A TRAMP ABROAD

PART 4

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CHAPTER XXII

THE BLACK FOREST—A GRANDEE AND HIS FAMILY—THE WEALTHY NABOB—A NEW STANDARD OF WEALTH—SKELETON FOR A NEW NOVEL—TRYING SITUATION—THE COMMON COUNCIL—CHOOSING A NEW MEMBER STUDYING NATURAL HISTORY—THE ANT A FRAUD—ECCENTRICITIES OF THE ANT—HIS DECEIT AND IGNORANCE—A GERMAN DISH—BOILED ORANGES.

From Baden-Baden we made the customary trip into the Black Forest. We were on foot most of the time. One cannot describe those noble woods, nor the feeling with which they inspire him. A feature of the feeling, however, is a deep sense of contentment; another feature of it is a buoyant, boyish gladness; and a third and very conspicuous feature of it is one's sense of the remoteness of the work-day world and his entire emancipation from it and its affairs.

Those woods stretch unbroken over a vast region; and everywhere they are such dense woods, and so still, and so piney and fragrant. The stems of the trees are trim and straight, and in many places all the ground is hidden for miles under a thick cushion of moss of a vivid green color, with not a decayed or ragged spot in its surface, and not a fallen leaf or twig to mar its immaculate tidiness. A rich cathedral gloom pervades the pillared aisles; so the stray flecks of sunlight that strike a trunk here and a bough yonder are strongly accented, and when they strike the moss they fairly seem to burn. But the weirdest effect, and the most enchanting is that produced by the diffused light of the low afternoon sun; no single ray is able to pierce its way in, then, but the diffused light takes color from moss and foliage, and pervades the place like a faint, green-tinted mist, the theatrical fire of fairyland. The suggestion of mystery and the supernatural which haunts the forest at all times is intensified by this unearthly glow.

We found the Black Forest farmhouses and villages all that the Black Forest stories have pictured them. The first genuine specimen which we came upon was the mansion of a rich farmer and member of the Common Council of the parish or district. He was an important personage in the land and so was his wife also, of course.

His daughter was the "catch" of the region, and she may be already entering into immortality as the heroine of one of Auerbach's novels, for all I know. We shall see, for if he puts her in I shall recognize her by her Black Forest clothes, and her burned complexion, her plump figure, her fat hands, her dull expression, her gentle spirit, her generous feet, her bonnetless head, and the plaited tails of hemp-colored hair hanging down her back.

The house was big enough for a hotel; it was a hundred feet long and fifty wide, and ten feet high, from ground to eaves; but from the eaves to the comb of the mighty roof was as much as forty feet, or maybe even more. This roof was of ancient mud-colored straw thatch a foot thick, and was covered all over, except in a few trifling spots, with a thriving and luxurious growth of green vegetation, mainly moss. The mossless spots were places where repairs had been made by the insertion of bright new masses of yellow straw. The eaves projected far down, like sheltering, hospitable wings. Across the gable that fronted the road, and about ten feet above the ground, ran a narrow porch, with a wooden railing; a row of small windows filled with very small panes looked upon the porch. Above were two or three other little windows, one clear up under the sharp apex of the roof. Before the ground-floor door was a huge pile of manure. The door of the second-story room on the side of the house was open, and occupied by the rear elevation of a cow. Was this probably the drawing-room? All of the front half of the house from the ground up seemed to be occupied by the people, the cows, and the chickens, and all the rear half by draught-animals and hay. But the chief feature, all around this house, was the big heaps of manure.

We became very familiar with the fertilizer in the Forest. We fell unconsciously into the habit of judging of a man's station in life by this outward and eloquent sign. Sometimes we said, "Here is a poor devil, this is manifest." When we saw a stately accumulation, we said, "Here is a banker." When we encountered a country-seat surrounded by an Alpine pomp of manure, we said, "Doubtless a duke lives here."

The importance of this feature has not been properly magnified in the Black Forest stories. Manure is evidently the Black-Forester's main treasure—his coin, his jewel, his pride, his Old Master, his ceramics, his bric-a-brac, his darling, his title to public consideration, envy, veneration, and his first solicitude when he gets ready to make his will. The true Black Forest novel, if it is ever written, will be skeletoned somewhat in this way:

SKELETON FOR A BLACK FOREST NOVEL

Rich old farmer, named Huss.

Has inherited great wealth of manure, and by diligence has added to it. It is double-starred in Baedeker. The Black forest artist paints it—his masterpiece. The king comes to see it. Gretchen Huss, daughter and heiress. Paul Hoch, young neighbor, suitor for Gretchen's hand—ostensibly; he really wants the manure.

Hoch has a good many cart-loads of the Black Forest currency himself, and therefore is a good catch; but he is sordid, mean, and without sentiment, whereas Gretchen is all sentiment and poetry. Hans Schmidt, young neighbor, full of sentiment, full of poetry, loves Gretchen, Gretchen loves him. But he has no manure. Old Huss forbids him in the house. His heart breaks, he goes away to die in the woods, far from the cruel world—for he says, bitterly, "What is man, without manure?"

Paul Hoch comes to old Huss and says, "I am at last as rich as you required—come and view the pile." Old Huss views it and says, "It is sufficient—take her and be happy,"—meaning Gretchen.

Wedding party assembled in old Huss's drawing-room. Hoch placid and content, Gretchen weeping over her hard fate. Enter old Huss's head bookkeeper. Huss says fiercely, "I gave you three weeks to find out why your books don't balance, and to prove that you are not a defaulter; the time is up—find me the missing property or you go to prison as a thief." Bookkeeper: "I have found it." "Where?" Bookkeeper (sternly—tragically): "In the bridegroom's pile!—behold the thief—see him blench and tremble!" [Sensation.] Paul Hoch: "Lost, lost!"—falls over the cow in a swoon and is handcuffed. Gretchen: "Saved!" Falls over the calf in a swoon of joy, but is caught in the arms of Hans Schmidt, who springs in at that moment. Old Huss: "What, you here, varlet? Unhand the maid and quit the place." Hans (still supporting the insensible girl): "Never! Cruel old man, know that I come with claims which even you cannot despise."

Huss: "What? Name them."

Hans: "Listen then. The world has forsaken me, I forsook the world, I wandered in the solitude of the forest, longing for death but finding none. I fed upon roots, and in my bitterness I dug for the bitterest, loathing the sweeter kind. Digging, three days agone, I struck a manure mine!—a Golconda, a limitless Bonanza, of solid manure! I can buy you all, and have mountain ranges of manure left! Ha-ha, now thou smilest a smile!" [Immense sensation.] Exhibition of specimens from the mine. Old Huss (enthusiastically): "Wake her up, shake her up, noble young man, she is yours!" Wedding takes place on the spot; bookkeeper restored to his office and emoluments; Paul Hoch led off to jail. The Bonanza king of the Black Forest lives to a good old age, blessed with the love of his wife and of his twenty-seven children, and the still sweeter envy of everybody around.

We took our noon meal of fried trout one day at the Plow Inn, in a very pretty village (Ottenhoefen), and then went into the public room to rest and smoke. There we found nine or ten Black Forest grandees assembled around a table. They were the Common Council of the parish. They had gathered there at eight o'clock that morning to elect a new member, and they had now been drinking beer four hours at the new member's expense.

They were men of fifty or sixty years of age, with grave good-natured faces, and were all dressed in the costume made familiar to us by the Black Forest stories; broad, round-topped black felt hats with the brims curled up all round; long red waistcoats with large metal buttons, black alpaca coats with the waists up between the shoulders. There were no speeches, there was but little talk, there were no frivolities; the Council filled themselves gradually, steadily, but surely, with beer, and conducted themselves with sedate decorum, as became men of position, men of influence, men of manure.

We had a hot afternoon tramp up the valley, along the grassy bank of a rushing stream of clear water, past farmhouses, water-mills, and no end of wayside crucifixes and saints and Virgins. These crucifixes, etc., are set up in memory of departed friends, by survivors, and are almost as frequent as telegraph-poles are in other lands.

We followed the carriage-road, and had our usual luck; we traveled under a beating sun, and always saw the shade leave the shady places before we could get to them. In all our wanderings we seldom managed to strike a piece of road at its time for being shady. We had a particularly hot time of it on that particular afternoon, and with no comfort but what we could get out of the fact that the peasants at work away up on the steep mountainsides above our heads were even worse off than we were. By and by it became impossible to endure the intolerable glare and heat any longer; so we struck across the ravine and entered the deep cool twilight of the forest, to hunt for what the guide-book called the "old road."

We found an old road, and it proved eventually to be the right one, though we followed it at the time with the conviction that it was the wrong one. If it was the wrong one there could be no use in hurrying; therefore we did not hurry, but sat down frequently on the soft moss and enjoyed the restful quiet and shade of the forest solitudes. There had been distractions in the carriage-road—school-children, peasants, wagons, troops of pedestrianizing students from all over Germany—but we had the old road to ourselves.

Now and then, while we rested, we watched the laborious ant at his work. I found nothing new in him—certainly nothing to change my opinion of him. It seems to me that in the matter of intellect the ant must be a strangely overrated bird. During many summers, now, I have watched him, when I ought to have been in better business, and I have not yet come across a living ant that seemed to have any more sense than a dead one. I refer to the ordinary ant, of course; I have had no experience of those wonderful Swiss and African ones which vote, keep drilled armies, hold slaves, and dispute about religion. Those particular ants may be all that the naturalist paints them, but I am persuaded that the average ant is a sham. I admit his industry, of course; he is the hardest-working creature in the world—when anybody is looking—but his leather-headedness is the point I make against him. He goes out foraging, he makes a capture, and then what does he do? Go home? No—he goes anywhere but home. He doesn't know where home is. His home may be only three feet away—no matter, he can't find it. He makes his capture, as I have said; it is generally something which can be of no sort of use to himself or anybody else; it is usually seven times bigger than it ought to be; he hunts out the awkwardest place to take hold of it; he lifts it bodily up in the air by main force, and starts; not toward home, but in the opposite direction;

not calmly and wisely, but with a frantic haste which is wasteful of his strength; he fetches up against a pebble, and instead of going around it, he climbs over it backward dragging his booty after him, tumbles down on the other side, jumps up in a passion, kicks the dust off his clothes, moistens his hands, grabs his property viciously, yanks it this way, then that, shoves it ahead of him a moment, turns tail and lugs it after him another moment, gets madder and madder, then presently hoists it into the air and goes tearing away in an entirely new direction; comes to a weed; it never occurs to him to go around it; no, he must climb it; and he does climb it, dragging his worthless property to the top—which is as bright a thing to do as it would be for me to carry a sack of flour from Heidelberg to Paris by way of Strasburg steeple; when he gets up there he finds that that is not the place; takes a cursory glance at the scenery and either climbs down again or tumbles down, and starts off once more—as usual, in a new direction. At the end of half an hour, he fetches up within six inches of the place he started from and lays his burden down; meantime he has been over all the ground for two yards around, and climbed all the weeds and pebbles he came across. Now he wipes the sweat from his brow, strokes his limbs, and then marches aimlessly off, in as violently a hurry as ever. He does not remember to have ever seen it before; he looks around to see which is not the way home, grabs his bundle and starts; he goes through the same adventures he had before; finally stops to rest, and a friend comes along. Evidently the friend remarks that a last year's grasshopper leg is a very noble acquisition, and inquires where he got it.

Evidently the proprietor does not remember exactly where he did get it, but thinks he got it "around here somewhere." Evidently the friend contracts to help him freight it home. Then, with a judgment peculiarly antic (pun not intended), they take hold of opposite ends of that grasshopper leg and begin to tug with all their might in opposite directions. Presently they take a rest and confer together. They decide that something is wrong, they can't make out what. Then they go at it again, just as before. Same result. Mutual recriminations follow. Evidently each accuses the other of being an obstructionist. They lock themselves together and chew each other's jaws for a while; then they roll and tumble on the ground till one loses a horn or a leg and has to haul off for repairs. They make up and go to work again in the same old insane way, but the crippled ant is at a disadvantage; tug as he may, the other one drags off the booty and him at the end of it. Instead of giving up, he hangs on, and gets his shins bruised against every obstruction that comes in the way. By and by, when that grasshopper leg has been dragged all over the same old ground once more, it is finally dumped at about the spot where it originally lay, the two perspiring ants inspect it thoughtfully and decide that dried grasshopper legs are a poor sort of property after all, and then each starts off in a different direction to see if he can't find an old nail or something else that is heavy enough to afford entertainment and at the same time valueless enough to make an ant want to own it.

There in the Black Forest, on the mountainside, I saw an ant go through with such a performance as this with a dead spider of fully ten times his own weight. The spider was not quite dead, but too far gone to resist. He had a round body the size of a pea. The little ant—observing that I was noticing—turned him on his back, sunk his fangs into his throat, lifted him into the air and started vigorously off with him, stumbling over little pebbles, stepping on the spider's legs and tripping himself up, dragging him backward, shoving him bodily ahead, dragging him up stones six inches high instead of going around them, climbing weeds twenty times his own height and jumping from their summits—and finally leaving him in the middle of the road to be confiscated by any other fool of an ant that wanted him. I measured the ground which this ass traversed, and arrived at the conclusion that what he had accomplished inside of twenty minutes would constitute some such job as this—relatively speaking—for a man; to wit: to strap two eight-hundred-pound horses together, carry them eighteen hundred feet, mainly over (not around) boulders averaging six feet high, and in the course of the journey climb up and jump from the top of one precipice like Niagara, and three steeples, each a hundred and twenty feet high; and then put the horses down, in an exposed place, without anybody to watch them, and go off to indulge in some other idiotic miracle for vanity's sake.

