMBERG, July 4.

I take back all I said about Germany. Nuremberg *is* different from Hoboken. Billy took me into the Church of St. Sebald, seated me before the shrine, and recited

the whole of a poem of Longfellow to me. I actually forgot to stop her, because it described the very thing we had seen, but I warned her never to risk it again. Poetry is not made to be quoted by women to women. Nuremberg is delicious. It is like—a queer mechanical toy, and a long sunny afternoon at your grandmother's, and music you can't forget. It makes you believe in theosophy, or whatever creed says you lived once before—I think I had a German lover here five hundred years ago. I wore a quaint little cap and a brocade petticoat. I was a good deal better girl than I am now. I went to confession regularly, and let Gottlieb Johann Schmockpfeifer (or whatever his name was) sing under my window—It was that lovely oriel window of Melchior Pfining over by St. Sebald—I believe it was easier for girls to be sweet and good in the fourteenth century. If there happened then to be a *Gottlieb and a Fohann*, that each wanted her, and maybe a Schmockpfeifer besides, she did not have half the fuss and responsibility a girl has nowadays. Gottlieb just went to the family armory, selected a ten-foot crowbar with a sharp steel point, challenged Johann, and I only had to marry the survivor. Schmockpfeifer, who never had any chance, anyway, took the veil, or whatever is the masculine of it. Now—Mr. Heath need not think I encouraged him to write to me. I told him I was in Mrs. Thorne's care, that if he saw fit to write I should probably let her see his letter, or should share it with the others, as I did Mr. Edgecomb's. Mr. Heath is frivolous. If I were a man I should admire Harriet Dwight. I am not going to lend the books he sent (Mr. Edgecomb) to Billy. I did not tell her they

had come. Last night we were all together, telling what we had been most impressed by during the day. It was all very informal. Billy was in ecstasies over the Burg, a wonderful well, a lime tree eight hundred years old, and some queer stoves with mottoes on them. Florida Pollock had revelled in the torture chamber of the castle, but when she expressed her horror of the iron woman, who if she once fastened on a man never would let him go, I opened my lips to make an innocent comment, and Mrs. Thorne actually trod on my toe. She had no right to assume that I was not going to ask about the inquisition. I had my revenge later. I meant to be really instructive, telling about the ancient books I saw in the town library in the old Dominican monastery, where I went with Billy. I told them instead of a kitten I saw walking out in a red flannel blanket made like a puppy's and trimmed with white braid and agate buttons. Mrs. Thorne tried to draw me out then on St. Lawrence's Cathedral, but I could not seem to recall anything but the way the sexton's family ring the bell. A lot of his boys and girls grip hold of the big rope that hangs down inside the church. They pull, and out they swing, short skirts, long pig-tails, and boys' boots—all flying like the fringe on a tassel. I do not think that my chaperon will step on my toes again. Harriet Dwight surprised us. She began to tell what had interested her, and evidently forgot every one of us but Mrs. Thorne. Billy just stores up facts of history and opinions of critics. Harriet—well, I cannot explain how she did it, but soon I was not in the old parlor of the Golden Eagle. I was living in the days when the city was in the height of its glory. Mrs. Thorne and she

knew all about the court life, the burghers' way of living, the various guilds, the goldsmiths, the architects, and painters. I wish I were not a fool. I will answer Mr. Edgecomb's letter from Nuremberg. I will be sensible if it kills me.

When I went to bed the moonlight fell on the roofs visible from my window. On one, all peaks and gables and queer sky-light windows, were scores of doves. I called Harriet to come across the hall to see them. We were in a tiny balcony. When she had seen the doves she looked at me meditatively. I said, "Speak right out! What do you think of Dorothy Coxe?"

"I was wishing I had lived a few years of her life as I imagine it has been."

"So you might have improved those years better?"

"I was thinking of myself, not of you. My life has been grim. I think it would have made me more flexible if I had been petted a little, and wasted money occasionally, and had more beauty around me in things."

I said I had been called a spoiled child, and I was altogether too flexible at times. I needed a stiffer backbone, or a New England conscience, which was much the same; then I coaxed her to tell me about herself, and she did—a little. She is not rich. An aunt educated her and has sent her abroad. She feels as if she was slowly thawing after being congealed in the frosty atmosphere of her estimable relative's home. She did not say that, but she told me how her Aunt Eliza has always tried to rear her—"check her exuberances," teach her "self-restraint." I seem to understand much Harriet left unsaid. She had never been ill-used or neglected, but

after she was six years old if she had to cry she hid until she "regained her composure." She came to feel ashamed if she grew enthusiastic over music, and when for the first time in her life she kissed her aunt the day she went to boarding school, Aunt Eliza said: "There, there! That will do."

She, Harriet, delighted in school. That shows what a home she had. She found her soul, she actually declared, "when she began to know books, as if it had been shut in there waiting for her." I think mine would have awaked under Aunt Eliza, and might have set hers in commotion. Now, Harriet is, I believe, enjoying everything rare and beautiful more intensely than all the rest of us put together, only she is so cool. Now why could not Aunt Eliza have had a niece like Billy to tackle? Billy shorn of exuberances would have been—very much reduced in bulk.

It raised me in my own esteem, this confidence of Harriet's. I wish I had any reasonable ground for that fancy I can't get rid of, that—After all, I wrote only the most formal and proper little missive to Mr. Edgecomb, thanking him for his books. I showed it to Harriet to see if it was too stiff. She seemed to approve of it or of me. I can be more effusive when I see him if I think best.

Up to a certain date our friends had made no acquaintances as they travelled. They usually had a railway coach to themselves, and at other times had no desire for outside companionship. There came a

day when a singular little episode made them acquainted with another American. On getting aboard the train for an eight hours' trip they entered a coach built on the Swiss plan. Two apartments adjoined. Each held, or could hold, a dozen persons. It was an agreeable change, giving one a chance to move about and to watch other travellers. Kate and the girls settled themselves in one apartment; the other ladies were with the Doctor just in the rear. Mrs. Thorne and Dolly sat opposite two solemn men in spectacles and a stout bald-headed American. Harriet and Bertha were on a line with these last and facing two civil but sleepy Germans. Miss Bilton sat by one window, the bald fellow-countryman by the opposite one. These windows were very large and beautifully clean, not a trace of dust or steam obscured the landscape without; indeed Bertha, who was very near-sighted, supposed the window by the American to be wide open. Miss Bilton, always happy, was saturated with contentment this sunny forenoon. She was in the land of Goethe and Schiller, the home of art and song and romanticism. She could gaze out and catch glimpses of mediæval castles perched on hills, with hoary hamlets at their base. She could put on her glasses and read in her beloved Baedeker what cut-throat baron built each castle, and when the black plague devastated the village. Her active fancy flitted back into the Middle Ages. She recalled Walter von der

Vogelweide, Hans Sachs, and the pretty tale of Philipine Weiser of Augsburg and the emperor's son. Her big, near-sighted eyes were suffused with tears of excitement, and her plump cheeks were flushed. Still, about twelve o'clock Kate was not surprised to see Miss Bilton draw from her hand-bag a big tissue-paper parcel. Bertha had a healthy nineteenth-century stomach, and never disregarded its claims. The rest sometimes preferred to delay lunch for an hour rather than to take it on the road. Bertha was never of that number. This day the stolid passengers who watched her were all unnoticed, as musing on feudal days and deeds of chivalry, she spread out in her lap cold ham, boiled eggs, fat rolls, chicken wings, and currant cakes. Sighing with satisfaction and gratified sentiment, she began methodically to obliterate the contents of her tissue paper. At times she looked past the American who was casting up figures in a little book, and she enjoyed much the view from the window that she still supposed was open. Sometimes in moods of abstraction Miss Bilton was guilty of slight acts of rudeness. She was moved to-day to commit one—but not, oh, far from it, to do what she did! She ate until she wished no more; there remained crusts, much fat ham, egg shells, a *mélange* of edibles. She loosely wrapt all together in the paper, leaned forward with a motion toward the window. There was a start of horror on Kate's part—a rushing object through the

air, loud exclamations on every side, and such a picture! All down from the American's bald head rained salt, pepper, chicken bones, and bread crusts—a slice of fat ham nestled in his shirt front—the powdered yelk of an egg on his nose. Rage and boundless astonishment pervaded him from head to heels.

“Oh, mercy! mercy!” shrieked Bertha. “I thought that window was open!”

Mrs. Thorne (nights long after she awoke for fits of laughter at the recollection) arose in distress to apply her clean handkerchief to the victim, to explain, to beg pardon for Bertha. The other passengers, at first stupefied, began to roar. The irate American suddenly joined in the shout. Bertha burst into tears. Doctor Tom, hearing the commotion, appeared from the next apartment, and his amazement in beholding Kate's ministrations to the bald-headed gentleman was past expression. She was at that instant extracting the fat ham from his bosom. There was very little formality in the coach for the rest of the journey. Tom and Mr. Hudson, as the man gave his name, fell into a brisk conversation, Bertha, who had no sense of the humorous, was uncommonly hysterical. Two of the other men soon got out to change coaches. They could not look at her and preserve the gravity they felt was expected of them in view of her agitation.

“Oh, it is nothing, miss, nothing,” urged Mr. Hudson. “It would have gone outdoors all right if the window had been open. Yes, sir,” (he turned

back to Tom) "I came over in February, German Lloyd Line to Genoa. I got through Italy so in cool weather."

"Enjoyed your trip?"

"Yes, on the whole; have not had a decent cup of coffee—chicory everywhere. Then I was alone, and that is dull. You can't tell how dull, because you have your whole family."

Tom, trying to repress his indignation, explained they were not all kin save through Adam, and the stranger in return gave them a few personal items.

"I have no family. My wife died a year ago. She was an excellent woman. She weighed one hundred and thirty pounds, and was eminently calculated to make me happy."

Mrs. Thorne wondered at the conjunction of facts thus stated, and wanted to ask if profound philosophy prompted it—this intimation that women lean like "Cassius" "think too much and are dangerous." Tom enjoyed chatting with somebody who could talk of news from the United States. They learned that Mr. Hudson was a retired merchant, that he knew friends of Dr. Bruce, that he was following the same route as the eight, that he was a man of kindly impulses and small education.

ENGLISCHER HOF,
PRAGUE, July 8th.

DEAR MISS COXE:

I entreat you not to frown at the thickness of this letter. You allowed me to believe you would receive an

epistle if it were in a manner written to your entire party. Surely in that case it must be long enough to go around. Besides, you are suffering in Edgecomb's place. I told you what voluminous letters I always write him. The worm has turned. He wrote me a fortnight since that he was about to leave Geneva for an excursion into the mountains, and no mail could reach him until his return. I read between the lines. From Delft I went to Hanover, thence to Berlin and Dresden. I was going to be cunning enough to strike your route at Nuremberg, but a certain cabman in Dresden was cunninger. He dropped me at a nearer station, which happened to be the one for Prague. At the office the mistake was discovered, and a lot of Germans, as openly curious as children, scolded and lamented as if we had all been victimized together. One fat old frau clasped her hands and implored me to "Fly! oh, fly!" Nature having denied me the necessary apparatus for crossing the city in the four minutes that remained, I went instead to Prague, racking my brains on the way for facts about the place; my Baedeker being for Northern Germany, was of no use. I remembered mention of Prague in the old novel of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, and my grandmother used to play a turbulent tune called the *Battle of Prague*; then I overheard a fellow say only Hungarian was spoken there, but I took heart, for something like the miraculous gift of tongues has been bestowed upon me several times in tight spots. Toward midnight there was a thunderstorm. We arrived in the height of it. I alighted and sent heavenward a loud shout of *Drosky!* In some outlandish place it means a carriage. I thought it might

here. A dripping waterproof codger appeared swinging a lantern. He grunted interrogatively, and grunts being the same in all languages, I grunted affirmatively; then I followed him through a tunnel of darkness which suddenly ended in a court adorned with the oleanders in vivid green tubs, and the hotel clerk all loving kindness, which by this time are equally well known to you. This hotel used to be an old monastery. You will find the rooms dingy (for I know Mrs. Thorne will bring you here), but the cuisine is excellent; that is it was so after I reasoned with the head waiter about the excess of fried potatoes and ice water. He said he was once in New York, and fried potatoes and ice were what all Americans hankered after when abroad.

My room was upholstered in dark blue. I had only one candle. I presume the rule is not to give two when it lightens. I was sadly going to bed, having ascertained to a certainty that the sheets were very damp, when somebody rapped. It was a lank, black-robed priest. He solemnly begged pardon; it was late, but his errand was his excuse—would I kindly give a little sum toward a hospital for strangers. English and American people sometimes died in Prague, etc., etc. I hastened his exit by contributing one of those left-over Dutch dining plates that was very heavy to carry around, but I did not care for Prague that first night. Daylight changed everything. Please say to Miss Bilton that for beauty of location, variety of ornamentation, picturesque street scenes, as well as intensely interesting historic associations, Prague is the most entrancing city I have seen yet. Besides I am here. If you are in Dresden it is on your

way to Vienna. If you are in Nuremberg you can go this way to Dresden. If Mrs. Thorne will bring you here you can tell all the other Americans you meet this summer (and ever after) that in *not* coming to Prague they missed the thing best worth while on the continent. I have noted that the ability to make such a speech fills one's whole being with sweet serenity—and takes it right out of the other fellow. After breakfast I got a guide-book and started. There are fascinating “snap scenes” at every step (I have a kodak, Miss Coxe). Fountains are surrounded by dark-eyed, gaily dressed Bohemian girls filling their jugs; over them tower colossal statues of warriors or ancient kings. White-cöifed nuns glide under arched doorways. Carts roll along heaped with fruit and drawn by white oxen, their yokes gilded or trimmed with wild flowers. In the old part of the city is a marvellous bridge five hundred years old, over the river Moldau. Its entire span is covered with stone saints and martyrs, and it is good form in Prague to come out here for the purpose of saying your prayers. The statue that interested me more than any other on the bridge was that of the Rev. John Nepomuk. I am looking for his life and works to send our clerical friend Edgecomb, but I can't refrain from telling you the main facts in his career. He was the confessor of a queen of Bohemia who lived in 13—something. She had a husband, Wenzel by name. The queen was a highly respectable person and committed only such sins as one in her station would occasionally find necessary. These she gave over in a strictly official manner to the Rev. Nepomuk, who made them null and void. He of course

by his vows could never reveal them. King Wenzel was as curious as a Yankee postmaster. He fairly ached to know what sins in particular his wife had been sinning. He asked the confessor, who would not tell. He resolved to squeeze the story out of him, and the squeezing was a literal process too, done by the latest improved torture machines of that year, 1300 and something. Poor Nepomuk, when pinched, pulled, scorched, and racked, never told of the smallest caper cut by her majesty. Wenzel gave the wringer one twist too many, finished the confessor, and flung him into the river. No self-respecting saint would sink under such circumstances. Nepomuk promptly rose and floated. Soon they needed no electric lights on the new bridge, for five miraculous stars came down to hover over his head. It would have been economical to have used old Nepomuk for permanent illuminating purposes, but perhaps not really respectful. The common council hooked him up. The stars went back to heaven, at least they are not now on exhibition in the cathedral where I saw the other things—sections of the saint and so on. This big cathedral is dedicated to a saint I never heard much about. We have a dance named after him, but it never has been or will be very popular—namely Saint Vitus. The cathedral is the most gorgeous I have seen yet. Before mounting Nepomuk in silver they took out his knee bone and put it under glass. Most soul-thrilling of all they carefully pickled his faithful tongue, and keep it in a gold pickle jar, but I did not see the casket and the pickled tongue for the same sixpence. The knee bone is also extra.

I can be your guide everywhere if Mrs. Thorne will

permit. I was surprised to find here, in Prague, the tomb of the great Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe, and still more astonished to learn that in life he wore a gold nose. This was bad enough purely as extravagance and love of display, but the epitaph says his nose was cut off in a duel. "The undevout astronomer is mad." Without doubt Tycho neglected to say his prayers on the Carlsbridge or he would not have gotten mad and lost his nose. I make these reflections, Miss Coxe, at the risk of being tiresome, but don't you think facts of history should teach us lessons of self-restraint? I saw a great many other things that first day and every day since, but you will soon, I hope, see them all for yourselves. Tell Mrs. Thorne it will save you all from needing to read the *History of the Reformation* to come to Prague, for the guide-books will give full particulars about Jerome of Prague, and John Huss, and Ziska the blind fighter. History too—why you can swallow it down here volumes at a time. The thirty years' war began in Prague. I really think you will miss the greatest opportunity of your lives if you neglect Prague. Tell the Doctor there is a wonderful medical college and a "universal sick-house," which I take it is a hospital, and asylums without number. Of course none of you need anything of the sort, but the jewelry shops are ravishing. Prague is the headquarters for garnets. They set them in gold for necklaces, brooches, earrings, nose-rings, bracelets—then amber—that is fairly thrown away. About what date could you come do you think?

Here endeth the first general epistle.

Miss Coxe may consider the rest of no interest to the world at large. May I hope that she will write me at

least a few lines? There is only one of me, and I shall share her letter with nobody, if I am blessed enough to get one. I think she must guess why I would have followed her from Delft if I had dared. Blue eyes can be heavenly kind if they will. If I only knew how hers are as she thinks of—Prague. I dare not even trust myself to write more. It would be too much. I cannot remember that she knows almost nothing of me, for since I first saw her I seem to see her all the time, but I cannot bear to think she has no care to know me. Cautious, elderly people might suggest that I was too presumptuous in assuming that we might be friends before I told my pedigree. To any such Edgecomb, if questioned, could give full satisfaction. You know who the Edgecombs have been for generations. Everett—well he would not let a fellow he was ashamed of presume to call him “friend.” He is worth several dozen of me to be sure, but I prefer Miss Coxe should not think too much about that. After Nuremberg (or wherever she is) what? The gods grant it may be Prague.

Very sincerely her friend,

LEROY HEATH.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

DAYS IN PRAGUE.

MR. HEATH'S letter proved irresistible to Mrs. Thorne, and somewhat later he had the pleasure of acting as their cicerone about Prague. Every day they drove through the various parts of the city, finding all enchanting. He took them first to places of strictly historic interest. He devoted himself to Mrs. Thorne with an earnestness that did not now impose on her in the least. He poured into the ears of Miss Bilton an amount of encyclopedical facts that reduced her to ecstasy. She had made ready to ask him to tell her a little about Prague, and at the earliest opportunity opened her lips with that intent. Before she could speak, Mr. Heath remarked, looking her directly in the eye. "Prague is the headquarters of the Austrian officials, and the seat of a prince-bishop. It was founded in the eighth century. The population is about two hundred and sixty thousand. The city is nine miles in circumference and divided into seven districts. The University was founded in 1340 and soon became a great centre of learning.

Later there was a split and thousands of students seceded. The Germans who went off founded the University of Leipsic. The Prague University is still flourishing, attended by two thousand Bohemians and sixteen thousand Germans. The carriages are at the door, so we will see all the rest for ourselves."

Miss Bilton looked startled as when one turns a faucet and finds the water supply unexpectedly copious, but she whispered to Miss Dwight on the way to the carriage: "There is more in Mr. Heath than I thought. He has seemed, you know, just a little trifling, but I think he can be very improving."

With this in her mind, Miss Bilton secured a seat next to Mr. Heath, who felt that virtue was not rewarded when he saw Dolly snuggle down in the next carriage close to the arm of Doctor Tom's alpaca coat.

"Where are we going to-day, Mr. Heath," asked Mrs. Thorne.

"Do you want to see a royal palace?"

There was a chorus of noes.

"Have any of you ever read Schiller's *Wallenstein*?"

Mrs. Thorne and Miss Dwight had, Miss Bilton had not, but she knew the historical facts.

"Then I shall take you to Wallenstein's palace," said Mr. Heath; "do you remember that Schiller describes many rooms in it?"

“Indeed I do,” cried Kate with all a girl’s enthusiasm, “but I thought of it as a poet’s fancy. I remember there was an astrological tower, where Seni the old astrologer set with Wallenstein the horoscope. It was furnished with statues of Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Venus, all marvellously illumined with radiance from a planetary system overhead—Venus bathed in rose-red light. Was the palace real?”

“It was, and is to-day as real as ever was the Duke of Friedland. I will take you there now.”

“It is like opening a door into romance-land,” whispered Harriet when, after a drive in the Kleinsseite, they alighted at the entrance of the palace.

A guide ushered them into a queer grotto of stalactites, and then went over the part shown to visitors. The pillars were of Bohemian marble, the walls frescoed, the tapestries showed time and decay. Bertha found the very window of the banquet-hall before which three generals were hanged during supper one night, and delightedly explained how at the end of the feast the Duke had the curtains drawn back that the official guests might receive an object lesson.”

“I will show you something prettier,” whispered Heath to Dorothy. “The guide must go his rounds, but the rest is stupid.”

He uttered a few German words in the old chap’s ear, introduced a weightier bit of silver into his not

too reluctant paw, and drew Dolly through a near doorway.

“The rest is all rags, tatters, and moth-eaten relics. Let us wait for them in the garden. You don't care anything about an old rascal of a Duke dead two hundred years ago.”

Dolly was half inclined to retreat, but a step farther and out from the grim old rooms she came into the sunniest, quaintest of prim gardens. It was shut in from the noise of the street by a high grey wall overrun with ivy.

“How lovely!” cried Dolly, glancing up at the cloudless blue overhead, down at the soft grass full of primroses and little pink daisies. The ivy wreaths were full of twittering, chirping birds, the white butterflies were riotous in the warm, golden air.

“Yes, is it not beautiful? You never read Schiller's tragedy, you say? Well, it is a grim, bloody tale, but there is the sweetest idyl in it, as unlike the wars and stratagems as this garden is unlike the palace dungeons. A fair young girl lived here—a German Thekla with hair as bright and eyes as blue as a girl I know who lived two centuries later. She had a lover Max—I have no doubt they have been often where we are now. Poor things, their love came to nothing but sorrow and heartbreak!”

There was a tenderness in Heath's tone which prompted Dolly to remark, cheerfully: “Well, they are both as dead now as they would have been if

they had not come to grief; so don't let us worry about them."

"You read my letter?"

"Of course I did, and found it perfectly ridiculous. We all shouted over it."

"Did you read *all* of it aloud?"

"Well, no. I think Miss Bilton interrupted, and dinner was announced."

Heath picked a rose, carefully removed its leaves as he said:

"You are either very kind or very cruel. Will you tell me which you *mean* to be?"

"I think I hear Mrs. Pollock's voice."

