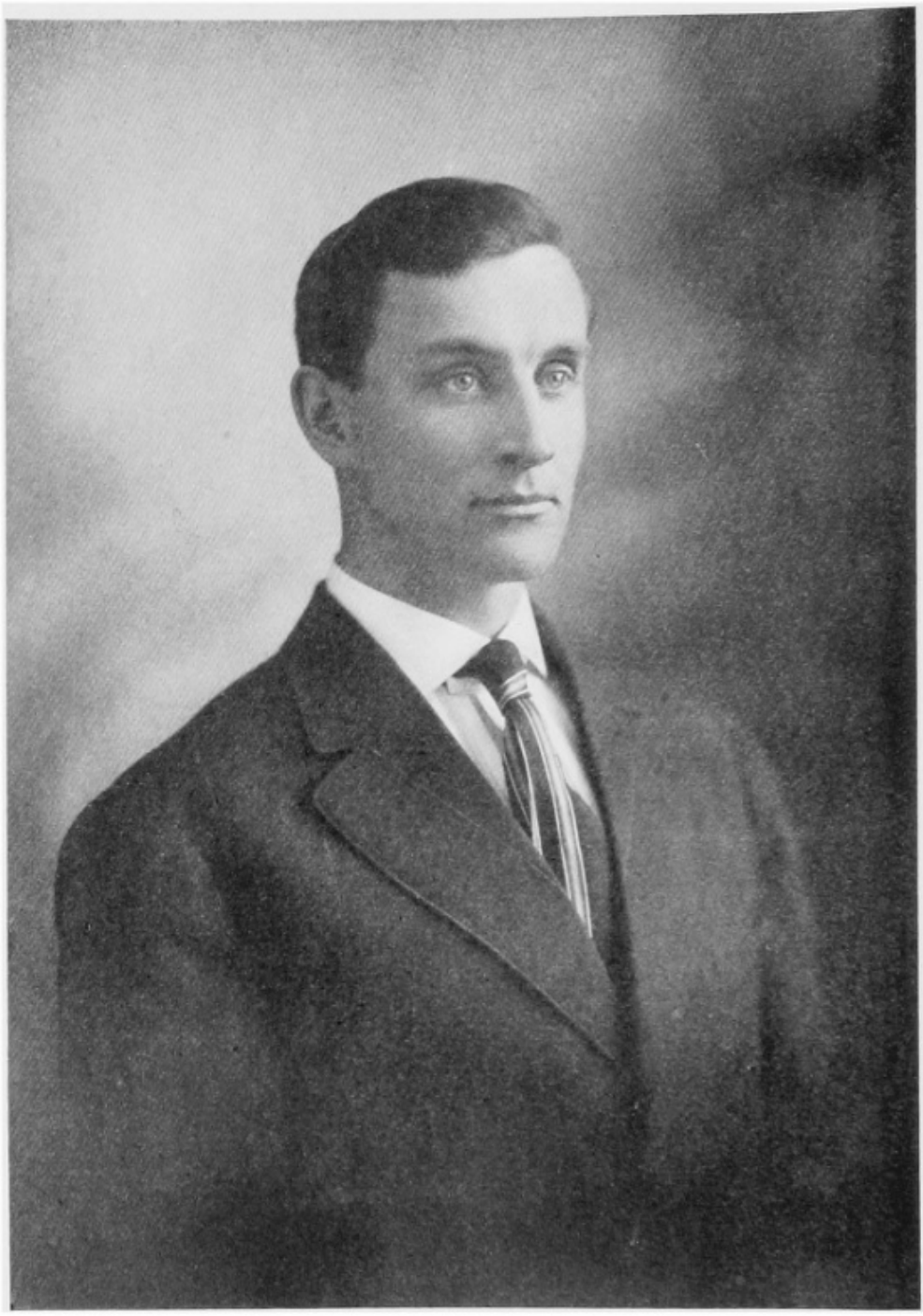
A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD



Harry A Franck

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

A NARRATIVE OF
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

BY

HARRY A. FRANCK

ILLUSTRATED WITH MORE THAN
ONE HUNDRED PHOTOGRAPHS

Pour connaitre les véritables moeurs d'un pays il faut descendre dans d'autres états; car celles des riches sont presque partout les mêmes.
JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU.

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1910

Published, March, 1910

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A FOREWORD OF EXPLANATION

Some years ago, while still an undergraduate, I chanced to be present at an informal gathering in which the conversation turned to confessions of respective aspirations.

"If only I had a few thousands," sighed a senior, "I'd make a trip around the world."

"Modest ambition!" retorted a junior, "But you'd better file it away for future reference, till you have made the money."

"With all due respect to bank accounts," I observed, "I believe a man with a bit of energy and good health could start *without* money and make a journey around the globe."

Laughter assailed the suggestion; yet as time rolled on I found myself often musing over that hastily conceived notion. Travel for pleasure has ever been considered a special privilege of the wealthy. That a man without ample funds should turn tourist seems to his fellow-beings an action little less reprehensible than an attempt to finance a corporation on worthless paper. He who would see the world, and has not been provided the means thereto by a considerate ancestor, should sit close at home until his life work is done, his fortune made. Then let him travel; when his eyes have grown too dim to catch the beauty of a distant landscape, when struggle and experience have rendered him blasé and unimpressionable.

A spirit of rebellion against this traditional notion suggested a problem worthy of investigation. What would befall the man who set out to girdle the globe as the farmer's boy sets out to seek his fortune in the neighboring city; on the alert for every opportunity, yet scornful of the fact that every foot of the way has not been paved before him? There were, of course, other motives than mere curiosity to urge me to undertake such an expedition. As a vocation I had chosen the teaching of modern languages; foreign travel promised to add to my professional preparation. Were I permitted an avocation it would be the study of social conditions; what surer

way of gaining vital knowledge of modern society than to live and work among the world's workmen in every clime? In the final reckoning, too, an inherent Wanderlust, to which, as an American, I lay no claim as a unique characteristic, was certainly not without its influence.

It was not until a year after my graduation that opportunity and my plans were ripe. I resolved to take a "year off," to wander through as much of the world as possible, and to return to my desk in the autumn, fifteen months later. As to my equipment for such a venture: I spoke French and German readily, Spanish and Italian with some fluency; I had "worked my way" on shorter journeys, had earned wages at a dozen varieties of manual labor in my own country, and had crossed the Atlantic once as a cattle man and once before the mast. It was my original intention to attempt the journey without money, without weapons, and without carrying baggage or supplies; to depend both for protection and the necessities of life on personal endeavor and the native resources of each locality. That plan I altered in one particular. I decided to carry a kodak; and to obviate the necessity of earning en route what I might choose to squander in photography, I set out with a sum that seemed sufficient to cover that extraneous expense; to be exact: with one hundred and four dollars. As was to be expected, I spent this reserve fund early, in those countries of northern Europe in which I had not planned an extensive stay. But the conditions of the self-imposed test were not thereby materially altered; for before the journey ended I had spent in photography, from my earnings, more than the original amount,— to be exact again: one hundred and thirteen dollars.

The chief object of investigation being the masses, I made no attempt during the journey to rise above the estate of the common laborer. My plan included no fixed itinerary. The details of route I left to chance and the exigencies of circumstances. Yet this random wandering brought me to as many famous spots as any victim of a "personally conducted tour" could demand; and in addition, to many corners unknown to the regular tourist. These latter it is that I have accentuated, passing lightly over well-known scenes. It is easy and, alas, too often customary for travelers to weave fanciful tales. But a story of personal observation of social conditions can

be of value only in so far as it adheres to the truth of actual experience. I have, therefore, told the facts in every particular, denying myself the privilege even of altering unimportant details to render more dramatic many a somewhat prosaic incident. The names of places, institutions, and persons appearing in the text are in every case authentic; the illustrations are chosen entirely from the photographs I took during the journey.

The question that aroused my curiosity has been answered. A man *can* girdle the globe without money, weapons, or baggage. It is in the hope that the experiences and observations of such a journey may be of interest to fireside travelers that I offer the following account of my Wanderjahr.

The author wishes to acknowledge the courtesy of *Harper's Weekly, Outing* and *The Century Magazine* in permitting him to republish from their pages certain chapters of this book.

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

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CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY RAMBLES

ON the eighteenth day of June, 1904, I boarded the ferry that plies between Detroit and the Canadian shore, and, coasting the sloping beach of verdant Belle Isle, swung off on the first stage of my journey around the globe. At the landing stage a custom officer glanced through my bag, stared perplexedly from the kodak to my laborer's garb, and with a shrug of his shoulders passed me on into the streets of the Canadian village.

A two-mile tramp brought me to the Walkerville cattle-barns, where thousands of gaunt calves are rounded up each autumn to come forth in the summer plump bulls and steers, ready for the markets of old England. From the long rows of low, brick buildings sounded now and then a deep bellow or the song or whistle of a stock feeder at his labor. I had arranged for my passage some days before, and, dropping my bag at the office, I joined the crew in the yard.

Months of well-fed inactivity had not tamed the spirits of the sleek animals that were set loose and driven one by one out of the various stables. The racing, bellowing cattle, urged slowly up the shute into the waiting cars by blaspheming stockmen, waving lance-like poles above their heads, gave to the scene the aspect of a riotous *corrida de toros*. The sun had set and darkness had fallen in the alleyways between the endless stables before the last bull was tied and the last car door locked. The shunting engine gave a warning whistle. We, who were to attend the stock en route raced to the office for our bundles, and, tossing them on top of the freight cars, climbed after them.