Science has recently discovered that the ant does not lay up anything for winter use. This will knock him out of literature, to some extent. He does not work, except when people are looking, and only then when the observer has a green, naturalistic look, and seems to be taking notes. This amounts to deception, and will injure him for the Sunday-schools. He has not judgment enough to know what is good to eat from what isn't. This amounts to ignorance, and will impair the world's respect for him. He cannot stroll around a stump and find his way home again. This amounts to idiocy, and once the damaging fact is established, thoughtful people will cease to look up to him, the sentimental will cease to fondle him. His vaunted

industry is but a vanity and of no effect, since he never gets home with anything he starts with. This disposes of the last remnant of his reputation and wholly destroys his main usefulness as a moral agent, since it will make the sluggard hesitate to go to him any more. It is strange, beyond comprehension, that so manifest a humbug as the ant has been able to fool so many nations and keep it up so many ages without being found out.

The ant is strong, but we saw another strong thing, where we had not suspected the presence of much muscular power before. A toadstool—that vegetable which springs to full growth in a single night—had torn loose and lifted a matted mass of pine needles and dirt of twice its own bulk into the air, and supported it there, like a column supporting a shed. Ten thousand toadstools, with the right purchase, could lift a man, I suppose. But what good would it do?

All our afternoon's progress had been uphill. About five or half past we reached the summit, and all of a sudden the dense curtain of the forest parted and we looked down into a deep and beautiful gorge and out over a wide panorama of wooded mountains with their summits shining in the sun and their glade-furrowed sides dimmed with purple shade. The gorge under our feet—called Allerheiligen—afforded room in the grassy level at its head for a cozy and delightful human nest, shut away from the world and its botherations, and consequently the monks of the old times had not failed to spy it out; and here were the brown and comely ruins of their church and convent to prove that priests had as fine an instinct seven hundred years ago in ferreting out the choicest nooks and corners in a land as priests have today.

A big hotel crowds the ruins a little, now, and drives a brisk trade with summer tourists. We descended into the gorge and had a supper which would have been very satisfactory if the trout had not been boiled. The Germans are pretty sure to boil a trout or anything else if left to their own devices. This is an argument of some value in support of the theory that they were the original colonists of the wild islands of the coast of Scotland. A schooner laden with oranges was wrecked upon one of those islands a few years ago, and the gentle savages rendered the captain such willing assistance that he gave them as many oranges as they wanted. Next day he asked them how they liked them. They shook their heads and said:

"Baked, they were tough; and even boiled, they warn't things for a hungry man to hanker after."

We went down the glen after supper. It is beautiful—a mixture of sylvan loveliness and craggy wildness. A limpid torrent goes whistling down the glen, and toward the foot of it winds through a narrow cleft between lofty precipices and hurls itself over a succession of falls. After one passes the last of these he has a backward glimpse at the falls which is very pleasing—they rise in a seven-stepped stairway of foamy and glittering cascades, and make a picture which is as charming as it is unusual.

CHAPTER XXIII

OFF FOR A DAY'S TRAMP—TRAMPING AND TALKING—STORY TELLING—DENTISTRY IN CAMP—NICODEMUS DODGE—SEEKING A SITUATION—A BUTT FOR JOKES—JIMMY FINN'S SKELETON—DESCENDING A FARM—UNEXPECTED NOTORIETY.

We were satisfied that we could walk to Oppenau in one day, now that we were in practice; so we set out the next morning after breakfast determined to do it. It was all the way downhill, and we had the loveliest summer weather for it. So we set the pedometer and then stretched away on an easy, regular stride, down through the cloven forest, drawing in the fragrant breath of the morning in deep refreshing draughts, and wishing we might never have anything to do forever but walk to Oppenau and keep on doing it and then doing it over again.

Now, the true charm of pedestrianism does not lie in the walking, or in the scenery, but in the talking. The walking is good to time the movement of the tongue by, and to keep the blood and the brain stirred up and active; the scenery and the woodsy smells are good to bear in upon a man an unconscious and unobtrusive charm and solace to eye and soul and sense; but the supreme pleasure comes from the talk. It is no matter whether one talks wisdom or nonsense, the case is the same, the bulk of the enjoyment lies in the wagging of the gladsome jaw and the flapping of the sympathetic ear.

And what motley variety of subjects a couple of people will casually rake over in the course of a day's tramp! There being no constraint, a change of subject is always in order, and so a body is not likely to keep pegging at a single topic until it grows tiresome. We discussed everything we knew, during the first fifteen or twenty minutes, that morning, and then branched out into the glad, free, boundless realm of the things we were not certain about.

Harris said that if the best writer in the world once got the slovenly habit of doubling up his "haves" he could never get rid of it while he lived. That is to say, if a man gets the habit of saying "I should have liked to have known more about it" instead of saying simply and sensibly, "I should have liked to know more about it," that man's disease is incurable. Harris said that his sort of lapse is to be found in every copy of every newspaper that has ever been printed in English, and in almost all of our books. He said he had observed it in Kirkham's grammar and in Macaulay. Harris believed that milk-teeth are commoner in men's mouths than those "doubled-up haves."

I do not know that there have not been moments in the course of the present session when I should have been very glad to have accepted the proposal of my noble friend, and to have exchanged parts in some of our evenings of work.—[From a Speech of the English Chancellor of the Exchequer, August, 1879.]

That changed the subject to dentistry. I said I believed the average man dreaded tooth-pulling more than amputation, and that he would yell quicker under the former operation than he would under the latter. The philosopher Harris said that the average man would not yell in either case if he had an audience. Then he continued:

"When our brigade first went into camp on the Potomac, we used to be brought up standing, occasionally, by an ear-splitting howl of anguish. That meant that a soldier was getting a tooth pulled in a tent. But the surgeons soon changed that; they instituted open-air dentistry. There never was a howl afterward—that is, from the man who was having the tooth pulled. At the daily dental hour there would always be about five hundred soldiers gathered together in the neighborhood of that dental chair waiting to see the performance—and help; and the moment the surgeon took a grip on the candidate's tooth and began to lift, every one of those five hundred rascals would clap his hand to his jaw and begin to hop around on one leg and howl with all the lungs he had! It was enough to raise your hair to hear that variegated and enormous unanimous caterwaul burst out!

With so big and so derisive an audience as that, a sufferer wouldn't emit a sound though you pulled his head off. The surgeons said that pretty often a patient was compelled to laugh, in the midst of his pangs, but that they had never caught one crying out, after the open-air exhibition was instituted."

Dental surgeons suggested doctors, doctors suggested death, death suggested skeletons—and so, by a logical process the conversation melted out of one of these subjects and into the next, until the topic of skeletons raised up Nicodemus Dodge out of the deep grave in my memory where he had lain buried and forgotten for twenty-five years. When I was a boy in a printing-office in Missouri, a loose-jointed, long-legged, tow-headed, jeans-clad countrified cub of about sixteen lounged in one day, and without removing his hands from the depths of his trousers pockets or taking off his faded ruin of a slouch hat, whose broken rim hung limp and ragged about his eyes and ears like a bug-eaten cabbage leaf, stared indifferently around, then leaned his hip against the editor's table, crossed his mighty brogans, aimed at a distant fly from a crevice in his upper teeth, laid him low, and said with composure:

"Whar's the boss?"

"I am the boss," said the editor, following this curious bit of architecture wonderingly along up to its clock-face with his eye.

"Don't want anybody fur to learn the business, 'tain't likely?"

"Well, I don't know. Would you like to learn it?"

"Pap's so po' he cain't run me no mo', so I want to git a show somers if I kin, 'taint no diffunce what—I'm strong and hearty, and I don't turn my back on no kind of work, hard nur soft."

"Do you think you would like to learn the printing business?"

"Well, I don't re'ly k'yer a durn what I do learn, so's I git a chance fur to make my way. I'd jist as soon learn print'n's anything."

"Can you read?"

"Yes—middlin'."

"Write?"

"Well, I've seed people could lay over me thar."

"Cipher?"

"Not good enough to keep store, I don't reckon, but up as fur as twelve-times-twelve I ain't no slouch. 'Tother side of that is what gits me."

"Where is your home?"

"I'm f'm old Shelby."

"What's your father's religious denomination?"

"Him? Oh, he's a blacksmith."

"No, no—I don't mean his trade. What's his religious denomination?"

"Oh—I didn't understand you befo'. He's a Freemason."

"No, no, you don't get my meaning yet. What I mean is, does he belong to any church?"

"Now you're talkin'! Couldn't make out what you was a-tryin' to git through yo' head no way. B'long to a church! Why, boss, he's ben the pizenest kind of Free-will Babtis' for forty year. They ain't no pizener ones 'n what he is. Mighty good man, pap is. Everybody says that. If they said any diffrunt they wouldn't say it whar I wuz—not much they wouldn't."

"What is your own religion?"

"Well, boss, you've kind o' got me, there—and yit you hain't got me so mighty much, nuther. I think 't if a feller he'ps another feller when he's in trouble, and don't cuss, and don't do no mean things, nur noth'n' he ain' no business to do, and don't spell the Saviour's name with a little g, he ain't runnin' no resks—he's about as saift as he b'longed to a church."

"But suppose he did spell it with a little g—what then?"

"Well, if he done it a-purpose, I reckon he wouldn't stand no chance—he oughtn't to have no chance, anyway, I'm most rotten certain 'bout that."

"What is your name?"

"Nicodemus Dodge."

"I think maybe you'll do, Nicodemus. We'll give you a trial, anyway."

"All right."

"When would you like to begin?"

"Now."

So, within ten minutes after we had first glimpsed this nondescript he was one of us, and with his coat off and hard at it.

Beyond that end of our establishment which was furthest from the street, was a deserted garden, pathless, and thickly grown with the bloomy and villainous "jimpson" weed and its common friend the stately sunflower. In the midst of this mournful spot was a decayed and aged little "frame" house with but one room, one window, and no ceiling—it had been a smoke-house a generation before. Nicodemus was given this lonely and ghostly den as a bedchamber.

The village smarties recognized a treasure in Nicodemus, right away—a butt to play jokes on. It was easy to see that he was inconceivably green and confiding. George Jones had the glory of perpetrating the first joke on him; he gave him a cigar with a firecracker in it and winked to the crowd to come; the thing exploded presently and swept away the bulk of Nicodemus's eyebrows and eyelashes. He simply said:

"I consider them kind of seeg'yars dangersome,"—and seemed to suspect nothing. The next evening Nicodemus waylaid George and poured a bucket of ice-water over him.

One day, while Nicodemus was in swimming, Tom McElroy "tied" his clothes. Nicodemus made a bonfire of Tom's by way of retaliation.

A third joke was played upon Nicodemus a day or two later—he walked up the middle aisle of the village church, Sunday night, with a staring handbill pinned between his shoulders. The joker spent the remainder of the night, after church, in the cellar of a deserted house, and Nicodemus sat on the cellar door till toward breakfast-time to make sure that the prisoner remembered that if any noise was made, some rough treatment would be the consequence. The cellar had two feet of stagnant water in it, and was bottomed with six inches of soft mud.

But I wander from the point. It was the subject of skeletons that brought this boy back to my recollection. Before a very long time had elapsed, the village smarties began to feel an uncomfortable consciousness of not having made a very shining success out of their attempts on the simpleton from "old Shelby." Experimenters grew scarce and chary. Now the young doctor came to the rescue. There was delight and applause when he proposed to scare Nicodemus to death, and explained how he was going to do it. He had a noble new skeleton—the skeleton of the late and only local celebrity, Jimmy Finn, the village drunkard—a grisly piece of property which he had bought of Jimmy Finn himself, at auction, for fifty dollars, under great competition, when Jimmy lay very sick in the tan-yard a fortnight before his death. The fifty dollars had gone promptly for whiskey and had considerably hurried up the change of ownership in the skeleton. The doctor would put Jimmy Finn's skeleton in Nicodemus's bed!

This was done—about half past ten in the evening. About Nicodemus's usual bedtime—midnight—the village jokers came creeping stealthily through the jimpson weeds and sunflowers toward the lonely frame den. They reached the window and peeped in. There sat the long-legged pauper, on his bed, in a very short shirt, and nothing more; he was dangling his legs contentedly back and forth, and wheezing the music of "Camptown Races" out of a paper-overlaid comb which he was pressing against his mouth; by him lay a new jewsharp, a new top, and solid india-rubber ball, a handful of painted marbles, five pounds of "store" candy, and a well-gnawed slab of gingerbread as big and as thick as a volume of sheet-music. He had sold the skeleton to a traveling quack for three dollars and was enjoying the result!

Just as we had finished talking about skeletons and were drifting into the subject of fossils, Harris and I heard a shout, and glanced up the steep hillside. We saw men and women standing away up there looking frightened, and there was a bulky object tumbling and floundering down the steep slope toward us. We

got out of the way, and when the object landed in the road it proved to be a boy. He had tripped and fallen, and there was nothing for him to do but trust to luck and take what might come.