"They can't get here in five minutes yet. You are kind if you mean to let me know that I must not put in words what you can see: that I love you—because you—Oh, Miss Dorothy, do not be cruel! Give me a little hope that when you know me better——"

It was Mrs. Pollock, with Bertha at her heels. Bertha, who prattled away about a picture attributed to Albrecht Dürer she had just seen in the oratory. They all then had to go to the stables, where once as many horses as there were days in the year fed from marble mangers. Heath, shaking off a certain air of preoccupation, put a few questions to the guide, who, suddenly beginning to speak English in sentences fearfully and wonderfully made, replied: "The possessor of the present, Count Wallenstein

who is, descends himself in straight lines from the mighty Duke. He makes ready to restore all things."

Doctor Bruce, delighted to hear his native tongue, began at once to torture the guide with questions to which he had no ready-made answers. Hitherto explanations had been in German, and Kate had translated. At last he led the company to a room where stood what looked to be a big rocking-horse minus the rockers. Its hide was like the cover of those hair-cloth trunks our great-grandfathers used. Around its neck was a curious label written in the style of English often found abroad in public places. The Doctor, stepping near, read aloud :

"This is the horse that bore Wallenstein stuffed at the battle of Lützen."

Looking the guide sternly in the face, Tom asked : "Which went into battle stuffed—Wallenstein or this curious beast?"

Mrs. Thorne frowned, but there were giggles and titters that caused the guide to assume what in fine writing would be called a "haughty mien." He led the party to the street door, and only limbered when Tom's hand met his in parting.

"If you had not provoked him, I think we should have seen more," said Mrs. Thorne, after their exit.

"We had seen enough," returned Tom. "I draw the line at equine mummies."

This time Heath contrived to get into the carriage with Dolly. She dropped her guide-book and scat-

tered out some ivy leaves she had picked in the garden. He carefully restored them, save one. She did not appear to see the theft or the reproachful glance that accompanied it.

“Let us go home to dinner now,” suggested the Doctor, “then I propose that we hunt up a summer garden this afternoon. I delight to sit under a linden tree, absorbing coffee and music, watching the peaceful *fraus* and the playful *kinder*.”

“Bravo, Tom,” cried his sister. “We will have you talking Dutch yet.”

“Yes, I have begun. The ‘boots’ in my hall talks English as I talk German. This morning he pointed to an old negro passing (the only one in Prague I fancy). He said: “Black man from States, white man from States, was *macht die* difference?”

“I gave him a Germanico-Englisho ethnological explanation, and as light broke in on his mind he bellowed: ‘Ya, ya, mein Herr!’ then he interpreted for the chambermaid, and I made out that he said Americans were born red and called ‘Inzins,’ turned white in adult years, and grew black in old age. She ya-ya-ed so delightfully that I let the matter rest. The old negro will be twice as interesting in their eyes after this.”

By this time the carriages were at the hotel. The waiters flew out, fluttering white napkins like doves’ wings. Every one of them was, in fact, as harmless as a dove and as wise as a serpent.

The head waiter, smiling sweetly on Mrs. Thorne, whispered: "I know what you Americans like best for all meals. I was six weeks in New York. It is ice-ice-ice-water, ice-cream, and fried potatoes ever. All awaits you."

"He is of the same opinion as the Englishman who wrote lately in a London paper: 'Americans actually consider water a beverage. I am told they drink it like camels.'"

It was Heath who spoke, assuming a sprightly manner as he perceived Dorothy could not be made to notice the somewhat exaggerated gloom previously expressed in his countenance. She seemed unaware of his existence the rest of the day.

That evening Miss Coxe visited Miss Bilton for the purpose of transferring to her journal anything that seemed of especial interest. That duty done, she sat gazing out of the window at the curious eyelids in the opposite roof, for exactly like eyelids did the tiny windows look.

"Harriet had read Schiller and you had read history. I never had heard of Wallenstein, but I am not a fool."

"Billy" looked up in distress. "Why, Dolly, if you want to read the play there is an excellent translation in Coleridge's poems."

"It is not that"—Dorothy looked coolly at her really sympathetic companion, murmuring, "I would not tell you if you could understand, Billy. If any

one were to love Harriet Dwight, how would he go to work to show it?"

This promised to be a dissertation after Billy's own heart. She replied with vivacity: "He would tell her so."

"Of course, you goose, but *how* and with what preliminary exercises?"

"Well, first he would be afraid of her slightly. Next, if he got a little way with her he would stick," continued Billy, with more force than elegance. "And for a long time he could not get any further, I imagine. Then he would get desperate and she would have to listen."

"He would not joke much, I presume, and carry it off as an affair half-sentimental, half-funny, with a bit of flattery about her blue eyes now and then thrown in as one would offer sugar to a—to a monkey."

"No, indeed, but Harriet's eyes are not blue."

"Well, say pink, if you like, one color is as good as another for illustration."

"Pink eyes! Why that would make one an Albinos. Could a man fall in love with a creature in a menagerie?" asked Bertha, a little off the line of Dolly's thought by reason of her double mention of pink eyes and a monkey.

Dorothy disdained to answer, but asked instead: "How would you wish a man to care for you?"

"Oh, in much the same way that I think Harriet's

lover would feel toward her—unless—I don't mind—I mean he need not be afraid of me."

"He never will be," said Dorothy, solemnly.

"How is it with you?" ventured Billy, timidly.

"It is, and always has been, pretty talk, boxes of Huyler's candy, compliments. It makes me furious. I wish it to be a solemn experience. I would like a man to feel that he might have to sail through bloody seas before he got me," said Dolly, savagely.

"How could he?" gasped Billy.

"Could he what? feel so or sail? He could not, so I shall not marry. I am not a canary on a perch to be coaxed and coo-ed at. I would wish the whole thing solemn, dignified, and rather tragic toward the grand *finale*."

"That is much the most interesting way for things to go," agreed Miss Bilton," but in real life we do not seem to scare men. They are as lively as can be when they are in love and confident of success."

"Quite too confident. Mr. Edgecomb was not at all flippant."

"Mr. Heath is not so dignified, but he has a great deal of what the French call *esprit*," added Miss Bilton.

"Mr. Heath!" exclaimed Miss Coxe, with a toss that set all the stray curls on her head in a dance. "He always has a laugh in his eye no matter how solemn and softly he pretends to talk. I would like

to make him ache in the very pit of his soul, I feel so exasperated with him."

"Why, I had no idea that you disliked him."

"Well, never mind him, Billy. What else have you written in your journal that I ought to know?"

Miss Bilton meekly reopened her notes and reminiscences for Dolly's benefit, so that no more confidences were in order.

Mr. Heath became a great favorite with Mrs. Thorne's company. All, with the exception perhaps of Dorothy, were given to praising him in season and out. This was because he showed no apparent partiality, but carried Mrs. Bushby's wrap, never failed to render little services to the elder Mrs. Pollock, talked amicably with Florida, and was to every one everywhere amiable and not inattentive. Mrs. Florida had a suspicion that he greatly admired Miss Dwight. She mentioned her fancy to Dolly, who thought it extremely probable.

This was, indeed, a matter of fact; at least, if Heath did not call the sentiment Harriet inspired in him admiration, it was one of hearty goodfellowship and esteem. He liked to hear her tell what she was enjoying. She talked more when with him than with any one else, unless with Mrs. Thorne. She found his breezy touch-and-go fashion rather stimulating than otherwise.

They had been three days in Prague when one

morning Miss Bilton remarked: "This is our last afternoon. What are we going to do?"

The Pollocks promptly responded that they would be excused from joining in any sightseeing. They were planning a private *coup d'état*. There was in a near street a wily Israelite who had in his show case an amber comb worth two thalers. He had asked Florida six for it, and she felt in her "innermost" that she could get it at a bargain for four if she were persevering.

"I will take care of any one of you who wants to visit the hospital," said Tom; "otherwise I go alone."

"I shall take a nap and darn my stockings," put in Mrs. Bushby. "Some days it is heavenly to give the go-by to every object of interest outside the hotel."

Miss Bilton buried herself for five minutes in Baedeker. When she emerged, she exclaimed: "We certainly ought to see the Ghetto here, also a very ancient synagogue, the oldest in Europe, the only Gothic one."

"If Mrs. Thorne agrees, I will show you the way with great pleasure. I meant to go there before I left Prague," said Mr. Heath.

At that moment Miss Bilton, who sat facing the door, uttered a cry of half-suppressed dismay. Every one looked up to see her color with embarrassment as Mr. Hudson, the bald-headed American, appeared on the threshold.

“Well, well! Here we are again,” he heartily exclaimed, shaking hands with Tom and beaming on the ladies. “Oh, now, Miss—Em—ah,” he kindly grunted, seeing Bertha’s flushes, “don’t think I lay that up against you. Oh, gracious, no! It was only unexpected! Been to Vienna? I have—hottest place I was ever in; and how they tuck it on a fellow’s bill!”

He dropped into a chair by Tom, and soon the two were exchanging *Galignani’s Messengers* and the latest items of home news.

“I think,” said Mrs. Thorne to Mr. Heath, “that if you will order a carriage large enough to hold those of us who want to go, we will drive once more about the city, and will go to the Ghetto or the Judenstadt as they call it. We will get ready at once.”

Miss Coxe happened to be the first one down again ten minutes later. Mr. Heath was with her almost immediately.

“I never realized before, Miss Coxe, a fact in mathematics—never as I have in the last two days. Given, say eight persons, there can be such almost endless combinations of those people, and yet two particular persons almost invariably *not* be together.”

“I had not thought of it; I am not mathematical,” said Dolly, airily, adding with an accession of interest: “Why did Mr. Edgecomb not come into Germany? I hoped to know him better.”

"I wish you wanted to know me better. I think— How on earth did Mrs. Thorne ever drill you all into such promptness!" he muttered, as Kate appeared with Harriet and Bertha.

"I have ordered a carriage with plenty of room for you four ladies. I will sit with the driver, and extract bits of local gossip," said Heath.

"Share them with us when they are worth it," returned Mrs. Thorne.

"Look how narrow the streets are getting. I think this is a horrid part of the town," remarked Dolly, frowning on Heath, who was riding backwards for the chance of seeing her face. Harriet looked curiously up at the tall, black buildings whose tops were only far enough apart to show a strip of sky like a pale blue ribbon.

"Have patience, Miss Coxe," entreated Mr. Heath; "the synagogue may be very curious."

They alighted before a dirty building whose lower part Bertha assured them was a thousand years old. They groped down steep stairs into a place so uncanny that Kate told Heath Albrecht Dürer might have been inspired there to produce his *Melancholia*. No cobweb had been disturbed, so they hung everywhere like festoons of dust-colored lace draperies. Sickly daylight struggled in to mingle with the lurid rays from a swinging lamp.

"Let us go; this is horrible!" begged Dolly, but the rest listened to a withered Israelite not unlike

a bat, who fluttered from a corner. Dolly tilted her pert nose and made Heath know that she considered his choice of sights anything but admirable. As soon as he could get the others away he hurried them toward the carriage. Blocking the way as they came out into the daylight was a hunchbacked dwarf, ugly as Quilp. He insisted that everybody always visited the near burial-ground older even than the synagogue. Miss Bilton started before any one could refuse, muttering: "How perfectly fascinating!"

They went up this time. A hill covered over with grave-stones so jammed in that the foot could scarcely find room between them—a hill of graves six times covered over and six times filled up, until not an inch remained of space. Gnarled unsightly trees were wedged in between the stones that bore queer emblems of the various tribes. The dwarf hopped from grave to grave, chattering a jargon meant for English. Dolly turned, fled through the gateway, and sprang into the carriage. Heath followed her, hoping for a *tête-à-tête* while the rest looked for the grave of a rabbi's wife that according to Bertha dated from 606.

"Really," remarked Dorothy, scornfully, "I think I should have gone to the hospital with the Doctor. His horrors would at least have been sprinkled with carbolic acid. These are suggestive of nothing but Asiatic cholera."

“Tell me, Miss Coxe, how I can atone for this mistake. The afternoon is not gone. Is there no beautiful place you care to see?”

“Oh, no doubt Mrs. Thorne has something in mind that she means us to see. Here they are! Mrs. Thorne, won't you tell him to get out of this part of Prague as soon as he can.”

By “him” Dolly meant the driver, who grinned and nodded as if he had heard similar remarks in the past. He whipped the air with terrific force, while his old horse started off fairly well, but before long began to drag.

“Let us go as far as the Carlsbridge,” proposed Mrs. Thorne, “then dismiss the carriage. It will be our last chance for a walk through the city.”

“Yes, do,” cried Bertha, “I did not half see the great *Pulverthurm* at the end or the statues on the bridge that time we drove across it.”

When they reached the bridge, Dolly's temper improved.

“Is this not beautiful enough to banish your late impressions?” asked Heath, as they were leisurely strolling along.

Miss Coxe without replying looked approvingly on the fair scene. The golden light of late afternoon bathed in newer beauty the always beautiful city and its surroundings. Massive towers and airy minarets stood out against a radiant sky. The arches of the bridges were reflected in the waves of

the Moldau, while almost above them towered the grand Hradschin. The previous day had been a holy day, so that every shrine and statue along the bridge's span was adorned with flowers or wreaths not yet withered. "You really cannot imagine how much there is to see on this bridge," said Heath. "If you care to know, Miss Coxe, I will point you out the queerest statues."

She longed to provoke him by a suggestion that if he were to tell Miss Bilton it would be information more eagerly received and longer treasured, but she refrained. Heath would stand much from her, but not everything.

They stopped under the great stone crucifix, where Heath, instead of telling her the story of the Jew who was forced to erect it, studied her face.

"You make several stops before getting to Geneva, so I shall probably get there first."

"Get where? Oh, to Geneva; I forgot you were going to be there too."

She was a little overdoing her *rôle* of indifference; that was all that gave Heath any comfort. It was cold comfort. Leaning over the stone coping he reflected that Dolly possibly fancied he wanted to start up a brisk and transient flirtation of the sort he had sometimes indulged in during the years that were gone. To tell the truth, it surprised him that this was not what he did want. In Delft he had

been charmed with Dolly. When she went away it seemed necessary that he should follow her in order that he might know her better. To have learned certain cunning ways she had with her eyes, her mouth, her blushes, her laughter, her sudden cross freaks—this was not to know her. Perhaps not, but after a few days in Prague, Heath was convinced that he had discovered in her all sorts of lovable qualities,—even of mental and moral excellences. She was, he believed, as intelligent as Miss Bilton, but too witty to be tiresome; as conscientious as Miss Dwight, but too shy to reveal anything but her lightest thoughts to the world at large. He actually did not go widely astray in his reading of her character, but be that as it might, Heath was fully possessed with earnest, loyal love for little Miss Coxe. He no sooner realized his sentiments and condition than he went to work in the clumsiest manner possible to make all plain to Dorothy.

“See that good papist over there saying his prayers. If I had been trained to pray on street corners and the middle of bridges right here and now, I would pray for—what do you think, Miss Coxe?”

“Oh, any of the Christian graces, I don’t think you could go amiss.”

“I only want one of the Graces—though she is an embodiment of all the rest,” returned Heath, who really would not have been so idiotic under other

circumstances. "You would not let me finish what I wanted to tell you in Wallenstein's palace——"

"Oh, Mr. Heath! do let *me* tell you the funniest thing you ever heard in your life," hurriedly began Miss Coxe, seeing her companions were not near to afford her protection from what she detected was about to come. "You know Mrs. Flori Pollock gets a bit confused over words sometimes. Well, last night Billy asked her if she would not like to go to Spain, and Mrs. Pollock said: 'Yes, I have always thought I would like to see a fight between a bull and a trained *cuspidor*.'" "

Heath had to laugh and then follow his tormentor to their companions. There would be no understanding between Dolly and himself in Prague, but at any rate she knew he loved her if his wooing did not prosper. The next day Mrs. Thorne's party was *en route* for Switzerland. Mr. Hudson was with them. He had given an entire afternoon to Prague and did not think much of it. He expected foreign cities to be unlike New York, but in proportion as they differed from it, he disliked them. The old home of Saint John Nepomuk was full of things that he remarked to Tom he "had no use for." Tom understood him perfectly. The good-natured middle-aged Philistine enjoyed meeting so many of his country people. He decided to be with them as much as was agreeable to them and consistent with his own plans.

GENEVA.

MY DEAR HEATH,

The pictures on your Delft-ware are all of blue eyes, and I doubt if the films in your kodak will reveal, when developed, any pictures in which Miss Dorothy's form is not in the foreground. So, too, if you had your wish and were a painter, you would take after Andrea del Sarto, and your Madonnas would all be Miss Dorothys. Providence has confined you to vain wishes to use the brush, and it is just as well, for you might not have Andrea del Sarto's skill. Love counts for much in art, but not for all. Your heart always fills your head. How often have I delivered lectures to you on this point! It is particularly necessary for you to be on guard against this sin with reference to Miss Dorothy. She will not consent to be idealized in art or conversation. Your heart must stay in your breast and you must hide her away in your heart and let her find out for herself that she is there. But what is the use of saying this? I have no doubt that before you read it you will have managed to make yourself regret precipitancy in confessing your state of mind, and if my instinct does not deceive me you will have some pangs to bear in consequence: but be of good courage, these pangs will not be fatal to hope. I always enjoy your pangs; they make you humorous and flighty.

People are so much more than the places they make celebrated, or sacred, except when one is alone. What an agreeable round of visits one could pay if the Geneva of old were included in the Geneva of to-day! Our consul here says the Genevese now have the morals of Rousseau, the principles of Calvin, and the religion of

Voltaire. I would fain get these at first hand in the Rue des Chanoines or the Rue de Cornavin or at Fernex. I am leaving to-day for a ramble up in the Juras. I shall expect to find a letter from you when I return.

Yours,

EDGECOMB.

DOROTHY COXE'S JOURNAL.

July 17th.

We have seen so much and been in so many places lately that my head is as full of pictures as a bazaar is of bric-a-brac. Some day I must sort over my experiences, and realize where they belong. We had so long a day's journey from Prague, I was so tired at night I have forgotten in what place I went to bed. The next day we were in Switzerland. We stopped two hours in a little hamlet, took a walk, and bought milk in a cabin where a woman coolly left her baby near the edge of a precipice while she got the milk. The baby seized its mother's half-knit stocking, crawled straight out, and sat on the edge of nothing. We sounded an alarm, the mother rushed out in wild dismay at seeing the baby—had pulled out her knitting-needles. She cuffed its ears, and left it where it was. Probably babies hold on to bushes when they go over, and learn to climb up again, for most of the country is on the perpendicular.

One day we drove through wonderful scenery, huge mountains, waterfalls leaping down into streams that rushed through villages full of toy houses. Once when the road went straight up toward heaven, as roads often

do here, a woman appeared from an inn leading out an extra horse. She hitched him on before the others, and walking rapidly along, encouraged him up about two miles. She wore a yellow petticoat, blue stockings with a hole in each heel, and hobnailed shoes. Her hair was braided over white cotton and thrust through with what looked like a pewter spoon. She was about fifty years old, but she flirted with our yellow-haired driver as if careering up a perpendicular hill was the delight of her life. Every time she tossed her head she cracked her long whip with a snap over the head-horses, and altogether she was a fine subject for a shot.

Yesterday I took another photograph that I am sure will be a great success. He was a friar, a Capuchin brother, who sat near me, and he knew how to economize space even better than Mrs. Thorne with her Gladstone bag. He had a brown robe with a hood and wide sleeves. In this hood of the robe that reached to his heels (the robe and perhaps the hood too) he carried no end of papers, spectacles, prayer-book, rolls, snuff-box, red handkerchief, and what did not go there, he ran up his sleeves. If I were a pretty peasant girl I would spend my days by the town pump, washing a little, gossiping more, and making a picture of myself to delight—tourists. I suppose if I could get at Billy's diary I should be surprised to know how many remarkable things I have seen ; but she is busy just now writing to that Methodist minister my emotions on seeing the Alps. If I disturb her she may have another struggle with her conscience and refuse to tell him how I felt. She did refuse as it was, but I coaxed her judiciously. I know I

felt just as she will say I did feel, only I could not express it. I have told her what to say at the last about not writing to him any more. Speaking of consciences, Harriet Dwight has one. Yesterday it made her tell me something that I fancy she would have kept to herself had she not thought it deceitful. She said that Mr. Edgecomb was not an entire stranger to her when I introduced him to her in Canterbury. She met him when he visited in the town near Boston where her aunt lived. I have no reason to think it would make any difference to Harriet (and I usually think girls are of no account anyway in times of temptation) yet Harriet keeps me from—well, intellectual, spiritual Bostonian, and I do not care what else he may be I do believe I could shake a little of that high and mighty Edgecomb's composure out of him if I brought all my skill to bear. Possibly I might not. I will allow Mr. Heath about three days for appearance sake, and up he will pop like a Jack-in-the-box at Geneva. If I only knew what would torment him, but I seem powerless. He is maddeningly good-natured, so buoyantly hopeful that I want to crush him. It is queer, for meek men I have disliked.

Well, we are in Geneva. We arrived this noon. We are to rest here, so to-day we did no sightseeing.

The porter told Doctor Bruce that a "Mr. *Edgeworth*" from a near hotel left a card for him, but he could not find it. "The gentleman was going to be absent a fortnight," and it was "now time for him to return to Geneva." I hope it will be soon—his return.

Mr. Hudson is great fun. Mrs. Thorne has found that he is a Sunday-school superintendent when he is home,

so she lets me chatter at him all I like. He enjoys it, for he is the mellowest creature that ever I saw. He fell in love with Sarah Somebody "along in the early sixties" he says. He has told me all about that (Sarah jilted him), also about three wives and their courtships. Then between the wives several women wanted him, as he fancies, and I know all their histories. Actually last night in the *salon* I was so entertained by him I could not take time to go to the window to see a Punch and Judy show. Perhaps I might have gone though if Mrs. Florida had not been so persistent in calling me.

July 21st. Just as I said—that Mr. Heath is in Geneva. Billy saw him get off the boat and go to the Beau Rivage, where Mr. Edgecomb stayed when here.

About a week after the Thorne party had arrived in Geneva, Mr. Edgecomb returned. He came by boat at noon, glanced frequently toward the Hotel de la Paix while the passengers were landing. It had not altered its position during his absence, so pointing out his portmanteau to a hotel runner, he betook himself to the Beau Rivage. The hall porter greeted him with effusion, running to fetch for him a full handful of letters and papers. *Déjeuner* being served, Edgecomb stowed away the papers and carried the letters to a quiet table in the *salle à manger*, where he could read at his ease. He was surprised to find one from Chamonix directed in Heath's hand, for he had just looked up and down the room expecting to see his friend.

“Has not got here then,” he reflected. “That is rather odd.”

The letter looking bulky, as Heath's letters were apt to be, Edgecomb ran his eye over the contents of the others, then being hungry, ate his first course before he opened Heath's. He was surprised to learn that Heath had made a brief visit to Geneva and had gone; not waiting for Edgecomb who had promised to go with him to Chamonix. The letter ran after this fashion:

CHAMONIX, July 25th.