There were no formal leave-takings between the little stock-yard community on the shute platform and those who were "crossin' the

pond wi' the bullocks." The cars began to move amid such words of farewell as might have been exchanged with one setting out for the nearby village:

"So long, Jim, keep sober."

"Don't fergit me that tin o' Wills' Smokin', Bob."

"Give me best to Molly down on the Broomielaw, Jim," with an over-drawn wink at that worthy standing stolidly on the last car.

Jim and Bob were "boss cattle men," each of whom, though still young, had made scores of trips between the barns and the principal ports of Great Britain.

A short run down the spur brought us to the main line of the Canadian Pacific; our cars were joined to a train that was making up, and we made our way to the caboose that had been rammed on behind. Though the companies permit it, train men look with no kindly eye on the intrusion of traveling "cow-punchers" into their home and castle. As we emerged into the glare of the tail-lights, carrying our bundles and poles, a surly growl gave us greeting:

"Huh! 'Nother bloody bunch o' cattle stiffs!"

A steady run of thirty-six hours, enlivened by changes of caboose at unseemly hours, crews of increasing surliness, and a tramp along the cars at every halt to "punch 'em up" brought us to Montreal. The feeders at the railroad pens took charge of the shipment and we repaired to the "Stockyards Hotel," a hostelry pervaded from barroom to garret by the odor of cattle. Thus far our destination had been uncertain, but, not long after our arrival, information leaked out that we were to sail for Glasgow on the *Sardinian* two days later.

On that second evening, I reported at a wharf peopled by a half-hundred men whose only basis of fellowship, apparently, was pennilessness and riotous desire to secure passage to the British Isles. Twelve hundred cattle, collected from several Canadian feeding centers, were to be shipped and, besides the bosses, twenty cattle men were needed. A few, like myself, had come overland with the stock trains; but the throng was made up chiefly of those who had paid a Montreal agency $2.50 for the privilege of shipping.

Over these we were given precedence. "Farnsworth's gang" was summoned first and under the lead of our boss we filed into the shipping-office, to be greeted by a blustering officer seated before the ship's log:

"What 's yer name?"

"H. Franck."

"Ever been over before?"

"Yes, sir, on the Manchester Importer."

The name was recorded and I touched the pen to make binding the contract I had signed by proxy.

"All right! Fi' bob fer the run. Next!"

Our boss was entitled to eight men, four of whom he had already chosen. The last of these had barely given his name, when the "agency stiffs" swept aside the policeman who had held them back, and surged screaming into the office. We left them to fight for the coveted places and, stepping out into the night, groped our way on board the *Sardinian*. Even while we wandered among the empty cattle pens, built on her four decks, we clung jealously to our bundles, for the skill of the Montreal wharf-rat in "lifting bags" is proverbial among seafaring men.

Towards midnight several loads of baled straw were sent on board, and those of us who had not succeeded in hiding "turned to" to bed down the pens. Like many another transatlantic liner, the *Sardinian,* homeward bound, carried cattle in the spaces allotted to third-class passengers on the outward journey. It was not, however, for this reason, as one of my new acquaintances was convinced, that this section of the ship was known as the steerage.

The bedding completed, we threw ourselves down in the stalls and fell asleep. Long before the day broke, the entire ship's company, from the first mate to the sleepiest "stiff," was rudely awakened by a stampede of excited cattle and the blatant curses of their drivers. The stock-yard tenders had tied up alongside. In three hours our cargo was complete; the panting animals were securely tied in their stanchions; the winch had yanked up on deck the three or four bulls that, having been killed in the rush, were to be dumped in the outer bay; and we were off down the St. Lawrence. The crew fell to coiling up the shore-lines and joined the cattle men in a rousing chorus:—

> "We 're homeward bound, boys, for Glasgow town,
> Good-by, fare thee well! good-by, fare thee well!
> We 'll soon tread the Broomielaw now, my belle,
> Good-by, fare thee well; good-by."

Our passage varied little from the ordinary trip of a cattle boat. A few quarrels and an occasional free-for-all mêlée were to be expected, for the "stiffs' fo'c'stle" housed a heterogeneous com-

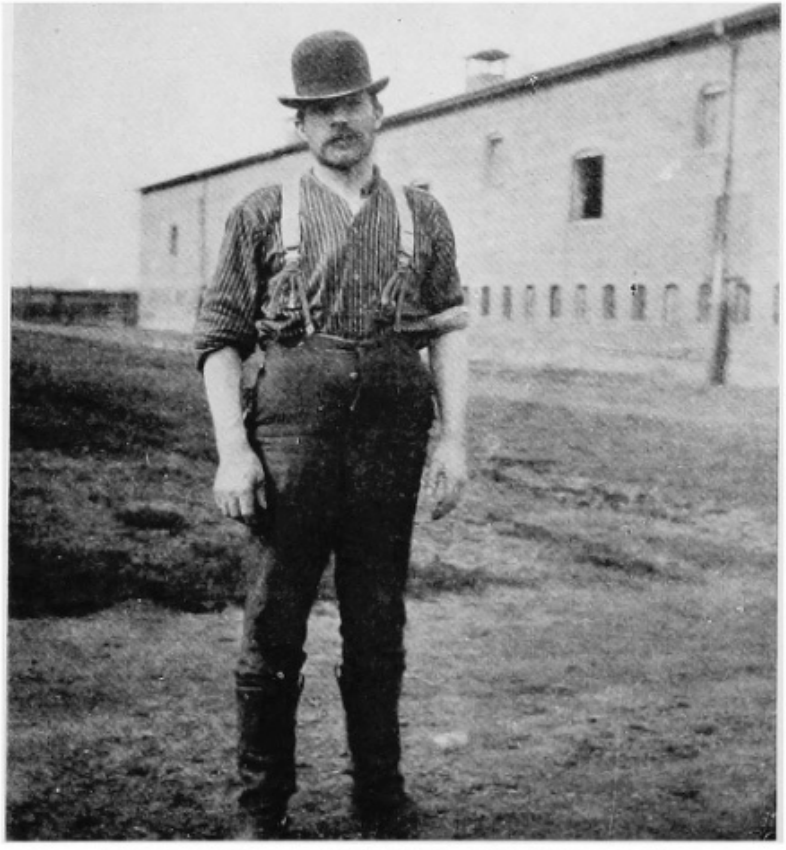
pany. Some of our mates were skilled workmen of industry and good habits, bound on a visit to their old homes. Contrasted with them were several incorrigible wharf-rats, bred on the docks of the United Kingdom, who had somehow contrived to cross the Atlantic to what had been pictured to them as a land "where a bloke c'n live like a gent at 'ome widout wavin' 'is bleedin' flipper." The western hemisphere had proved no such ideal loafing-place. Bound back now to their accustomed haunts, the disillusioned rowdies spent their energies in heaping curses on America and those who had painted it in such glowing colors. They were not pleasant messmates.

The work on the *Sardinian* was, as we had anticipated, hard, the food unfit to eat, and the forecastle unfit to live in. But there were no "first trippers" among us and all had shipped with some knowledge of the treatment meted out to "cattle stiffs."

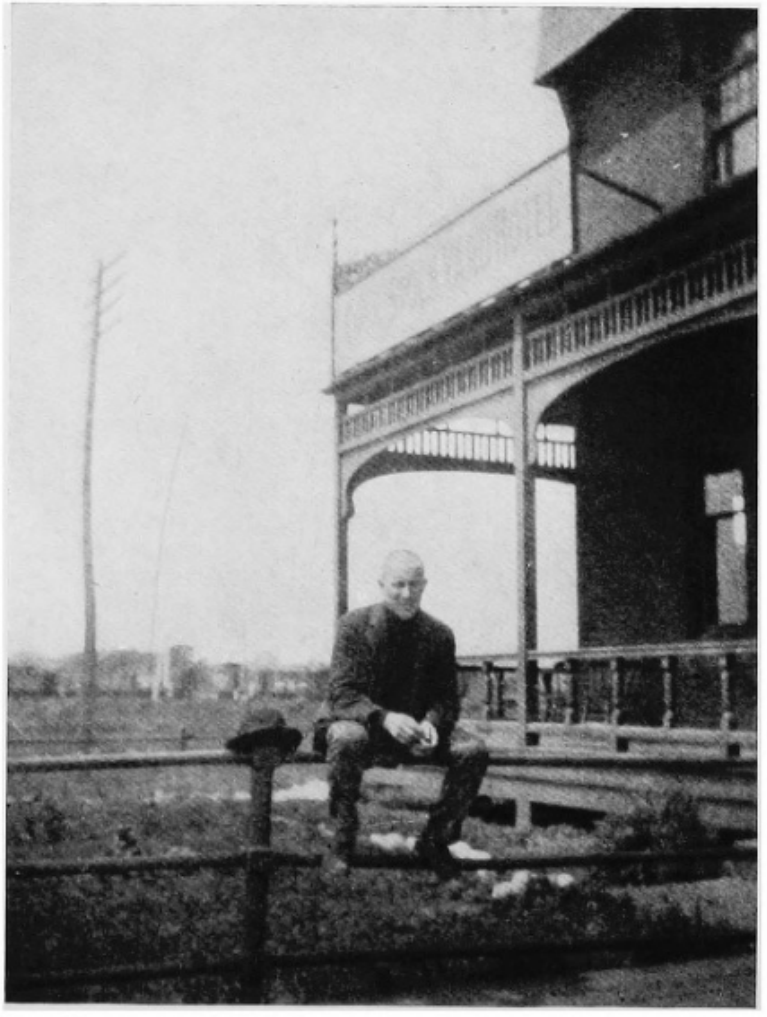
On the tenth day out, the second of July, we came on deck to find, a few miles off to starboard, the sloping coast of Ireland, patches of growing and ripening grain giving the island the appearance of a huge, tilted checkerboard. Before night fell, we had left behind Paddy's Mile-stone and the Mull o' Kintyre, and it was near the mouth of the Clyde that we completed our last feeding.