When one starts to roll down a place like that, there is no stopping till the bottom is reached. Think of people farming on a slant which is so steep that the best you can say of it—if you want to be fastidiously accurate—is, that it is a little steeper than a ladder and not quite so steep as a mansard roof. But that is what they do. Some of the little farms on the hillside opposite Heidelberg were stood up "edgeways." The boy was wonderfully jolted up, and his head was bleeding, from cuts which it had got from small stones on the way.

Harris and I gathered him up and set him on a stone, and by that time the men and women had scampered down and brought his cap.

Men, women, and children flocked out from neighboring cottages and joined the crowd; the pale boy was petted, and stared at, and commiserated, and water was brought for him to drink and bathe his bruises in. And such another clatter of tongues! All who had seen the catastrophe were describing it at once, and each trying to talk louder than his neighbor; and one youth of a superior genius ran a little way up the hill, called attention, tripped, fell, rolled down among us, and thus triumphantly showed exactly how the thing had been done.

Harris and I were included in all the descriptions; how we were coming along; how Hans Gross shouted; how we looked up startled; how we saw Peter coming like a cannon-shot; how judiciously we got out of the way, and let him come; and with what presence of mind we picked him up and brushed him off and set him on a rock when the performance was over. We were as much heroes as anybody else, except Peter, and were so recognized; we were taken with Peter and the populace to Peter's mother's cottage, and there we ate bread and cheese, and drank milk and beer with everybody, and had a most sociable good time; and when we left we had a handshake all around, and were receiving and shouting back leb' wohl's until a turn in the road separated us from our cordial and kindly new friends forever.

We accomplished our undertaking. At half past eight in the evening we stepped into Oppenau, just eleven hours and a half out of Allerheiligen—one hundred and forty-six miles. This is the distance by pedometer; the guide-book and the Imperial Ordinance maps make it only ten and a quarter—a surprising blunder, for these two authorities are usually singularly accurate in the matter of distances.

CHAPTER XXIV

SUNDAY ON THE CONTINENT—A DAY OF REST—AN INCIDENT AT CHURCH—AN OBJECT OF SYMPATHY—ROYALTY AT CHURCH—PUBLIC GROUNDS CONCERT—POWER AND GRADES OF MUSIC—HIRING A COURIER.

That was a thoroughly satisfactory walk—and the only one we were ever to have which was all the way downhill. We took the train next morning and returned to Baden-Baden through fearful fogs of dust. Every seat was crowded, too; for it was Sunday, and consequently everybody was taking a "pleasure" excursion. Hot! the sky was an oven—and a sound one, too, with no cracks in it to let in any air. An odd time for a pleasure excursion, certainly!

Sunday is the great day on the continent—the free day, the happy day. One can break the Sabbath in a hundred ways without committing any sin.

We do not work on Sunday, because the commandment forbids it; the Germans do not work on Sunday, because the commandment forbids it. We rest on Sunday, because the commandment requires it; the Germans rest on Sunday because the commandment requires it. But in the definition of the word "rest" lies all the difference. With us, its Sunday meaning is, stay in the house and keep still; with the Germans its Sunday and week-day meanings seem to be the same—rest the tired part, and never mind the other parts of the frame; rest the tired part, and use the means best calculated to rest that particular part. Thus: If one's duties have kept him in the house all the week, it will rest him to be out on Sunday; if his duties have required him to read weighty and serious matter all the week, it will rest him to read light matter on Sunday; if his occupation has busied him with death and funerals all the week, it will rest him to go to the theater Sunday night and put in two or three hours laughing at a comedy; if he is tired with digging ditches or felling trees all the week, it will rest him to lie quiet in the house on Sunday; if the hand, the arm, the brain, the tongue, or any other member, is fatigued with inanition, it is not to be rested by addeding a day's inanition; but if a member is fatigued with exertion, inanition is the right rest for it. Such is the way in which the Germans seem to define the word "rest"; that is to say, they rest a member by recreating, recuperating, restoring its forces. But our definition is less broad. We all rest alike on Sunday—by secluding ourselves and keeping still, whether that is the surest way to rest the most of us or not. The Germans make the actors, the preachers, etc., work on Sunday. We encourage the preachers, the editors, the printers, etc., to work on Sunday, and imagine that none of the sin of it falls upon us; but I do not know how we are going to get around the fact that if it is wrong for the printer to work at his trade on

Sunday it must be equally wrong for the preacher to work at his, since the commandment has made no exception in his favor. We buy Monday morning's paper and read it, and thus encourage Sunday printing. But I shall never do it again.

The Germans remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, by abstaining from work, as commanded; we keep it holy by abstaining from work, as commanded, and by also abstaining from play, which is not commanded. Perhaps we constructively break the command to rest, because the resting we do is in most cases only a name, and not a fact.

These reasonings have sufficed, in a measure, to mend the rent in my conscience which I made by traveling to Baden-Baden that Sunday. We arrived in time to furbish up and get to the English church before services began. We arrived in considerable style, too, for the landlord had ordered the first carriage that could be found, since there was no time to lose, and our coachman was so splendidly liveried that we were probably mistaken for a brace of stray dukes; why else were we honored with a pew all to ourselves, away up among the very elect at the left of the chancel? That was my first thought. In the pew directly in front of us sat an elderly lady, plainly and cheaply dressed; at her side sat a young lady with a very sweet face, and she also was quite simply dressed; but around us and about us were clothes and jewels which it would do anybody's heart good to worship in.

I thought it was pretty manifest that the elderly lady was embarrassed at finding herself in such a conspicuous place arrayed in such cheap apparel; I began to feel sorry for her and troubled about her. She tried to seem very busy with her prayer-book and her responses, and unconscious that she was out of place, but I said to myself, "She is not succeeding—there is a distressed tremulousness in her voice which betrays increasing embarrassment." Presently the Savior's name was mentioned, and in her flurry she lost her head completely, and rose and courtesied, instead of making a slight nod as everybody else did. The sympathetic blood surged to my temples and I turned and gave those fine birds what I intended to be a beseeching look, but my feelings got the better of me and changed it into a look which said, "If any of you pets of fortune laugh at this poor soul, you will deserve to be flayed for it." Things went from bad to worse, and I shortly found myself mentally taking the unfriended lady under my protection. My mind was wholly upon her. I forgot all about the sermon. Her embarrassment took stronger and stronger hold upon her; she got to snapping the lid of her smelling-bottle—it made a loud, sharp sound, but in her trouble she snapped and snapped away, unconscious of what she was doing. The last extremity was reached when the collection-plate began its rounds; the moderate people threw in pennies, the nobles and the rich contributed silver, but she laid a twenty-mark gold piece upon the book-rest before her with a sounding slap! I said to myself, "She has parted with all her little hoard to buy the consideration of these unpitying people—it is a sorrowful spectacle." I did not venture to look around this time; but as the service closed, I said to myself, "Let them laugh, it is their opportunity; but at the door of this church they shall see her step into our fine carriage with us, and our gaudy coachman shall drive her home."

Then she rose—and all the congregation stood while she walked down the aisle. She was the Empress of Germany!

No—she had not been so much embarrassed as I had supposed. My imagination had got started on the wrong scent, and that is always hopeless; one is sure, then, to go straight on misinterpreting everything, clear through to the end. The young lady with her imperial Majesty was a maid of honor—and I had been taking her for one of her boarders, all the time.

This is the only time I have ever had an Empress under my personal protection; and considering my inexperience, I wonder I got through with it so well. I should have been a little embarrassed myself if I had known earlier what sort of a contract I had on my hands.

We found that the Empress had been in Baden-Baden several days. It is said that she never attends any but the English form of church service.

I lay abed and read and rested from my journey's fatigues the remainder of that Sunday, but I sent my agent to represent me at the afternoon service, for I never allow anything to interfere with my habit of attending church twice every Sunday.

There was a vast crowd in the public grounds that night to hear the band play the "Fremersberg." This piece tells one of the old legends of the region; how a great noble of the Middle Ages got lost in the mountains, and wandered about with his dogs in a violent storm, until at last the faint tones of a monastery bell, calling the monks to a midnight service, caught his ear, and he followed the direction the sounds came from and was saved. A beautiful air ran through the music, without ceasing, sometimes loud and strong, sometimes so soft that it could hardly be distinguished—but it was always there; it swung grandly along through the shrill whistling of the storm-wind, the rattling patter of the rain, and the boom and crash of the thunder; it wound soft and low through the lesser sounds, the distant ones, such as the throbbing of the convent bell, the melodious winding of the hunter's horn, the distressed bayings of his dogs, and the solemn chanting of the monks; it rose again, with a jubilant ring, and mingled itself with the country songs and dances of the peasants assembled in the convent hall to cheer up the rescued huntsman while he ate his supper. The instruments imitated all these sounds with a marvelous exactness. More than one man started to raise his umbrella when the storm burst forth and the sheets of mimic rain came driving by; it was hardly possible to keep from putting your hand to your hat when the fierce wind began

to rage and shriek; and it was not possible to refrain from starting when those sudden and charmingly real thunder-crashes were let loose.

I suppose the "Fremersberg" is a very low-grade music; I know, indeed, that it must be low-grade music, because it delighted me, warmed me, moved me, stirred me, uplifted me, enraptured me, that I was full of cry all the time, and mad with enthusiasm. My soul had never had such a scouring out since I was born. The solemn and majestic chanting of the monks was not done by instruments, but by men's voices; and it rose and fell, and rose again in that rich confusion of warring sounds, and pulsing bells, and the stately swing of that ever-present enchanting air, and it seemed to me that nothing but the very lowest of low-grade music could be so divinely beautiful. The great crowd which the "Fremersberg" had called out was another evidence that it was low-grade music; for only the few are educated up to a point where high-grade music gives pleasure. I have never heard enough classic music to be able to enjoy it. I dislike the opera because I want to love it and can't.

I suppose there are two kinds of music—one kind which one feels, just as an oyster might, and another sort which requires a higher faculty, a faculty which must be assisted and developed by teaching. Yet if base music gives certain of us wings, why should we want any other? But we do. We want it because the higher and better like it. We want it without giving it the necessary time and trouble; so we climb into that upper tier, that dress-circle, by a lie; we pretend we like it. I know several of that sort of people—and I propose to be one of them myself when I get home with my fine European education.

And then there is painting. What a red rag is to a bull, Turner's "Slave Ship" was to me, before I studied art. Mr. Ruskin is educated in art up to a point where that picture throws him into as mad an ecstasy of pleasure as it used to throw me into one of rage, last year, when I was ignorant. His cultivation enables him—and me, now—to see water in that glaring yellow mud, and natural effects in those lurid explosions of mixed smoke and flame, and crimson sunset glories; it reconciles him—and me, now—to the floating of iron cable-chains and other unfloatable things; it reconciles us to fishes swimming around on top of the mud—I mean the water. The most of the picture is a manifest impossibility—that is to say, a lie; and only rigid cultivation can enable a man to find truth in a lie. But it enabled Mr. Ruskin to do it, and it has enabled me to do it, and I am thankful for it. A Boston newspaper reporter went and took a look at the Slave Ship floundering about in that fierce conflagration of reds and yellows, and said it reminded him of a tortoise-shell cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes. In my then uneducated state, that went home to my non-cultivation, and I thought here is a man with an unobstructed eye. Mr. Ruskin would have said: This person is an ass. That is what I would say, now.

Months after this was written, I happened into the National Gallery in London, and soon became so fascinated with the Turner pictures that I could hardly get away from the place. I went there often,

afterward, meaning to see the rest of the gallery, but the Turner spell was too strong; it could not be shaken off. However, the Turners which attracted me most did not remind me of the Slave Ship.

However, our business in Baden-Baden this time, was to join our courier. I had thought it best to hire one, as we should be in Italy, by and by, and we did not know the language. Neither did he. We found him at the hotel, ready to take charge of us. I asked him if he was "all fixed." He said he was. That was very true. He had a trunk, two small satchels, and an umbrella. I was to pay him fifty-five dollars a month and railway fares. On the continent the railway fare on a trunk is about the same it is on a man. Couriers do not have to pay any board and lodging. This seems a great saving to the tourist—at first. It does not occur to the tourist that somebody pays that man's board and lodging. It occurs to him by and by, however, in one of his lucid moments.

CHAPTER XXV

LUCERNE—BEAUTY OF ITS LAKE—THE WILD CHAMOIS—A GREAT ERROR EXPOSED—METHODS OF HUNTING THE CHAMOIS—BEAUTIES OF LUCERNE—THE ALPENSTOCK—MARKING ALPENSTOCKS—GUESSING AT NATIONALITIES—AN AMERICAN PARTY—AN UNEXPECTED ACQUAINTANCE—GETTING MIXED UP—FOLLOWING BLIND TRAILS—A HAPPY HALF—HOUR—DEFEAT AND REVENGE.

Next morning we left in the train for Switzerland, and reached Lucerne about ten o'clock at night. The first discovery I made was that the beauty of the lake had not been exaggerated. Within a day or two I made another discovery. This was, that the lauded chamois is not a wild goat; that it is not a horned animal; that it is not shy; that it does not avoid human society; and that there is no peril in hunting it.