I would sling my bootjack into the Juras, Edgecomb, if by any chance it could hit you! Confound you! Why didn't you send along your good-for-nothing advice in time to be of some avail? I'll be hanged if I would have taken it in any case. Now put on your sacerdotal grin, for of course I have “gone and done it,” and precious little satisfaction did I get out of it. Going to “enjoy my pangs,” are you? Not much, you old ghoul! I shall “suffer and be strong” that you may see how “sublime a thing” is the man you dared to call “humorous and flighty.”—I, who like the wounded, wild gazelle, have fled into solitude that the wound may bleed!—Bah! I might as well caper like a fool and ring my jester's bells, for that is what she persists in thinking me—just a fool *au naturel*. Never mind that—I stayed five days in Geneva. I loath the place: Intoxicated old chimney pots lurching around on the roofs! Long rows of mermaid washerwomen tearing buttons by the dozen off the shirts of tourists in public. Shops full of green

and yellow alpine crystals set in silver gilt—fit ornaments for negro girls. Associations? What do I care for the people who lived here and hereabouts? I went to Coppet of course, but as for Madame de Staël, I don't wonder Napoleon banished her. I would have done it myself had I been living and banishing. She knew too much; she was given too much to telling what she knew, she was homely. (“I doubt if she told that,” commented Edgecomb, smiling, “but I will put in a semi-colon for you.”) Was it around here that old Gibbon went down on his knees to his lady love? He being an octogenarian and so fat, they must needs call for a derrick to hoist him to his legs again. Soul of me, Edgecomb! Dost thou think that what I am now suffering will be recurrent even until I become what the old lady called a “centurion”? Then pray the gods that I become not obese! Voltaire—his is no name to conjure with, since I saw the old beau's brushes, combs, paint-boxes, his toilet fuss and frippery in the days when Frederick the Great tickled him with verses and he tickled back with flattery.

What should I hang around Geneva for? I came on to Chamonix. Perhaps I may be here when you come, perhaps not. You have not been here, I believe? Well, if I go blind to-night I have seen a sight worth living for—I got in under a curtain of fog, met a fellow whom I talked with on the steamer. We roamed about the little hamlet and found it melancholy, wet, and too much out-of-doors. I turned in early. Parker had a room next to mine. About four in the morning he pounded on my wall, and yelled like a Comanche Indian: “Get up! Look out of your window.”

I did it. Take all the pale gold and brightest rose-red of all the sunsets you ever saw (I don't say sunrises, for you have seen few); pour them in a flood of glory over—but you have not seen Mont Blanc. You can't imagine it. I can't picture it for you. Nothing matters much in a universe where such a thing can be, nothing transient I mean, nor will much happen to us until we grow big enough to see a Mont Blanc in Emerson's way: "Every object rightly seen unlocks a new faculty of the soul." I believe I saw it aright that morning.

Since I wrote you last I have done Germany; my plans now are rather vague. You will find Mrs. Thorne and party in Geneva. They are close by you at the Hotel de la Paix. We went together to St. Peter's, where Calvin used to hold forth. Miss Bilton gave me points about his life and theology. She thinks he was quite right in burning up the other pious chap, I forget his name—or come to think of it she doubted if Calvin had anything to do with it, but never mind. We went to music-box factories, etc., etc., etc. Miss Dwight is looking charming. I tell you, Edgecomb, there are just two classes of girls nowadays. One class has brains but no heart. The other sort has no brains to speak of, and no heart in the place where the heart ought to grow. She (the blue-eyed one) cares for fun, dress, operas, excitement, her own perverse way, and to torment men. She has not led me on, I confess that.—Her heart, or the organ doing duty for one, must be the size and hardness of a pebble. She told me she would "cut her own grandmother if the old lady was not stylish." She has an idea that I am a "struggling young lawyer." She

told me a girl was a fool to marry a poor man, and as for her she "hated poverty." She imposes on Miss Bilton, who adores her. She is making a goose of an old fellow the Doctor picked up in Germany—but why should I scold about her like an old gossip? Only, Edgecomb, sometimes I fancy she is at the core a true, tender little woman if one really knew her. One day I saw her out for a walk, Mrs. Thorne had stopped by a window, Miss Coxe strolled on. I was in a shop, but I saw her. She wore a new light gown and pretty, delicate gloves. A little wretch of a girl came along with a pitcher; she slipped on something, fell in the mud at a crossing, and cut her hand on the broken pitcher. Nobody looked at her until Dorothy Coxe (is n't it a prim little Quakerish name for such a creature?)—she picked up the young one, comforted her as lovingly as if the mud was not clinging to her, gave her some silver, and before Mrs. Thorne came up, had hustled her into a cake shop to send her off with cheeks, hands, and kerchief full of sweet stuff. She coo-ed away to that small brat in a voice to make a man—well, grin, I say, if it pleases you! *This* time I was not fooling. She has treated me as no girl ever would treat a man that she cared a straw for. I never wish to see her again, unless it is to show her I am alive and happy. I may stay in Chamonix for that purpose until you all get here.

Yours,

HEATH.

Hotel Couttet.

For some reason Edgecomb pondered over this not at all profound epistle without the superior smile

Heath had permitted him in the existing condition of affairs. Perhaps a fellow-feeling does make us wondrous kind; at any rate, back of the "flightiness" Heath used in telling his tale, there was an impression given of a sort that made Edgecomb sorry for him. He had not "been fooling." He had really begun to love this "blue-eyed one," and it was going hard with him. Everything he professed to believe of her was nonsense, except the sincerity of his naïve "fancy" that she was a "true, tender little woman."

Things looked rather discouraging for Heath after all, because by his own testimony Miss Coxe had not flirted with him; she seemed merely to have snubbed him; and under "such circumstance he has been a donkey to attempt to rush things as he has done," was Edgecomb's verdict.

He continued his lunch, musing if it might not be well to take warning by Heath and avoid any possibility of himself coming to grief in the same way. Still the cases were quite unlike, Miss Dwight had never been repellent, only quietly reserved. He would never lose his head and risk matters on one stake, when it were wiser to make haste slowly. He decided to pay a visit to the near hotel at an early hour of the evening. They would not (the ladies) be indoors earlier; then it occurred to him that possibly he might join them for some excursion if he made an earlier visit. He went to his room to

put away a parcel of Jura specimens, then took his hat and hastened into the street. He was a few paces from the Hotel de la Paix when he saw descending the broad stairs Mrs. Thorne, Miss Dwight, and Miss Coxe. A moment more and he was giving and receiving cordial greetings.

“You have started for an afternoon of sight-seeing, Mrs. Thorne?”

“Yes, we are going to see Ferney, that is if the not very lucid directions of the porter enable me to find the place.”

“You do not think you need a protector?” he suggested.

“Are there brigands on the road? A protector—no—a companion (if you mean yourself) we will welcome to make our number even.”

“Of course you need a fourth one, social triangles are awkward.” Edgecomb promptly added, “at least on a pavement. Three cannot well go abreast, and one does not want to be either advance guard or rear.”

He led the way with Mrs. Thorne, the girls so near that without apparent effort he could see Harriet as she serenely gazed into shop windows.

“I hope you like Geneva better than my friend Heath did. He seems to have shaken its dust off in something of a hurry.”

“I like it extremely,” replied Mrs. Thorne. “New Geneva is bright, wide-awake, but *the* Geneva I sup-

pose one only sees in history. Its history is so much bigger than itself that there is no way of looking at it by ordinary measurements."

"Yes, somebody has said that from Bonnivard's and Calvin's time to ours much of the world's progress has come around by the way of Geneva."

"Turn here toward Place Cornavin. I hope, Miss Dwight, you have noted one singularity of Geneva: the archways of the older parts. I followed the thoroughfares under them one day, and the picturesque squalor was peculiar of its kind. I never saw such courts in any other city."

"I had a peep in one such place," said Harriet, "and left Dolly to fill in details." It struck Edgecomb that Dolly was particularly radiant, though he could not resolve that radiancy into its component elements. She could have told him that one of these elements was a Parisian street-suit from the finest modiste's in the city, and another was a hat with forget-me-nots the color of those eyes that had been poor Heath's undoing. Edgecomb felt an uncommon degree of sympathy for Heath, and supposed it was the letter working. He noticed for the first time in Dolly the innocent little-girl look that Tom always saw. He hoped Mrs. Thorne was kind and petted her—just as if Dolly all her life long had not had the cream off every milk-pan in her vicinity skimmed for her benefit. She never asked for it; people liked to earn her smiling, dimpled surprise.

They had not much time for conversation after that, because of a crowd of Genevese who were also going Ferney-way to some rural fête or other. At the gate of the grounds Mr. Edgecomb said: "The chateau is in charge of the most uncivil boor it was ever my luck to encounter (I have been out here before), but really there is nothing noteworthy to see within doors."

They rang the bell which summoned the glum individual mentioned. He glanced at them separately and collectively before admitting them into the rooms once occupied by Voltaire—the rooms where he received the messengers of kings and emperors, whence he issued his satires, and tried to worry his Geneva neighbors out of their religion and their democratic manners. Dolly went about, her little nose scornfully upturned as she surveyed the faded furnishings.

"His niece worked the seats of these chairs, did she? Well, they are nothing remarkable! I declare, Harriet, if here is not an arrangement made to contain his heart. I never supposed he had any."

"It is dreary; let us go out in the garden; that looks pleasant," said Harriet.

They bestowed a quite sufficient fee on the scowler, who critically regarded it before he informed them they might breathe the garden air, but were in no case to seat themselves on the old benches, or to pluck leaf or blossom. The garden was in terraces,

and pretty in a certain quaint, artificial way. The view beyond it was more attractive, and to see this they lingered.

“The place means nothing to me,” said Kate. “It is not that I am ignorant of Voltaire’s life or works; it may be that, being a woman, I cannot judge him as impartially as a man might. I think—” She was speaking to Edgecomb, but turning, she perceived he had not heard. His eyes were fixed on Harriet Dwight, who stood apart from them, and apparently more indifferent than usual to her surroundings.

Mrs. Thorne suddenly realized that nobody there present cared a pin about her ideas of Voltaire, unless it might be Dolly, who had only a vague impression that a fearfully wicked man of that name once existed. She had fixed his date about the time that Columbus flourished, until she saw the chair bottoms which his niece made. They could not have been quite so antique.

After that they wandered about until it was time to go back to the city, and Kate was very thoughtful. Dolly Coxe and Mr. Edgecomb were the ones who talked most until they were again in Geneva.

“I don’t think that expedition paid,” said Dolly. “I wish we had taken a sail.”

“In a day or two,” returned Mrs. Thorne, “we will sail slowly about the lake, stopping at various points as long as we like.”

Mr. Edgecomb was a little disappointed. He had hoped they would be going soon to Chamonix.

As they approached the hotels he turned to Harriet, saying: "It is just the hour when the light on the mountains is best. If Mrs. Thorne will permit me we will walk a little farther and I will show you the view I spoke of."

"Certainly, we agreed to go in to dinner rather later than usual," said Mrs. Thorne, "for the others have gone with Dr. Bruce to Coppet." At the corner she added: "You will excuse me. I am tired enough to rest now."

Dolly, by a quick movement, paired off with her chaperon, who, not quite at ease, went into the hotel.

"Oh, don't look worried," said Dolly, wickedly: "You can surely trust her to a young clergyman. Besides, he did it so neatly we had to dismiss ourselves."

"I am,—surprised, Dolly," said Kate, pausing midway up the wide stairs, and gazing appealingly at her companion.

"So am I—rather surprised. I thought he would fall in love with *me*. I expected it."

"How long have you known this?"

"Since he met us this noon or met her, for he did not see any one else;"

"I am surprised," repeated Kate.

That evening the Doctor and his sister were discussing various business matters in a quiet nook of

the then deserted reading-room. They decided the questions under consideration, changed one or two things in their plans for the next few days, and then Kate said: "Tom! I never was more astonished in my life than to-day. I find a love affair progressing, or at least beginning, under my very eyes."

Tom laughed with sudden keen delight, saying tauntingly: "Very sharp-sighted you have been. I saw it long ago. I have wondered where your wits were."

"You saw it! Tom, you simply fib when you say that. How could you?"

"*How?* Why, if ever I saw a person who had fallen in love head over heels—who was just soaked, saturated with love, it is that fellow—Heath,"

"*Heath?*" cried Kate with a little gasp. "For pity's sake whom has Heath fallen in love with?"

It was Tom's turn to look amazed.

"You do not mean to say, Kate, that you have not known Dolly Coxe was driving Heath half wild with her airs and graces and tantrums? He came to Geneva as beaming and rosy as a schoolboy with a first prize; he went away looking like a Wall Street broker after a panic that has swamped his last dollar."

Kate gazed at the newspapers on the table as if she were mentally quoting, "Can such things be and overcome us like a summer cloud?" After a pause she murmured, "I thought they had barely become acquainted with our girls."

“Oh, Kate, did you mean some one else than Heath?”

“I meant that Mr. Edgecomb shows very marked pleasure in Miss Dwight’s companionship.”

Tom whistled softly before he suggested: “Did I not understand there were no followers allowed when Mrs. Thorne acted as guide, philosopher, and friend to her little flock?”

“I do not see how I could have guarded against this—Oh, I do! It all comes, Tom, of your undertaking to conduct them in London. You lost them and this is the direct result of your carelessness.”

“Nonsense, the fellows saw the girls on the steamer. You ought to be thankful that you know them to be gentlemen and sure to satisfy the old folks at home in case they please the girls themselves. Is Miss Dwight inclined towards the clergy? Dolly, I must say, has been positively vicious to Heath. I was sorry for him the day we went over the music-box factory. He was showing her a monkey with an internal apparatus constructed to make him jump and chatter. Heath made a laughing speech and I did not hear Dolly’s answer. I saw the gleam in her eye and know it was a wicked speech, for Heath turned pale and then red. He did not speak to her again while we were together.”

“He is probably very disagreeable to her. I do not see why. I like him, but, Tom, what shall I do?”

“Do—why nothing. Why need you worry? The girls are giving no trouble, and the young chaps must look out for their own peace of mind.”

“It complicates matters or I fear it will. I shall start around the lake day after to-morrow.”

The next day Harriet Dwight was quite eager to accompany Mrs. Thorne to banks, ticket-offices, and shops. That lady thought it possible she had some confidences to impart. On the contrary, she talked of everything impersonal, was by turns very animated and again demurely silent. She expressed herself delighted to leave Geneva on the morrow, whereupon Mrs. Thorne decided that it was all the young men who were making trouble, while her girls were glad to be free from annoyance.

They did not see Mr. Edgecomb until evening when he met them all in the *salon*. He learned their plans and casually mentioned later that he was going to Chamonix in the morning.

“We will get along there in a few days,” said Tom. Soon after the young man bade them good-night. He shook hands American fashion, taking Harriet’s last.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

UNDER MONT BLANC.

THE friendship between Edgecomb and Heath was not so one-sided as Heath pretended to believe. True, Edgecomb talked less, dropped often into a didactic tone, but always listened to Heath's confidences of what sort soever. For several days after they met at Chamonix no mention was made of any of Mrs. Thorne's party. They climbed together to the *Grands Mulets*; they made shorter excursions in the neighborhood. One night they came on a New Haven family known to them both: the Brewsters—father, mother, and three daughters. Rose, the eldest, was a beauty of the finest Irish type, blue eyes, black hair, rosy lips forever apart to let out some gay sally. She claimed Heath at once as an old "chum," and it came out that they learned their letters in the same school, before the days of kindergarten.

"Oh, I am so glad to see one of my own countrymen to whom I can talk. How the Englishmen swarm here, and are they not funny with the gauze

veils around their hats?" exclaimed this Rose, leaving Edgecomb to her parents or her little sisters, as he elected, while she chatted gaily to Heath.

"We are going down the road here to a little bazaar, where I saw some pretty trifles that I want to buy; won't you come with us?" she asked of the by no means reluctant young men. It was quite dark before they reached the bazaar; for Brewster, *père* was constantly making detours for various inquisitive purposes. The bazaar was a cheerful little shop, full of carved wood salad-forks, alpenstocks, rock crystals, chamois horns, and rosaries. While his companion turned over stamp boxes, inkstands, and the utterly useless picturesque little Swiss clocks. Heath asked her the home news. She rattled it glibly off—weddings, engagements, deaths, and lesser items of gossip. By and by Heath made bold enough to teasingly inquire after a friend of his—and hers. Rose justified her name as she whispered: "It was announced (our engagement) the week I sailed. John is coming over to do England with us next month."

She was a beauty, and never looked prettier than with that especially tender light in her bright eyes. Heath was warmly congratulating her in the low tone suitable for such confidences, when a voice startled him: Dolly Coxe's voice, saying to the shopman: "Let me see that Venetian paper-weight."

Almost in the same moment Mrs. Bushby, her

sole companion, discovered Mr. Edgecomb. She was such a cordial little body that she greeted him heartily, then quite flew at Heath, and introductions seemed inevitable. The Brewsters were not reserved people, and everybody was in the best of spirits. Dolly bestowed a bow on Heath before she fell to giving Edgecomb animated accounts of their experiences since she saw him last. She was unusually rapid in her processes, buying the paper-weight at twice its value, and hurrying Mrs. Bushby away from a green quartz beetle that lady had almost decided to take. She shot one glance at the beautiful Miss Brewster that must have photographed her every feature on the blank tablets of Dolly's memory; then she vanished into the outer starlight.

The Brewsters chanced to be also at the Hotel Couttet. All strolled homeward together. Edgecomb and Heath left their new-found friends at the door, and turned to the garden. The moon was just coming up over a ridge, the air was soft and full of flower perfume from the terraces in bloom.

They were seated for a smoke on one of the rustic sofas, when Edgecomb asked in what struck Heath as a decidedly sympathetic tone: "Did she refuse you out and out, Heath?"

"No; that is the most galling thing about it all. She let me tell her in a dozen ways how I felt toward her, and laughed it all away, as if I were a boy in a pinafore teasing for jam."

“Never gave you a word of encouragement?”

“That is what I cannot tell, even to myself; she never said anything very encouraging; but several times I could swear that she liked me to love her.”

“That may merely prove her a coquette,” commented Edgecomb, adding slowly: “I surprised a look on Miss Dorothy’s countenance to-night that gave me a fancy I pass on to you for what it is worth.”

“A look!” echoed Heath.

“Yes, you know she has a very child-like expression, even if she be a flirtatious little minx. As you introduced the jam simile, I will put it that she looked like a child who discovers another child dipping into her especial jam-pot. Miss Brewster was bestowing seraphic smiles on you when she stepped from behind a stuffed bear and discovered you.”

“Yes, she—Rose was telling me of her engagement to John Allen, my first chum at college—So she looked at me? I tell you what, Edgecomb, you *have* given me a point. I have been too meek a victim. Where are they staying?”

“Our friends? At the Royal, I think; for Mrs. Bushby spoke of the statue of de Saussure in front. They came this noon.”

Heath smoked in silence a while, then casting away the end of his cigar, chuckled at some idea.

“Look here, Heath, you always go too fast; I think I see what you intend; but unless you are careful she will either see directly through your scheme or

else decide that you do not know your own mind a week at a time."

"Don't you fear, old fellow. I will put in my very best work the next few days; no marked neglect, but quiet, indifferent civility. I will happen to be wherever Miss Brewster is. It may possibly occur to Miss Dolly that hearts are caught in the rebound. I will go slowly, don't you fear!"

When Dolly came back that night from the bazaar she did not speak of seeing the young men, but Mrs. Bushby saved her the trouble, relating the encounter with full details.

Mrs. Thorne glanced at Harriet Dwight to see if she showed any special interest, but Harriet was quietly studying a book of Alpine pictures she had taken from the centre table. Closing it soon and saying she was tired, she went away to her own room. There, when the door was locked after the officious maid, Harriet drew from her pocket a letter. The two candles stood on a low mantelpiece under an ancient engraving of Saint Cecilia. The corners of the envelope looked as if the inclosure had been taken out several times. This time as Harriet drew near the lights to read, Saint Cecilia might have looked over her shoulder; perhaps she did look, in which case she read something like this:

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I have known you for two years to-day, and I knew you just as well the first day as I know you now, or is it that

I know you just as little now as I knew you then? Did our evening together on the jetty at Geneva make me any different to you, merely because I put love into words—and was punished with serious looks in disapproving eyes? What a beautiful place to tell you in it was! I shall always see the widening blue shadows of the Juras, the slanting sunshine beginning to redden Mt. Blanc for the “after-glow,” and those pure white swans making a voyage of discovery from Rousseau’s island, and fluttering and splashing the water with their wings till they made for themselves showers of golden drops. Why was it wrong to love you in words, that you must needs scold? I was not scolded when your attention was on the cloud-banner streaming from *Les Voirons*, and mine was not, but my immunity then may have been because I began talking volubly about the Vaudois when you drew your kissed hand away. What will you do with me? keep me always, or see if you can make my love fade like the rosecolor on those mountains? If you did the latter you would always find it again the next evening, because you are a part of my sense of immortality, else how could I have been patient for two years? You knew last winter that I loved you—at least your eyes said you did one evening when I was in the little town where I first met you. That night you were embroidering yellow chrysanthemums on a large square of white cloth. There was a Christmas look in your eyes and an expression of content about your mouth. The light fell softly on your hair, your white neck and hands, and the yellow chrysanthemums. I looked at you until I saw all the world beyond you—all the beauty and goodness of it. Did

you not see, when you glanced up that night, that I wanted it all—you in it and it all in you? You are a sensible young person, and you do not like me to look upon you as a thing of forms and colors? Love is not love when it is wise, for then it is philosophy.

When I had left you on board the steamboat I had just time to secure my place on the banquette of the Chamonix diligence, and its wheels and those of the *Helvetie* turned at the same moment. I do not know how long Mrs. Thorne will keep you at the head of the lake. The pretty pensions down on the shore between Lausanne and Villeneuve are very tempting resting-places, where the flowing of one day into the next makes havoc with pre-arranged itineraries.

You have a *penchant* for communing with water-falls. The cascade of Arpenaz to the left of the road will delight you. The spray takes the form of veiled maidens who glide out from the rock two by two, like sister Undines. Is it wrong to imagine you in a white veil? Why? But I could not imagine you an Undine; you are too warm and sweet and living and quiet.