A mighty uproar awakened us at dawn. Urged on by the bellows of Glasgow longshoremen, the cattle were slipping and sliding down the gangway into the wharf paddock. Unrestrained joy burst forth in the feeders' quarters. Enmities were quickly forgotten, the few razors passed quickly from hand to hand, beards of two weeks' growth disappeared as if by magic, bags were snatched open, the rags and tatters that had done duty as clothing on the voyage were poked in endless stream through the porthole into the already poisonous Clyde, and an hour later the "stiffs," looking almost respectable, were scattering along the silent streets of Sunday-morning Glasgow.

Strange it seemed next morning to find business moving as usual, with no sounds of celebration, for it was the Fourth, "Independence" or "Rebellion" day, according to the nationality of the speaker. At noon we gathered on board the *Sardinian* to receive our "fi' bob" and our discharges from the Board of Trade. These latter were good for the return trip on the same steamer, but few besides the bosses intended to avail themselves of the privilege. As for myself, I found another use for the document. One who is moving about Europe in the garb of a laborer must be ever ready to declare his station in life. The answer of the American tramp that he is "just a' travelin'"



A boss cattle-man of the Walkerville barns who has crossed the Atlantic scores of times



Upon arrival in Montreal I put up at the "Stock Yards Hotel" and get a preliminary hair-cut in anticipation

will not pass muster across the water. To have called myself a carpenter or a teamster without corroborating testimonials would have been as foolish as to have told the truth. The discharge from the *Sardinian,* though issued to a cattle man, did not differ materially from that of an able seaman. My corduroy suit and cloth cap gave me the appearance of a Jack ashore. I decided to pose henceforth as a sailor.

Tucking my kodak into an inside coat pocket, I sold my bag for the price of a ticket on the night steamer to Belfast. A two days' tramp along the highways of the Emerald Isle was a pleasant "limbering up" for more extended journeys to come. It might have been longer but for an incessant rain that drove me back to Scotland.

On the afternoon of my return to Glasgow I struck out along the right bank of the Clyde towards the Highlands. An overladen highway led through Dumbarton, a town of factories, that poured its waste products into the sluggish river of poison, and brought me at evening to Alexandria. A band was playing. I joined the recreating throng and stretched out on the village green. What a strange fellow is the Scotchman! In a few short hours he runs through the whole gamut of emotions, gloomy and despondent when things go wrong, romping and joking a moment after.

The sun was still well above the horizon when the concert ended, though the hour of nine had already sounded from the church spire.

Not far beyond the town the hills died away on the left and disclosed the unruffled surface of Loch Lomond, its western end aglow with the light of the drowning sun. By and by the moon rose to cast a phosphorescent shimmer over the Loch and its little wooded islands. On the next hillside stood a field of wheat shocks. I turned into it, giving the owner's house a wide berth. The straw was fresh and clean, just the thing for a soft bed. But wheat sheaths do not offer substantial protection against the winds of the Scottish Highlands, and it was not with a sense of having slept soundly that I rose at daybreak and pushed on.

Two hours of tramping brought me to Luss, a cozy little village on the edge of the Loch. I hastened to the principal street in quest of a restaurant, but the hamlet was everywhere silent and asleep. Down on the beach of the Loch a lone fisherman, preparing his tackle for the day's labor, took umbrage at my suggestion that his fellow-townsmen were late risers.

"Why mon, 'tis no late!" he protested, "'tis no more nor five, an'

a bonny mornin' it is, too. But there 's a mist in it," he added pessimistically.

I glanced at the bright morning sun and the unclouded sky and set down both statements for fiction. But a clock-maker's window down the beach confirmed the first, and the second proved as true before the day was done. Stifling my premature hunger, I stretched out on the sands to await the morning steamer; for Ben Lomond, the ascent of which I had planned, stood just across the Loch.

About six a heavy-eyed shopkeeper sold me a roll of bologna, concocted of equal parts of pepper and meat, and a loaf of day-before-yesterday's bread. The steamer whistle sounded before I had regained the beach. I purchased a ticket at the shore-end of the distorted wooden wharf and hurried out to board the craft. My way was blocked by a burly Scot who demanded " tu p'nce."

" But I 've paid my fare," I protested, holding up the ticket.

" Aye, mon, ye hov," rumbled the native, straddling his legs and setting his elbows akimbo. " Ye hov, mon. But ye hovna paid fer walkin' oot t' yon boat on oor wharf."

Ten minutes later I paid a similar sum for the privilege of walking off the boat at Renwardenen.

Plodding across a half-mile of heath and morass, I struck into the narrow, white path that zigzagged up the face of the Ben, and soon overtook three Glasgow firemen, off for a day's vacation in the hills. The mist that the fisherman had foreseen began to settle down and turned soon to a drenching rain. For five hours we scrambled silently upward in Indian file, slipping and falling on wet rocks and into deep bogs, to come at last to a broad, flat boulder where the path vanished. It was the summit of old Ben Lomond, a tiny island in a sea of whirling grey mist, into which the wind bowled us when we attempted to stand erect. My companions fell to cursing their luck in expressive Scotch. The remnants of a picnic lunch under the shelter of a cairn tantalized us with the thought of how different the scene would have been on a day of sunshine. I was reminded, too, of the bread and bologna that had been left over from my breakfast, and I thrust a hand hopefully into my pocket. My fingers plunged into a floating pulp of pepper, dough, and bits of meat and paper that it would have been an insult to offer to share with the hungriest mortal; and I fell to munching the mess alone.

Two of the firemen decided to return the way we had come. With the third I set off down the opposite slope towards Inversnaid. In

the first simultaneous stumble down the mountain side, we lost all sense of direction and, fetching up in a boggy meadow, wandered for hours over knolls and through swift streams, now and then scaring up a flock of shaggy highland sheep that raced away down primeval valleys. Well on in the afternoon, as we were telling ourselves for the twentieth time that Inversnaid must be just over the next ridge, we came suddenly upon a hillside directly above the landing stage of Renwardenen. On this side of the Loch was neither highway nor footpath. For seven miles we dragged ourselves, hand over hand, through the thick undergrowth, and even then must each take a header into an icy mountain river before we reached our goal.

Here a new disappointment awaited me. Instead of the town I had expected, Inversnaid consisted of a landing stage and a hotel of the millionaire-club variety in which my worldly wealth would scarcely have paid a night's lodging, even should the house dogs have permitted so bedraggled a being to approach the establishment. The fireman wandered down to the wharf and I turned towards a cluster of board shanties at the roadside.

"Can you sell me something to eat?" I inquired of the sour-faced mountaineer who opened the first door.

"I can no!" he snapped, "go to the hotel."

There were freshly baked loaves plainly in sight in the next hovel, but I received a similar rebuff.

"Have you nothing to eat in the house?" I demanded.

"No, mon, I 'm no runnin' a shop."

"But you can sell me a loaf of that bread?"

"No!" bellowed the Scot, "we hovna got any. Go to the hotel. Yon 's the place for tooreests."

The invariable excuse was worn threadbare before I reached the last hut, and, though I had already covered twenty-five miles, I struck off through the sea of mud that passed for a highway, towards Aberfoyle, fifteen miles distant.

The rain continued. An hour beyond, the road skirted the shore of Loch Katrine and stretched away across a desolate moorland. Fatigue drove away hunger and was in turn succeeded by a drowsiness in which my legs moved themselves mechanically, carrying me on through the dusk and into the darkness. It was past eleven when I splashed into Aberfoyle, too late to find an open shop in straight-laced Scotland, and, routing out a servant at a modest inn, I went supperless to bed. Months afterward, when I was in training for such undertak-