The chamois is a black or brown creature no bigger than a mustard seed; you do not have to go after it, it comes after you; it arrives in vast herds and skips and scampers all over your body, inside your clothes; thus it is not shy, but extremely sociable; it is not afraid of man, on the contrary, it will attack him; its bite

is not dangerous, but neither is it pleasant; its activity has not been overstated—if you try to put your finger on it, it will skip a thousand times its own length at one jump, and no eye is sharp enough to see where it lights. A great deal of romantic nonsense has been written about the Swiss chamois and the perils of hunting it, whereas the truth is that even women and children hunt it, and fearlessly; indeed, everybody hunts it; the hunting is going on all the time, day and night, in bed and out of it. It is poetic foolishness to hunt it with a gun; very few people do that; there is not one man in a million who can hit it with a gun. It is much easier to catch it than it is to shoot it, and only the experienced chamois-hunter can do either. Another common piece of exaggeration is that about the "scarcity" of the chamois. It is the reverse of scarce. Droves of one hundred million chamois are not unusual in the Swiss hotels. Indeed, they are so numerous as to be a great pest. The romancers always dress up the chamois-hunter in a fanciful and picturesque costume, whereas the best way to hunt this game is to do it without any costume at all.

The article of commerce called chamois-skin is another fraud; nobody could skin a chamois, it is too small. The creature is a humbug in every way, and everything which has been written about it is sentimental exaggeration. It was no pleasure to me to find the chamois out, for he had been one of my pet illusions; all my life it had been my dream to see him in his native wilds some day, and engage in the adventurous sport of chasing him from cliff to cliff. It is no pleasure to me to expose him, now, and destroy the reader's delight in him and respect for him, but still it must be done, for when an honest writer discovers an imposition it is his simple duty to strip it bare and hurl it down from its place of honor, no matter who suffers by it; any other course would render him unworthy of the public confidence.

Lucerne is a charming place. It begins at the water's edge, with a fringe of hotels, and scrambles up and spreads itself over two or three sharp hills in a crowded, disorderly, but picturesque way, offering to the eye a heaped-up confusion of red roofs, quaint gables, dormer windows, toothpick steeples, with here and there a bit of ancient embattled wall bending itself over the ridges, worm-fashion, and here and there an old square tower of heavy masonry. And also here and there a town clock with only one hand—a hand which stretches across the dial and has no joint in it; such a clock helps out the picture, but you cannot tell the time of day by it. Between the curving line of hotels and the lake is a broad avenue with lamps and a double rank of low shade trees. The lake-front is walled with masonry like a pier, and has a railing, to keep people from walking overboard. All day long the vehicles dash along the avenue, and nurses, children, and tourists sit in the shade of the trees, or lean on the railing and watch the schools of fishes darting about in the clear water, or gaze out over the lake at the stately border of snow-hooded mountain peaks. Little pleasure steamers, black with people, are coming and going all the time; and everywhere one sees young girls and young men paddling about in fanciful rowboats, or skimming along by the help of sails when there is any wind. The front rooms of the hotels have little railed balconies, where one may take his private luncheon in calm, cool comfort and look down upon this busy and pretty scene and enjoy it without having to do any of the work connected with it.

Most of the people, both male and female, are in walking costume, and carry alpenstocks. Evidently, it is not considered safe to go about in Switzerland, even in town, without an alpenstock. If the tourist forgets and comes down to breakfast without his alpenstock he goes back and gets it, and stands it up in the corner. When his touring in Switzerland is finished, he does not throw that broomstick away, but lugs it home with him, to the far corners of the earth, although this costs him more trouble and bother than a baby or a courier could. You see, the alpenstock is his trophy; his name is burned upon it; and if he has climbed a hill, or jumped a brook, or traversed a brickyard with it, he has the names of those places burned upon it, too.

Thus it is his regimental flag, so to speak, and bears the record of his achievements. It is worth three francs when he buys it, but a bonanza could not purchase it after his great deeds have been inscribed upon it. There are artisans all about Switzerland whose trade it is to burn these things upon the alpenstock of the tourist. And observe, a man is respected in Switzerland according to his alpenstock. I found I could get no attention there, while I carried an unbranded one. However, branding is not expected, so I soon remedied that. The effect upon the next detachment of tourists was very marked. I felt repaid for my trouble.

Half of the summer horde in Switzerland is made up of English people; the other half is made up of many nationalities, the Germans leading and the Americans coming next. The Americans were not as numerous as I had expected they would be.

The seven-thirty table d'hôte at the great Schweitzerhof furnished a mighty array and variety of nationalities, but it offered a better opportunity to observe costumes than people, for the multitude sat at immensely long tables, and therefore the faces were mainly seen in perspective; but the breakfasts were served at small round tables, and then if one had the fortune to get a table in the midst of the assemblage he could have as many faces to study as he could desire. We used to try to guess out the nationalities, and generally succeeded tolerably well. Sometimes we tried to guess people's names; but that was a failure; that is a thing which probably requires a good deal of practice. We presently dropped it and gave our efforts to less difficult particulars. One morning I said:

"There is an American party."

Harris said:

"Yes—but name the state."

I named one state, Harris named another. We agreed upon one thing, however—that the young girl with the party was very beautiful, and very tastefully dressed. But we disagreed as to her age. I said she was eighteen, Harris said she was twenty. The dispute between us waxed warm, and I finally said, with a pretense of being in earnest:

"Well, there is one way to settle the matter—I will go and ask her."

Harris said, sarcastically, "Certainly, that is the thing to do. All you need to do is to use the common formula over here: go and say, 'I'm an American!' Of course she will be glad to see you."

Then he hinted that perhaps there was no great danger of my venturing to speak to her.

I said, "I was only talking—I didn't intend to approach her, but I see that you do not know what an intrepid person I am. I am not afraid of any woman that walks. I will go and speak to this young girl."

The thing I had in my mind was not difficult. I meant to address her in the most respectful way and ask her to pardon me if her strong resemblance to a former acquaintance of mine was deceiving me; and when she should reply that the name I mentioned was not the name she bore, I meant to beg pardon again, most respectfully, and retire. There would be no harm done. I walked to her table, bowed to the gentleman, then turned to her and was about to begin my little speech when she exclaimed:

"I knew I wasn't mistaken—I told John it was you! John said it probably wasn't, but I knew I was right. I said you would recognize me presently and come over; and I'm glad you did, for I shouldn't have felt much flattered if you had gone out of this room without recognizing me. Sit down, sit down—how odd it is—you are the last person I was ever expecting to see again."

This was a stupefying surprise. It took my wits clear away, for an instant. However, we shook hands cordially all around, and I sat down. But truly this was the tightest place I ever was in. I seemed to vaguely remember the girl's face, now, but I had no idea where I had seen it before, or what name belonged with it. I immediately tried to get up a diversion about Swiss scenery, to keep her from launching into topics that might betray that I did not know her, but it was of no use, she went right along upon matters which interested her more:

"Oh dear, what a night that was, when the sea washed the forward boats away—do you remember it?"

"Oh, don't I!" said I—but I didn't. I wished the sea had washed the rudder and the smoke-stack and the captain away—then I could have located this questioner.

"And don't you remember how frightened poor Mary was, and how she cried?"

"Indeed I do!" said I. "Dear me, how it all comes back!"

I fervently wished it would come back—but my memory was a blank. The wise way would have been to frankly own up; but I could not bring myself to do that, after the young girl had praised me so for recognizing her; so I went on, deeper and deeper into the mire, hoping for a chance clue but never getting one. The Unrecognizable continued, with vivacity:

"Do you know, George married Mary, after all?"

"Why, no! Did he?"

"Indeed he did. He said he did not believe she was half as much to blame as her father was, and I thought he was right. Didn't you?"

"Of course he was. It was a perfectly plain case. I always said so."

"Why, no you didn't!—at least that summer."

"Oh, no, not that summer. No, you are perfectly right about that. It was the following winter that I said it."

"Well, as it turned out, Mary was not in the least to blame—it was all her father's fault—at least his and old Darley's."

It was necessary to say something—so I said:

"I always regarded Darley as a troublesome old thing."

"So he was, but then they always had a great affection for him, although he had so many eccentricities. You remember that when the weather was the least cold, he would try to come into the house."

I was rather afraid to proceed. Evidently Darley was not a man—he must be some other kind of animal—possibly a dog, maybe an elephant. However, tails are common to all animals, so I ventured to say:

"And what a tail he had!"

"One! He had a thousand!"

This was bewildering. I did not quite know what to say, so I only said:

"Yes, he was rather well fixed in the matter of tails."

"For a negro, and a crazy one at that, I should say he was," said she.

It was getting pretty sultry for me. I said to myself, "Is it possible she is going to stop there, and wait for me to speak? If she does, the conversation is blocked. A negro with a thousand tails is a topic which a person cannot talk upon fluently and instructively without more or less preparation. As to diving rashly into such a vast subject—"

But here, to my gratitude, she interrupted my thoughts by saying:

"Yes, when it came to tales of his crazy woes, there was simply no end to them if anybody would listen. His own quarters were comfortable enough, but when the weather was cold, the family were sure to have his company—nothing could keep him out of the house. But they always bore it kindly because he had saved Tom's life, years before. You remember Tom?

"Oh, perfectly. Fine fellow he was, too."

"Yes he was. And what a pretty little thing his child was!"

"You may well say that. I never saw a prettier child."

"I used to delight to pet it and dandle it and play with it."

"So did I."

"You named it. What was that name? I can't call it to mind."

It appeared to me that the ice was getting pretty thin, here. I would have given something to know what the child's was. However, I had the good luck to think of a name that would fit either sex—so I brought it out:

"I named it Frances."

"From a relative, I suppose? But you named the one that died, too—one that I never saw. What did you call that one?"

I was out of neutral names, but as the child was dead and she had never seen it, I thought I might risk a name for it and trust to luck. Therefore I said:

"I called that one Thomas Henry."

She said, musingly:

"That is very singular ... very singular."

I sat still and let the cold sweat run down. I was in a good deal of trouble, but I believed I could worry through if she wouldn't ask me to name any more children. I wondered where the lightning was going to strike next. She was still ruminating over that last child's title, but presently she said:

"I have always been sorry you were away at the time—I would have had you name my child."

"Your child! Are you married?"

"I have been married thirteen years."

"Christened, you mean."

`"No, married. The youth by your side is my son."

"It seems incredible—even impossible. I do not mean any harm by it, but would you mind telling me if you are any over eighteen?—that is to say, will you tell me how old you are?"

"I was just nineteen the day of the storm we were talking about. That was my birthday."

That did not help matters, much, as I did not know the date of the storm. I tried to think of some non-committal thing to say, to keep up my end of the talk, and render my poverty in the matter of

reminiscences as little noticeable as possible, but I seemed to be about out of non-committal things. I was about to say, "You haven't changed a bit since then"—but that was risky. I thought of saying, "You have improved ever so much since then"—but that wouldn't answer, of course. I was about to try a shy at the weather, for a saving change, when the girl slipped in ahead of me and said:

"How I have enjoyed this talk over those happy old times—haven't you?"

"I never have spent such a half-hour in all my life before!" said I, with emotion; and I could have added, with a near approach to truth, "and I would rather be scalped than spend another one like it." I was holily grateful to be through with the ordeal, and was about to make my good-bys and get out, when the girl said:

"But there is one thing that is ever so puzzling to me."

"Why, what is that?"

"That dead child's name. What did you say it was?"

Here was another balmy place to be in: I had forgotten the child's name; I hadn't imagined it would be needed again. However, I had to pretend to know, anyway, so I said:

"Joseph William."

The youth at my side corrected me, and said:

"No, Thomas Henry."

I thanked him—in words—and said, with trepidation:

"O yes—I was thinking of another child that I named—I have named a great many, and I get them confused—this one was named Henry Thompson—"

"Thomas Henry," calmly interposed the boy.

I thanked him again—strictly in words—and stammered out:

"Thomas Henry—yes, Thomas Henry was the poor child's name. I named him for Thomas—er—Thomas Carlyle, the great author, you know—and Henry—er—er—Henry the Eighth. The parents were very grateful to have a child named Thomas Henry."

"That makes it more singular than ever," murmured my beautiful friend.

"Does it? Why?"

"Because when the parents speak of that child now, they always call it Susan Amelia."

That spiked my gun. I could not say anything. I was entirely out of verbal obliquities; to go further would be to lie, and that I would not do; so I simply sat still and suffered—sat mutely and resignedly there, and sizzled—for I was being slowly fried to death in my own blushes. Presently the enemy laughed a happy laugh and said:

"I have enjoyed this talk over old times, but you have not. I saw very soon that you were only pretending to know me, and so as I had wasted a compliment on you in the beginning, I made up my mind to punish you. And I have succeeded pretty well. I was glad to see that you knew George and Tom and Darley, for I had never heard of them before and therefore could not be sure that you had; and I was glad to learn the names of those imaginary children, too. One can get quite a fund of information out of you if one goes at it cleverly. Mary and the storm, and the sweeping away of the forward boats, were facts—all the rest was fiction. Mary was my sister; her full name was Mary ———. Now do you remember me?"