When I woke the morning after my arrival at Chamonix, and looked out of the window at steep ranks of fir-trees and gleaming white summits, I bethought me it was Sunday, and that I must find sermons in stones. Heath preferred to rest and read. After breakfast I walked up the road to Les Praz, meeting peasant women all dressed in black silk, with tight bodice and lace caps. I turned off, and crossed the moraine to the source of the Arveyron, then made a hand-and-knee ascent up the boulders at the edge of the ice to the path

leading to the Chapeau. I crossed the Mer de Glace, intending to return to the hotel by the bridge, lower down ; but, as I was leaving the ice, several small heaps of stones caught my eye, and in looking for their sermons I discovered they were the clue by which the guides conduct parties to the Jardin. Following clues is a temptation too great for human nature to resist. I therefore saw the Mer de Glace as it should be seen—in utter solitude. It was dusk when I got back to the Montanvert, and I proved, as I have often done before, how much I lack your sedate habit of “considering.” To save going on zigzags, I took short cuts till the zigzags ceased, and descended the rest of the way over slippery, moss-covered bowlders, swinging down on the branches of firs. When I reached Les Praz I was a fit subject for arnica and commiseration. My clothes were wet with Arveyron water, my hands were torn, and both ankles were out of repair. I was taken in and comforted by a sweet, old motherly peasant in that hamlet, Goody Couttet. The moral of this sermon in stones is that I need you to look after me on Sundays. I would take care of you on week days. Must I ask for you seven times, or seven times seven times ?

J. E. EDGECOMB.

When Harriet finished reading she lifted her eyes to the ancient, pictured Saint, and was suddenly annoyed, as if by an impertinent presence. She was not aware that her grey eyes were as dark as purple pansies ; that a flame was kindling behind her delicate cheeks, but she quickly extinguished the not

very brilliant candles, crossed to the open window and stood in the semi-darkness. The night was warm, but she shivered and trembled, a great fear, a great, sweet surprise filling her heart. The fear said, "You cannot believe in this sudden, mystic illumination of life; this light that never was on land or sea." The surprise held her startled, questioning, like a forlorn child straying through a wood and coming on fairy-land. To understand her mood one must have known Harriet since she herself had been a child. She wondered if anywhere nowadays another such little girl existed; if she were anywhere in the flesh, Harriet would have gone a long way to say kindly, "Poor little one!" and she would have looked at her through tears. She would have known this was a child worshipping beauty and thinking herself ugly; her vanity not suffering because of the fact, but something always sadly telling her that only loveliness called out love. By some quaint reasoning the little Harriet had early felt that her lot would be more self-satisfying the more nearly she personally escaped observation, the more secret she kept her mental processes. Her aunt confided to neighbors, when Harriet was not present, that the little girl was "very set" but never "troublesome." When Harriet was happy she hid in the long grass and enjoyed the sun, the birds and the grasshoppers; when she was reflective she crawled under a huge, claw-legged centre table and evolved theories of the

universe that would have stiffened her aunt's hair erect. When she was hurt in mind or body this child Spartan fled to the remotest corner of the hay-loft, and firmly shutting her lips, felt herself defeated if a tear escaped the fast winking lids and trickled over the wee child-woman's cheeks. Her first permanent impression was of belonging to nobody, of being lonesome in a very roomy sort of a world. When the child grew into the maiden she discovered that part of this world belonged to her, all the good, satisfying part that lies between book covers. She took possession and felt herself enriched. To people (children and the poor excepted) she paid little attention in the growing years. They were like chairs about a room whose frescoed walls were all that she had come to see; chairs only differed in being common wood or satin draped. Next came her college life, which, bringing her into contact with other young girls, had been good for her. Now this experience of a lover—she had thought of the lovers of these other girls, critically gauged their mental capacities, perhaps wondered wherein lay their charming qualities. So the unexpected had happened! It came in the person of Edgecomb. When she met him in the little New England town, at the time spoken of in his letter, she had not a thought of the attraction she had for him; but she ceased to wonder about those other girls; of a potential lover not objectionable she was able to conceive.

Then she came abroad and things were as they were.

Standing this night in the starlight, the sound of the rapid rushing river near, the lights twinkling in the little village, Harriet was afraid of herself, afraid of Edgecomb, most of all afraid of the future. Here was an experience she could not carry into hiding, and effacing herself make it as if non-existent. Another human being, with a strong personality, blocked the way under the table or to the hayloft. He would be answered. If she were to let herself go—to love him! The knowlege of what it would mean to her made her tremble. If she loved as she might love, there would be little else in life—nothing that did not begin or end in her love. If when that was true she found a man's love—this man's, good for once only?—she had heard of such things. Not that she distrusted Edgecomb himself so much, but she distrusted the Harriet whom he loved. Perhaps that Harriet was an illusion of his own making; so, when he did not find her, the real Harriet would lose the love given a fancy. But if the truth was in this letter, "You are a part of my sense of immortality"—Edgecomb had written—then—she was to see him the next day! Her heart gave a great leap. She was glad the candles were out; no ascetic saint could see her face.

The next morning there was a merry set of people before the Hotel Couttet. All the Brewsters were

out, and to the delight of the younger ones, so were four or five donkeys being led about by their boys, who were on the look-out for business. The two younger Brewsters were charming little girls of nine and twelve. They began to tease their father to start at once for the Mer de Glace or on some other expedition. He refused, decidedly insisting he wanted to "keep still one day to find out how it seemed." Heath, finding the little girls' chief desire was to ride the donkeys, proposed that they mount them and go about the village. They teased Rose to join them, and she readily agreed when Heath offered to walk at her side. They started off with much fun and laughter. Heath directed their course, taking them in front of the Hotel Royal. Greatly to his satisfaction he met Mrs. Thorne and some of her ladies. Miss Brewster's donkey was trying to kick his companions; Heath devoted himself to calming Miss Rose, who assured him she was not a bit afraid. So busy was he that he passed Miss Coxe without appearing aware of the fact. Next the children wanted their pictures taken on the donkeys, and Heath found himself in demand as general overseer. As the day passed the father of this lively family found it very agreeable to press Heath into service for the time being, while he himself took a little vacation from active duty. The young man therefore had no trouble in carrying out his scheme that day and for days to come.

Mrs. Thorne's young people soon became acquainted with the young Brewsters, then all joined forces for various excursions. Mrs. Thorne was not a good climber, but the Pollocks, with great good-nature, came to her help, acting as chaperons whenever her strength gave out. Mrs. Florida Pollock was an imposing figure in the landscape, as wrapt in a dark mackintosh she strode along, climbing rocks with not ungraceful ease. Her mother, having no superfluous flesh, kept pace with Florida, both enduring tramps as long and hard as the youngest among them.

One day all went to the Flégère together, and this was Edgecomb's first talk with Harriet since leaving Geneva. Some rode part of the way on mules, a few walked, and not long after starting all were more or less separated, according to their own speed or that of the mules. Tom, the Pollocks, Harriet and Edgecomb were finally in one group. Edgecomb made himself so agreeable as a guide, able to show them all the points along the way about which any could ask questions, that he was in demand for the first hour. At a certain stage in the upward march they met a lad with a basket of Alpine roses and edelweis.

The Pollocks began at once to bargain for stiff little bunches of them glued to cardboard. They kept Tom to prevent the youth from demanding an unrighteous sum for his wares.

“Are n't they wonderful, Doctor?” cried Flori, picking out the very wooliest of the edelweis.

“Yes,” assented the Doctor, “only somebody took all the poetry out of them for me by calling them ‘a neat little flower in a flannel petticoat.’”

“Well, the poor things need to dress warm in this climate,” said the old lady.

“You do not want flowers gummed fast to cards,” whispered Edgecomb to Harriet. “I shall find you a bunch of fresh Alpine roses before you leave Chamonix. Let us go on a little way ahead of the others.”

After climbing the steep approach to the Flégère they walked along a grassy ledge faced with stunted trees, and sat down to look at the chain of Mont Blanc across the valley while waiting for Doctor Tom and the Pollocks.

“How much whiter and higher the peaks seem through these pine boughs than when the eye takes them all in with the greater sky beyond,” said Harriet.

“That is the one virtue of limitation, which is otherwise, as Emerson calls it, the only sin. Cæsar is greater seen through the pierced robe held up to the rabble by Antony than he was at the feast of Lupercal, refusing the crown. It is always best to look at the greater through the less, and at the less either in or from the greater. Nobility is brought out and made impressive only by contrast with some-

thing that might be called noble by another contrast with something below it."

"What is the last rugged mountain this side of Mont Blanc?" she asked.

"The Aiguille du Midi."

"And the next one?"

"The Aiguille de Blaitière, and behind it the Crepon."

"They look as if sculptured over with mural figures, like an Egyptian temple. There is even a hawk-faced god."

"Osiris or Horus, somewhat timorous at that altitude, and flattened close to the rock, with his legs braced against the spurs of the mountain."

"And behind him," she added, "are three kings and a troop of slaves, all clinging to the precipice."

"Which peak do you think most beautiful?"

"The rocky one on the left of the glacier."

"The Aiguille du Dru?—the manliest mountain in the Alps, with the exception of that hoary old patriarch, the Matterhorn. Both look lonesome."

"The Dru is not alone; he has a companion."

"That is Madame the Aiguille Verte, a thousand feet higher than her husband."

"They were exquisite early this morning, with the sun shining through their wreaths of cloud."

Edgecomb was not looking at the Aiguille Verte, but at Harriet. The climb had deepened the glow in her cheeks; she had removed her gloves, and was

arranging a bunch of bluebells gathered on the way up, and watching a bee rummaging in one with the peculiar thoroughness of Swiss and Savoyard bees, which seem to know that they have to compete with imported honey. When Harriet looked up and met Edgecomb's eyes, she turned away her face and said gravely :

“ We must be only friends ; you must not look at me like that.”

“ Of course we must be friends,” answered Edgecomb, picking up a fallen bluebell, “ just as we always have been. Only friends ? Your honest ‘ no ’ in Geneva, when I asked you to marry me, did not make me unhappy. Your love as my friend is sweeter than any other love could be, except what you might add to it ; and if I choose to look at love through your friendship I do but follow my own principle of looking at the greater through the less.”

“ Love and friendship are distinct. You have my friendship, but I do not wish you to look at me as you did just then, or to speak and write to me as you have done, as if you went on expecting more than I can give. I want to do what is right, and you cannot judge. How can I listen without seeming to assent to your hoping for what you may never have ? ”

“ Do you not feel that you are more my friend than you were a year ago ?—that your friendship was not something given complete ? ”

"Yes," she slowly answered.

"Why should I not believe it will be more in another year?"

"Perhaps it will. Why are you not content with it?"

"I am," he said, smiling on her. "You know how dear it is to me, and I think of your love to come as opening in it some day, like a flower, to the surprise of both. I would rather be loved like that than in any other way, and not be sure until I knew."

Harriet was silent. "Not be sure until he knew," she thought, remembering her emotion a few nights before. "And I—how can I know until I feel sure?"

It was evident to the young man watching the sedate resolution of her mouth that he would have to wait longer.

Dr. Tom and the Pollocks coming by, Harriet and Edgecomb joined them, and Harriet puzzled Doctor Tom by seeming to prefer his society to that of any of his companions.

. . . . It was Sunday. All of Mrs. Thorne's flock but Dorothy had gone decorously to church in the morning, and in the afternoon were reading, writing letters, or roaming about the grounds. Dolly was perverse; she retired to the summer-house, but was no sooner joined by Miss Bilton with her journal than she departed homeward.

"Going to take a nap?" asked the Doctor, meeting her in the hall.

“No; I was going to be pious and peaceable in the summer-house, but Billy arrived. I saw the whole of Coleridge’s *Hymn to Mont Blanc* in her eye. I escaped as quick as I could.”

Tom laughed, leaving her to her own devices. She espied two elderly English spinsters just then descending the stairs, with respectability in every fold of their precise garments, and prayer-books in their hands.

“I will go to afternoon service myself, and I will go alone,” thought Dolly. “It is four o’clock; in this little hamlet, the streets full of folks going to that English church, I can be perfectly safe.”

She rushed to her room, put on her newest hat, the Geneva “creation”; seized gloves and handkerchief; then, with amazing forethought, wrote on a card “I have gone to church,” leaving it pinned on her table-cover, in plain sight.

It was a pleasant walk to the pretty English church, for a while along a way thronged with tourists. Few, however, proved to be going where she was, but ahead she saw the English ladies moving steadily churchward. Service had begun, yet almost all the seats were vacant. She went half-way up the aisle before she seated herself, glancing about to see if any acquaintance might be present. Dolly felt vaguely penitent for undefined sins, and desirous to be good; but when such an attack came on she did not care to have persons she knew within reach

of her. They might take advantage of her state of mind. There was a prayer-book in the seat, and Dolly, with the best intentions, tried to find the place, but, not being an Episcopalian, she kept opening to the marriage service and the baptism of infants. Finally she gave up the attempt, but listened attentively; that is she did so until turning her eyes toward the near wall she discovered just above her a window. It was not large, but it framed Mont Blanc; just that in the glorious afternoon sunshine; above it infinite depths of blue heaven. A sudden shiver of awe touched with delight ran over the girl; the keen realization that she had come to church for a freak and caught a vision of glory in this place. It seemed to her she had not seen Mont Blanc at all before. She had regarded it as a huge ice-hill, on which you could see through a telescope climbers tied together like flies along a black sewing silk. She forgot the preacher, did not care who was in the church, saw only the mountain of glory; but no sermon would have been better for her. Dolly's soul—she had one—shook itself free from nonsense and frippery—thought real thoughts, worshipped. She never would forget that holy hour even if when it was too much for her spiritually as the ice glitter became for her eyes; then she came back into the little church, and quite sincerely confessed her sins with the rest of the congregation.

By and by the service ended. The clergyman

retired into a side room, while the few people went out after fewer salutations. They were for the most part strangers to one another. Dolly wore a black lace gown. When she stood to pass out of the seat, a fold of it slid into a crack at the end of the pew, holding her fast. Her first twitch to free it jerked it into instead of out of the trap. She looked for help, but all the people were so remote she must call out loud, a sexton was not in sight. She was tugging stoutly at the lace, about resolved to tear herself free if she ruined one of her prettiest gowns, when working his way toward her came Heath.

“For once say you are glad to see me.”

“Yes, I am—if you can be of any use. I seem to have joined this church against my consent.”

“Poor old pew,” said Heath. “I don’t wonder you hate to have her leave you. I would hold on to her if I were in your place.”

“I can tear myself free if you think it caught firmly,” remarked Miss Coxe, quite icily.

Heath expostulated, insisting it was a very simple matter if she would not be impatient. He took out his pocket knife, inserted the large blade in the crack, and with a glance out of the door now and then, took all the time he dared to take before the gown was loose. He was then rewarded by the knowledge that they would walk alone, at least half the way home. The church had been set quite outside the village. There was a pretty path from the door,

just a beaten footway across a wide meadow, and then a straggling lane of a street. They had gone but a few steps when Dolly cried out: "Oh, see the little wild flowers in the grass!"

"Lovely, let us get some," returned Heath, glad of another pretence to loiter; but Dolly kept making fair progress onward, plucking blossoms as she went with a grace Heath found very distracting. There were nestling in the short green turf pink-tipped daisies, forget-me-nots, with quantities of pale, yellow, and white violets. Heath picked only one sort, so that by and by he had a fine cluster; then he said: "See, Miss Coxe, how beautifully these blue flowers match those in your hat!"

He held them out to her, well knowing their name.

"No, thanks, I have picked a lot of those myself, put them in your button-hole."

"Change with me?"

"Mine are mixed flowers. I like mine better."

"You don't want to give me a forget-me-not; penurious creature you."

"I am not. See here! I will give you half my little violets, with the German significance included."

Heath grasped the flowers, almost the little kid glove, but that was too quick and slippery.

"What did you say about——"

"This little violet—the Germans call *kleine Stiefmutter*, or little step-mother. It is a cute name for

them. If you *will* be sentimental press it in your letter of credit and always think of me as your step-mother. I would like that dearly," said Dolly.

"We are not German, these violets sprang from French soil inimical to everything German. I don't want a step-mother. No, violets like these mean heart's-ease; you are adorable to bestow that on me. The big ones are almost pansies, and pansies are thoughts. I delight to know you give them also to me."

"It is Sunday, and I was feeling spiritually minded until you appeared; besides I ran away, so I must hurry home or Mrs. Thorne will worry."

"So was I, Miss Coxe, in anything but an everyday mood as I sat back there in the church. This seemed to me the most beautiful day of my life, or rather I felt it easily could be that if the girl I love with all my heart could only love me. I know you are not hard-hearted—I saw your face when you turned it toward the window to-day; you were thinking good sweet thoughts. Why are you so hard to me? Will you not at least, Dorothy, tell me if you *like* me?"

She looked at the flowers in her hand, at those along the path, at the great white mount—almost against her will at the earnest face, the pleading eyes so near her own, then she admitted: "Yes, I like you, but I wish you would not tease me, I did not come abroad to—to—for that. I wish to see all

the objects of interest and to improve my mind. I have done very little of it since you appeared."

"Have n't kept up that diary?"

"No" (severely).

"Might put me in" (tenderly).

"I spoke of objects of interest. Here we are in the street. I think you might better go on and leave me. It is not the thing at all for us to be meandering around with no chaperon; just go on very fast—No! good gracious, don't! See those horrible cows tossing their heads," and cowardly Dolly grasped his arm, pale and panic-stricken at four happy little beasts coming down the lane shaking their musical bells.

"Don't be afraid. I have no doubt some of them may be vicious," fibbed Heath, who knew that the gentle creatures usually slept under the roof and made part of the family of their owners. "I won't let one of them come near you."

He took excessively good care of her as long as she would permit, wishing with all his heart that every cow in Chamonix would be just then taking her walk abroad.

"Before we come where people are, Miss Coxe, I want to show you my mother's photograph, a new one I received yesterday." He drew from his coat a flat case holding several pictures, mostly of little nieces. Dolly had seen them before. In running them over in haste to find his mother's picture he

did not notice (but Dolly did) a photograph of Rose Brewster. She had given her own and her sisters' to him the day before, but he had forgotten the fact.

Dorothy said some very civil things about his mother, but so dryly that the warm-hearted fellow felt suddenly depressed, reflecting: "It is no use; if she cared anything about me she would have been interested; she really acted bored."

Truly, Dolly had left her goodness back with the prayer-books and the wild flowers. She grew positively hateful before they reached her hotel. Observing that he wore a particularly well-fitting London coat, she commiserated him on the wrinkle that was somewhere on his back. Driven to desperation, he told her he intended to leave Chamonix on the morrow.

"Do you, indeed; then it is not likely we shall see you again. We are about decided to go no farther into Italy than Venice. The Doctor does not think it advisable this time of year. We may go from Venice to Paris and stay there. It is uncertain where we will go. Good-bye; remember I would have been your step-mother if you wished it."

"Oh, Miss Coxe, do be my step-mother, grandmother—any relation with 'my' before it, do."

"Stop, stop, here comes Mrs. Pollock," and bidding him a formal good-afternoon, Miss Coxe disappeared into the hotel.

Heath was rather more miserable than ever before

since he first saw Miss Dorothy Coxe. All his scheming had come to naught. Miss Coxe had sought Miss Brewster's acquaintance, had declared her charming. Miss Brewster had actually several times given him the slip and joined Dolly for a walk or talk from which he was excluded. Was ever a man so tantalized?

Doctor Bruce was predestinated to live and to die a bachelor. No one who knew him well ever disputed that fact. He had never been "disappointed," he was far from hard-hearted; but all the sentiment he possessed found full exercise in vicarious love-making. He dearly loved to find out every heart affection that fell under his suspicions, whether of the sort taken note of by medical authorities or more occult varieties. His patients were always confiding in him and (if Kate could believe him) he had often been a guardian angel in difficulties of parents and children; persuading obstinate papas or influencing foolish young people. One thing was certain: he had boundless curiosity and not too great sensitiveness about meddling with other people's affairs.

The last evening of his stay in Chamonix Mrs. Thorne sat with him in the little balcony of her room, watching the sunset. At least Kate was watching, but finally noticed her brother smiling down on some one in the plaza below.

"There is that Hudson down there. He arrived

yesterday, has 'seen it all,' and goes on to-morrow the same way we go. He is a clever old fellow; we had a long talk to-day, and really I felt like helping the poor man."

"Why, I thought you said that he had means."

"Oh, he has money enough; he wants a wife."

Kate turned toward Mont Blanc with scorn ineffable.

"You see, before he sailed he had not had time to be lonesome after the funeral, and he was in a New York boarding-house just full of widows and spinsters, the most of them 'too willing,' as he said."

"Tom! a widower's vanity is vaster than—Mont Blanc itself."

"I grant you! but boarding-house-femininity often is of the 'Barkis' order. When he got over here, he says, he began to want some one to care whether he enjoyed himself or not."

"Sweetly unselfish, is n't he?"

"Yes, that is only one side of the desire to give somebody else pleasure; then he says he sees people delighted with buying pictures, bric-a-brac, and trash from every bazaar, while he has nobody to buy the stuff for. Yes, he offered the biggest wooden bear in Berne and a Swiss *châlet* to a pretty American girl who was hankering for both, and he seemed surprised that her mother was indignant enough to scalp him. He loses his clothes in the wash, and he

calculates the holes in his stockings and the minus buttons on his shirts cost him ten francs a week."

"Truly, he confided in you like a man and a brother."

"That he did, I have not begun to tell you all he said."

"Don't try! I will imagine the rest. However, Tom, I have no doubt that you led him on like the very old gossip that you are."

"Softly, now, he needed no encouragement. The fact is he startled me by one request; but I agreed to find something out for him."

Tom began forthwith to laugh, swallowed a whiff of tobacco smoke and made such an ado that Kate said: "Do step in, Tom, until you can control yourself, people below are looking to see what ails you."

Wiping his eyes, the Doctor threw away his cigar and proceeded. "Mr. Hudson asked me (in confidence of course or I should not have come right away to tell) if my sister 'had any idea of changing her condition'—and—and—well, if I thought it would do 'later on' for him to 'sort of lead up to that idea.' I believe those were his exact words."

Mrs. Thorne looked at her brother Thomas. He began to feel an icy chill from the Alps penetrating to his very bones.

"I supposed my brother was too much of a gentleman to discuss his sister with any—any—travelling tramp."

“Oh, come now, that is hard, Kate, hard on me and harder on poor old Hudson. He means one hundred cents to the dollar every time. Of course I was not going to have you tormented. I told him your heart was buried in the grave or that you were engaged to the governor of one of our biggest States, I forget which, for I thought of both excuses simultaneously; anyway he saw it was no use, so he never will think of it again. In fact, right away he asked if Mrs. Bushby was a ‘pleasant person.’”

“You can tell him,” said Kate, still frigid, “that Mrs. Bushby told me that she has a large pension which enables her to live at her ease, and she never will ‘lose it for any man’ unless she loses her wits first.”

“Really, now,” said Tom, meditatively, “sometimes I fancied little Bushby was uncommonly agreeable to *me*.”

“What I said about the vanity of widowers applies to all men everywhere.”

“Humph! Thanks—narrowing down for Hudson, is n’t it? Misses Dwight and Coxe counted out. There is Miss Bilton, nobody can deny that he was very much struck by her the first time they met.”