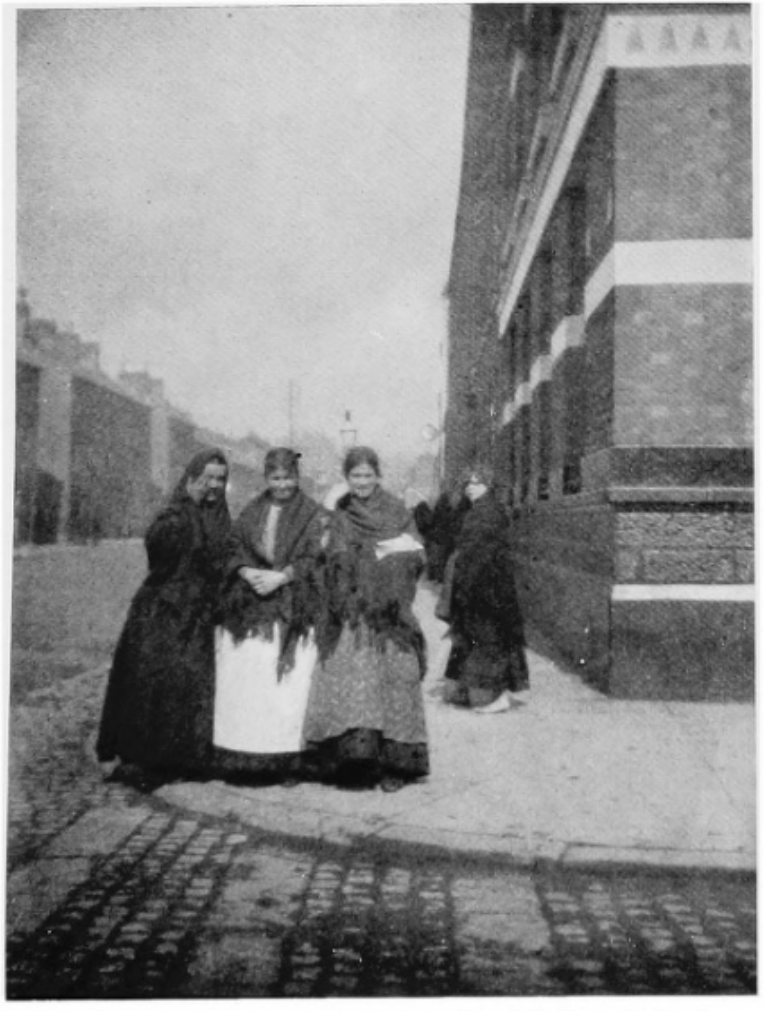
ings, a forty-mile tramp left no evil effects; at this early stage of the journey the experience was not quickly forgotten.

The attraction of the open road was lacking when, late the next morning, I hobbled out into the streets of Aberfoyle, and, my round of sight-seeing over, I wandered down to the station and took train for Stirling. Long before the journey was ended, there appeared, far away across the valleys, that most rugged of Scotland's landmarks, the castle of Stirling. Like the base of some giant pillar erected by nature and broken off by a mightier Sampson, it stands in solemn isolation in a vast, rolling plain, the very symbol of staunch independence and sturdy defiance.

My imagination far back in the days of Wallace and Bruce, I made my way up to the monument from the city below, half expecting, as I entered the ancient portal, to find myself surrounded by those bold and fiery warriors of past ages. And surely, there they were! That group of men in bonnets and kilts, gazing away across the parapets. Cautiously I approached them. What pleasure it would be to hear the old Scottish tongue and, perhaps, the story of some feud among the fierce clans of the Highlands! Suddenly one of the group strode away across the courtyard. As he passed me, he began to sing. A minstrel lay of ancient days, in the old Gaelic tongue? No, indeed. He had broken forth in the rasping voice of a Liverpool bootblack, juggling his H's, as only a Liverpool bootblack can, in "The Good Old Summer Time."

An hour afterward I faced the highway again, bound for Edinburgh. The route led hard by the battle-field of Bannockburn, to-day a stretch of waving wheat, distinguished from the surrounding meadows, that history does not know, only by the flag of Britain above it. With darkness I found lodging in a wheat field overlooking the broad thoroughfare.

The next day was Sunday and the weather calorific. For all that, the highroad had its full quota of tramps. I passed the time of day with any number of these roadsters,— they call them "moochers" in the British Isles. Some were sauntering almost aimlessly along the shimmering route, others were stretched out at apathetic ease in shady glens carpeted with freshly-blossomed bluebells. The "moocher" is a being of far less activity and initiative than the American tramp. He is content to stroll a few miles each day, happy if he gleans a meager fare from the kindly disposed. He would no more think of "beating his way" on the railroads than of building an air-ship for



Women laborers in the linen-mills of Belfast, Ireland

S.S. *Sardinian.* "Lamps does a bit of painting above the temporary cattle-pens"

his aimless and endless wanderings. It is always walk with him, day after day, week after week; and if, by chance, he hears of the swift travel by "blind-baggage" and the full meals that fall to his counterpart across the water, he stamps them at once "bloody lies."

In stranger contrast to the American, the British tramp is quite apt to be a family man. As often as not he travels with a female companion whom he styles, within her hearing and apparently with her entire acquiescence, "me Moll" or "me heifer." But whatever his stamping ground the tramp is essentially the same fellow the world over. Buoyant of spirits for all his pessimistic grumble, generous to a fault, he eyes the stranger with deep suspicion at the first greeting, as uncommunicative and noncommittal as a bivalve. Then a look, a gesture suggests the world-wide question, "On the road, Jack?" Answer it affirmatively and, though your fatherland be on the opposite side of the earth, he is ready forthwith to open his heart and to divide with you his last crust.

I reached Edinburgh in the early afternoon, and, following the signs that pointed the way to the poor man's section, brought up in Haymarket Square. A multitude of unemployed, in groups and in pairs, sauntering back and forth, lounging about the foot of the central statue, filled the place. Here a hooligan, ragged and unkempt as his hearers, was holding forth, to as many as cared to listen, on the subject of governmental iniquities. There another, less fortunate than his unfortunate fellows, wandered from group to group in his shirt-sleeves, vainly trying to sell his coat for a "tanner" to pay a night's lodging.

High above towered the vast bulk of Edinburgh castle. A royal infant lowered from its windows, as happened, 'tis said, in the merry days of Queen Bess, would land to-day in a most squalid lodging house. Indeed, this is one point that the indigent wanderer gains over the wealthy tourist. The cheap quarters, the slums of to-day are, in many a European city, the places where the history of yesterday was made. The great man of a century ago did not dwell in a shaded suburb; he made his home where now the hooligan and the laborer eke out a precarious existence.

The sorry-looking building at the foot of the castle rock bore the sign:—

"Edinburgh Castle Inn. Clean, Capacious Beds, 6d."

I had too often been misled by similar self-assertive adjurations to expect any serious striving on the part of the proprietor to keep

anything but the sign in any marked degree of cleanliness. I was not prepared, however, to find the place as filthy as it proved. The cutting satire of the ensign was doubly apparent when I escaped again into the square. A "Bobby" marched pompously up and down not far from the brazen-voiced speaker, whose power of endurance should have won him a livelihood somewhere.

"Where shall I find a fairly cheap lodging house?" I inquired.

"Try the Cawstle Inn h'over there," replied "Bobby," with a majestic wave of his Sunday gloves towards the hostelry I had just inspected.

"But that place is not clean!" I protested.

"Not clean! Certainly it 's clean! There 's a bloomin' law makes 'em keep 'em clean," and "Bobby" glared at me as if I had libeled the King's Parliament and the Edinburgh police-force into the bargain.

I entered another inn facing the square, but was thankful to escape from it to the one I had first visited. Paying my "tanner" at a misshapen wicket, I received a stub bearing the number of my sty and passed into the main room. It was furnished with benches, tables, and a cooking establishment. For four pence the guest might have set before him an unappetizing, though fairly abundant, supper. By far the greater number of the inmates, however, were crowded around several cooking stoves at the back of the room. Water, fuel, and utensils were provided gratis to all who had paid their lodging. On the stoves was sputtering or boiling every variety of cheap food, tended by tattered men who handled frying-pans with their coat-tails as holders, and cut up cabbages or peeled potatoes with knives on the blades of which were half-inch deposits of tobacco. Each ate his concoction with the greatest relish as soon as it showed the least sign of approaching an edible condition, generally without any allowance of time for boiling messes to cool, thereby suffering more than once dire injury.

Three days later I took passage for London and on the afternoon following my arrival embarked at Gravesend on the *Batavien II,* bound for Rotterdam. The steerage fare was five shillings; in view of the accommodations, an extravagant price. My only companions amid the chaos of so-called mattresses strewn about the hold were a German *Hufschmied* and his bedraggled spouse, joint possessors of a bundle of rags containing a most distressingly powerful pair of lungs. The odor of the mattresses and the stench from the bundle turned the night

into a walking nightmare, which I spent in congratulating myself that the voyage was to be of short duration.

I climbed on deck at sunrise to find the ship steaming at half speed through a placid canal. Far down below us were clusters of squat cottages, the white smoke of kindling fires curling slowly upward from their chimneys. Here and there a peasant, looking quite tiny from the height of our deck, crawled along across the flat meadows. Away in the distance several stocky windmills were turning slowly yet ceaselessly in the morning breeze.

The canal opened out into the teeming harbor of Rotterdam. A custom's officer inquired my profession, slapped me paternally on the back with a warning in German to beware the "*schlechte Leute*" who lay in wait for seamen ashore, and dismissed me, while the well-dressed tourist still fumed over the uninspected luggage in his cabin.

I quickly tired of the confines of the city and turned out along the flat highway to Delft. The route skirted a great canal; at intervals it crossed branch waterways, all half-hidden by cumbersome cargo-boats. Heavily laden boats toiled slowly by on their way to market, empty boats glided easily homeward. On board, stocky men, bowed double over heavy pike-poles, marched laboriously from bow to stern. Along the graveled tow-paths that checkered the flat landscape, buxom women strained like over-burdened oxen at the tow-ropes about their shoulders. Wherever one met him the boating Dutchman shared most fairly with his wife the labor of propelling his unwieldy craft, except that the wife walked and the Dutchman rode.