"Yes," I said, "I do remember you now; and you are as hard-headed as you were thirteen years ago in that ship, else you wouldn't have punished me so. You haven't changed your nature nor your person, in any

way at all; you look as young as you did then, you are just as beautiful as you were then, and you have transmitted a deal of your comeliness to this fine boy. There—if that speech moves you any, let's fly the flag of truce, with the understanding that I am conquered and confess it."

All of which was agreed to and accomplished, on the spot. When I went back to Harris, I said:

"Now you see what a person with talent and address can do."

"Excuse me, I see what a person of colossal ignorance and simplicity can do. The idea of your going and intruding on a party of strangers, that way, and talking for half an hour; why I never heard of a man in his right mind doing such a thing before. What did you say to them?"

"I never said any harm. I merely asked the girl what her name was."

"I don't doubt it. Upon my word I don't. I think you were capable of it. It was stupid in me to let you go over there and make such an exhibition of yourself. But you know I couldn't really believe you would do such an inexcusable thing. What will those people think of us? But how did you say it?—I mean the manner of it. I hope you were not abrupt."

"No, I was careful about that. I said, 'My friend and I would like to know what your name is, if you don't mind.'"

"No, that was not abrupt. There is a polish about it that does you infinite credit. And I am glad you put me in; that was a delicate attention which I appreciate at its full value. What did she do?"

"She didn't do anything in particular. She told me her name."

"Simply told you her name. Do you mean to say she did not show any surprise?"

"Well, now I come to think, she did show something; maybe it was surprise; I hadn't thought of that—I took it for gratification."

"Oh, undoubtedly you were right; it must have been gratification; it could not be otherwise than gratifying to be assaulted by a stranger with such a question as that. Then what did you do?"

"I offered my hand and the party gave me a shake."

"I saw it! I did not believe my own eyes, at the time. Did the gentleman say anything about cutting your throat?"

"No, they all seemed glad to see me, as far as I could judge."

"And do you know, I believe they were. I think they said to themselves, 'Doubtless this curiosity has got away from his keeper—let us amuse ourselves with him.' There is no other way of accounting for their facile docility. You sat down. Did they ask you to sit down?"

"No, they did not ask me, but I suppose they did not think of it."

"You have an unerring instinct. What else did you do? What did you talk about?"

"Well, I asked the girl how old she was."

"Undoubtedly. Your delicacy is beyond praise. Go on, go on—don't mind my apparent misery—I always look so when I am steeped in a profound and reverent joy. Go on—she told you her age?"

"Yes, she told me her age, and all about her mother, and her grandmother, and her other relations, and all about herself."

"Did she volunteer these statistics?"

"No, not exactly that. I asked the questions and she answered them."

"This is divine. Go on—it is not possible that you forgot to inquire into her politics?"

"No, I thought of that. She is a democrat, her husband is a republican, and both of them are Baptists."

"Her husband? Is that child married?"

"She is not a child. She is married, and that is her husband who is there with her."

"Has she any children."

"Yes—seven and a half."

"That is impossible."

"No, she has them. She told me herself."

"Well, but seven and a half? How do you make out the half? Where does the half come in?"

"There is a child which she had by another husband—not this one but another one—so it is a stepchild, and they do not count in full measure."

"Another husband? Has she another husband?"

"Yes, four. This one is number four."

"I don't believe a word of it. It is impossible, upon its face. Is that boy there her brother?"

"No, that is her son. He is her youngest. He is not as old as he looked; he is only eleven and a half."

"These things are all manifestly impossible. This is a wretched business. It is a plain case: they simply took your measure, and concluded to fill you up. They seem to have succeeded. I am glad I am not in the mess; they may at least be charitable enough to think there ain't a pair of us. Are they going to stay here long?"

"No, they leave before noon."

"There is one man who is deeply grateful for that. How did you find out? You asked, I suppose?"

"No, along at first I inquired into their plans, in a general way, and they said they were going to be here a week, and make trips round about; but toward the end of the interview, when I said you and I would tour around with them with pleasure, and offered to bring you over and introduce you, they hesitated a little, and asked if you were from the same establishment that I was. I said you were, and then they said they had changed their mind and considered it necessary to start at once and visit a sick relative in Siberia."

"Ah, me, you struck the summit! You struck the loftiest altitude of stupidity that human effort has ever reached. You shall have a monument of jackasses' skulls as high as the Strasburg spire if you die before I do. They wanted to know I was from the same 'establishment' that you hailed from, did they? What did they mean by 'establishment'?"

"I don't know; it never occurred to me to ask."

"Well I know. They meant an asylum—an idiot asylum, do you understand? So they do think there's a pair of us, after all. Now what do you think of yourself?"

"Well, I don't know. I didn't know I was doing any harm; I didn't mean to do any harm. They were very nice people, and they seemed to like me."

Harris made some rude remarks and left for his bedroom—to break some furniture, he said. He was a singularly irascible man; any little thing would disturb his temper.

I had been well scorched by the young woman, but no matter, I took it out on Harris. One should always "get even" in some way, else the sore place will go on hurting.

CHAPTER XXVI

COMMERCE OF LUCERNE—BENEFITS OF MARTYRDOM—A BIT OF HISTORY—THE HOME OF CUCKOO CLOCKS—A SATISFACTORY REVENGE—THE ALAN WHO PUT UP AT GADSBY'S—A FORGOTTEN STORY—WANTED TO BE POSTMASTER—A TENNESSEAN AT WASHINGTON—HE CONCLUDED TO STAY A WHILE—APPLICATION OF THE STORY.

The Hofkirche is celebrated for its organ concerts. All summer long the tourists flock to that church about six o'clock in the evening, and pay their franc, and listen to the noise. They don't stay to hear all of it, but get up and tramp out over the sounding stone floor, meeting late comers who tramp in in a sounding and vigorous way. This tramping back and forth is kept up nearly all the time, and is accented by the continuous slamming of the door, and the coughing and barking and sneezing of the crowd. Meantime, the big organ is booming and crashing and thundering away, doing its best to prove that it is the biggest and best organ in Europe, and that a tight little box of a church is the most favorable place to average and appreciate its powers in. It is true, there were some soft and merciful passages occasionally, but the tramp-tramp of the tourists only allowed one to get fitful glimpses of them, so to speak. Then right away the organist would let go another avalanche.

The commerce of Lucerne consists mainly in gimcrackery of the souvenir sort; the shops are packed with Alpine crystals, photographs of scenery, and wooden and ivory carvings. I will not conceal the fact that miniature figures of the Lion of Lucerne are to be had in them. Millions of them. But they are libels upon him, every one of them. There is a subtle something about the majestic pathos of the original which the copyist cannot get. Even the sun fails to get it; both the photographer and the carver give you a dying lion, and that is all. The shape is right, the attitude is right, the proportions are right, but that indescribable something which makes the Lion of Lucerne the most mournful and moving piece of stone in the world, is wanting.

The Lion lies in his lair in the perpendicular face of a low cliff—for he is carved from the living rock of the cliff. His size is colossal, his attitude is noble. His head is bowed, the broken spear is sticking in his shoulder, his protecting paw rests upon the lilies of France. Vines hang down the cliff and wave in the wind, and a clear stream trickles from above and empties into a pond at the base, and in the smooth surface of the pond the lion is mirrored, among the water-lilies.

Around about are green trees and grass. The place is a sheltered, reposeful woodland nook, remote from noise and stir and confusion—and all this is fitting, for lions do die in such places, and not on granite pedestals in public squares fenced with fancy iron railings. The Lion of Lucerne would be impressive anywhere, but nowhere so impressive as where he is.

Martyrdom is the luckiest fate that can befall some people. Louis XVI did not die in his bed, consequently history is very gentle with him; she is charitable toward his failings, and she finds in him high virtues which are not usually considered to be virtues when they are lodged in kings. She makes him out to be a person with a meek and modest spirit, the heart of a female saint, and a wrong head. None of these qualities are kingly but the last. Taken together they make a character which would have fared harshly at the hands of history if its owner had had the ill luck to miss martyrdom. With the best intentions to do the right thing, he always managed to do the wrong one. Moreover, nothing could get the female saint out of him. He knew, well enough, that in national emergencies he must not consider how he ought to act, as a man, but how he ought to act as a king; so he honestly tried to sink the man and be the king—but it was a failure, he only succeeded in being the female saint. He was not instant in season, but out of season. He could not be persuaded to do a thing while it could do any good—he was iron, he was adamant in his stubbornness then—but as soon as the thing had reached a point where it would be positively harmful to do it, do it he would, and nothing could stop him. He did not do it because it would be harmful, but because he hoped it was not yet too late to achieve by it the good which it would have done if applied earlier. His comprehension was always a train or two behindhand. If a national toe required amputating, he could not see that it needed anything more than poulticing; when others saw that the mortification had reached the knee, he first perceived that the toe needed cutting off—so he cut it off; and he severed the leg at the knee when others saw that the disease had reached the thigh. He was good, and honest, and well meaning, in the matter of chasing national diseases, but he never could overtake one. As a private man, he would have been lovable; but viewed as a king, he was strictly contemptible.

His was a most unroyal career, but the most pitiable spectacle in it was his sentimental treachery to his Swiss guard on that memorable 10th of August, when he allowed those heroes to be massacred in his cause, and forbade them to shed the "sacred French blood" purporting to be flowing in the veins of the red-capped mob of miscreants that was raging around the palace. He meant to be kingly, but he was only the female saint once more. Some of his biographers think that upon this occasion the spirit of Saint Louis had descended upon him. It must have found pretty cramped quarters. If Napoleon the First had stood in the shoes of Louis XVI that day, instead of being merely a casual and unknown looker-on, there would be no Lion of Lucerne, now, but there would be a well-stocked Communist graveyard in Paris which would answer just as well to remember the 10th of August by.

Martyrdom made a saint of Mary Queen of Scots three hundred years ago, and she has hardly lost all of her saintship yet. Martyrdom made a saint of the trivial and foolish Marie Antoinette, and her biographers still keep her fragrant with the odor of sanctity to this day, while unconsciously proving upon almost every page they write that the only calamitous instinct which her husband lacked, she supplied—the instinct to root out and get rid of an honest, able, and loyal official, wherever she found him. The hideous but beneficent French Revolution would have been deferred, or would have fallen short of completeness, or even might not have happened at all, if Marie Antoinette had made the unwise mistake of not being born. The world owes a great deal to the French Revolution, and consequently to its two chief promoters, Louis the Poor in Spirit and his queen.

We did not buy any wooden images of the Lion, nor any ivory or ebony or marble or chalk or sugar or chocolate ones, or even any photographic slanders of him. The truth is, these copies were so common, so universal, in the shops and everywhere, that they presently became as intolerable to the wearied eye as the latest popular melody usually becomes to the harassed ear. In Lucerne, too, the wood carvings of other sorts, which had been so pleasant to look upon when one saw them occasionally at home, soon began to fatigue us. We grew very tired of seeing wooden quails and chickens picking and strutting around clock-faces, and still more tired of seeing wooden images of the alleged chamois skipping about wooden rocks, or lying upon them in family groups, or peering alertly up from behind them. The first day, I would have bought a hundred and fifty of these clocks if I had the money—and I did buy three—but on the third day the disease had run its course, I had convalesced, and was in the market once more—trying to sell. However, I had no luck; which was just as well, for the things will be pretty enough, no doubt, when I get them home.

For years my pet aversion had been the cuckoo clock; now here I was, at last, right in the creature's home; so wherever I went that distressing "HOO'hoo! HOO'hoo! HOO'hoo!" was always in my ears. For a nervous man, this was a fine state of things. Some sounds are hatefuler than others, but no sound is quite so inane, and silly, and aggravating as the "HOO'hoo" of a cuckoo clock, I think. I bought one, and am

carrying it home to a certain person; for I have always said that if the opportunity ever happened, I would do that man an ill turn.

What I meant, was, that I would break one of his legs, or something of that sort; but in Lucerne I instantly saw that I could impair his mind. That would be more lasting, and more satisfactory every way. So I bought the cuckoo clock; and if I ever get home with it, he is "my meat," as they say in the mines. I thought of another candidate—a book-reviewer whom I could name if I wanted to—but after thinking it over, I didn't buy him a clock. I couldn't injure his mind.

We visited the two long, covered wooden bridges which span the green and brilliant Reuss just below where it goes plunging and hurrahing out of the lake. These rambling, sway-backed tunnels are very attractive things, with their alcoved outlooks upon the lovely and inspiriting water. They contain two or three hundred queer old pictures, by old Swiss masters—old boss sign-painters, who flourished before the decadence of art.

The lake is alive with fishes, plainly visible to the eye, for the water is very clear. The parapets in front of the hotels were usually fringed with fishers of all ages. One day I thought I would stop and see a fish caught. The result brought back to my mind, very forcibly, a circumstance which I had not thought of before for twelve years. This one:

THE MAN WHO PUT UP AT GADSBY'S

When my odd friend Riley and I were newspaper correspondents in Washington, in the winter of '67, we were coming down Pennsylvania Avenue one night, near midnight, in a driving storm of snow, when the flash of a street-lamp fell upon a man who was eagerly tearing along in the opposite direction. "This is lucky! You are Mr. Riley, ain't you?"