Kate refused to smile.

“I will drop this subject once for all, Mrs. Thorne, when I have made one remark. I consider it a beautiful work of Christian charity to befriend a lonely countryman desolate in a strange land. You

are without compassion. It will be a righteous judgment if every maid and madam in your care becomes engaged before she sees again her native shores.'

Mrs. Thorne remarked on the afterglow.

After a good deal of amiable discussion it was decided that Edgecomb, Heath, and the Doctor should start on foot from Chamonix across the Tête Noire. The younger men intended to walk the whole way to Martigny, starting early in the morning. Tom thought it likely that his enthusiasm and his legs would give out about midway, in which case he would join himself to the ladies who, starting about eight in carriages, could easily pick him up on the road. Mrs. Thorne's plans for her route after leaving Martigny were clearly defined; those of the young men were not at all clear even to themselves. Had either of them received encouragement to become literally "followers" of the ladies, Mrs. Thorne's prejudices might have been overborne; as it was, Mr. Edgecomb was inclined to go at once to Venice. Heath faced to a different point of the compass every half hour.

The morning came, a clear, delicious dawning, the mountains violet in shade, pricked out in gold against the sky lines, all the valley odorous with sweet clover, quiet except for the kine with their not unmusical bells. It was three hours later when our young people were saying good-bye to chance ac-

quaintances, giving last glances at Mont Blanc through the hotel telescope, buying from the head waiter photographs of the Saussure monument. In return he was bestowing on each a dainty bouquet of pinks or pansies when the word came to start. Two clumsy but comfortable carriages carried the seven; with each carriage was a talkative driver, whose French being half English was pronounced by Florida remarkably "pure." She sat near her driver, extracting many very entertaining facts from him, which she generously shared with her mother, Harriet, and Bertha. For a long way every one was looking backward, not forward, all loth to know Mont Blanc was visible and they were turned from it, but after a while simpler sights amused: the meadows green as velvet, the profusion of wild flowers, the women with bundles of hay covering heads and shoulders, children chasing them with boiled eggs and home-made lace, goats climbing rocks—everything entertained them that summer day. They met few vehicles—a fact they rejoiced in later when to pass a carriage would have been an exciting experience. The driver told them that two wagon loads of Cook's excursionists had gone along an hour earlier. It is a principle no driver from Chamonix or Martigny ever violates, that wherever horses can walk without sliding down hill of their own accord they should be made to walk. To go slowly is to go safely, to give time to see the scenery,

and it is more agreeable to beast and *cocher*. Pierre Froissard also explained to Florida that *la Blanche*, as he called one fat little animal, "was not so much stout as she had the air." After an hour or more Harriet and Bertha begged Pierre to let them get out for a walk. He gladly consented, so the two girls were soon finding delight at every step, while they easily kept the rest in sight, or often passed them. The road ran through lonely valleys shut in with lofty pine-crowned hills, or through ravines, over rude bridges, along precipices. Below roared and dashed in maddest fury the Black Water, belying its name, for it was either foam-white, green, or the color of *café-au-lait*.

"If I had made Switzerland," said Harriet, with the beautiful irreverence of a child, "I should have thought only about getting the biggest rocks, the wildest torrents; I might have gotten Mont Blanc all right. What I should have forgotten would have been these maiden-hair ferns and these fairy-like mosses behind the bowlders. It had to be God for all Switzerland."

"Yes," said Bertha, understanding her perfectly. She always understood if one got far enough from common affairs, sometimes from common-sense. By and by Bertha walked ahead, leaving Harriet alone. It was about high noon, yet the light was solemnly green, for no direct sunrays seemed able to penetrate the sombre solitude. The road was just a

ledge above the vast gorge below, in whose depths rushed the mad river, a ledge under rocks whose top she could not distinguish. A few steps farther and she passed under an archway, to come out and stand forgetful of everything but the grandeur about her. Bertha came hurrying back to tell her Mrs. Thorne feared she would slip over the bank or get too tired. She advised her to get into the carriage again until they reached the Hotel de la Tête Noire, where they would stop for dinner. It was but a short time before they drew up at the pretty little inn and overflowed into the dining-room, giving vent to joyful exclamations at sight of the white-spread table already boasting strawberries, white bread, honey, and glass pitchers of milk, while various odors in the air suggested fragrant coffee and hot viands.

"If we did not pass the gentlemen they must be here," said Mrs. Bushby.

"Not of necessity," replied Kate; "for they meant to strike off at some point for special views. They told me to be at ease even if they did not appear in Martigny for twenty-four hours after our arrival. There are several attractive places along here and nothing dangerous; but I will ask."

A pleasant old woman sat in the homelike office knitting. She had no English but "My daughter she comes."

She came; a handsome woman with a coffee-pot and a smile of welcome. She glanced at each, hesi-

tated a second between Mrs. Bushby and Mrs. Thorne, then advancing to Kate, gave her a note. While Kate read it, the woman answered the rapid questions of the others.

DEAR KATE :

Don't be in the least frightened by any stories they may tell you here or later on the road. Heath has had a fall, he is pretty well scratched and shaken—not a bone broken. It happened a mile or so back ; fortunately one of Cook's carriages came along. It was only half filled, so we put Heath in. He has some sprains and strains that give him a faint turn now and then ; but he felt better after a cup of strong coffee. I, being about walked out, will go on with him in this conveyance of Cook's. He might want some coddling on the road. It is just as well, for I will have your rooms engaged, and dinner ordered at Hotel du Mont Blanc. Edgecomb has gone off on a side issue. He fell into a chat with an Englishman from Oxford, professor of something Edgecomb seemed to be up in ; so they have started for the Gorge du Trient together. Don't meddle with the roast beef—you have n't the muscle for the contest, and the beef has ; the chicken is good.

Au reservoir and avoirdupois.

TOM.

Kate read the note aloud, all but the reference to the roast beef and the burlesque French, then listened to the woman's account. She said the young man was very white, a place was cut on his head.

It bled so freely she feared at first that he was badly injured. He tried to make a "leetle fun" when they helped him into the house, then he "fainted quite."

Everybody was loud in expressions of sympathy, except Dolly. She had listened intently to the Doctor's note. Now she slipped lightly back of the landlady, picked a strawberry out of the dish, and heartlessly proposed: "Let us hurry up dinner, and do our mourning between the courses. He is only 'cracked around the corners,' as the darkey said when he fell out of the hen-roost, while we are simply famished."

The woman took the hint, vanished to return with a lunch; then, while the horses were resting, the ladies walked about or climbed a wooden observatory near the hotel, from which they could have a fine view of the grand gorge of the Eau Noire.

Mrs. Thorne and Bertha were the last to linger there.

"Is it far to the gorges where Mr. Edgecomb has gone?" asked Bertha.

"Not over a half hour's walk."

"Mrs. Thorne, do you know what the word 'alder-liefest' means?"

Kate looked puzzled, saying: "I ought to know, it sounds like old German,—no, Saxon."

"It is Saxon," interrupted Bertha, eagerly. "I heard Mr. Edgecomb use the word and I looked in

a dictionary. *Alder* was Saxon for 'all'—*liefest* for 'dearest.' There was a reference to Shakespeare, 2 Henry VI., i., i., showing its use."

"You are interested in the study of words."

"Yes;" and then Bertha honestly added: "I wanted to know what he meant."

"Did *he* apply the word to you?"

"No, he did not mean me to hear it; he said it to——"

"There, Bertha, wait—if you had found a key of his to a private drawer, would you come to ask me to examine its contents with you? When Mr. Edgecomb talks Saxon to *you* I will listen to confidences, but not before. There, don't feel hurt. Let us go down and see them bring the horses around."

A few moments before they were ready to start Mr. Edgecomb appeared. Every one was startled by his unfamiliar aspect, but he began at once a laughing explanation. His head was crowned by a big sunburned straw hat, adorned with a red ribbon, a rent in his coat starting between his shoulders went half way down his back, while all the rest of his attire was more or less a picture of "looped and windowed raggedness."

"'Pity the sorrows of a poor old man'—above all things, Miss Coxe, don't laugh at this hat. I had to pay an exorbitant price to a stableman for it, and I flattered myself you would say it gave me a brigandish air. I hope," he said, turning to Mrs. Thorne,

“that you were not alarmed by anything you heard.”

At that every one rushed at him with questions, and would only be satisfied with full details. He told them of the morning, how all enjoyed it. Heath and he had been, toward noon, in advance of the Doctor and an Englishman who left Chamonix with them. Heath had been in one of his extravagant moods. In fact, Edgecomb had enticed him ahead because of the information (falsely so called) which he was viciously imparting to the learned but confiding Oxford professor, who strove to inform himself on American colleges.

After a while in the wildest part of the way Heath discovered a curious formation of rock a little way down the precipices overhanging the gorge, and he declared his intention of seeing it closer. Edgecomb regretted later that he had promptly called him “foolhardy,” forgetting that in some moods reason was the one thing that irritated Heath. To reach the rocks looked impossible. Once down there was a ledge that might be firm or might not, and below, a horrible descent into rapids like those of Niagara—at least in turmoil.

“Heath took off his coat, carefully made his way perhaps four feet down, then slid, tore up bushes—”

Edgecomb gasped a little in his narration and merely added :

“Well, he found the peculiar formation and

stopped short of the abyss. He was knocked half senseless."

A chorus of groans went around, then a double row of questions.

Of the rest Edgecomb made brief mention. Cook's carriage came along, there were several men in it, and the driver had ropes with him. They had a nice bit of work laid out, but managed it. By the time the Doctor arrived Heath was on the grass ready for him.

Edgecomb made no explanation for his own rent condition beyond saying that his hat went overboard in the excitement.

Mrs. Thorne brought out a paper of pins and offered to bind up his wounds as best she could. Dolly, whose cheeks had lost color for the last five minutes, regained her vivacity sufficiently to tell him that he had never looked so well in his life. The sun had burned his cheeks, the wind had roughened his hair, under the big hat his eyes glowed intent and soft—perhaps from surprising the look in Harriet's. She knew why he blushed like a girl when Dolly said: "Even now I don't see how Mr. Heath was pulled up again; but no doubt Cook's conveyance drove right after him. I have heard they have coupons for all sorts of extra trips. Come on, carriages are ready."

"Mrs. Thorne," asked Edgecomb, "may I be the fourth in the carriage that has only three besides

the driver? I think I will go on to Martigny; some of the way I shall walk."

Mrs. Thorne readily consented. Edgecomb was very complacent when Bertha, Dolly, and Mrs. Bushby fell to him as companions. In fact, he was pleased, for he began to be concerned to know, for Heath's sake, if this bewitching Dolly was worth the trouble she was making his friend. He would ask her to walk with him; perhaps he might understand her if Heath could not. At least he could tell if she were silly and shallow; such a wife would be the ruin of Heath. Edgecomb had found out that day that he cared more than he knew for Heath. For a time Dolly talked unmitigated nonsense; then piqued a little when Edgecomb turned to Bertha, she was silent; tiring of that she showed herself the shrewd, good little American girl she certainly was. They jogged along for a few hours, then Edgecomb proposed a walk. Mrs. Bushby preferred to stay in the carriage, but Bertha and Dorothy joined him. Sometimes they kept together; just as often each was seeking a fern or flower or some point of view unsought by the others.

Once when Dolly was alone with Bertha she remarked *apropos* of nothing whatever: "I have written to that Methodist minister. I did it yesterday."

"Why—why!" gasped Bertha. "Another letter in—another handwriting."

“Oh, that is all right. I confessed I made you write the first. I told him I found Mont Blanc very big and cold and white, but knew it would never do to merely say so, and therefore I urged you to emotionate (is there such a word? There ought to be) for me. You see I meant to convince him he was mistaken in me. I told him he must answer your letter, that really the circumstances required it, because you were very intellectual, pious, and full to the brim with proper emotion (you are, you know); so, Bertha, see you keep up the correspondence. Having begun it, *as you have*, it would be rude to drop it.”

The tone Miss Coxe employed was so calmly virtuous that Miss Bilton's blushing surprise gave way to a bewildered impression that she was under some sort of obligation to assume Miss Coxe's "misfit" in the shape of a lover. She trotted meekly along. Fate took her silence for consent. Far over the ocean an equally meek young parson awaited a missive from his blue-eyed mistress. All would be well in time. Dolly would be the one to decide his future, but his wife-to-be would have brown eyes.

“See,” exclaimed Dolly, softly, “what a bunch of wild flowers Mr. Edgecomb has! He is going ahead now to ask Mrs. Thorne and Harriet to walk. We must get back in the carriage, Billy, we are tired.”

“Why, I am not! I could walk every step of the way.”

“Get right into that carriage. I know when we are expected to be tired, if you don't,” and Dolly coolly propelled the reluctant Bertha toward the carriage and mounted into it after her.

Mr. Edgecomb was close by the other carriage—doing exactly as Dolly suspected.

“Yes, it is a very lovely time now for a walk,” said Mrs. Thorne, “and we are going to have a fine sunset.”

She motioned Harriet to get out first, then spent a moment or two in search of a book in which she pressed wild flowers.

Mr. Edgecomb gave her several rare ones he had gathered, then, the clasp of her book getting out of order, she bade them go on while she fastened it. He wondered if she guessed how he wanted that sunset hour alone with Harriet, and blessed her, believing she knew. True, she was never far away, while the voices from the carriage came softly back to them; but no perfect solitude could have been sweeter. The awful grandeur of the scenery was passed now. They were amid more serenely beautiful scenes. Meadows and vineyards were bathed in yellow light, birds twittered in old orchards; afar off they saw the brown walls of La Batiaz, and then below, the little town.

There was such tender beauty about the hour that even old Mrs. Pollock said to Florida: “Let us get out and walk too.”

“No we won’t,” returned Florida. “What is the use of walking when we have paid to ride; besides, we are wearing out our shoes fast enough as it is.”

The old lady assented. It was pleasant enough anywhere; then she remarked: “How handsome Mr. Edgecomb looks in that queer old hat.”

“Oh, he looks well enough; but he is not half as sharp as he thinks he is. He tries to be polite to Harriet and Bertha, but any one can see he is dreadfully smitten with Dolly.”

“Well, really, she is a pleasant girl, Flori. She has hunted my spectacles and done several nice little things for me.”

“She is well enough,” again said Florida, becoming interested in the approach to Martigny.

Every one had enjoyed the day, but now that it was nearly ended, each was ready for the cosy old hotel, with its substantial comforts.

True to his word, Tom had engaged pleasant rooms for them, and appeared as glad to see them as if they had been separated for a month.

Early the next morning our friends started by train to Brieg, thence over the Simplon to Domo d’Ossola, and so on to the Italian lakes. Before starting, the Doctor paid Heath a visit, returning to the ladies with Heath’s own message that the lovers of art would find him interesting, for he was like most of the finest statuary—“imperfectly restored.” The Doctor added that Heath would stay quiet at

least a week, while Edgecomb would remain near as long as he might need him. For a few days Heath suffered a good deal, but bore pain without a complaint, working it off in fun, songs, and excess of nonsense. Getting better he became alternately melancholy and cross. Edgecomb was unusually patient with him, knowing that all his discomfort was not physical. He tried to interest him in some hitherto unthought-of line of travel, but Heath, enthusiastic one hour, was unbearably contrary the next. Finally forbearance ceased to be a virtue. Edgecomb packed his valise and started southward. If the season remained cool he proposed to spend some time in the north of Italy. The day he left Heath the Brewsters came over the Tête Noire, finding Heath able to walk about once more. When he bade Edgecomb good-bye he was half persuaded to keep with the Brewsters, who after going to Zermatt were to go back to Paris. A week later he sent a line to Edgecomb from Pisa. He had decided to try rushing about in advanced tourist fashion; was going on to Rome, Naples, and if later Vesuvius belched up his boots it would be because the momentum acquired on the way had carried him into the crater. It was a brief letter, but long enough to show that the writer was getting mentally demoralized. A few weeks earlier, if he had thus written, Edgecomb might have sent him in return a dose of strong common-sense that would have made him

heartily mad, whatever its after-effect might have been. Things had gone too far with him now for severe measures. Sense minus sympathy would cast him into the depths of despondency. In the few days they had been together in Martigny Heath had scarcely mentioned Dorothy Coxe's name, but it was plainly evident to Edgecomb that he was fully possessed by a passion of love for the girl as earnest and enduring as his nature permitted. He was impetuous and strong-willed, fervid and often contradictory, but not weak or vacillating.

At first Edgecomb was tempted to tell him how very pale Dolly grew that day on the Tête Noire when he told of Heath's accident; still that was no sure sign she cared for him beyond the agitation any woman would feel when a life was in peril. He himself believed Dolly might be won if the right influences could be brought to bear on her. Too much coaxing was not best; a rebuff now and then, wholesome neglect, and even a "snub" might be efficacious. Heath was not cool enough for such methods. Quite too early in the day he had let her ladyship see that she was altogether perfect in his eyes. At this point Edgecomb fell into a reverie on the characteristics of another maiden. How truthful she was, because she was only concerned to know herself aright! There was strong feeling and enthusiasm under her calm self-possession, and it was just this capacity for passion and generous indignation—this

will and strength veiled under a certain sweet austerity that by force of contrast appealed to his imagination, stirred his affections. She might not show him her heart at once, notwithstanding that sincerity, but she was infinitely too high-minded to tease, to torment, to affect an indifference she did not feel. But so was not this Dorothy. Therefore what should he write to Heath ; for, queerly enough, now-a-days he could not, as of old, let Heath's letters go unnoticed. He had far more faith in Harriet than Heath could have in Dorothy, but as yet he was not sure that his chances of success in winning his own sweet-heart were more certain than Heath's. He resolved at last to write to his friend his ideas of the theory and practice of love-making as he understood it. He went about so doing, saying to himself : " I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching."

VERONA, August 5th.

MY DEAR HEATH :

There is a Spanish print which represents two men in bed ; one is supposed to be a sick man, and the other his disease. Beside the bed stands the doctor, blind-folded, laying about him vigorously with a thick stick. Such are we who condole with spirits like yours. Perchance I shall hit your illness if I belabor you. The first qualification of a lover is faith, the second is more faith, the third more faith. His other qualifications are infer-

ences from these. Must not the beauty of that in which you have faith be perfect to you? Can you think of perfect beauty as other than good? Then let Miss Dorothy seem always beautiful and good to you—and, yes, if you love her, you must be willing to give her your life, and if you do that, by what right do you rebel if she gives you pain? If she were to ask you, with her blue eyes down-cast, if you would die for her, how quickly would you answer that you would! Yet, when she seems to ask with blue eyes sarcastic if you can bear being tormented a little by the person you pretend to love more than any one else, you must needs grow bitter and mope?

What has become of my merry, heart-whole Heath? Let Miss Dorothy be the centre of your world if you like; yet believe it the part of wisdom to remember there are a thousand pursuits and duties, a thousand attractions and enjoyments elsewhere, and if your mind were under its own control, it would know how to move among them and make use of them. A love that shuts out all other attachments is hurtful. It dispossesses and impoverishes you. On the contrary, the infallible test of any right feeling is that it leads in one way or other to all other feelings that are right. Love is the central power that should bring all other powers sooner or later along with it. Let Miss Dorothy's frowns make your heart glow, as blows do the iron on an anvil. You should not repine. Love not purified by pain is not comparable to love that is. And you should so far rejoice in your tribulations as to bear them with patience. The trouble with you is that you do not yet love Miss Dorothy perfectly, or you would be satisfied to have her what she is. I

feel encouraged for you by what has reduced you to despair. If she cared nothing for you she would be very gentle, as an intimation that she would prefer to be your sister.

The road turns and winds every time a height is to be ascended. These sweet troubles are the sign of ascent. A woman likes to feel antagonisms toward her lover, as a man likes to think contradictions to his beloved. He should not try to make her feel—she will feel herself. By teasing for emotions, how can you get them? Are they like pennies in a purse? A woman becomes tired of a man who will not give liberty to her feelings, just as a man becomes tired of a woman who constrains his thoughts too narrowly. If I did not know you had a foundation of optimism I should doubt your case, but I know that in due time you will come back to Miss Dorothy in a mood worthy of receiving smiles in place of frowns. The essential of a lasting relation is magnanimity, and looking over present disaster to things hoped for though unseen. The angry, resentful, and sullen only accomplish their own further injury.

I doubt if a man was ever injured in his courtship by the strength of his love and the greatness of his want, but always by the slightest distrust or fear—these set him back by so far as he yields to them, and he advances by so far as he overcomes them. Let me hear good of you in Venice. Address *poste restante*.

EDGECOMB.

August 18th.

DEAR EDGECOMB :

I have taken the pledge—not to write you any more letters ; but, like most converts from intemperance in any form, I proceed to break it just to let you know I appreciate your last. Only it is no use. You know these shrines where the blind and the halt repair, decide they are cured, hang up their crutches as proof and take themselves off Heaven knows how ! I bet they ache in spite of their marvellous cures ! Well, I am cured after that fashion. I went in spirit to the shrine of Venus. I had been getting about over rough places on crutches called false hopes for some time past. I hung them up forever to decorate the aforesaid shrine, then I travelled off, as gaily as any other poor wretch ever went. We will say that ends the fret and fever. Edgcomb, you don't know how to travel, poking about like a snail. The tourist parties are the ones with the real go in them. I have been travelling in competition with one since I left Milan ; a run-away engine is nothing to it. Let me think—four days ago I had not seen Rome, but got there one night. Next morning " Party " was at breakfast. " Head " said it was to be rather an off-day with them, some " members " feeling tired. I asked permission to join them, so we sauntered out to S. Pietro and the Vaticano and Castello S. Angelo, and the Colosseum and the Arco di Settimo Severo and Arco di Constantino, the Foro Romano, and half a dozen other places before we had an interval for luncheon. Really the most magnificent kaleidoscopic exercise of mind and body I ever " assisted at," as the French say. After lunch, while digestion was

going on, we went on, too, could not be left behind anyway. We took a few palaces, if I remember aright, the Barberini, Borghese, Colonna, Sciarra, Doria, Farnese, Rospigliosi, and by that time of day the Chieses were open (though I believe the plural of Italian churches does not end with "s." We learn much Italian as we go). We drove—I forgot to say that we drive through, past, over, and around all the aforesaid objects—we drove to S. Maria del Popolo, S. M. (read Santa Maria every time) degli Angeli, S. M. dell' Anima, S. M. in Araceli, S. M. della Concezione, S. M. sopra Minerva, S. M. della Pace, S. M. in Trastevere, and a lot of masculine sanctuaries to even up things, Saint Peters and Pauls and Pantoleos ; then we had an interval for dinner. The second day we settled down to steady work, and in the evening I went about looking at the fountains. I did not drop a penny in the fountain of Trevi to insure my coming again to Rome. What is the use of being pig-gish? Besides what will be left for me to see? If now one had a bright, interested companion with whom to go about in this glorious moonlight. Confound it! How I forget my crutches hung up in the shrine, but I know those miraculously cured wretches did feel twinges of pain afterwards.