In the early afternoon I briefly visited Delft, and pushed on towards the Hague. No wayfarer, obviously, could in a single day become accustomed to the national clatter of wooden shoes. Beyond Delft I turned into a narrow roadway paved in cobble-stones and flanked by two canals. It was a quiet route even for Holland. In serene contentment I pursued my lonely way, gazing off across the unbroken landscape. Suddenly a galloping "rat-a-tat" sounded close behind me. What else but a runaway horse could produce such a devil's tattoo? To pause and glance behind might cost me my life, for the frenzied brute was almost upon me. With a swiftness born of fear I took to my heels. A few yards beyond was a luckily-placed foot-bridge over one of the canals. I made a flying leap at the structure and gained it in safety, just as there dashed by me at full speed — a Hollander of some six summers, bound to market with a basket on his arm!

"S-Gravenhage," as the Dutchman calls his capital, was a city teeming with interest; but Holland was one of those countries which I purposed to "do" in orthodox tourist fashion and, after a few short hours in the royal borough, I sought out the highway to Leiden. My seeking was not particularly successful. The mongrel commixture of German, English, and pantomime in which I carried on conversation with the natives was a delectable language, but it did not always gain me lucid directions. Sharply prosecuted inquiries brought me to a road to Leiden, right enough, but it was not the public highway. Thanks to some misconstruction of the native dactylology, I set out for the stamping ground of Rembrandt along the old royal driveway.

It was a pleasure, of course, to travel by the Queen's own promenade, especially as it led through a fragrant forest park. Unfortunately, a royal demesne is no place in which to find an inn when hunger and darkness come on. This one had not even a cross-road to lead me back to the main highway, and I plodded on into the night amid unbroken solitude. Just what hour it was when I reached Leiden I know not. Beyond question it was late, for the good people, and even the bad, except a few drowsy policemen, were sound asleep; and with a painful number of miles in my legs I went to bed on a pile of lumber.

The warming sun rose none too early, though long before the first shopkeeper. Still fasting I set off towards Haarlem. On these flat lowlands this Sabbath day was oppressively hot. Yet how dolorously devout appeared the peasants who plodded for miles along the dusty highway to the village church! The men, those same men so comfortably picturesque in their work-a-day clothes, marched in their cumbersome Sunday garments like converts doing penance for their sins. The women, buxom always, but painfully awkward in stiffly starched gowns, tramped swelteringly behind the males. Even the children, the rollicking youngsters of the day before, were imprisoned in homemade straight-jackets and suffered martyrdom in uncomplaining silence. But one and all had a cheery word for the passerby and never that sour look which one "on the road" encounters on British highways.

Often, since leaving Rotterdam, I had wondered at the absence of wells in the rural districts. Surely these peasants' cottages were not connected by water-mains! Pondering the question, I had thus far quenched my thirst only in the villages. But towards noon on this

hot Sunday an imperative call for water drove me to turn in at an isolated cottage. Beside the road ran the omnipresent canal. A narrow foot-bridge crossed it to the gate before the dwelling, around which flowed a branch of the main waterway, giving a mooring for the peasant's canal-boat. The gate proved impregnable and it required much shouting to attract the attention of the householder. At last, from around a corner of the building, a *Vrouw* of the most buxom type hove into view and bore down upon me as an ocean liner sails into a calm harbor. My knowledge of Dutch being nil, I followed my usual method of coining a language by a process of elimination. Perhaps the lady spoke some German.

"Ein Glas Wasser, bitte."

"Vat?"

It could do no harm to give my mother tongue a trial.

"A glass of water."

"Eh!"

I tried a mixture of the two languages. For what is Dutch after all than a jumble of badly spelled English and German words with the endings lopped off?

"Ein glass of vater." It was the open sesame.

"Vater?" shrieked the lady with such vehemence that the rooster in the back yard leaped sideways a distance of six feet. "Vater!"

"Ja, vater, bitte."

A profound silence succeeded, a silence so absolute that one could have heard a fly pass by a hundred feet above. Slowly the lady placed a heavy hand on the intervening gate. A shadow passed over her face, as though she were mentally calculating the strength of resistance of the barrier against a madman. Then, with a bovine snort, she wheeled about and waddled towards the house. Close under the eaves of the cottage hung a tin basin. Snatching it down without a pause, the human steamship set a course for the family anchorage, stooped, dipped up a basinful of that selfsame weed-clogged water that flowed by in abundance at my feet, and tacked back across the yard to offer it to me with a magnanimous sigh of resignation. I quenched my thirst thereafter, in rural Holland, at roadside canals, after the manner of beasts of the field — and Hollanders.

Miles away from Haarlem appeared the great flower-farms for which this region is famous and, growing more and more frequent, continued into the very suburbs of the city itself. Across the ultra-fertile plain beyond, the broad highway to Amsterdam ran as straight

as a geometrical line. From the city of tulips to where it disappeared in the fog of rising heat waves, the thoroughfare was thronged with vehicles, riders, and, above all, with wheelmen, who, refusing to swerve a hair's breadth for my convenience, drove me ever and anon into the wayside ditch. The Hollander is, ordinarily, an obliging fellow, and in the main the humble workman or pedestrian is fairly treated. Yet that distinct line of demarkation between the "commoner" and the "upper class" is never obliterated. The American laborer may spend some time in the British Isles without noting this discrimination; he will not be long on the continent before the advantage of his status at home is shown forth in plain relief.

There is not that gradual shading off from the professional man to the coal-heaver that exists in the United States. One can no more conceive of a Hollander who looks forward to a career in the gentler walks of life "beginning at the bottom" than of one who aspires to the papacy taking a wife. He whose appearance stamps him as of those who live by the sweat of the brow cannot complain of any overt act of oppression. Yet he is early reminded that, as a worker with his hands, he has a distinct place in society and that he must keep to it. Among his fellow workmen, in his own caste, he lives and moves and has his being as in our own land. But in other ranks he catches here and there a glance, a gesture, a protesting silence, that brings home to him his lowly status.

My zigzag tramp ended late in the afternoon, and, after a deal of wandering in and out among the canals of the metropolis, I took a garret lodging overhanging a sluggish waterway. The proverbial cleanliness of Holland is no mere figure of speech. Few cities of the same size have as little of the slum district within their confines as Amsterdam. The Dutch laborer is, in many ways, far better off than those of the same class across the channel. In the city there is always a *Koffie Huis* close at hand, where eggs, milk, cheeses, and dairy products in general are served at small cost and in cleanly surroundings. Compare this diet with that of the British workman, who subsists often, not on food, but on the waste products of those places where food is prepared. One can identify a Briton of the lower classes by his teeth. At twenty he has a dozen, perhaps, that are neither broken off, crumbling, black, nor missing. At thirty he shows a few yellow fangs. But one cannot determine the class of the Hollander by the same sign. His diet is too wholesome.

Parks, museums, laborers' quarters, and the necessity of a protracted

search each evening for my canalside garret kept me three days in Amsterdam. On the fourth I drifted on board one of the tiny steamers of the Zuidersee and journeyed to Hoorn. Hoorn is one of Holland's dead cities, one of the many from which prosperity and wealth departed to come no more as the shifting sands of the North Sea blocked up their channels and drove away the rich commerce that was their fortune. Now they are dead indeed. A tiny remnant of a great population clatters along their deserted streets, a few of the ancient mansions house humbler inmates, and all about is ruin.

By no means regretting the whim that had carried me away to this land of yesterday, I set back along the See towards Amsterdam. The typical Hollander is nowhere seen to better advantage than in this district. The population plies two vocations. Along the shores and on the adjoining islands the stolid, picturesque fisherman is predominant. In the great, flat meadows the care of his cattle occupies the no less stolid, if less quaint, peasant.

There are wheat shocks even in Holland. As night was falling over the vast plain I withdrew to a roadside field and retired. A Dutchman spied me out in my resting-place at some silent hour, but sped away across the country like a firm believer in ghosts when I offered to share my bed. I awoke at daybreak to find myself within sight of the much maligned island of Marken, with an unobstructed view of the quaint old church of Monnickendam, a once populous city that has shrunk to a baggy-trousered hamlet of fisherfolk. Beyond the town there rattled by occasionally a milk or baker's cart, drawn, now by one dog, now by a team of two or three, harnessed together with utter disregard to size, breed, or disposition. Sometimes, indeed, a canine and a human team-mate tugged together at the traces.

There ran a rumor in my favorite Koffie Huis soon after my arrival at Amsterdam in the afternoon, that a cargo-boat which carried passengers for a song was to leave at four for Arnheim on the Rhine. I thrust a lunch into a pocket and hurried down to the mooring-place of the international liner. She was a canal-boat some twenty-five feet long and eight wide, as black as a coal-barge, though by no means as clean; her uncovered deck piled high with boxes, barrels, and crates ranging in contents from beer mugs to protesting live stock. I scrambled over the cargo and found a seat on a barrel of oil. It was already after four, but there was really no reason for my anxious haste. No Dutch cargo-boat was ever known to depart at the hour set.

It turned out that the overburdened craft was not yet loaded. From

time to time lethargic longshoremen wandered down to the wharf with more bales, crates, and boxes, and stacked them high about us. It was long after dark when their task was done, and, what with quarrels between the captain and the crew as to the proper channel, we were scarcely out of the harbor when dawn broke.

A long day we spent in jumping about the cargo like jack-rabbits, in a vain attempt to keep out of the way of the crew searching for a bale to set ashore at each wayside village. That alone would have been endurable. But our lives were made miserable by two Hungarians, owners of a barrel organ, who insisted that the infernal squawk which the machine emitted was "moosik," and who had the audacity to invite us periodically to pay for the torture.