Riley was the most self-possessed and solemnly deliberate person in the republic. He stopped, looked his man over from head to foot, and finally said:

"I am Mr. Riley. Did you happen to be looking for me?"

"That's just what I was doing," said the man, joyously, "and it's the biggest luck in the world that I've found you. My name is Lykins. I'm one of the teachers of the high school—San Francisco. As soon as I heard the San Francisco postmastership was vacant, I made up my mind to get it—and here I am."

"Yes," said Riley, slowly, "as you have remarked ... Mr. Lykins ... here you are. And have you got it?"

"Well, not exactly got it, but the next thing to it. I've brought a petition, signed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and all the teachers, and by more than two hundred other people. Now I want you, if you'll be so good, to go around with me to the Pacific delegation, for I want to rush this thing through and get along home."

"If the matter is so pressing, you will prefer that we visit the delegation tonight," said Riley, in a voice which had nothing mocking in it—to an unaccustomed ear.

"Oh, tonight, by all means! I haven't got any time to fool around. I want their promise before I go to bed—I ain't the talking kind, I'm the doing kind!"

"Yes ... you've come to the right place for that. When did you arrive?"

"Just an hour ago."

"When are you intending to leave?"

"For New York tomorrow evening—for San Francisco next morning."

"Just so.... What are you going to do tomorrow?"

"Do! Why, I've got to go to the President with the petition and the delegation, and get the appointment, haven't I?"

"Yes ... very true ... that is correct. And then what?"

"Executive session of the Senate at 2 P.M.—got to get the appointment confirmed—I reckon you'll grant that?"

"Yes ... yes," said Riley, meditatively, "you are right again. Then you take the train for New York in the evening, and the steamer for San Francisco next morning?"

"That's it—that's the way I map it out!"

Riley considered a while, and then said:

"You couldn't stay ... a day ... well, say two days longer?"

"Bless your soul, no! It's not my style. I ain't a man to go fooling around—I'm a man that does things, I tell you."

The storm was raging, the thick snow blowing in gusts. Riley stood silent, apparently deep in a reverie, during a minute or more, then he looked up and said:

"Have you ever heard about that man who put up at Gadsby's, once? ... But I see you haven't."

He backed Mr. Lykins against an iron fence, buttonholed him, fastened him with his eye, like the Ancient Mariner, and proceeded to unfold his narrative as placidly and peacefully as if we were all stretched comfortably in a blossomy summer meadow instead of being persecuted by a wintry midnight tempest:

"I will tell you about that man. It was in Jackson's time. Gadsby's was the principal hotel, then. Well, this man arrived from Tennessee about nine o'clock, one morning, with a black coachman and a splendid four-horse carriage and an elegant dog, which he was evidently fond of and proud of; he drove up before

Gadsby's, and the clerk and the landlord and everybody rushed out to take charge of him, but he said, 'Never mind,' and jumped out and told the coachman to wait—

said he hadn't time to take anything to eat, he only had a little claim against the government to collect, would run across the way, to the Treasury, and fetch the money, and then get right along back to Tennessee, for he was in considerable of a hurry.

"Well, about eleven o'clock that night he came back and ordered a bed and told them to put the horses up—said he would collect the claim in the morning. This was in January, you understand—January, 1834—the 3d of January—Wednesday.

"Well, on the 5th of February, he sold the fine carriage, and bought a cheap second-hand one—said it would answer just as well to take the money home in, and he didn't care for style.

"On the 11th of August he sold a pair of the fine horses—said he'd often thought a pair was better than four, to go over the rough mountain roads with where a body had to be careful about his driving—and there wasn't so much of his claim but he could lug the money home with a pair easy enough.

"On the 13th of December he sold another horse—said two warn't necessary to drag that old light vehicle with—in fact, one could snatch it along faster than was absolutely necessary, now that it was good solid winter weather and the roads in splendid condition.

"On the 17th of February, 1835, he sold the old carriage and bought a cheap second-hand buggy—said a buggy was just the trick to skim along mushy, slushy early spring roads with, and he had always wanted to try a buggy on those mountain roads, anyway.

"On the 1st August he sold the buggy and bought the remains of an old sulky—said he just wanted to see those green Tennesseans stare and gawk when they saw him come a-ripping along in a sulky—didn't believe they'd ever heard of a sulky in their lives.

"Well, on the 29th of August he sold his colored coachman—said he didn't need a coachman for a sulky—wouldn't be room enough for two in it anyway—and, besides, it wasn't every day that Providence sent a man a fool who was willing to pay nine hundred dollars for such a third-rate negro as that—been wanting to get rid of the creature for years, but didn't like to throw him away.

"Eighteen months later—that is to say, on the 15th of February, 1837—he sold the sulky and bought a saddle—said horseback-riding was what the doctor had always recommended him to take, and dog'd if he wanted to risk his neck going over those mountain roads on wheels in the dead of winter, not if he knew himself.

"On the 9th of April he sold the saddle—said he wasn't going to risk his life with any perishable saddle-girth that ever was made, over a rainy, miry April road, while he could ride bareback and know and feel he was safe—always had despised to ride on a saddle, anyway.

"On the 24th of April he sold his horse—said 'I'm just fifty-seven today, hale and hearty—it would be a pretty howdy-do for me to be wasting such a trip as that and such weather as this, on a horse, when there ain't anything in the world so splendid as a tramp on foot through the fresh spring woods and over the cheery mountains, to a man that is a man—and I can make my dog carry my claim in a little bundle, anyway, when it's collected. So tomorrow I'll be up bright and early, make my little old collection, and mosey off to Tennessee, on my own hind legs, with a rousing good-by to Gadsby's.'

"On the 22d of June he sold his dog—said 'Dern a dog, anyway, where you're just starting off on a rattling bully pleasure tramp through the summer woods and hills—perfect nuisance—chases the squirrels, barks at everything, goes a-capering and splattering around in the fords—man can't get any chance to reflect and enjoy nature—and I'd a blamed sight ruther carry the claim myself, it's a mighty sight safer; a dog's mighty uncertain in a financial way—always noticed it—well, good-by, boys—last call—I'm off for Tennessee with a good leg and a gay heart, early in the morning.'"

There was a pause and a silence—except the noise of the wind and the pelting snow. Mr. Lykins said, impatiently:

"Well?"

Riley said:

"Well,—that was thirty years ago."

"Very well, very well—what of it?"

"I'm great friends with that old patriarch. He comes every evening to tell me good-by. I saw him an hour ago—he's off for Tennessee early tomorrow morning—as usual; said he calculated to get his claim through and be off before night-owls like me have turned out of bed. The tears were in his eyes, he was so glad he was going to see his old Tennessee and his friends once more."

Another silent pause. The stranger broke it:

"Is that all?"

"That is all."

"Well, for the time of night, and the kind of night, it seems to me the story was full long enough. But what's it all for?"

"Oh, nothing in particular."

"Well, where's the point of it?"

"Oh, there isn't any particular point to it. Only, if you are not in too much of a hurry to rush off to San Francisco with that post-office appointment, Mr. Lykins, I'd advise you to 'Put Up At Gadsby's' for a spell, and take it easy. Good-by. God bless you!"

So saying, Riley blandly turned on his heel and left the astonished school-teacher standing there, a musing and motionless snow image shining in the broad glow of the street-lamp.

He never got that post-office.

To go back to Lucerne and its fishers, I concluded, after about nine hours' waiting, that the man who proposes to tarry till he sees something hook one of those well-fed and experienced fishes will find it wisdom to "put up at Gadsby's" and take it easy. It is likely that a fish has not been caught on that lake pier for forty years; but no matter, the patient fisher watches his cork there all the day long, just the same, and seems to enjoy it. One may see the fisher-loafers just as thick and contented and happy and patient all along the Seine at Paris, but tradition says that the only thing ever caught there in modern times is a thing they don't fish for at all—the recent dog and the translated cat.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE GLACIER GARDEN—EXCURSION ON THE LAKE—LIFE ON THE MOUNTAINS—A SPECIMEN TOURIST—"WHERE'RE YOU FROM?"—AN ADVERTISING DODGE—A RIGHTEOUS VERDICT—THE GUIDE-BOOK STUDENT—I BELIEVE THAT'S ALL.

Close by the Lion of Lucerne is what they call the "Glacier Garden"—and it is the only one in the world. It is on high ground. Four or five years ago, some workmen who were digging foundations for a house came upon this interesting relic of a long-departed age. Scientific men perceived in it a confirmation of their theories concerning the glacial period; so through their persuasions the little tract of ground was bought and permanently protected against being built upon. The soil was removed, and there lay the rasped and guttered track which the ancient glacier had made as it moved along upon its slow and tedious journey. This track was perforated by huge pot-shaped holes in the bed-rock, formed by the furious washing-around in them of boulders by the turbulent torrent which flows beneath all glaciers. These huge round boulders still remain in the holes; they and the walls of the holes are worn smooth by the long-continued chafing which they gave each other in those old days.

It took a mighty force to churn these big lumps of stone around in that vigorous way. The neighboring country had a very different shape, at that time—the valleys have risen up and become hills, since, and the hills have become valleys. The boulders discovered in the pots had traveled a great distance, for there is no rock like them nearer than the distant Rhone Glacier.

For some days we were content to enjoy looking at the blue lake Lucerne and at the piled-up masses of snow-mountains that border it all around—an enticing spectacle, this last, for there is a strange and fascinating beauty and charm about a majestic snow-peak with the sun blazing upon it or the moonlight softly enriching it—but finally we concluded to try a bit of excursioning around on a steamboat, and a dash on foot at the Rigi. Very well, we had a delightful trip to Fluelen, on a breezy, sunny day. Everybody sat on the upper deck, on benches, under an awning; everybody talked, laughed, and exclaimed at the wonderful scenery; in truth, a trip on that lake is almost the perfection of pleasuring.

The mountains were a never-ceasing marvel. Sometimes they rose straight up out of the lake, and towered aloft and overshadowed our pygmy steamer with their prodigious bulk in the most impressive way. Not snow-clad mountains, these, yet they climbed high enough toward the sky to meet the clouds and veil their foreheads in them. They were not barren and repulsive, but clothed in green, and restful and pleasant to the eye. And they were so almost straight-up-and-down, sometimes, that one could not imagine a man being able to keep his footing upon such a surface, yet there are paths, and the Swiss people go up and down them every day.

Sometimes one of these monster precipices had the slight inclination of the huge ship-houses in dockyards—then high aloft, toward the sky, it took a little stronger inclination, like that of a mansard roof—and perched on this dizzy mansard one's eye detected little things like martin boxes, and presently perceived that these were the dwellings of peasants—an airy place for a home, truly. And suppose a peasant should walk in his sleep, or his child should fall out of the front yard?—the friends would have a tedious long journey down out of those cloud-heights before they found the remains. And yet those far-away homes looked ever so seductive, they were so remote from the troubled world, they dozed in such an atmosphere of peace and dreams—surely no one who has learned to live up there would ever want to live on a meaner level.

We swept through the prettiest little curving arms of the lake, among these colossal green walls, enjoying new delights, always, as the stately panorama unfolded itself before us and rerolled and hid itself behind us; and now and then we had the thrilling surprise of bursting suddenly upon a tremendous white mass

like the distant and dominating Jungfrau, or some kindred giant, looming head and shoulders above a tumbled waste of lesser Alps.

Once, while I was hungrily taking in one of these surprises, and doing my best to get all I possibly could of it while it should last, I was interrupted by a young and care-free voice:

"You're an American, I think—so'm I."

He was about eighteen, or possibly nineteen; slender and of medium height; open, frank, happy face; a restless but independent eye; a snub nose, which had the air of drawing back with a decent reserve from the silky new-born mustache below it until it should be introduced; a loosely hung jaw, calculated to work easily in the sockets. He wore a low-crowned, narrow-brimmed straw hat, with a broad blue ribbon around it which had a white anchor embroidered on it in front; nobby short-tailed coat, pantaloons, vest, all trim and neat and up with the fashion; red-striped stockings, very low-quarter patent-leather shoes, tied with black ribbon; blue ribbon around his neck, wide-open collar; tiny diamond studs; wrinkleless kids; projecting cuffs, fastened with large oxidized silver sleeve-buttons, bearing the device of a dog's face—English pug. He carried a slim cane, surmounted with an English pug's head with red glass eyes. Under his arm he carried a German grammar—Otto's. His hair was short, straight, and smooth, and presently when he turned his head a moment, I saw that it was nicely parted behind. He took a cigarette out of a dainty box, stuck it into a meerschaum holder which he carried in a morocco case, and reached for my cigar. While he was lighting, I said:

"Yes—I am an American."

"I knew it—I can always tell them. What ship did you come over in?"

"Holsatia."

"We came in the Batavia—Cunard, you know. What kind of passage did you have?"

"Tolerably rough."

"So did we. Captain said he'd hardly ever seen it rougher. Where are you from?"

"New England."

"So'm I. I'm from New Bloomfield. Anybody with you?"

"Yes—a friend."

"Our whole family's along. It's awful slow, going around alone—don't you think so?"

"Rather slow."

"Ever been over here before?"

"Yes."