At the end of the third day the "Head" said we had done Rome and done it thoroughly, so we came on to Naples by night, and (interval for breakfast) started out bright and early to see Naples. I think another party must have preceded us, for a more weary lot of cab horses I never saw than those about the streets. However, as soon as one dropped dead we sprang into another

cab, and by noon, having seen Naples, were ready for Pompeii. What singular ideas of upholstery and tapestry these Italians have! All the way to Pompeii they had hung out on their clothes-lines and spread on the ground curtains and carpets of macaroni. You have been to Pompeii. To-morrow we take a run up to Vesuvius. It is rather active. I have been sitting by the bay out at the Posilipo to-night watching the eruptions. After dark it seemed as if a red toy-balloon issued from the mountain top, slowly inflated (though always a toy at this distance), then was drawn down again. Every third or fourth time it more resembled a big red tomato bursting violently from some internal force. This is realistic, not poetic, but I am developing the practical part of my nature nowadays, I have been too romantic in the past. It is all nonsense about Italy being too hot for tourists. I walk evenings when it gets cool, sit around in ruins, do all the imprudent things one is warned not to do, and—what on earth shall I do next? It is not the time for Egypt, or I would hunt up another "Party." Edgecomb, if I should fall into Vesuvius or—you have my mother's address. What are you doing? Sometimes I think I might better go home, hang out my sign, and go to practising law if I am ever going to do it. How long shall you stay on this side?

Yours,

HEATH.

VENICE, August 21st.

MY DEAR HEATH:

If you went in spirit to the shrine of Venus you should have behaved like Sir Scudamore in the *Færie Queene*, when he carried off Amoret from that shrine. He pre-

served his calm because he needed it. He did not rush out of the temple and consort with any excursion parties when Amoret hung back. It is not enough to say to Miss Dorothy that you love her; you must show it with patience and long-suffering, and let her feel it. First find some peace in loving, without too much regard to the instant return of your love, and in that peace be reasonably hopeful. Miss Dorothy may love you on short acquaintance, as you do her; but she will not confess it as you would have her, but only under one of two conditions—either you must await her good pleasure, enduring long months of torment, to have your truth and steadfast qualities tested, or something must happen to sweep away all lesser feelings and shock love into full possession of her. You know that this is true. You would not have her different.

When you finish your gyrations about Italy, come to Venice and wait here under my wing until Mrs. Thorne's party arrives. You are desperate in folly. How will it advance your prospects to get an Italian fever? Perhaps, but, well, who can tell how another's fate-thread is spun? I grow uneasy about you, and feel that you would be better in every way here with me. Poor boy! I have a most sensible fellow-feeling with you in every one of your troubled thoughts, though you would not suspect it of me. . . . Yours,

EDGECOMB.

“Yes, Katherine mine,” said Tom, in a tone of affectionate complacency (his post-prandial tone). “I

think this place answers all requirements of an earthly paradise."

"Is it not beautiful!" returned Kate. They were sitting together on the piazza of the Grand Hotel at Pallanza. It was early evening after a gorgeous sunset that had left its glow over all the sky. A waning moon was mirrored in Lake Maggiore, and between the piazza and the lake was only a garden of chestnut, fig, olive, and orange trees. Plainly visible in the far north were the peaks of the Simplon.

"There is a resident clergyman in the house," said Tom, "a clever little man, he showed me all about before dinner, played the organ in the chapel for me and allowed me to contribute to his pet missionary project."

"I wish they needed a resident physician," said Kate, "then you and I would forsake our native land."

"Not for many months, if there were no Browning Clubs, afternoon teas, and coffee-house temperance jinks for you."

"How the time goes; our trip will be over soon now."

"Kate you are inconsistent."

"In what way?"

Tom puffed out a volume of smoke before he drawlingly replied. "I made you out a list of people available for this tour; you would none of them. Has (Tom looked over his shoulder before

he murmured Florida's name)—proved to be all your fancy painted her?"

"I am glad you asked me that, for I knew you had been thinking I had made a mistake, but I have not. You do not know her yet. I took her for her own sake; she never has had a chance to grow broad and sweet. I knew her in school, she is as old as I am; her father was a miser, her mother a shrew. She married a little Miss Nancy of a man. She did not think he knew enough to be wicked, but he learned how and mortified her bitterly before he went underground. She is not really miserly or ill-natured, she only talks sometimes the language of the people who have been always next to her. You, again, note her mistakes, for she is not well educated. What you have not seen is abundantly existent in her: sound judgment, real principle, a hunger to be more to herself and to others. She is growing. She has stopped pretending to like everything labelled with a first prize, and is finding out beauty that is beautiful to her. She envied the girls at first—Harriet for her college education, Dolly for her youth. Lately she realizes (for she said so to me) that each girl is most admirable for her genuineness. Mrs. Pollock will go home more sincere, with thoughts of her own. I believed these months would help her, and I am glad she came with us."

"I never really disliked her. She says many shrewd things."

At that moment Miss Coxe appeared, coming through the long window from the reading-room. She too was enthusiastic in her liking for Pallanza.

“It is so unlike any place we have been in yet, and there are charming people here. We were all going for a row on the lake after dinner, but we stopped in the drawing-room and have been there ever since. There is an American lady, with three daughters, nice girls; an English father, mother, and two boys. We have had great fun with these young fellows—one is fifteen, one seventeen. They say American girls ‘are no end jolly, don’t you know?’ I said ‘Su-ah-ly änd English läds ar’ n’t hääf bääd.’”

“They are well-bred young fellows. I noticed them at dinner,” said Kate.

“Yes, and the English clergyman’s wife is a dear little lady, like Miss Molly in Mrs. Gaskell’s *Cranford*. Oh, I came out here to ask you if there were not exceptions to your rules, Mrs. Thorne? You told us once that we would never think of dancing with strangers evenings in foreign hotel parlors, as the manner of some fast American girls is. We never would want to do it under ordinary circumstances, but they are beginning to dance in there. It is great fun. The clergyman is dancing with the youngest American girl. The English boys with the clergyman’s wife and the girls’ mother; the other partners are all ladies. Can’t we join that giddy throng?”

"You may, dear," laughed Kate.

"Then I will lead old Mrs. Pollock out. She looks longingly at the floor. Oh, no, Doctor Bruce, you come!"

"I dance! Why, daughter, I don't know a horn-pipe from a clog-dance, or what the illiterate lady called an 'old-fashioned minaret.'"

"He shall help you, Dolly," said Kate, leading the way to the long parlor, where the little band of English-speaking people were visiting together as if it were a reunited family party. "The lady out of the book," as Dolly called the wife of the parson, was vainly trying to play a tune to which they could dance. Kate took her place, and for the next half hour all was fun and laughter.

During a pause in the merriment, consequent on Doctor Tom's having cut a caper unknown to any of the younger dancers, a new-comer appeared—Mr. Hudson.

He shook everybody's hand with great cordiality, at least that of every one he had ever met before. Dolly Coxe at once asked him to dance with her. He could not undertake such a limbering-up process of his heavy legs on so short notice, but he was happy only to sit where he could watch the gyrations of his country people.

When all were weary of exercise the young people wandered out in the grounds. Dolly Coxe had privately whispered to the Doctor, who had consented

to hunt up a man to row Harriet, Bertha, herself, and Doctor Bruce out on the lake in the moonlight. Kate disappeared. Mr. Hudson looked about, and, espying Mrs. Florida, said cheerfully: "Your husband did not come across with you?"

Mrs. Pollock, in a semi-pensive tone, gave him to understand that her spouse's days of travel were over, at least in this sublunar sphere.

"Indeed! What a lonesome feeling it is roaming around foreign parts alone, aint it?" he exclaimed, in a cheerful yet not unfeeling tone. But then you aint alone; husband taken away some time since?"

"Six years ago."

"Yours dead, too, madam?"

Mrs. Bushby was startled. She was about to go out on the piazza, but waited to reply: "The General has been dead ten years."

"My loss is more recent. Wife Alvira was an excellent woman. I do not think, however, she would have enjoyed Europe; the cooking would have been very trying to her. Did you ever see such horrible rolls as those at Domo d'Ossola? They broke the filling out of two of my teeth. Shall we walk out in the moonlight?"

They sauntered across the piazza, down among the flowers, and on toward the water.

"You have been to Rome, have you not?" asked Florida.

"Yes; it is changing fast. There are streets

there that would do credit to an American city, and the Quirinal Hotel is prime. I never had a classical education, so I did not go into the antiquities much. Genoa is the city for me. I never appreciated sculpture until I saw it there in the Campo Santo. It beats the antique all hollow—the kind you see there; pure white marble, no legs and arms missing, and talk about finish! Why, there is one group there, a family gathered about a dying man,—you never imagined anything so worked out, every button on the men's coats, the ladies' back hair, even the hem on the sheet under the dying father's chin. I could stand before a thing like that, and seem to take it in."

"Did you see any work of Michael Angelo?" asked Florida.

"Not there. I saw his Moses. He hewed him out as big as Goliath, and gave him horns like an ox; yet, I believe, in his day Michael Angelo had quite a reputation."

"Are you going back to Italy now?" asked Mrs. Bushby.

"I guess I will run down to Venice. You see, I went to Turin by the Mont Cenis Tunnel, down by Genoa and Pisa to Rome, then to Milan and up to Switzerland before, leaving out Venice."

From this point Mr. Hudson, who had no desire to talk wholly of himself, drew out by a series of direct questions a great deal of information in regard

to the life and affairs of his companions. His interest in his fellow-creatures surpassed any felt in art, history, or travel.

They reached the little pier just as the Doctor and the girls were being rowed away by a stout oarsman.

“Oh, how lovely!” cried Florida.

“Will you ladies go if I can find another man?” asked their escort, and while they were assenting the man appeared. The boat was at hand already.

Mrs. Pollock, Senior, went to bed. Mrs. Thorne sat with the English clergyman on the piazza, talking of Ruskin, while for more than an hour her widows and maidens floated over the moonlit waters. Tom grew so sentimental that Bertha never afterwards could be persuaded that his was not the fate of one who had loved and lost in days gone by. Mr. Hudson gave particulars of an attack of rheumatism that he once experienced, with details as to how it differed from another attack suffered by Mrs. Hudson now no more. He asked each widow present in the boat to what church she belonged, and if she played the piano and was fond of housekeeping. By and by both boats came to shore, and their occupants returned to the piazza, where Mr. Hudson summoned a waiter and ordered lemon ices, cake, and fruit for everybody there assembled.

“He can't be stingy,” whispered Florida to Mrs. Bushby, “for he must know it would count up to three or four francs each.”

The waiter who returned with the feast, after arranging it on two small iron tables, looked about until he saw Harriet leaning over the piazza rail to gather a rose. He plucked her two that were out of her reach and then respectfully gave her a letter. She dropped it into her pocket, not caring to explain that the American mail had not arrived.

When the banquet ended she slipped away to her room. Its great window opened to the northwest, framing a picture of ice mountains, dark islands, and the lake. She did not as usual stand by the casement, but making a light opened her letter, post-marked "Venezia." She held it unread a moment, then drawing another from her pocket, re-read that first, as if to see if both were in the same musical key. The first ran thus :

It is not often you gratify me with a letter. The one I received to-day was not meant to be an encouraging one, and I suppose I ought to be subdued by it. But it does not seem to me that the life of a despondent lover is an attractive or desirable one. Venice and thoughts that you are coming to Venice are too satisfactory for me to feel anything but gladness. Do not expect me to listen to "must nots" and "cannots," when you do not add to them the words, "because I do not love you." You must kill hope at the root.

Last winter your conscience was all aroused by the intuitive discovery (for I did not say it) that I loved you, and you put an end to all our pleasant times together,

letting me surmise what reason I could, which was far from the right one. The pain of those days was great, but I thank you for the lessons I learned in them. It was like coming out of a black cloud, that April day, when we went with the sugar party to the maple woods and were left by our companions to set the table in the cabin while they hunted for arbutus buds. When our work was done and we sat before the door, somehow I felt I was forgiven by that discouraged gesture of your pretty hands, both raised to smoothe your hair and then dropped into your lap. After that day you ceased to think about being loved, as children cease to think about the sun in their interest in what it shines upon; and so I won—you would have me think a friend, and I would think, my beautiful wife. Sweet, why do you resist now when all your heart consents?

J. E. E.

“Surely, this is a man not easily discouraged,” reflected the fair reader, and then knew in her soul that she had lost earnestness in her efforts to that end—knew that if this last letter should not prove like unto the other she would be sorry.

Dearest, love in the abstract is just the simple state of mind which results from the infinite possession of pure happiness, and love in this world is happy in degree.

Venice—when you come—is to cease being the Venice of history and become my Venice. Because here you are to give me that simple state of mind in which all is to be mine, whether life or death, or things present or

things to come—all are to be mine, because you are to be mine. That is what your delicious hesitation on the Tête Noire meant that ended in a smile when I examined your palm and made such bold prophecies of your future as my gypsy costume of rags justified. And you so far relented as to consent to some of the gypsy stories with your eyes. I want it in words that I may have you. I do not think a woman ever had so sweet a voice as yours with which to promise.

I have been learning the art of the gondoliers and the meaning of their whistles, cries and signs, and can now send my black boat through the narrow canals without danger of collision with my picturesque brothers. Yesterday I devoted the afternoon to my new vocation. The day was perfect, cloudless, yet cool, with a slight breeze. I propelled my craft past the last piles and out upon the calm Adriatic, till Venice became hazy and mystic in the distance—a fairy city; and then I stood swaying slowly with the oar and watched the green dimples on the face of the deep, and the curling flight of three white sea-gulls that came from *Weissnichtwo* and stayed in *Weissnichtwo* and went *ich weiss nicht wo*, and then I sat down and dreamed of you till my head seemed to be on your breast, and the breeze became your hand on my cheek, and the waves moments, and the sea time, and the sky eternity.

Heath says I have too much money for a minister. Perhaps he is right, but not too much for a minister and you. You shall leave blessings wherever we go. Half my happiness will be in having you, and half in having, seeing, feeling good you do. You remember last winter in your little New England village when we were reading

Kalidasa's dramas and studying the Hindoo gods, you wished for a library there because I had to go so often to Boston for books. You shall build one and I will stock it with them, so that your culture club can develop citizens equal to those of Concord.

You are not going home with Mrs. Thorne. You are going with me to India to study the gods in their own rock temples and pagodas, and then to live a quaint, porcelain-vase life with me in our own Japanese villa, and finally when we come home through the Golden Gate you are to confess that you are happier with me than you were with Mrs. Thorne when you watched the Nevesink Highlands drop below the horizon.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

LOVE.

HEATH'S account of himself, though overdrawn, was in the main true. Whenever he took life slowly in those days he found himself dull and despondent, a frame of mind he was unused to cherishing. It seemed to him both wise and philosophical to proceed now as if he had no heart to ache and no head or heels to give out. He joined every available party going to ancient villas, extinct volcanoes, interminable galleries, palaces, or catacombs. In Florence he found intensely hot weather, but assured the Florentines that a New Yorker would get pneumonia in such a climate; no shaded side of the road for him! He tramped to Fiesole, searched out everything Etruscan, as if archæology were the one passion of his soul. He conscientiously considered every room of the Uffizi and Pitti galleries, and started on a thorough-going exploration of the churches. One noontime, standing guide-book in hand before some uncommonly horrible and archaic

frescos, he suddenly anathematized all art as a "beastly bore," crammed his book into his pocket, and started on the next train for Venice. It was a slow train, the slowest he had ever known in his life. He grew overpoweringly weary of the scenery, of the huge stations, of the heat and sunshine outside, of a fat mustached signora opposite. She was old, ugly, and heavily perfumed. She left him at Bologna, where he got out to stand on the platform, eager for cool air and forgetful of his supper. Starting on again he dozed away the time until after dark, awakening with the startled notion that he could not remember to what city he was going, so perhaps he had been taken past it. He drowsily reflected that he had not decided to what hotel he should go in—in Rome—Milan, was it?—no, Venice. Well, the porter would see to that. He was in Venice at last and out in the evening light, more bewildered at the reality than by his late dreams. The water looked like molten iron. The black craft moored all about, the moving mass of boatmen, porters, and nondescript people, with the cries of the gondoliers, gave him a nightmare sensation not lessened by the pain in his head. He stood stupidly waiting for some one who would do something. This individual materialized in the shape of a big porter talking English with a strong German accent; taking Heath's silence for consent to his proposal of a hotel, he ventured to reach out for his luggage ticket.

Heath yielded it, followed his guide, and a moment or two later they were afloat for a hotel he would never have thought of choosing had he given the matter any thought at all. However, it was a good house under German management, and just off the Grand Canal. As they rowed past the painted posts, like barbers' poles, the fancy took Heath that he was a tobacconist's wooden Indian out for some purpose unknown, and he showed little more intelligence than such an image would have evinced when the blue and gold porter turned him loose in the big entrance hall. However, the routine of continental hotels renders intelligence of little account in the tourist, a yielding disposition is better for all concerned. Heath found his supper, his room, his bed, all in due order.

Sound sleep he did not find. There was music in the air, gondoliers made it and their songs tangled his dreams. There were also gnats in the air and they bit him. At daylight he arose to look out of his window. Opposite was an open casement showing a neighboring kitchen with copper saucepans all over the walls. Between him and this kitchen was a green ditch bearing on its unruffled surface a few cabbage leaves and considerable orange peel.

"As a part of my ideal Venice—as stuff for dreams and romance, I have no use for you," commented our hero; "I might put you to a more practical purpose, I might join myself to the floating cabbage

leaves. No, it is dryer to go back to bed if only I could sleep off this headache."

At breakfast the coffee was real, German-made coffee, and not chicory broth. In the strength of it Heath went out to spend an hour in a gondola, then ordered the man to row him to Cook's office, where he had ordered any letters sent. He found a little budget awaiting him, chatted a while with the pleasant agent, finally asked if he knew of any Americans arrived lately in Venice by name Edgecomb, Bruce, or Thorne.

"No such people are registered here," said the agent, turning over the leaves of a book near him, "but they would not be unless their letters were coming here. Look over the lists of hotel arrivals."

Heath looked over a number of papers, asked a few questions about Venice, bought a map of the city and went out requesting his mail sent for a week to his hotel. He assured himself that Edgecomb had left Venice and the others had not arrived. He was mistaken; they had been several days in Venice.

Mrs. Thorne, who once (and it was the first time) entered Venice in the glare of midday, planned to save others from the disappointment she suffered. The glory of a summer sunset was flooding earth and sky as they steamed past the green fields and prosperous farms of North Italy. The golden light was tinged with pink, when the train seemed to

plunge into the water and make a track for itself across the lagoons.

“Oh, I see Venice!” cried Dolly, “and pretty soon, as the travelled dressmaker said, ‘we shall enter a dongola and be rowed over the galoons.’”

Yes, very soon the prosaic became the picturesque. They had not to make their way to any huge hotel omnibus. Everything was different from any other station—except the benign hotel-porter awaiting them. He is the same everywhere, ready to talk any language, even Volapuk; able to tell anything any human being wants to know of art, history, politics, manners, customs; or where to buy pins, veils, and shoestrings. He led them past the gondolas lining the water’s edge, and from each black craft the gondolier waved them an invitation. By each knelt a ragged boy or grizzly old man clawing the boat to the platform with an iron hook. The porter halted by one who might have posed as a model for a Charon by the Styx. Everybody stepped gingerly into the gondola, half expecting it to upset under them. Nothing of the sort happened, and when two boats were filled with them and their luggage they started. Kate pitied them, for even though the light was lovely on the water she saw soon the shade that fell over the girls’ faces at sight of the first colored palaces that came in sight. They were expecting fair Desdemonas to lean from exquisite balconies; they saw walls like faded patch-

work, cave-like entrances, in which every now and then loitered fat matrons, who, tying ropes about the bodies of their small progeny, were calmly dropping them over the threshold to soak or swim in the canals as the case might be. But after a while the newcomers heard for the first time in Venice a familiar name, the Rialto, or the Bridge of Sighs—and their faces brightened. Then the hotel—of course, there was a “Grand” and also a “Royal” in its title, for it was a hotel with a pedigree, so to speak, as it was literally its own grandfather. It was the home of the Doge Enrico Dandolo, who conquered Constantinople in 1204; but no doubt the family mansion has suffered many alterations since the morning when Enrico sailed away to return a mummy and the night that Mrs. Thorne’s Americans took possession. In fact, that truthful lady assured them that perhaps only the walls remained, but they preferred to think differently.

All of them wrote home describing the elegantly carved oaken sideboards, the tall-backed chairs, the treasure chests and cabinets of choice china, the marble floors and frescoed ceilings. They were getting enthusiastic about Venice before dinner was over. Florida mentally composed a “talk” before her “literary club” while she ate her dinner. She dwelt in detail on the splendor of this *salle à manger* where Enrico gazed, as he feasted, on the wall pictures of Dante, Tasso, and Petrarch. Chronology

was of small account to Florida, and here were the pictures before her very eyes.

After dinner Mrs. Thorne said: "Go get on your wraps and we will see Venice in twilight; so far you have only gotten rid of a few illusions. Any new ones you have hereafter will be twice as beautiful and warranted not to fade."

They went to their rooms, soon to return to the hall, where Doctor Tom, through the porter, was calling gondoliers. Mr. Edgecomb stood with them greeting each lady as she came downstairs. At least he spoke to all but Harriet, whom he did not seem to see until he took her hand to help her into a boat, stepping in next, having sent ahead the two Pollocks. Surely two chaperons were enough. He could furnish employment for their eyes and ears, could show them the beauties of the Grand Canal—and not neglect Harriet.

It was Venice, and it was summer. The initiated can fancy all the rest. When, one by one, the gondoliers swept slowly out into the broad expanse of shimmering water, each person realized the full verification of all the poets had written or painters pictured. Every token of dirt and decay was effaced, nothing apparent but the shadowy whiteness of fairy-like façades and the grace of marvellous porticos. Every now and then a gondola gay with colored lanterns would glide along by others, and suddenly the air would be full of music from rich

voices and stringed instruments—one of the Venetian bands afloat every night to charm foreigners, and to lure away their willingly bestowed coin.

Yes, before ten o'clock Mrs. Thorne's young people were quite Venice-smitten, were even charmed with the narrower streets, where the black water splashed against the mossy old walls as one black boat moved after another with the statuesque gondolier swaying in the glare of his red lamp, crying shrilly in the Rembrandtish gloom: "*Stalì*" (I come,—to the right), "*Premè*" (to the left), "*Sciàr*" (stop).