I left the cargo-boat at Arnheim and, halting at the principal cities on its banks, made my way up the Rhine by steamer and on foot in a few days to Mainz. From there I turned eastward along the highway to Frankfurt. Strange and varied had been my sleeping-places in Germany. The innkeepers of the Fatherland, fearful of punishment for lodging those who turn out to be "wanted" by His Majesty's officers, are chary of offering accommodations to strangers. Whether it was due to the garb that stamped me as a wanderer or to a foreign accent, it was my fate to be treated in the Kaiser's realm as an extremely suspicious member of society.

It was late at night when I reached Frankfurt. The highway ended among the palatial edifices of the business section, and I wandered long in search of the poorer quarters. At last, in a dingy side street a tavern, offering *logieren* at one mark, drew my attention. Truly it was a high price to pay for a bed, but the hour was late and the night stormy. I entered the drinking-room, and waiting until the *Kellner* could catch a moment's respite from his strenuous task of silencing the shouts of "*Glas Bier*" that rose above the tumult, made my wants known.

"Beds?" cried the Kellner, too busy with his glasses to look up at me, "To be sure. We have always plenty of beds. One mark."

But *mein Herr* the proprietor was staring at me from the back of the hall. Slowly he shuffled forward, cocked his head on one side, and scrutinized me intently from out his bleary eyes.

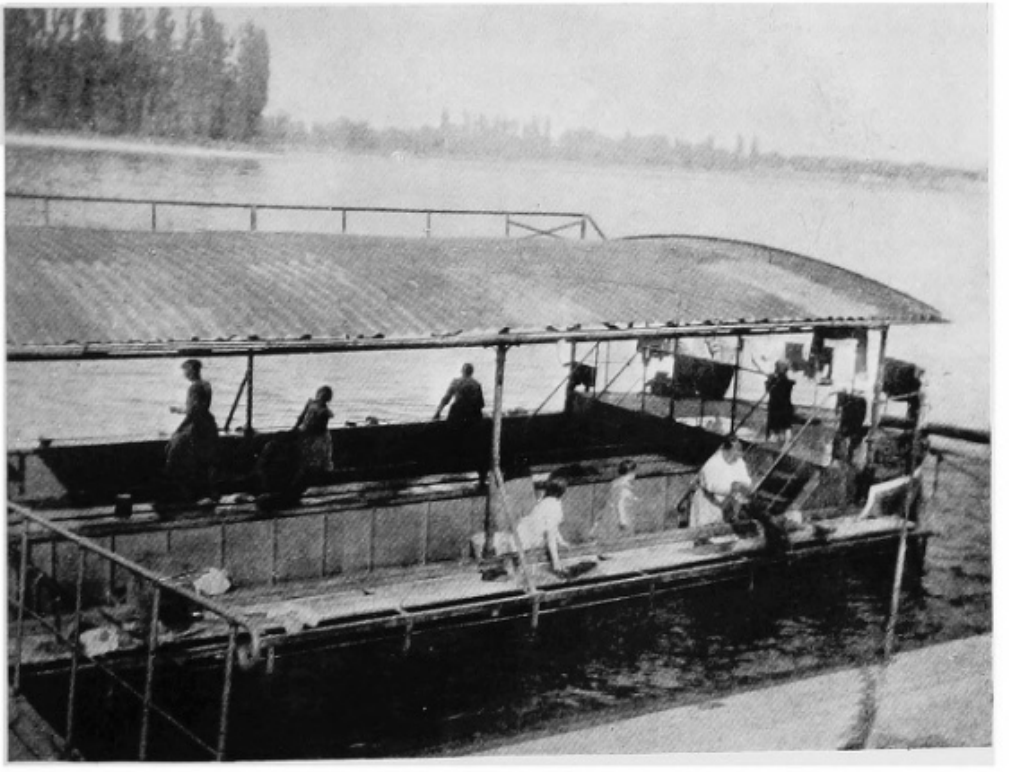
"What does he want?" he demanded, turning to the tapster.

I answered the query myself and the customary inquisition began.

"Woher kommen Sie?"

Knowing from experience the order of the questions, I launched

A baker's cart of Holland on the morning round



A public laundry on the Rhine at Mainz, Germany

forth into the story of my life, past, present, and future, or as much of it as was in keeping with the assertion that I was an American sailor on a sight-seeing expedition in the Fatherland. Plainly my hearers regarded it as a clumsy tale. Long before I had ended, the proprietor, the Kellner, and those clients of the house that had clustered around us, fell to nudging each other with grimaces of incredulity. The *Wirt,* harassed by the conflicting emotions of greed and fear, blinked his pudgy eyes and glanced for inspiration into the faces about him. The temptation to add another mark to his coffers was strong within him. Yet what would the police inspector say in the morning to the name of a foreigner on his register? He scratched his grizzly poll with a force that suggested that he was going clear down through it to extract an idea with his stubby fingers, glanced once more at the tipplers, and surrendered to fear.

"Es tut mir leid, Junge," he puffed, with a prolonged blink, "I am sorry, but we have not a bed left in the house."

I wandered out into the night and told my story to a second, a third, and even a fourth innkeeper with the same result. In despair I turned in at the fifth house resolved to try a strange plan — to tell the truth. In carefully chosen words I explained my identity and my purpose in visiting Germany in laborer's garb. Never before since leaving Detroit had I resorted to such an expedient, and I took good care not to repeat the experiment during my subsequent travels. I had barely elucidated my situation when the landlord informed me in no uncertain terms that I was a liar and an ass into the bargain; and that a hasty retreat from his establishment was the surest way of preserving my good health. He was a creature of awe-inspiring proportions, and I followed his suggestion promptly. At midnight a policeman directed me to an inn where suspicious characters were less of a novelty, and I was soon asleep.

I had not yet well learned the lesson, begun in the British Isles, that the homes of the famous of a century ago are the slums of to-day. Next morning I turned back to the brilliant thoroughfares, expecting to find somewhere along them the birthplace of Goethe. Once amid such surroundings as the greatest of the Germans might fittingly have graced by his presence, I addressed myself to a policeman. Goethe? Why, yes, the name seemed familiar. He was not sure, but he fancied the fellow lived in the eastern part of the city, and directed me accordingly. The way led through narrow, winding streets. Now and then I went astray, to be set right again by other

minions of the law. The quest cost me a goodly amount of shoe-leather and most of the morning, but I found at last the landmark I was seeking — exactly across the street from the inn in which I had slept.

There was in Frankfurt after all a lodging house where wanderers free from the burden of wealth were welcome. I came across it during the day's roaming and took care not to forget its location. Several disreputable humans were wending their way thither as twilight fell and, joining them, I entered a great, dingy hall, low of ceiling, and poorly served in the matter of windows. A cadaverous female, established behind a rust-eaten wicket, was dealing out *Schlafmarken* at thirty *Pfennig* (7 cents) each. I pocketed one and hastened to find a place on one of the wooden benches; for the hall was rapidly filling with members of the Brotherhood of the Great Unwashed.

Drowsiness came quickly in the stifling atmosphere. I stepped to the wicket and asked to be shown to my quarters.

"What!" croaked the hollow-eyed matron, "bed? You can't sleep yet. Wait till you hear the bell at ten-thirty."

I turned back to the bench only to find that another squatter had jumped my claim. Too sleepy to stand unaided, I hung myself up against the wall and waited. If the dreams from which I was aroused were not much shorter than they seemed, several days passed before there sounded the sudden clang of an iron-voiced bell. The resulting stampede carried me to the second floor.

In an evilly-ventilated room, lower of ceiling than the hall below, I found that cot thirty-seven, to which I had been assigned, could be reached only by climbing over several of the sixty which as many men in varying stages of insobriety were preparing to occupy. By a series of contortions, in the execution of which I often thumped with my elbows the man behind me and displaced my cot sufficiently to cause the downfall of my opposite neighbor, whose equilibrium was far from stable, I succeeded in removing my shoes and coat. To venture further in the disrobing process seemed undesirable. I spread my germ-proof jacket across the animated coverlet and lay down. Before the last sot had ceased his maudlin grumbling there broke out here and there in the room a dialogue of snores. Rapidly it increased to a chorus. In ten minutes the ensemble would have put to shame the most atrocious steam calliope ever inflicted upon a defenceless public. Reiterated kicks and punches reduced to com-

parative silence the few slumberers within reach; by shying one shoe at a distant sleeper whose specialty was a nerve-racking falsetto and the other at a fellow whose deep bass set the cots to trembling in sympathy, I brought a moment's respite. But the dread of going forth in the morning unshod drove me on an expedition across the bodies of my room-mates and, by the time I had recovered my footwear, the chorus was again swelling forth in Wagnerian volume. I gave up in despair and settled down on the hill and dale mattress to convince myself that I was sleeping in spite of the infernal bedlam.

There runs a proverb, the origin of which is lost among the traditions of hoar antiquity, to the effect that misfortunes travel in bands. That it is true I have never doubted since the day following that broken-backed night in Frankfurt. It was curiosity that called down upon my head this new adversity, for naught else could have moved me to investigate the secrets hidden behind a fourth-class ticket to Weimar. In all the countries of Europe there is nothing that compares with the fourth-class railway service of Germany. The necessity of providing some mode of transportation cheaper than walking may be an excuse for its perpetration, but woe betide the unsuspecting traveler who, for mere matter of economy, abandons for this system that of our ancient forebears.

Intending to take the nine o'clock train, I purchased a ticket about eight-forty and stepped out upon the platform just in time to hear a guard bellow the German variation of "all aboard." The Weimar train stood close at hand. As I stepped towards it, four policemen, strutting about the platform, let out simultaneous war-whoops, and sprang after me.