"I haven't. My first trip. But we've been all around—Paris and everywhere. I'm to enter Harvard next year. Studying German all the time, now. Can't enter till I know German. I know considerable French—I get along pretty well in Paris, or anywhere where they speak French. What hotel are you stopping at?"

"Schweitzerhof."

"No! is that so? I never see you in the reception-room. I go to the reception-room a good deal of the time, because there's so many Americans there. I make lots of acquaintances. I know an American as soon as I see him—and so I speak to him and make his acquaintance. I like to be always making acquaintances—don't you?"

"Lord, yes!"

"You see it breaks up a trip like this, first rate. I never got bored on a trip like this, if I can make acquaintances and have somebody to talk to. But I think a trip like this would be an awful bore, if a body couldn't find anybody to get acquainted with and talk to on a trip like this. I'm fond of talking, ain't you?

"Passionately."

"Have you felt bored, on this trip?"

"Not all the time, part of it."

"That's it!—you see you ought to go around and get acquainted, and talk. That's my way. That's the way I always do—I just go 'round, 'round, 'round and talk, talk, talk—I never get bored. You been up the Rigi yet?"

"No."

"Going?"

"I think so."

"What hotel you going to stop at?"

"I don't know. Is there more than one?"

"Three. You stop at the Schreiber—you'll find it full of Americans. What ship did you say you came over in?"

"City of Antwerp."

"German, I guess. You going to Geneva?"

"Yes."

"What hotel you going to stop at?"

"Hôtel de l'Ecu de Génève."

"Don't you do it! No Americans there! You stop at one of those big hotels over the bridge—they're packed full of Americans."

"But I want to practice my Arabic."

"Good gracious, do you speak Arabic?"

"Yes—well enough to get along."

"Why, hang it, you won't get along in Geneva—they don't speak Arabic, they speak French. What hotel are you stopping at here?"

"Hotel Pension-Beaurivage."

"Sho, you ought to stop at the Schweitzerhof. Didn't you know the Schweitzerhof was the best hotel in Switzerland?— look at your Baedeker."

"Yes, I know—but I had an idea there warn't any Americans there."

"No Americans! Why, bless your soul, it's just alive with them! I'm in the great reception-room most all the time. I make lots of acquaintances there. Not as many as I did at first, because now only the new ones stop in there—the others go right along through. Where are you from?"

"Arkansaw."

"Is that so? I'm from New England—New Bloomfield's my town when I'm at home. I'm having a mighty good time today, ain't you?"

"Divine."

"That's what I call it. I like this knocking around, loose and easy, and making acquaintances and talking. I know an American, soon as I see him; so I go and speak to him and make his acquaintance. I ain't ever bored, on a trip like this, if I can make new acquaintances and talk. I'm awful fond of talking when I can get hold of the right kind of a person, ain't you?"

"I prefer it to any other dissipation."

"That's my notion, too. Now some people like to take a book and sit down and read, and read, and read, or moon around yawping at the lake or these mountains and things, but that ain't my way; no, sir, if they like it, let 'em do it, I don't object; but as for me, talking's what I like. You been up the Rigi?"

"Yes."

"What hotel did you stop at?"

"Schreiber."

"That's the place!—I stopped there too, full of Americans, wasn't it? It always is—always is. That's what they say. Everybody says that. What ship did you come over in?"

"Ville De Paris."

"French, I reckon. What kind of a passage did ... excuse me a minute, there's some Americans I haven't seen before."

And away he went. He went uninjured, too—I had the murderous impulse to harpoon him in the back with my alpenstock, but as I raised the weapon the disposition left me; I found I hadn't the heart to kill him, he was such a joyous, innocent, good-natured numbskull.

Half an hour later I was sitting on a bench inspecting, with strong interest, a noble monolith which we were skimming by—a monolith not shaped by man, but by Nature's free great hand—a massy pyramidal rock eighty feet high, devised by Nature ten million years ago against the day when a man worthy of it should need it for his monument. The time came at last, and now this grand remembrancer bears Schiller's name in huge letters upon its face. Curiously enough, this rock was not degraded or defiled in any way. It is said that two years ago a stranger let himself down from the top of it with ropes and pulleys, and painted all over it, in blue letters bigger than those in Schiller's name, these words:

"Try Sozodont;"

"Buy Sun Stove Polish;"

"Helmbold's Buchu;"

"Try Benzaline for the Blood."

He was captured and it turned out that he was an American. Upon his trial the judge said to him:

"You are from a land where any insolent that wants to is privileged to profane and insult Nature, and, through her, Nature's God, if by so doing he can put a sordid penny in his pocket. But here the case is different. Because you are a foreigner and ignorant, I will make your sentence light; if you were a native I would deal strenuously with you. Hear and obey: —You will immediately remove every trace of your offensive work from the Schiller monument; you pay a fine of ten thousand francs; you will suffer two

years' imprisonment at hard labor; you will then be horsewhipped, tarred and feathered, deprived of your ears, ridden on a rail to the confines of the canton, and banished forever. The severest penalties are omitted in your case—not as a grace to you, but to that great republic which had the misfortune to give you birth."

The steamer's benches were ranged back to back across the deck. My back hair was mingling innocently with the back hair of a couple of ladies. Presently they were addressed by some one and I overheard this conversation:

"You are Americans, I think? So'm I."

"Yes—we are Americans."

"I knew it—I can always tell them. What ship did you come over in?"

"City of Chester."

"Oh, yes—Inman line. We came in the Batavia—Cunard you know. What kind of a passage did you have?"

"Pretty fair."

"That was luck. We had it awful rough. Captain said he'd hardly seen it rougher. Where are you from?"

"New Jersey."

"So'm I. No—I didn't mean that; I'm from New England. New Bloomfield's my place. These your children?—belong to both of you?"

"Only to one of us; they are mine; my friend is not married."

"Single, I reckon? So'm I. Are you two ladies traveling alone?"

"No—my husband is with us."

"Our whole family's along. It's awful slow, going around alone—don't you think so?"

"I suppose it must be."

"Hi, there's Mount Pilatus coming in sight again. Named after Pontius Pilate, you know, that shot the apple off of William Tell's head. Guide-book tells all about it, they say. I didn't read it—an American told me. I don't read when I'm knocking around like this, having a good time. Did you ever see the chapel where William Tell used to preach?"

"I did not know he ever preached there."

"Oh, yes, he did. That American told me so. He don't ever shut up his guide-book. He knows more about this lake than the fishes in it. Besides, they call it 'Tell's Chapel'—you know that yourself. You ever been over here before?"

"Yes."

"I haven't. It's my first trip. But we've been all around—Paris and everywhere. I'm to enter Harvard next year. Studying German all the time now. Can't enter till I know German. This book's Otto's grammar. It's a mighty good book to get the ich habe gehabt haben's out of. But I don't really study when I'm knocking around this way. If the notion takes me, I just run over my little old ich habe gehabt, du hast gehabt, er hat gehabt, wir haben gehabt, ihr haben gehabt, sie haben gehabt—kind of 'Now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep' fashion, you know, and after that, maybe I don't buckle to it for three days. It's awful undermining to the intellect, German is; you want to take it in small doses, or first you know your brains all run together, and you feel them sloshing around in your head same as so much drawn butter. But French is different; French ain't anything. I ain't any more afraid of French than a tramp's afraid of pie; I can rattle off my

little j'ai, tu as, il a, and the rest of it, just as easy as a-b-c. I get along pretty well in Paris, or anywhere where they speak French. What hotel are you stopping at?"

"The Schweitzerhof."

"No! is that so? I never see you in the big reception-room. I go in there a good deal of the time, because there's so many Americans there. I make lots of acquaintances. You been up the Rigi yet?"

"No."

"Going?"

"We think of it."

"What hotel you going to stop at?"

"I don't know."

"Well, then you stop at the Schreiber—it's full of Americans. What ship did you come over in?"

"City of Chester."

"Oh, yes, I remember I asked you that before. But I always ask everybody what ship they came over in, and so sometimes I forget and ask again. You going to Geneva?"

"Yes."

"What hotel you going to stop at?"

"We expect to stop in a pension."

"I don't hardly believe you'll like that; there's very few Americans in the pensions. What hotel are you stopping at here?"

"The Schweitzerhof."

"Oh, yes. I asked you that before, too. But I always ask everybody what hotel they're stopping at, and so I've got my head all mixed up with hotels. But it makes talk, and I love to talk. It refreshes me up so—don't it you—on a trip like this?"

"Yes—sometimes."

"Well, it does me, too. As long as I'm talking I never feel bored—ain't that the way with you?"

"Yes—generally. But there are exception to the rule."

"Oh, of course. I don't care to talk to everybody, myself. If a person starts in to jabber-jabber-jabber about scenery, and history, and pictures, and all sorts of tiresome things, I get the fan-tods mighty soon. I say 'Well, I must be going now—hope I'll see you again'—and then I take a walk. Where you from?"

"New Jersey."

"Why, bother it all, I asked you that before, too. Have you seen the Lion of Lucerne?"

"Not yet."

"Nor I, either. But the man who told me about Mount Pilatus says it's one of the things to see. It's twenty-eight feet long. It don't seem reasonable, but he said so, anyway. He saw it yesterday; said it was dying, then, so I reckon it's dead by this time. But that ain't any matter, of course they'll stuff it. Did you say the children are yours—or hers?"

"Mine."

"Oh, so you did. Are you going up the ... no, I asked you that. What ship ... no, I asked you that, too. What hotel are you ... no, you told me that. Let me see ... um .... Oh, what kind of voy ... no, we've been over that ground, too. Um ... um ... well, I believe that is all. bonjour—I am very glad to have made your acquaintance, ladies. Guten tag."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE RIGI-KULM—ITS ASCENT—STRIPPING FOR BUSINESS—A MOUNTAIN LAD—AN ENGLISH TOURIST—RAILROAD UP THE MOUNTAIN—VILLAGES AND MOUNTAIN—THE JODLERS—ABOUT ICE WATER—THE FELSENTHOR—TOO LATE—LOST IN THE FOG—THE RIGI-KULM HOTEL—THE ALPINE HORN—SUNRISE AT NIGHT.

The Rigi-Kulm is an imposing Alpine mass, six thousand feet high, which stands by itself, and commands a mighty prospect of blue lakes, green valleys, and snowy mountains—a compact and magnificent picture three hundred miles in circumference. The ascent is made by rail, or horseback, or on foot, as one may prefer. I and my agent panoplied ourselves in walking-costume, one bright morning, and started down the lake on the steamboat; we got ashore at the village of Waeggis; three-quarters of an hour distant from Lucerne. This village is at the foot of the mountain.

We were soon tramping leisurely up the leafy mule-path, and then the talk began to flow, as usual. It was twelve o'clock noon, and a breezy, cloudless day; the ascent was gradual, and the glimpses, from under

the curtaining boughs, of blue water, and tiny sailboats, and beetling cliffs, were as charming as glimpses of dreamland. All the circumstances were perfect—and the anticipations, too, for we should soon be enjoying, for the first time, that wonderful spectacle, an Alpine sunrise—the object of our journey. There was (apparently) no real need for hurry, for the guide-book made the walking-distance from Waeggis to the summit only three hours and a quarter. I say "apparently," because the guide-book had already fooled us once—about the distance from Allerheiligen to Oppenau—and for aught I knew it might be getting ready to fool us again. We were only certain as to the altitudes—we calculated to find out for ourselves how many hours it is from the bottom to the top. The summit is six thousand feet above the sea, but only forty-five hundred feet above the lake. When we had walked half an hour, we were fairly into the swing and humor of the undertaking, so we cleared for action; that is to say, we got a boy whom we met to carry our alpenstocks and satchels and overcoats and things for us; that left us free for business. I suppose we must have stopped oftener to stretch out on the grass in the shade and take a bit of a smoke than this boy was used to, for presently he asked if it had been our idea to hire him by the job, or by the year? We told him he could move along if he was in a hurry. He said he wasn't in such a very particular hurry, but he wanted to get to the top while he was young.

We told him to clear out, then, and leave the things at the uppermost hotel and say we should be along presently. He said he would secure us a hotel if he could, but if they were all full he would ask them to build another one and hurry up and get the paint and plaster dry against we arrived. Still gently chaffing us, he pushed ahead, up the trail, and soon disappeared. By six o'clock we were pretty high up in the air, and the view of lake and mountains had greatly grown in breadth and interest. We halted awhile at a little public house, where we had bread and cheese and a quart or two of fresh milk, out on the porch, with the big panorama all before us—and then moved on again.

Ten minutes afterward we met a hot, red-faced man plunging down the mountain, making mighty strides, swinging his alpenstock ahead of him, and taking a grip on the ground with its iron point to support these big strides. He stopped, fanned himself with his hat, swabbed the perspiration from his face and neck with a red handkerchief, panted a moment or two, and asked how far to Waeggis. I said three hours. He looked surprised, and said:

"Why, it seems as if I could toss a biscuit into the lake from here, it's so close by. Is that an inn, there?"

I said it was.

"Well," said he, "I can't stand another three hours, I've had enough today; I'll take a bed there."

I asked:

"Are we nearly to the top?"

"Nearly to the top? Why, bless your soul, you haven't really started, yet."

I said we would put up at the inn, too. So we turned back and ordered a hot supper, and had quite a jolly evening of it with this Englishman.