Mr. Edgecomb imparted a very large amount of interesting information to Mrs. Pollock, Senior, and her daughter-in-law; occasionally he added supplementary remarks that did not reach them. In explaining, for instance, these cries of the gondoliers he quoted from Monckton Milnes now and then a line:

“ For the young and the loving no sorrow endures,
If to-day be another's, to-morrow is yours ;
May the next time you listen your fancy be true,
I am coming—*Sciàr*—and for you, and to you !
Sciàr—and to you.”

It did not seem as if they had been out more than an hour before they heard Doctor Bruce bellowing like a bull of Bashan, from the boat ahead, that Mrs. Thorne said it was time to go home. Hotelward they went, therefore, but not immediately to bed.

There were bewitching little porticos out from the girls' windows where it is to be feared they lingered late, watching the lights flashing below, hearing the boat-songs, exchanging those endless confidences in which girls can indulge without confiding very much after all.

It was just after lunch at the Royal Danieli, and the ladies were together in the reading-room. Some were studying the English papers. The younger ones were at the windows, which in that part of the hotel were on a level with the Riva. They liked to watch the throng of passers-by, for the most of them were Venetians. Mrs. Thorne was surprised at the prolonged absence of the Doctor. He often left them for hours to their own devices, but at lunch and dinner was sure to appear. She had just made a statement to this effect when he entered the door. He looked warm or tired, and took no notice of a jesting speech from Dolly Coxe.

“Have you had your lunch, Tom?”

“Yes—no, not yet. Was Edgecomb in just now?”

“No, we have not seen him to-day. Why?”

“I thought he might have told you—Heath is here and very ill,” replied the Doctor.

“Here—where? In this hotel?” asked Mrs. Thorne.

“No, but not far away, at a Hotel d'Italie,” said the Doctor, adding: “When I went out this morning

I met Edgecomb and asked him to go over Salviati's glass manufactory with me. We bought a trifle or two and I found my pocket-book empty, so coming out I told the gondolier to row me to Cook's where I could draw money. There was a bank nearer, but it was well I did not know it, for when the agent saw my name on my letter of credit, he said: 'I think you are a man I want. Have you a friend named Heath?' Edgecomb answered before I could speak; then he said the porter of that hotel (who knew Heath's mail was sent from Cook's) had been in the night before to ask if Heath had friends in Venice, and to say he was ill and delirious. The agent remembered that Heath had asked in the office about a Doctor Bruce but he had no idea where to find me—the hotel lists giving me the elegant title of Doctor *Bones*. Edgecomb and I got ourselves as fast as possible to the hotel. I found Heath pretty badly off; Edgecomb says he has been very imprudent lately. It looks a little like typhoid fever, but I hope I can break it up. He was in a dingy room with only one window, in the rear of the hotel. We had him moved to a big, airy one in the part of the house that faces on the Grand Canal. They had been attentive to him but did not realize his condition until yesterday. He had not been really irrational until then, though the waiters all thought him queer. Edgecomb says he shall take a room close by him, and do his best with me.

to take charge of the case. I wish we could find a capable woman-nurse. He can't be properly cared for without."

"Oh, Tom, I ought to go to him, poor fellow, all alone!" cried Kate.

"We could take turns," said Mrs. Bushby, "though a bigger fool than I am inside a sick-room never was known."

Florida Pollock rose up and dropped the last number of a London fashion paper. Her voice took on an insistent tone, which together with her first words made Dorothy Coxe, for the second, hate her.

"No, Mrs. Thorne *must* not go! She owes a duty to her party, a *first* duty, and Mrs. Bushby would drive him mad, she fusses so when she gets worried. *I shall go myself.*"

Everybody looked at her in amazement.

"What ails you all? Ask mother if I know what I am about. I am old enough and a widow, so there is no impropriety; somebody must look after mother while I do it."

"I will," exclaimed Dolly Coxe, in a voice that only Tom who stood near heard. She did not see the glance he gave her. There were tears in her own eyes and her lip was trembling. She saw nobody but Mrs. Florida.

"Flori is a grand nurse," said the old lady; "our old doctor at home said it was a gift and she had it—that nurses, like poets, were born, not made."

"Never mind what anybody said or says, I am going to take care of that fellow in his fever," coolly remarked her daughter-in-law, turning to question the Doctor.

He had not thought of Florida in the light of a ministering angel ; but after a little talk with her he went to the dining-room for his lunch while she retired to her room for brief preparations. A half hour later he returned with her to Heath's room. It was agreed that Florida should be the one on whom next to the Doctor should rest all responsibility, but Mrs. Thorne, Mrs. Bushby, and Edgecomb were to take turns as night watchers, that Mrs. Pollock should not get over-tired. Before twelve hours had passed every one of them forgave Florida all her little failings. She indulged in no nonsense, but she knew exactly what to do and she did it. The Doctor was vehement in her praises to Kate, who each time replied, "I told you that you did not do her justice."

And now began a fight for life with the odds in favor of Death. It was not really typhoid fever, it certainly was not as every one at once pronounced it "Roman fever." Doctor Bruce did not trouble himself to give it a name ; for at least a week he was too busy with successive puzzling and always alarming changes.

The days were long for the younger members of Mrs. Thorne's band. They spent much of the time

on the water. No one was in any mood for sight-seeing, so the elder Mrs. Pollock, Harriet, Dorothy, and Bertha found nothing more quietly diverting than to take a gondola, letting the men lazily move in and out between the ancient houses, down narrowest side canals, watching the life on either hand. None of them talked much. Bertha perhaps was the one most keenly conscious of her surroundings. Occasionally she would tell them stories of old Venice. Bertha was as full of available lore as any old-time chronicle; true, she learned it as she went, but she made it her own. Sometimes Edgecomb joined them when it may be they went to the Academia. There Dorothy led Mrs. Pollock about, telling the old lady stories, showing her the pictures most likely to impress her, while even Bertha had tact enough to pursue her artistic researches alone. In this way it came to pass that Harriet and Edgecomb sauntered through the soft sunlit rooms, loitering before Bellini, Carpaccio, Titian, or Tintoretto, not oblivious to the beauty all about them—nay, exquisitely conscious of it as a background for another beauty—other sunshine, not of art or nature.

Dorothy Coxe faithfully redeemed her promise to Florida. She never let pass unimproved a chance to help or to interest the old lady. Indeed, she found her exactly the companion most desired in these days. The dimmer eyes of Mrs. Pollock rested with almost childish interest on each new object. They

did not see the trouble—the terror that filled the girl's blue eyes when they were alone together. Dolly was so kind to her she did not miss the usual gay chatter, the merry jests and laughter—did not once see the grey shadow fall over the sweet young face, as Dolly's glance fell on Edgecomb and Harriet far down some corridor.

One afternoon Mrs. Florida trusted Mrs. Thorne with her patient, and came out for a change. She had not seen the pictures of the Academia, so she decided to take one of the little steamboats and go to the gallery alone, rather than to waste time finding companions. Florida had traversed enough places of that kind to detect by certain infallible signs what were the "show sights," even if she had no guide-book with her. This day she made straight for the cushioned divan before Titian's Assumption of the Virgin.

There was a catalogue posted on a big card-board near by, which she faithfully studied before giving herself up to enjoyment of the great painting. She liked it; the light, the vivid coloring, the sense of joyous motion impressed her.

Suddenly the cushion went down as if depressed by the weight of a heavy body, and "Good-afternoon, Mrs. Pollard," sounded in Florida's ears.

"Why, Mr. Hudson! You here?"

"Got here yesterday. Queer old place, aint it? Dirty by day, but lights up well."

“We are all delighted with Venice,” replied Mrs. Pollock, neglecting Titian while she regarded Mr. Hudson. He took off his soft hat, polished his forehead and the bald spot beyond, sank comfortably back in his seat, drew out his spectacles and a copy of the *New York Herald*. It was evident that after he had discoursed with Florida, he meant to have a season of physical and mental relaxation.

“Yes, came last night; have been sozzling about on the water to-day, peeping into old meeting-houses, and seeing the homes that our Crosby Street organ-grinders come from. I let a tenement-house to a lot of them once—pigs are clean in comparison.”

“Your home is in New York?”

“My property is there, I have n’t any home at present. Yes, I came to the city forty years ago with fifteen dollars in my pocket. I have rather more than doubled it,” he remarked dryly.

Mrs. Pollock, with one eye on the Blessed Virgin, cast what Dolly used wickedly to call “her business eye” on the man at her side. He compared uncommonly well with a certain dried-up bundle of iniquity, once known to her—the one in short whose withdrawal from daylight had left her his “relict.”

Mr. Hudson was not young, nor extremely intellectual, but he looked as if he could be depended on to speak civilly and part with a penny without excess of sorrow.

“Is this big canvas the *chief-do-over*, as they say, of the whole collection?” he inquired, putting on his glasses.

“Yes,” said Florida, assuming the rôle of instructor. “It is considered Titian’s masterpiece.”

“Pretty—quite—what is the subject, Moses on the Mount?”

“Oh, no, it is the Assumption of the Virgin.”

“So it is a female figure. They swaddle their saints up in so many petticoats it is hard to tell the difference—Assumption—well now, what did she do when she—assumed?”

Florida, having put the very question to Mrs. Thorne in the past, promptly replied: “She is supposed by the Roman Catholics to have been raised from the tomb and received in this way into heaven.”

“She was, hey!—I doubt it, Bible does not say so—well, ah—big pattern is n’t she, but healthy-looking. Who is this chap looking at her over the back of his head—seems to be saying his prayers?”

“I—guess that is Saint Peter.”

“Saint or sinner, he is sitting down on nothing in a way nobody ever could without sprawling flat on his back—the little valentine cupids are natural-looking. Who did you say did it?”

“Titian, their greatest painter here. He died—a long time ago.”

“Titian, yes, I saw some work he did on the plastering over in that place that looks like our New

York gallery in Twenty-third Street. How are the the rest of your party, Mrs. Pollard?"

Florida set him right on her name, then told him of their doings and of Mr. Heath's illness.

He was very sorry, and declared his intention of going that night to offer his assistance to Mr. Edgcomb. He proposed to read the American news to Florida and after doing it sauntered about under her guidance. She found it not disagreeable to act as art instructor to one teachable, while undeniably ignorant of the old masters. Mr. Hudson for his part was glad of Florida's companionship. He said to her during the interview that he was "naturally sociable," and that he hoped Mrs. Thorne would not be "put out" if he joined her party occasionally. Owing to his presence Mrs. Pollock could not consult the catalogue with the attention required to understand the pictures, so when he boldly declared that "they did not amount to much" she was silent, though she felt the remark to be sacrilegious.

"Let us go out," proposed Mr. Hudson, at last, "and get on the steamboat and go as far as it goes! Now the city sees their advantage over these old black row-boats it is to be hoped they will have steam everywhere."

"Oh, but the gondolas are much more romantic, Mr. Hudson," protested Florida, going down stairs a step behind him, while she made those digital dives into her front hair done by her sex with intent to make it fluffy.

“Romantic—humph! Fancy a man going at midnight for his doctor, the baby in a fit.”

“In that case he might do better to take to his heels along the lanes behind the houses,” agreed Florida, who was not without practicality.

“All these old one-horse cities over here will soon be coming to the front with electricity to push them. Some things will be renewed sooner than others. I suppose now they would n’t rip up that old mosaic pavement, uneven as it is, in Saint Mark’s Cathedral if anybody would give them a good hard-wood floor, a warm carpet, and throw in a furnace. My room over at the hotel has a floor the porter says is Roman cement. It looks like petrified hash and is cold as a tombstone.”

They were outdoors by that time. One of the little *Vaporetti* that ply all day up and down the canal was stopping at the landing-place close by the *Academia*. Mr. Hudson escorted Mrs. Pollock on board, found her a shaded seat, and they started, touching at one or two points before they reached the Public Gardens. There Mr. Hudson proposed they should get off the boat and stroll around a few moments in what seemed a little park full of people. Mrs. Pollock making no objection they roamed about for more than an hour.

Doctor Tom stood at the window apparently watching the antics of a juvenile Venetian, who, having no back-yard in which to make mud pies,

had been tied by a rope to the family door-knob, and left to disport himself in the canal. Being quite infantile he had for safety what seemed like the family bread-board, on which he supported his elbows when weary, after the manner of the Sistine Madonna cherubs. The Doctor saw him, but was all the time carrying on a train of thought having no relation to anything before his eyes. He was thinking of Heath stretched out motionless on a wide couch drawn into the middle of the room. The fever had left him, and with his eyes closed he looked ghastly. He had weathered the worst, and Tom had little fear as to his ultimate recovery, but he did not gain as he should. He had just apologized with a flicker of a smile for being "such an unconscionable long time dying—or getting well." He was very patient. Florida had gone back to her party, and Edgecomb, with one faithful hotel waiter, cared for him; but day after day was going past, and Heath did not take the "start" which Tom had prophesied he surely would take. It troubled the Doctor. He left the window to go to Heath's side.

"You are better, young man."

"Am I?"

"Why, don't you feel better?"

"Have no feeling."

"You need stirring up. Now you are able to be on this couch arrayed in that Oriental dressing-gown arrangement, I think I might bring the girls to see you."

“No.”

“Not want to see Miss Bilton.”

“No.”

“Nor Miss Dwight?”

“Congratulate her,” gasped Heath, faintly. “Don’t you think you could venture?”

“May Miss Dorothy come?”

No answer for a moment, then the poor fellow faltered out: “Don’t torment outside of your legitimate field of operations. I suppose—she—would not have cared—if I had died.”

“Think so?” said Tom. “Hello, here comes Giacomo, or whatever his name is, with the broth; get all you can down. I will look in again later.”

All the time Doctor Bruce was meandering lunchward by a circuitous route (for he always lost his way) he was plotting a scheme that he dare not confide in its entirety to Kate. When he reached the hotel he met Miss Dwight in the entrance.

“Miss Dwight,” he said, “will you kindly ask Miss Coxe to come to the reading-room? I want to speak to her alone.” Then he turned toward that apartment, finding it deserted. He had scarcely opened a London paper before Dolly came, her eyes looking strangely dark and a bright spot of color in each cheek.

“What is it, Doctor? Any—any bad news?”

“Oh no, child,” he replied in his most fatherly tone, “only I have just come from our friend Heath. He was a special friend of yours, was he not?”

“He—yes.”

“Could you not come over this afternoon when I go to make my call; you and Kate? It might brighten him a bit; he is badly off—low-spirited, maybe he thinks he is not going to get well. One day he said something about wanting to leave some especial message for his mother in case anything did happen to him. Poor chap, it is rough, being sick away from his people and being cared for by comparative strangers.”

“Did he ask to have me come?”

Doctor Tom always vowed to Kate that the look Dolly Coxe gave him when she put that question rendered him morally incapable of the truth and nothing but the truth.

“He said, Miss Dolly, that he did not want any one *but* you and you did not want to come.”

Dolly’s forget-me-not eyes were suddenly all drenched in dew.

“Is he going *to die*, Doctor?”

“Not *at present*, but he never will get well unless he plucks up a little more courage.”

“You explain to Mrs. Thorne, and I will go,” said Dolly, darting away before he could speak again.

Tom marched into his sister’s presence and sternly regarded her as she was searching her bag for a clean handkerchief.

“Katherine?”

“Thomas.”

“At half-past three you will please accompany Miss Coxe and me to the Hotel d’ Italie. You will ask no questions and I will tell you no lies. On entering Mr. Heath’s apartment—(I will precede you by a moment)—you will go over to the window and watch the gondoliers. Miss Coxe we will leave to her own devices, and may the Lord have mercy on Heath.”

“Tom, are you wise? Remember pills and powders are all in your line, but—”

“But in this case I *can* minister to a mind diseased, and as for Dorothy Coxe—mark my words for it, Kate,—soon her foot will be on her native heath.”

Kate hinted that he was a match-making, punning wretch, but she did not refuse his request. She had before this made it her duty quietly to inform herself in regard to Mr. Heath. True, she might not have thought it necessary but for Tom’s suspicions in Geneva. She began to wonder at her brother’s penetration.

At half-past three exactly, Mrs. Thorne, coming out of her room, met Dorothy—at least Dorothy was in the hall—intently examining one of the beautiful carved cabinets that adorned this Palazzo Dandolo. She wore her hat and looked relieved when Kate, in a matter-of-fact way, remarked: “We will go in a gondola, but I want to walk home by way of

the square. We can do a little shopping when we get rid of Tom."

"What ingratitude, considering the times I have cheapened things by judiciously sneering at them for you," exclaimed the Doctor, appearing at the foot of the stairs.

It was a warm day, but the boat had a canopy; a soft breeze stole in from the sea; the gondolas moved slowly, the boatmen exchanging lazy greetings as they passed. The Doctor and Mrs. Thorne talked of indifferent topics, for Dolly was nervous, not once speaking, until they turned in toward the threshold of the Hotel d' Italie.

"Wait here just a moment," said the Doctor, when they were inside, "I will go ahead to give him a hint that you are here, then come right up."

Kate talked with the big and genial porter. Dolly gave a gasp as the dismissed gondolier pushed his craft out toward the Grand Canal. It was as if she saw escape cut off.

"Now, Dolly, we will go up." Kate glanced at her, moved out of the porter's hearing, and said gently: "Dorothy, do not go if you think—if you go merely from kindness; unless you understand *yourself* and *him* it might be kinder to stay away."

The young girl stood motionless, thinking; then she quietly passed before Mrs. Thorne, going first toward an open door near the head of the stairs. She entered first. Heath's face was turned towards

her; a half startled, half appealing intentness in the look fastened on this sudden vision of girlish loveliness. Kate shrank back a little, the Doctor—well he enacted “peeping Tom” over again just for the moment. In that period of time Dorothy crossed the room, slipped one silken sleeve under Heath’s neck, folded the other arm around him—and kissed him.

Tom had decency enough then to assume great interest in remarks made to his sister. Heath’s eyes rendered prompt speech on his part needless. Dolly just waited to touch her soft cheek for a second to his pale face before she turned in roguish, blushing tearfulness to announce to the witnesses present: “It is quite proper, I suppose. We are engaged”—then *sotto voce* to Heath: “If I say so we are, aren’t we?”

A whisper was the utmost that Heath could accomplish; all the force he had was in the grasp of his fingers around a warm, plump little hand. It was a hand that now stayed gladly in his—and for the rest, was it Heaven or just Venice? Dolly wore a rose; half its petals were strewn over his breast. Outside the window some one was singing a Venetian love song.

“You may stay with him just three minutes longer if he holds his tongue,” announced Doctor Tom, grinning on them over his watch; “then I will feel his pulse, give him a powder, and we will bid you ladies good-afternoon.”

“Dolly?”

She bent nearer to hear.

“I have decided to live, on one condition.”

“What is it?”

“Does this engagement hold for *life*?”

“If you never mean to marry—yes;” then not quite cruel enough to torment so helpless a victim, Dolly whispered something quite satisfactory.

The Doctor said: “Time’s up.”

Kate pointed out to her brother a long, low bark loaded with fruit. She made him enumerate to her the various sorts, after which exercise she hoped they had not overtaxed Mr. Heath’s strength; then she came away with Dorothy Coxe.

They had but a few steps to go before they were in the great square. At that hour of the summer day there was little life or motion. Broad sunshine fell on one side, deserted by all creatures save the doves, whose plumage gleamed gold and purple and crimson in the fierce light. Elsewhere was shade, open cafés, idlers sipping ices outside their doors, strangers strolling from windows full of jewels to others bright with gay pictures or still others radiant with iridescent glass.

Kate had an errand or two about which she talked to her companion, purposely saying nothing of what was in both their minds. They loitered along until close to the Basilica, where they stepped in under the ancient mosaics.

“Let us find a beautiful corner to rest awhile,” said Kate, adding: “I never get enough of St. Mark’s. There are no two places called churches more unlike than this and Westminster Abbey, but they are alike in the hold they take on my heart and brain.”

Then Dolly made one of those speeches that she never made to any one but Kate.

“Yet although both are churches, neither makes me think of worship, as I think of it in an old grey barn of a house where my Quaker grandmother sits silent, hours at a time.”

“I like to come here when too tired to think vigorously,” said Kate. “The faint odor of incense, the frequent music, and the feast for my eyes is infinitely soothing.”

They nestled into a dim retreat out of the track of the curious.

When they had been together a little time in silence, Kate said: “Your mother trusted you in my care, Dolly; will you be able to satisfy her that I have been careful enough of you? You did not really give me time to gainsay matters.”

“I will tell you about it, Mrs. Thorne,” said Dorothy, in a gentle way, quite irresistible.

She began shyly at first, the toe of her small boot doing its best to dislodge a bit of green mosaic from the billowy pavement, but growing earnest she forgot to be abashed. She made Kate see that her

love for Heath was not a superficial fancy; that so real had it been with her from the first that she had perversely fought it, provoked at being easily taken captive. She listened gravely when Kate gave her a kindly lecture on frivolity and naughtiness. She replied by confessing much of which she had not been accused, going on then to evince a "sweet reasonableness" and a promise of future goodness that would have satisfied even her Quaker ancestors. Mrs. Thorne half realized it then—Dorothy knew it later: that, during this hour in St. Mark's, the woman in her asserted itself, putting away childish things for ever. Love made her true to herself, and Dorothy's best self was sweet, pure, and sincere. Kate (as Miss Bilton often sadly remarked) was "very reserved," but she kissed Dolly in that dim nook under the colossal frescos, saying to her what the mother over the sea might have said in her stead. They went out then, finding clock-tower, domes, porticos, belfries, and bell-tower glittering in the late sunlight. The doves were multiplied by hundreds, a military band was giving a concert, and gaily-kerchiefed Venetian women, sober-hued travellers, peddlers, water-carriers, and flower-girls filled the square. Studying a picture in Naya's window stood Doctor Bruce.

"Is your patient any the worse for our call?" asked Mrs. Thorne.

"Kate, if the visit of two ladies can make a man

look so ineffably happy as Heath looks, what would be the effect of turning loose on him the whole seven? *Seven* is the emblem of perfection, too, you know—why, he would be like a glorified Buddhist absorbed in Nirvana. I got so envious at sight of a man in his condition beaming beatifically at nothing, that I came away. He will not know whether he is alone or not for the next twenty-four hours—Miss Coxe, come back! I want to show you this St. Barbara.”

“Stop teasing her, Tom. I am not sure that I approve of you at all.”

“Katherine Thorne, look me in the eye. Remember Ananias and Sapphira! Was that last remark of yours *true*?”

“Oh, all is well that ends well, but you took a great deal on yourself.”

“Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Heath is a brick, and, oh, if he is not happy, I never saw one who was.”

After the tender episode in Mr. Heath's sick-room, Mrs. Thorne supposed that she could predict exactly Miss Dorothy Coxe's future proceedings. Having been “uncertain and hard to please,” she would, of course, now adopt the “ministering angel” part of the poetic programme. Mrs. Thorne, with a sigh, resigned herself to the idea of accompanying Dolly daily to the Hotel d'Italie.