"Wo gehen Sie hin?" shrieked the first to reach me.

"Ich gehe nach Weimar."

"Aber, the train to Weimar is gone!" shouted the second officer.

As I had a hand on the carriage door, I made so bold as to deny the assertion.

"Aber, ja, er ist fort!" gasped the sergeant who brought up the rear of the constabulary deluge. "It is gone! The guard has already said 'all aboard.'"

The train stood at the edge of the platform long enough to have emptied and filled again; but, as it was gone ten minutes before it started, I was forced to wait for the next one at ten-thirty.

The fourth-class carriage, unlike other European cars, was built on the American plan, with a door at each end. In reality it was

nothing more than a box car with wooden benches around the sides and a few apologies for windows. Almost before we were under way, the most unkempt couple aboard stood up and turned loose what they evidently thought was a song. Many of the passengers seemed to be victims of the same auricular illusion, for the pair gleaned a handful of Pfennige before descending at the first station. The bawl of cracked voices, however, was but a prelude to worse visitations, for, as no train man enters the cars while they are in motion, fourth-class travelers are the prey of every grafter who chooses to inflict himself upon them.

We stopped at a station at least every four miles during that day's journey. At the first hamlet beyond Frankfurt the car slowly filled with peasants and laborers in heavy boots and rough smocks, who carried sundry farm implements ranging from pitchforks to young plows. Sunburned women, on whose backs were strapped huge baskets stuffed with every product of the countryside from cabbages to babies, packed into the center of the car, turned their backs upon those of us who occupied the benches, and serenely leaned themselves and their loads against us. The carriage filled at last to its utmost limits, and its capacity passed belief, a guard outside closed the heavy door with a bang, and uttered a mighty shout of "*Vorsicht*"! (look out), evidently to inform those near the portal that they were lucky to have "looked out" before it was slammed. The station master on the platform, a man boasting a uniform no American rear-admiral could afford, or dare to appear in, raised a hunting-horn to his lips and gave as a signal of departure such a blast as echoed through the ravines of Roncesvalles. The head-guard drew his whistle and shrilly seconded the command of his superior. The engineer whistled back to inform the guard that he was ready to do his duty. The guard repeated his sibilant order. The driver liberated another pent-up shriek to show how easily his engine could reach high C, or to imply that he was fast nerving himself up to open the throttle; the man on the platform whistled again to cheer him on; a heroic squeal came from the cab in answer; and, with a jerk that sent peasants, baskets, farm-tools, lime-pails, cabbages, and babies into a conglomerate, struggling mass at the back end of the car, we were off. To celebrate which auspicious event the engineer emitted a final shriek and gave a second yank, lest some sure-footed individual had by any chance retained his equilibrium.

By the time some semblance of order had been restored, unwieldy

peasant women pulled out of the clawing miscellany and stood right end up, cabbages and babies restored to their proper baskets, pitchforks and smocks disentangled, the next station was reached and a sudden stop undid all our efforts, this time stacking the passengers at the front end. Some minutes after the train had come to a standstill, when long-distance travelers had lost all hope of relief from the sweltering congestion, the countrymen began slowly to wander out at the doors. The exodus continued until there remained in the car only those few through-passengers, who, utterly cowed and subjugated, shrank back on the benches to escape attention. Then the vanguard of another multitude, bound for a village some three miles distant, made its appearance and history repeated itself.

There were times, too, during the journey when the villages were apparently too far apart to suit the engine-driver. For occasionally, soon after having run through his entire repertoire of toots, he suddenly, remarkably suddenly in fact, brought the engine to a halt in the open country. But as German railway laws forbid voyagers to step out, crawl out, or peep out of the car under such circumstances without a special permit from the guard, countersigned under seal by the head-guard, there was no means of learning whether the engineer had lost his courage or merely caught sight of a wild flower that particularly took his fancy.

Such are the pleasures of a fourth-class excursion in Germany. Travelers by first-class, it is said, suffer fewer inconveniences, but, however varied the accommodations may be, the prices are more so. At every booking-office is posted a placard giving the cost of transportation to every other town in the Empire. He who would ride on upholstered seats pays a bit higher rate than in the United States. Second-class costs one-half, third-class one-fourth as much. Three other rates are quoted: fourth-class, soldiers' tickets, and *Hundekarten* (dog tickets). The German conscript pays one-half fourth-class fare and rides in a third-class carriage. Hundekarten cost fourth-class fare. Verily it is better in Germany to be a soldier than a dog — at least while traveling.

I arrived at Weimar late at night. A stroll to Jena the following afternoon led through a pleasant rural district well known to the "poet pair" of Germany and the soldiers of Napoleon. From Jena I turned westward again, and, braving the rigors of fourth-class travel for two interminable days, descended during the waning hours of July at the city of Metz.

When August broke in the east, I turned pedestrian once more and set out towards Paris on the *Route Nationale,* constructed in the days when Mayence was a proud French city. The road wound its way over rolling hills, among the ravines and valleys of which was fought a great battle of the Franco-Prussian war. For miles along the way, dotting the hillsides, standing singly or in clusters along lazy brooks, or half-hidden by the foliage of summer, were countless simple, white crosses, bearing only the brief inscription "Hier ruhen Krieger-1870." Beyond, the colossal statue of a soldier of past decades pointed away across a deep-wooded glen to the vast graveyard of his fallen comrades.

A mile further on, in the open country, out of sight of even a peasant's cottage, two iron posts at the wayside marked the boundary established by the treaty of Versailles. A farmer with his mattock stood in Germany grubbing at a weed that grew in France.

Mindful of the lack of cordiality that exists between the two countries, I anticipated some delay at the frontier. The custom-house was a mere cottage, the first building of a straggling village some miles beyond the international line. A mild-eyed Frenchman, in a uniform worn shiny across the shoulders and the seat of the trousers, wandered out into the highway at my approach. Behind him strolled a second officer. But the difficulties I had expected were existent only in my own imagination. The pair cried out in surprise at mention of my nationality; they grew garrulous at the announcement that I was bound to Paris *à pied.* But their only official act was to inspect my bundle, and I pressed on amid their cries of "bon voyage."

The highways of France are broad and shaded, her innkeepers neither exclusive nor intrusive; yet even here pedestrianism has its drawbacks. Chief among them are the railway crossings. The French system of protection against accidents is effective, no doubt; but if *monsieur* the Frenchman were as impatient a being as the American the mortality would be little lessened, for the delay involved at these *traverses du chemin de fer* would choke with rising choler as many as might come to grief at an unprotected crossing.

On either side of the track is a ponderous *barrière,* the opening and shutting of which would be slow under the best of circumstances. Being always tended by a colossal *barrièrière* (gate-woman) who moves with the stately grace of a house being raised on jack-screws, the barricade is unduly effective. Ten minutes before a train

is due, *la barrièrière* hoists herself erect, waddles across the track to draw the further gate, closes the nearer one, and, having locked both, returns to the shade of her cottage. The train may be an hour late, but that is beside the question. This is the time that Madame is hired to lock the gates and locked they must remain until the train has passed. Woe betide the intrepid voyager who tries to climb over them, for her tongue is sharp and the long arm of the law is arrayed on her side.

Plodding early and late, I covered the round-about route through Châlons, Rheims, and Meaux, and reached Paris a few days after crossing the frontier. A month of tramping had made me as picturesque a figure as any *boulevardier* of Montmartre; moreover, August in the French capital was neither the time nor the place to display garments chosen with the winds of the Scottish Highlands in mind. I picked up in the Boulevard St. Denis, at a gross expenditure of fifteen francs, an outfit more in keeping with the weather, took up my abode in a garret of the Latin Quarter, and roamed at large in the city for three weeks.

CHAPTER II

ON THE ROAD IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND

THE month of August was drawing to a close when I swung my wardrobe of the city over a shoulder and, wandering down the Boulevard St. Germain, struck off to the southward. A succession of noisy, squalid villages, such as surround most cities of the old world, lined the way to Mélun. Beyond, tramping was more pleasant, for the route swung off across a rolling country, unadorned with squalling urchins and mongrel curs, towards Fontainebleau. The foot-traveler in France need have no fear of losing his way. From Paris to the important cities and frontier towns radiate "Routes nationales," each known by a certain number throughout its length. Signboards point the way at every cross-road; kilometer posts of white stone keep the wayfarer well informed of the progress he is making — almost too well, for when he has grown foot-sore and ill-tempered, each one greets him with a sardonic smile that says as plainly as words, "Huh! You 're only a kilometer further on, and a kilometer is not a mile by a long way."

They are excellently built, these national highways; the heaviest rain barely forms upon them a perceptible layer of mud. But one could pardon them a little unevenness of road-bed if only they would strike out for their goal with the dogged determination of our own axle-cracking turnpikes. They wind and ramble like mountain streams. They zigzag from village to village even in a level country. The least knoll seems to have been sufficient reason in the minds of the constructing engineers for making wide detours, and where hills abound, there are villages ten miles apart with twenty miles of tramping between them.