The German landlady gave us neat rooms and nice beds, and when I and my agent turned in, it was with the resolution to be up early and make the utmost of our first Alpine sunrise. But of course we were dead tired, and slept like policemen; so when we awoke in the morning and ran to the window it was already too late, because it was half past eleven. It was a sharp disappointment. However, we ordered breakfast and told the landlady to call the Englishman, but she said he was already up and off at daybreak—and swearing like mad about something or other. We could not find out what the matter was. He had asked the landlady the altitude of her place above the level of the lake, and she told him fourteen hundred and ninety-five feet. That was all that was said; then he lost his temper. He said that between ———fools and guide-books, a man could acquire ignorance enough in twenty-four hours in a country like this to last him a year. Harris believed our boy had been loading him up with misinformation; and this was probably the case, for his epithet described that boy to a dot.

We got under way about the turn of noon, and pulled out for the summit again, with a fresh and vigorous step. When we had gone about two hundred yards, and stopped to rest, I glanced to the left while I was lighting my pipe, and in the distance detected a long worm of black smoke crawling lazily up the steep mountain. Of course that was the locomotive. We propped ourselves on our elbows at once, to gaze, for we had never seen a mountain railway yet. Presently we could make out the train. It seemed incredible that that thing should creep straight up a sharp slant like the roof of a house—but there it was, and it was doing that very miracle.

In the course of a couple hours we reached a fine breezy altitude where the little shepherd huts had big stones all over their roofs to hold them down to the earth when the great storms rage. The country was wild and rocky about here, but there were plenty of trees, plenty of moss, and grass.

Away off on the opposite shore of the lake we could see some villages, and now for the first time we could observe the real difference between their proportions and those of the giant mountains at whose feet they slept. When one is in one of those villages it seems spacious, and its houses seem high and not out of proportion to the mountain that overhangs them—but from our altitude, what a change! The mountains were bigger and grander than ever, as they stood there thinking their solemn thoughts with their heads in the drifting clouds, but the villages at their feet—when the painstaking eye could trace them up and find them—were so reduced, almost invisible, and lay so flat against the ground, that the exactest simile I can devise is to compare them to ant-deposits of granulated dirt overshadowed by the huge bulk of a cathedral. The steamboats skimming along under the stupendous precipices were diminished by distance to the daintiest little toys, the sailboats and rowboats to shallops proper for fairies that keep house in the cups of lilies and ride to court on the backs of bumblebees.

Presently we came upon half a dozen sheep nibbling grass in the spray of a stream of clear water that sprang from a rock wall a hundred feet high, and all at once our ears were startled with a melodious "Lul ... l ... l l l llul-lul-LAhee-o-o-o!" pealing joyously from a near but invisible source, and recognized that we were hearing for the first time the famous Alpine Jodel in its own native wilds. And we recognized, also, that it was that sort of quaint commingling of baritone and falsetto which at home we call "Tyrolese warbling."

The jodeling (pronounced yOdling—emphasis on the O) continued, and was very pleasant and inspiriting to hear. Now the jodeler appeared—a shepherd boy of sixteen—and in our gladness and gratitude we gave him a franc to jodel some more. So he jodeled and we listened. We moved on, presently, and he generously jodeled us out of sight. After about fifteen minutes we came across another shepherd boy who was jodeling, and gave him half a franc to keep it up. He also jodeled us out of sight. After that, we found a jodeler every ten minutes; we gave the first one eight cents, the second one six cents, the third one four, the fourth one a penny, contributed nothing to Nos. 5, 6, and 7, and during the remainder of the day hired the rest of the jodelers, at a franc apiece, not to jodel any more. There is somewhat too much of the jodeling in the Alps.

About the middle of the afternoon we passed through a prodigious natural gateway called the Felsenthor, formed by two enormous upright rocks, with a third lying across the top. There was a very attractive little hotel close by, but our energies were not conquered yet, so we went on.

Three hours afterward we came to the railway-track. It was planted straight up the mountain with the slant of a ladder that leans against a house, and it seemed to us that man would need good nerves who proposed to travel up it or down it either.

During the latter part of the afternoon we cooled our roasting interiors with ice-cold water from clear streams, the only really satisfying water we had tasted since we left home, for at the hotels on the continent they merely give you a tumbler of ice to soak your water in, and that only modifies its hotness, doesn't make it cold. Water can only be made cold enough for summer comfort by being prepared in a refrigerator or a closed ice-pitcher. Europeans say ice-water impairs digestion. How do they know?—they never drink any.

At ten minutes past six we reached the Kaltbad station, where there is a spacious hotel with great verandas which command a majestic expanse of lake and mountain scenery. We were pretty well fagged out, now, but as we did not wish to miss the Alpine sunrise, we got through our dinner as quickly as possible and hurried off to bed. It was unspeakably comfortable to stretch our weary limbs between the cool, damp sheets. And how we did sleep!—for there is no opiate like Alpine pedestrianism.

In the morning we both awoke and leaped out of bed at the same instant and ran and stripped aside the window-curtains; but we suffered a bitter disappointment again: it was already half past three in the afternoon.

We dressed sullenly and in ill spirits, each accusing the other of oversleeping. Harris said if we had brought the courier along, as we ought to have done, we should not have missed these sunrises. I said he knew very well that one of us would have to sit up and wake the courier; and I added that we were having trouble enough to take care of ourselves, on this climb, without having to take care of a courier besides.

During breakfast our spirits came up a little, since we found by this guide-book that in the hotels on the summit the tourist is not left to trust to luck for his sunrise, but is roused betimes by a man who goes through the halls with a great Alpine horn, blowing blasts that would raise the dead. And there was another consoling thing: the guide-book said that up there on the summit the guests did not wait to dress much, but seized a red bed blanket and sailed out arrayed like an Indian. This was good; this would be romantic; two hundred and fifty people grouped on the windy summit, with their hair flying and their red blankets flapping, in the solemn presence of the coming sun, would be a striking and memorable spectacle. So it was good luck, not ill luck, that we had missed those other sunrises.

We were informed by the guide-book that we were now 3,228 feet above the level of the lake—therefore full two-thirds of our journey had been accomplished. We got away at a quarter past four P.M.; a hundred yards above the hotel the railway divided; one track went straight up the steep hill, the other one turned square off to the right, with a very slight grade. We took the latter, and followed it more than a mile, turned a rocky corner, and came in sight of a handsome new hotel. If we had gone on, we should have arrived at the summit, but Harris preferred to ask a lot of questions—as usual, of a man who didn't know anything—and he told us to go back and follow the other route. We did so. We could ill afford this loss of time.

We climbed and climbed; and we kept on climbing; we reached about forty summits, but there was always another one just ahead. It came on to rain, and it rained in dead earnest. We were soaked through and it was bitter cold. Next a smoky fog of clouds covered the whole region densely, and we took to the railway-ties to keep from getting lost. Sometimes we slopped along in a narrow path on the left-hand side of the track, but by and by when the fog blew aside a little and we saw that we were treading the rampart of a precipice and that our left elbows were projecting over a perfectly boundless and bottomless vacancy, we gasped, and jumped for the ties again.

The night shut down, dark and drizzly and cold. About eight in the evening the fog lifted and showed us a well-worn path which led up a very steep rise to the left. We took it, and as soon as we had got far enough from the railway to render the finding it again an impossibility, the fog shut down on us once more.

We were in a bleak, unsheltered place, now, and had to trudge right along, in order to keep warm, though we rather expected to go over a precipice, sooner or later. About nine o'clock we made an important discovery—that we were not in any path. We groped around a while on our hands and knees, but we could not find it; so we sat down in the mud and the wet scant grass to wait.

We were terrified into this by being suddenly confronted with a vast body which showed itself vaguely for an instant and in the next instant was smothered in the fog again. It was really the hotel we were after, monstrously magnified by the fog, but we took it for the face of a precipice, and decided not to try to claw up it.

We sat there an hour, with chattering teeth and quivering bodies, and quarreled over all sorts of trifles, but gave most of our attention to abusing each other for the stupidity of deserting the railway-track. We sat with our backs to the precipice, because what little wind there was came from that quarter. At some time or other the fog thinned a little; we did not know when, for we were facing the empty universe and the thinness could not show; but at last Harris happened to look around, and there stood a huge, dim, spectral

hotel where the precipice had been. One could faintly discern the windows and chimneys, and a dull blur of lights. Our first emotion was deep, unutterable gratitude, our next was a foolish rage, born of the suspicion that possibly the hotel had been visible three-quarters of an hour while we sat there in those cold puddles quarreling.

Yes, it was the Rigi-Kulm hotel—the one that occupies the extreme summit, and whose remote little sparkle of lights we had often seen glinting high aloft among the stars from our balcony away down yonder in Lucerne. The crusty portier and the crusty clerks gave us the surly reception which their kind deal out in prosperous times, but by mollifying them with an extra display of obsequiousness and servility we finally got them to show us to the room which our boy had engaged for us.

We got into some dry clothing, and while our supper was preparing we loafed forsakenly through a couple of vast cavernous drawing-rooms, one of which had a stove in it. This stove was in a corner, and densely walled around with people. We could not get near the fire, so we moved at large in the artic spaces, among a multitude of people who sat silent, smileless, forlorn, and shivering—thinking what fools they were to come, perhaps. There were some Americans and some Germans, but one could see that the great majority were English.

We lounged into an apartment where there was a great crowd, to see what was going on. It was a memento-magazine. The tourists were eagerly buying all sorts and styles of paper-cutters, marked "Souvenir of the Rigi," with handles made of the little curved horn of the ostensible chamois; there were all manner of wooden goblets and such things, similarly marked. I was going to buy a paper-cutter, but I believed I could remember the cold comfort of the Rigi-Kulm without it, so I smothered the impulse.

Supper warmed us, and we went immediately to bed—but first, as Mr. Baedeker requests all tourists to call his attention to any errors which they may find in his guide-books, I dropped him a line to inform him he missed it by just about three days. I had previously informed him of his mistake about the distance from Allerheiligen to Oppenau, and had also informed the Ordnance Depart of the German government of the same error in the imperial maps. I will add, here, that I never got any answer to those letters, or any thanks from either of those sources; and, what is still more discourteous, these corrections have not been made, either in the maps or the guide-books. But I will write again when I get time, for my letters may have miscarried.

We curled up in the clammy beds, and went to sleep without rocking. We were so sodden with fatigue that we never stirred nor turned over till the blooming blasts of the Alpine horn aroused us.

It may well be imagined that we did not lose any time. We snatched on a few odds and ends of clothing, cocooned ourselves in the proper red blankets, and plunged along the halls and out into the whistling wind bareheaded. We saw a tall wooden scaffolding on the very peak of the summit, a hundred yards away, and made for it. We rushed up the stairs to the top of this scaffolding, and stood there, above the vast outlying world, with hair flying and ruddy blankets waving and cracking in the fierce breeze.

"Fifteen minutes too late, at last!" said Harris, in a vexed voice. "The sun is clear above the horizon."

"No matter," I said, "it is a most magnificent spectacle, and we will see it do the rest of its rising anyway."

In a moment we were deeply absorbed in the marvel before us, and dead to everything else. The great cloud-barred disk of the sun stood just above a limitless expanse of tossing white-caps—so to speak—a billowy chaos of massy mountain domes and peaks draped in imperishable snow, and flooded with an opaline glory of changing and dissolving splendors, while through rifts in a black cloud-bank above the sun, radiating lances of diamond dust shot to the zenith. The cloven valleys of the lower world swam in a tinted mist which veiled the ruggedness of their crags and ribs and ragged forests, and turned all the forbidding region into a soft and rich and sensuous paradise.

We could not speak. We could hardly breathe. We could only gaze in drunken ecstasy and drink in it. Presently Harris exclaimed:

"Why—nation, it's going down!"

Perfectly true. We had missed the morning hornblow, and slept all day. This was stupefying.

Harris said:

"Look here, the sun isn't the spectacle—it's us—stacked up here on top of this gallows, in these idiotic blankets, and two hundred and fifty well-dressed men and women down here gawking up at us and not caring a straw whether the sun rises or sets, as long as they've got such a ridiculous spectacle as this to set down in their memorandum-books. They seem to be laughing their ribs loose, and there's one girl there that appears to be going all to pieces. I never saw such a man as you before. I think you are the very last possibility in the way of an ass."

"What have I done?" I answered, with heat.

"What have you done? You've got up at half past seven o'clock in the evening to see the sun rise, that's what you've done."

"And have you done any better, I'd like to know? I've always used to get up with the lark, till I came under the petrifying influence of your turgid intellect."

"You used to get up with the lark—Oh, no doubt—you'll get up with the hangman one of these days. But you ought to be ashamed to be jawing here like this, in a red blanket, on a forty-foot scaffold on top of the Alps. And no end of people down here to boot; this isn't any place for an exhibition of temper."

And so the customary quarrel went on. When the sun was fairly down, we slipped back to the hotel in the charitable gloaming, and went to bed again. We had encountered the horn-blower on the way, and he had tried to collect compensation, not only for announcing the sunset, which we did see, but for the sunrise, which we had totally missed; but we said no, we only took our solar rations on the "European plan"—pay for what you get. He promised to make us hear his horn in the morning, if we were alive.