Miss Coxe, however, was in a process of evolution, and Mrs. Thorne did not foresee the next stage.

Dorothy did not repent having made herself and Heath happy, but before the next day she had a severe attack of bashfulness, and bitterly regretted that she had been so precipitate. She fancied herself entering his room after Mrs. Thorne, her card-case in her hand. She wished she had seated herself by the window, composedly fanned herself, given him her impressions of Venice, and elegantly expressed gratification that he was likely to recover. To have held his hand just before she left him, giving it a *very* slight pressure, would have done for the present. The longer Dolly reflected, the more she suspected the Doctor of scheming.

Her first move the next day was to request Mrs. Thorne not to mention her engagement until Mr. Heath was able to be about. After that Dolly went sight-seeing. She excelled Miss Bilton in her efforts to see and to know everything. She was quieter, gentler, and not Harriet herself was more delicately circumspect on all occasions. Not once in the next ten days did she go near Heath. She sent, by Mrs. Thorne, a few notes and several bunches of blue violets; beyond that she refused to go. With the proper grace of a young Puritan maiden she remarked that "Mr. Heath certainly now understood" her; there would be "time enough to say anything he had to say when he got well."

It was all in vain for the Doctor and his patient to put their heads together and threaten Dorothy

with a "relapse." She refused to be scared in the least, saying recovery from a fever was always a slow process. Heath had to be content. It was not very hard with her flowers, her notes, her photograph under his pillow, with the recollection of her visit and the realization that she was having her way now, but his time was fast coming.

In the first days of Harriet Dwight's stay in Venice she had received a letter telling her of the death of her aunt, the only living relative (except a young cousin) whom she had left behind her. The news was not wholly unexpected. Her aunt was old and had been for several years getting infirm. She had been, as Charles Lamb said of another woman, "a steadfast old Christian with asperities." Harriet had always retained faith in her virtues; her faults the old lady never allowed any one to overlook. She had brought Harriet up after a heroic sort of treatment which had produced no lasting bad results. Some of her principles acted like planks laid over tender grass, still when the planks are lifted sunshine works wonders. In a way Harriet grieved for her, but grieved most that she could not grieve more. She was grateful for benefits received during her repressed childhood. She repented of remembered times when she refused to be repressed, and again she was saddened at the thought of there being no one now across the sea awaiting her return. After

a few days she rated herself for insensibility that her grief was not more poignant, that she could so quietly reason that the careworn old lady was better at rest. Only Mrs. Thorne understood Harriet in those days. She did not speak of her aunt to the others, who thought her strangely grave. Indeed, while all of the little company liked and admired Harriet Dwight, there was a reserve about her that none of them but Mrs. Thorne had penetrated. She knew Harriet more by what she intuitively understood than from what the young girl consciously revealed. During these weeks in Venice Mrs. Thorne, too, had come to feel the warmest liking for Mr. Edgecomb. She heartily wished him success in his love for his own sake and for Harriet's, but of his chances she could foretell little. Without ever having been told so, Edgecomb knew Mrs. Thorne was his friend, that she trusted him. One evening the entire party, with the addition of Mr. Hudson and Edgecomb, had been in the great square for an hour or more. There was a concert; every café overflowed with gay people, laughing, ice eating, coffee sipping. All the Venetians were abroad and every stranger in the city as well, or so it would seem from the swarming crowds that in time became oppressive.

“Mrs. Thorne,” said Mr. Edgecomb, unheard by their companions, “I have become expert in rowing a gondola.”

“So I have heard.”

“You leave Venice in a few days?”

“Yes.”

“I have been out with Miss Dwight and Mrs. Pollock, and Miss Dwight and Mrs. Bushby, and Miss Dwight and yourself. I should like to-night just for a little while to—to—”

“Leave Miss Dwight behind and take one of the others perhaps.”

“Mrs. Thorne, do not be cruel.”

“You will not go far nor be gone long?”

“Not if I can reckon time with a cool head.”

She probably consented, for he gave her hand a warm pressure. Finding Miss Dwight he told her they were to return to the hotel by boat. He led her to a gondola and she supposed the rest were close behind in the crowd. She was in the gondola before she saw they were alone.

“In such a night did Lorenzo steal away the pretty Jessica.”

“You should have obtained my consent,” retorted Harriet, reproachfully.

“In such a night did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew, slander her love, and he forgave it her.”

Vexation at being taken possession of so audaciously by her lover struggled with another feeling in her breast and Harriet was silent. Edgecomb construed the silence against himself.

“This is my hour, but I will not use force. Will you come with your—friend?”

Harriet, caught by the word "friend," hesitated and was lost.

"Yes, I will go with my friend."

The gondola shot forward with a sudden joyous impulse, gliding along over threads of gold on the dark water. Myriads of lights twinkled on all sides. For a while they spoke of the scene in the square, then they passed under a bridge. Edgecomb glanced at the Palazzo Rezzonico.

"Who are the Three in Browning's *In a Gondola*?" he asked.

"It is fashionable to understand Browning," she answered, "but I do not want to, except where he makes himself understood, or where he leaves us to understand by those three dots with which he is fond of breaking his lines. You might find out by rowing us past the Pucci Palace . . . who she is, . . . who the Three are. Her home—

"Know I where it fronts demurely
Over the *giudecca* piled,
Window just with window mating,
Door with door exactly waiting,
All 's the set face of a child:
But behind it where 's a trace
Of the staidness and reserve,
And formal lines without a curve
In the same child's playing face?
No two windows look one way
O'er the small water thread
Below them.'"

"We will leave the three dots unsolved," said

Edgecomb. "This palace with carved heads for capstones and carved Cupids in the dim cornices is Browning's."

They turned into a maze of side canals. Now and then a black shadow passed them with a signal to which Edgecomb responded. Sometimes they would be in the dark, then the queer prow would seem to be dividing a sheet of gold. Several times they came out upon the Grand Canal to pause before some palace, when Edgecomb would deliver little lectures on architecture, or more often tell a story or relate a legend.

At first Harriet was not quite at ease, but soon the witchery of the varying scene stole over her and she felt a strange happiness at being thus alone with Edgecomb in this world of beauty. Sometimes they would pass under a balcony where instead of the usual flower-pots were masses of creepers clambering across a balcony bridge from a garden wall opposite. One of these they found on the Palazzo Albrizzi, the home of Isabella Teotochi, the friend of Foscolo and Byron."

"I did not know there were private gardens," said Harriet.

"There are not many, but the serpent can find a tree even in Venice. The Palazzo dei Contarini has a beautiful garden with a narrow door in the high wall suggestive of *buoni mani* and stolen visits."

Sometimes for ten minutes together they would

not speak, and these silences Edgecomb would always break by a thought that had nothing to do with Venice. He seemed to be reviewing his whole acquaintance with Harriet. Her graceful walk and somewhat proud head had first caught his eyes, and then the refinement and beauty of her face; and then he had traced this beauty in her mind and heart and had loved her more and more. He could not think of a beginning for that. By her self-doubts, reserve, and inexorable justice she had unconsciously made him suffer even more than Dolly had made Heath, though unlike Heath he had given no outward sign. To-night he would know if his patience was to be rewarded, or if—he said to himself—he must have *more* patience. It was not in him to say “or give her up.”

At length they came to a canal wider than the rest, but entirely deserted. The clouds which had been hiding the moon now parted and drifted away. On one side tall palaces were shrouded in gloom; on the other the moonlight rested on façades beautiful with carved stone. Edgecomb came and seated himself at Harriet's feet. Her eyes followed his and rested on one of the loveliest sights she had ever seen. Late as it was, the sky was still a beautiful clear blue, and outlined against it was a row of delicately tinted marble columns. At the first glance they seemed white. Then the moon came around them and the exquisite tints of pink and green were

made visible. It seemed too rare even for Venice. It was like a glimpse of a city not made with hands. She turned her moonlit face to Edgecomb with a happy smile, and he, looking into it, lost in his love, said in a tone no woman can hear unmoved:

“Tell me, dear!”

And for answer she bent toward him, hesitating, hovering for a moment, and then felt herself drawn into his arms, and her pure lips pressed by his thirsting ones.

CHAPTER NINTH.

SHAWL-STRAPS.

MRS. POLLOCK thought she could shop to better advantage when alone. It was quite possible, for she had repeatedly returned from the square with articles purchased at a franc less than the price paid by her friends. She had gone out one day to select a few mosaic brooches, and had succeeded beyond all previous efforts. Being therefore in excellent spirits, she greeted Mr. Hudson very cordially when she happened to meet him roaming about rather aimlessly.

“I told you of that cemetery in Genoa, did n't I? Loveliest graveyard I was ever in. It seemed as if half the bodies there had come outside of their tombstones to visit with one another, and all been turned into first-class statuary. There were priests and monks with their robes, prayer-books, and beads. Why, even one good motherly-looking soul who used to be a baker was there with loaves of bread under her arm. You could have copied the pattern of the needlework on her apron.”

"It must have been a queer place," said Florida.

"Oh, beautiful! I have just been asking in this photograph shop what they have in that line here. They told me their burying-ground is on an island just a little way off—nice little excursion and fine view of Venice. Don't you want to take a boat right out here and go with me? It is two hours yet to lunch time."

"I don't know but I will," replied Florida, looking off at the sunlit waves that mirrored an intensely blue sky. "You seem interested in cemeteries," she said, following him toward the water.

"I ought to be, I have buried three wives in different ones, excellent, good women, all of them. My present purpose is to get an idea for a handsome stone for the last one," he remarked, suddenly halting and pointing upward so abruptly that Florida had a fleeting idea he saw a vision of the departed, but he merely wanted her to catch sight of the bronze giants on the clock tower while in the act of striking the hour.

"I hate these old black punts," Mr. Hudson remarked when they stood by the gondola. "I will let the man help you, for I am so clumsy we might go overboard. That would be bad for both of us, as I never could learn to swim."

It was a delightful trip, and the city was very beautiful as they floated farther and farther from it. A funeral procession was returning from the island

when they approached, and the effect of the singular hearse and sable drapings was very striking. On landing they took a cursory look about the church, but Tintoretto interested them not. One had never heard of him, the other had left her guide-book at home; it made no difference. The graveyard was extremely disappointing to Mr. Hudson, being in no way like that in Genoa. They wandered about between the graves, which were lavishly adorned with wreaths of beads, jet, blue, or white, according as the ornament was meant for a child's or an older person's grave. Mr. Hudson expressed hearty disgust. Florida, who was not a *connoisseur* in cemeteries, was not especially disappointed. She wandered about picking a few wild flowers and tripping her toes in the unwound wire of the many half-worn wreaths.

When they had made the circuit of the place Mr. Hudson took out his watch, saying: "I engaged the fellow for an hour and a half, so we might as well have the worth of the money. Let us sit down somewhere and have a chat."

He hunted out a clean slab for Florida and they were seated. Perhaps it was the influence of their surrounding, but the gentleman continued to dwell on what might be called his triple widowerhood. He was not lachrymose in the least; but assured Florida that these excellent women being all happy in heaven he took pleasure in the thought their troubles were over; for doubtless they had had trou-

bles, although he had tried to make life easy for each of the three.

Florida began to feel a premonition of something to come. She was really taken unprepared, which struck her as queer, considering similar occasions in the past when she had fancied coming events cast their shadows before—shadows that never solidified into realities.

“Mrs. Pollard—Pollock, I mean. Have you ever thought of marrying again?”

“Why yes, I presume I have *thought* of it—in an indefinite sort of a way, Mr. Hudson.”

“Well, suppose you think of it definitely; think of marrying me?” he cheerfully proposed, satisfying himself as he spoke that his coat tails were not grinding dirt in them from contact with the tomb of that defunct Venetian whereon he had deposited his substantial self.

Just then the gondolier gave a yell most unmusical as proceeding from an Italian throat. He was merely accosting a distant comrade, but he startled Mr. Hudson into looking again at his watch.

“Time will be up unless we start now. Well, Mrs. Pollard—Pollock, I mean, we will talk this matter over later. I would like to get your opinion on it. We are old enough, both of us, to be sensible.”

They were at the water's edge. The gondolier was busy with Florida. Mr. Hudson undertook to help himself; perhaps he was a trifle excited. At any

rate the boat gave a wild flop sideways. Mrs. Pollock was flung into the boatman's arms, and Mr. Hudson turned a summersault into the *Adriatic*. He went under with a sounding splash, but when he came up, the Venetian having disposed of Florida, was ready for him. Mrs. Pollock, too, was alert and had her wits about her, so that between them they hauled the gentleman where, seizing the boat, he managed to get into it, wet but amiable. Puffing, blowing, and mopping his face, he apologized for the water he had brought into the boat, exclaiming: "Never could have happened in a decent steamboat with a gangplank!"

They easily made known to the gondolier that he might row as fast as possible to the hotel. Mr. Hudson's hat had gone and though bobbing up and down on the waves it was not in a condition to be worth capturing. He spread his handkerchief over his head, made himself as comfortable as the circumstances allowed, and was good-natured. Little rivulets ran off his head, his ears, down the back of his neck, and oozed from every part of his attire. He congratulated himself that the water was warm and the sun hot; then he condemned the judgment of the builders of Venice for planting a city and a burying-ground in the sea with all the good dry land there was. Finally he asked what the party meant to do that afternoon.

Florida studied him intently. He did not look

pretty, but he was pleasant. That quality in a man must mean a good deal to his wife. The individual of whom she was a "relict" had not left her any reminiscences of amiability.

They reached the city in a shorter time than seemed possible, and Mr. Hudson did not create any sensation until they pulled up at the door of the hotel. There stood Doctor Tom awaiting the summons to lunch.

"Good land, Hudson!" he cried, "you look like a Doge that has wed the *Adriatic*, and gone to live in her home! Did you have to drop him overboard, Mrs. Pollock?"

Florida had fled to her room.

That evening she paid a little visit to Mrs. Thorne's room after dinner, and in a sensible, practical way narrated the events of her excursion to the graveyard. She agreed perfectly with Mrs. Thorne's suggestion that it would be well to keep Mr. Hudson a while on probation until she was entirely certain that she knew all about his moral and social standing. The Doctor knew nothing but good of him, still in such matters it was surely wise to take nothing for granted. Mrs. Pollock discussed the affair with great coolness and good sense, retiring when Miss Bilton arrived for a *tête-à-tête*.

Kate was not averse to a visit with Bertha. She had that day said to her brother: "Really, Tom, Bertha has come out strong so far as reaping present advantages from travel is concerned. I feared on

the steamer she was going to be silly. On the contrary, her whole mind is taken up with history, art, and what she can learn as she goes."

On this occasion, however, Miss Bilton did not speak of the old Republic, the lion of St. Mark's, or refer to the Bellini. She fidgeted awhile, and then asked if she might confide in Mrs. Thorne as if she were "mamma." Kate acquiesced. Bertha gave her in detail the story of Dolly Coxe's misfit lover, the young Methodist minister.

"You see, Mrs. Thorne, Dolly made me write her emotions on seeing Mont Blanc, then her conscience troubled her—or something—and she wrote and confessed for us both. He took it beautifully, wrote a letter to each of us. Dolly said it would be rude if I did not answer that, so I did. Now to-day comes this one. You can see yourself that he is good and poetical, though the quotation he gives from Tennyson is really from Wordsworth. The—the—the 'kindred soul' part can't mean--well in Dolly's letter she ended everything between the minister and *her*. I suppose 'these chords that thrill responsive' mean— Well, dear Mrs. Thorne, would you please read the letter and advise me what to do?"

A sigh struggled up from the depths of the chaperon's soul, but she adjusted the two candlesticks and perused the letter.

"Well, Bertha, I should say he might be a very sentimental, quite pious, and harmless young man.

You go right to your room, write a full account of him to your mother, inclose all his letters, and do not write him one word until you get her answer."

Miss Bilton was inclined to argue, but Kate succeeded in making her promise to follow the advice, then she kissed her for her mother, by request, and bade her good-night.

The rest of the company were that night together in the reading-room of the hotel. Mr. Heath was again among his friends. He had greeted them all with heartiest enthusiasm, told them of his experiences in southern Italy, and thanked one and all for recent kindnesses. Later he had enticed Miss Coxe into a window under pretence of listening to a band of musicians in a near gondola, but once there they were inattentive listeners.

"Dorothy, dear, is not this scheme of Edgecomb's too delightful for mortals here below?"

"What do you mean?"

"He is convinced that he can persuade Miss Dwight to marry him soon. He wants Mrs. Thorne to go back to Pallanza where there is, you know, that pretty chapel at the Grand Hotel I have heard you speak of, and an English clergyman. They can gather the orange blossoms for themselves by the border of the lake, be married, and go on and on—Egypt, India, Japan, home across the Pacific. Miss Dwight has no one left now waiting her return."

"Indeed!"

"Don't you think three months is a terribly long time to wait?"

"For what?"

"Our wedding."

"Oh, *our* wedding! Why, I thought I explained that after father and mother had seen you, if they disapproved in any way, I should never disobey them," replied Miss Dorothy, adding with sweet composure. "There is that to consider."

"You told me yourself, my Dorothy, that you had never found your parents disobedient to you since you were born. Well, I suppose I can endure to wait if Mrs. Thorne just stops a few weeks in Paris before we sail."

"We! Are you not going to finish your tour? I do not think you have improved your opportunities. You have been superficial. There is a great deal to see in Paris."

"Oh, no doubt; but then Hudson says that, taking the Louvre for instance, 'big place as that is, by looking neither to the right nor the left,' he 'got through it in two hours.' You can be buying your *trousseau* (is n't that what they call it?). I will run on errands for you. We will do a bit of sight-seeing and have the ocean voyage together."

"I do not think you can sail on our boat. Mrs. Thorne says the return passenger list is full. Why do you not run up to Scotland? You said once you must see Edinbro'."

“I need the sea voyage. I am not strong enough for travel now. Perhaps I never will be a well man again,” he hypocritically added, knowing all the time his appetite was getting utterly ravenous, and strength coming in like a tide.

Dorothy looked up so quickly, with trouble in her blue eyes, that he cunningly went on: “If I don’t get well, of course I will not keep you tied to——”

He stopped in mingled shame and delight. The tenderness in her lovely face, the flutter of her little hand into his quick grasp, showed him he need not fear or plot for Dorothy’s love. It was a rare occasion, and Heath improved it to the utmost. Mrs. Bushby and the Pollocks were comparing notes about the day’s shopping. Just outside the window now the singers and players were filling the moonlight with melody. For the second time in all his acquaintance with her, Dolly was not a torment nor a tease.

“Kate,” said her brother, the last day of their stay in Venice, “do you think this epidemic has run its course?”

“What epidemic?” she asked, in surprise.

“Why, this love-making, courting, engaging fever.”

Kate sighed, replying: “Well, I have reasonable expectations of getting Mrs. Bushby and old Mrs. Pollock home without any entanglements, but I may fail.”

“ I have a presentiment you will,” teased Tom.

“ Do you know of another? Is Bertha——”

“ No, no, dear; don't get excited, Kate. I merely meant that the air seems full of it—of a sort of suppressed emotional——”

“ Suppressed!” interrupted Kate, savagely. “ If anything of that sort has been suppressed, Tom, I wonder what you would call an expression of it, and I do believe that you are responsible for more than half of it all.”

“ Don't be rough, dear; I may be driven to some tender straits myself, if you are cross. Come, smooth out your brow, and let me escort you down to dinner; the bell has rung.”

Kate followed him to the banquet-hall of the Dandolo, and ate her dinner with rather pensive reflections. She loved Venice, and regretted leaving it, perhaps never to return. But a *table-d'hôte* dinner is not a very good place for the indulging of sentiment. It never ceased to be interesting to her to watch the peculiarities of the ever coming and going tourists, especially when they were not Americans nor English. This night, among other groups, she noticed two ladies and three gentlemen talking Italian. All had an air of distinction, one of the gentlemen being very handsome. He was a most animated talker, and appeared to have so much to say that he scarcely paid due attention to the conversation of his companions. They, in turn, perhaps in self-

defence, carried on active discourse without always listening to him. Mrs. Thorne twice happened to look him directly in the eyes, and was the second time annoyed by the consciousness that he was aware of the fact, and wished her to be. She did not again look in that direction during the course of the dinner. She had often, for the girls, resented the stares of foreigners, but never imagined being troubled on her own account.

Dinner over Kate remembered having left a guide-book on the table in the reading-room. She feared some one had picked it up but went thither hoping to find it. The book was there and also a new illustrated London journal. Mrs. Thorne took it up, pausing a while to look over its pages. Soon after Miss Bilton and Doctor Bruce arrived. A moment later hurried footsteps echoed across the marble hall, and the distinguished-looking gentleman whom Kate had noticed precipitated himself into the room; no other verb can so well describe his entrance; but once well over the threshold he stopped erect, looked quickly about, then with the elegant grace of a stage courtier, he tripped across the apartment and fell on his knees before Mrs. Thorne. So quick were his movements that while Tom and Miss Bilton stood open-mouthed, unable to believe their eyes, the lordly "swell" was pouring forth an ardent declaration of love in about equal parts of liquid Italian and astonishing English. He had just uttered an

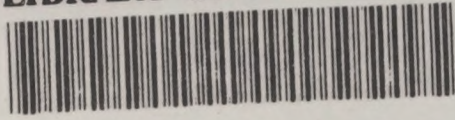
impassioned cry of, "Oh! gracious lady, why must thou went?" when a second man pounced in almost as alert and elegant as the first. The first sprang to his feet as the second reached his side, taking the arm of Mrs. Thorne's adorer and exclaiming: "A thousand pardons, madam. He is quite harmless; but I don't see how he escaped us after dinner"—then, as the gentleman in question became suddenly all absorbed in a boat visible from the window, this latest comer explained briefly that this was Prince D——, of a most illustrious Roman house. He was travelling slowly toward Aix les Bains with his wife, mother, and attendants. It was needless to add that he was irresponsible and given to love-making, without the usual preliminary acquaintance. When this statement had been most courteously given, the twain withdrew, the elder one warbling a strain from an opera, but turning at the door to bestow on Mrs. Thorne one more look of unutterable adoration. Poor Mrs. Thorne! She sank trembling into a chair. Tom began to laugh. She burst into tears. He hurried her to her room, and to his credit, be it said, he never after described that scene. Sometimes, when sorely tempted, he would just whisper, "Why must thou went?" and laugh himself half into a fit.

And now that Mrs. Thorne's party has divided itself up in this fashion of two by two nothing remains for reader or writer but to withdraw. The rôle of eavesdropper is undignified.

It is enough to say that Harriet wore for her bridal wreath the orange blossoms of Pallanza; that somewhat later Dorothy's docile parents welcomed Heath as a son-in-law; and that Mrs. Florida Pollock considered and consented.

THE END.

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