Thus far I had tramped the highways of Europe alone. Beyond Nemours, my second night's resting-place, I came upon two wayfarers in the shelter of a giant oak, enjoying a regal repast of hard bread which they rendered more palatable by dipping each mouthful in a brook at their feet. On the plea of an ample breakfast I declined

an invitation to share the feast, but our routes coincided and we passed on in company. The pair were young miners walking from Normandy to the great coal-fields of St. Etienne. Thanks to the free-masonry of "the road," formalities were quickly forgotten, and before the first kilometer post rose up to greet us we were exchanging confidences in the familiar "tu" form. I soon added to my vocabulary the nickname of the French tramp. My new comrades not only addressed me as *mon vieux,* but greeted by that title every wayfarer we encountered, until it came to have as familiar a sound in my ears as the "Jack" of the American hobo. Its analogy to our "old man" is at once apparent.

There are stern laws in France against wandering from place to place. A lone traveler may sometimes escape attention, but well I knew that in trio we should often be called upon to give an account of ourselves. We were still some distance off from the first village beyond our meeting-place when an officer appeared at the door of the *gendarmerie* and, advancing into the highway, awaited our arrival.

"Où allez vous autres?" he demanded, with officious bruskness.

"A St. Etienne."

"Et vos papiers?"

"Voilà!" cried the miners, each snatching from an inside pocket a small, flat book showing signs of age and hard usage.

The *gendarme* stuffed one of the volumes under an arm and fell to examining the other. Between its greasy covers was a complete biography of its owner. The first leaf bore his baptismal record, followed by a page for each of his three years of military service, all much decorated with official stamps and seals. Then came affidavits of apprenticeship, variously endorsed and *viséd,* and last a page for every firm that had employed the miner, giving dates, wages, testimonials, and reasons for leaving or dismissal. The miner bore the scrutiny with fortitude. With his official book at hand the French laborer has little dread of the officers of the law. After each term at his trade he may, if he sees fit to travel a bit, give variations of the old "looking-for-work" story, though as the date of his last employment grows more and more remote, the gendarmerie becomes an increasing obstacle.

Without some such document no one may tramp the highways of France. He who travels on foot for other reason than poverty, or who, being poor, will not make his way by begging, is an enigmatical

being to any race but the Anglo-Saxon. To the French gendarme his mode of travel is proof absolute that he is a *misérable sans-sous* to whom every law against vagrancy must be strictly applied.

The officer ended the examination of the books and handed them back with a gruff bien.

"Maintenant, les vôtres," he growled.

"Here it is," I answered, ignoring the plurality of the French pronoun, and I drew from my pocket a general letter of introduction to our consular service, signed by the Secretary of State. The gendarme, who had expected another book, opened the paper with a perplexed air which increased to blank amazement when, instead of familiar French words, his eyes fell on a half-dozen lines of incomprehensible hieroglyphics.

"Hein! Que diable!" he gasped. "Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça?"

"My passport," I explained. "Je suis américain."

"Ha! Américain! Diable! And that is really a passport? Never before have I seen one."

It was not really a passport by any means. I had none. But monsieur le gendarme was in no position to dispute my word had I told him it was a patent of nobility.

"Very good," he went on, "but you must have another paper. Foreign vagabonds cannot journey in France without a document to prove that they have worked."

Here was a poser. It would have been easy to assert that I was a traveler and no workman, but it would have been still easier to guess where such an assertion would land me. I rubbed my unshaven chin in perplexity, then struck by a sudden inspiration, snatched from my bundle the cattle-boat discharge.

"Bah!" grumbled the officer, "more foreign gibberish! What is that vilaine langue the devil himself could n't read?"

"English," I replied.

"Tiens, que c'est drôle que cette machine-là," he mused, holding the paper out at arm's length and scratching his head.

However, with some assistance he made out one date on the document, and, handing it back with a sigh of resignation, gave us leave to pass on.

"A propos!" he cried, before we had taken three steps, "what country did you say you come from?"

"America," I answered.

"L'Amérique! And being in America you come to France? Oh, mon Dieu, what idiocy!" and waving his arms above his head he fled for the shade of his office.

The ways of my companions would have made them the laughing-stock of American roadsters. They looked forward to no three meals a day. The hope of a "set-down" never intruded upon their field of vision. In fact, they considered that the world was going very well with them if they collected sous enough for one or two lunches of bread and wine daily. Yet wine they would have, except for breakfast, or they refused to eat even bread. Like almost all who tramp any distance in France, they "played the merchant" and were surprised to find that I ventured along the highways of their country without doing likewise. That is, they carried over one shoulder a bundle containing shoe-strings, thread, needles, thimbles, and other articles in demand among rural housewives. The demand was really very light. They *did* make a two or three-sous sale here and there, but the market value of their wares was of least importance. By carrying them, the miners evaded the strict laws against vagrancy. Without the bundles they were beggars, with them they ranked as peddlers. The ruse deceived no one, not even the gendarme. But it satisfied the letter of the law.

Still engrossed in discussing the character of the officer who had delayed us, we reached a large farmhouse. With one of the miners I lingered at the roadside. The other entered the dwelling, ostensibly to display his wares. A moment later he emerged with a half-loaf of coarse peasant's bread. Madame had needed nothing from his pack, but "she made me a present of this lump."

It was while they were canvassing a village in quest of sales, or crusts, in the dusk of evening that I lost sight of the miners. I had passed the village inn, and, being always averse to retracing my steps, continued my way alone. Had I suspected the distance to the next hamlet, I might have been less eager to press on. Fully three hours later I stumbled into Les Bussières and, having walked sixty-nine kilometers, it was not strange that I slept late next morning. Besides, the day was Sunday, and what with satisfying the curiosity of a company of peasants in the wine-room and drinking the health of several of them, I did not set out until the day was well advanced. Beyond the village stretched the broad, white route, endless and deserted. The long journey before me would have been less lonely in

the company of the miners; but we had parted and I plodded on in solitude, wondering when I should again fall in with so cheery a pair.

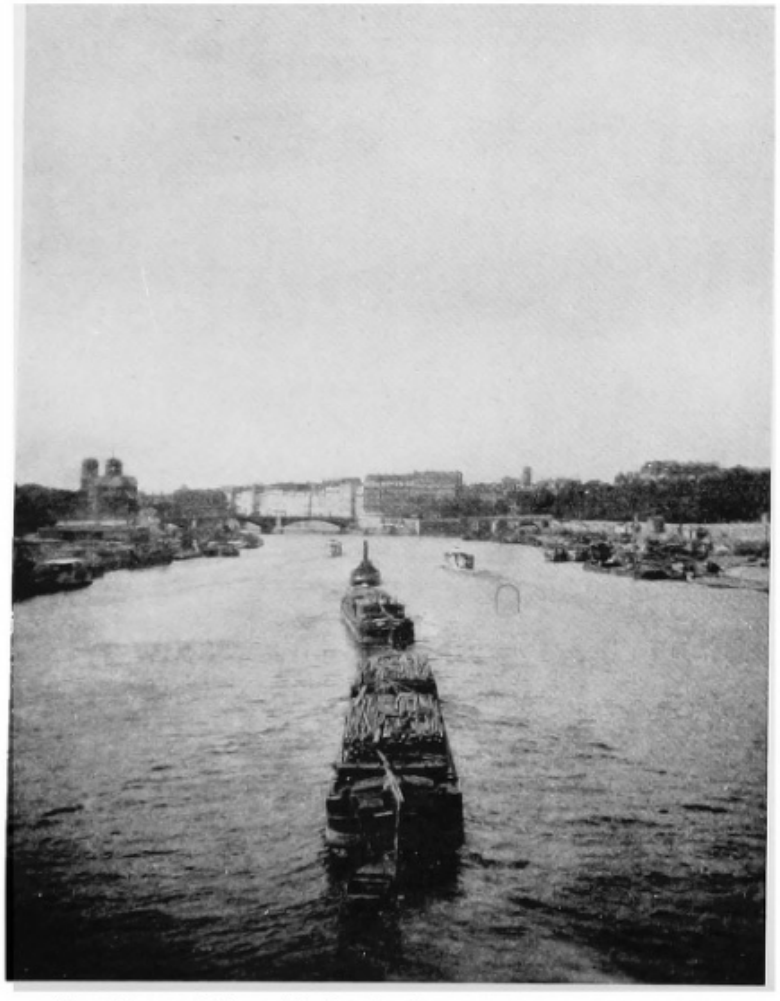
In passing a clump of trees at the roadside, I was suddenly roused from my revery by a shout of "Holà! L'américain!" What could have betrayed my nationality? I halted and stared about me. My eyes fell on the grove and I beheld my companions of the day before hastily gathering their possessions together.

We journeyed along as before, producing our papers at each village and being once stopped in the open country by a mounted gendarme. The miners played in poor luck all through the morning. A single sou and an aged quarter-loaf constituted their gleanings. Gaunt hunger was depicted on their countenances before we reached Briare in the early afternoon and, breaking the silence of an hour, I offered to stand the *compte* of a meal for three.

There was in Briare, as in every town in France larger than a hamlet, an inn the proprietor of which catered to the vagabond class. None but a native tramp could have found the establishment without repeated inquiries; but the miners, needing no second invitation and guided by some peculiar instinct, led the way down a side street and into a squalid cul de sac. The most acute foreign eye would have seen only frowning back walls, but my companions pushed open the door of what looked like a deserted warehouse and we entered a low room, gloomy and unswept. Around the table, to which we made our way through a very forest of huge wine-barrels, were gathered a dozen peasants and a less solemn pair who turned out to be of "the profession."

The first greetings over, the keeper set out before us a loaf of coarse bread and a bottle of wine, demanded immediate payment, and having received it, resumed his seat on a barrel. His shop was, in reality, the wine cellar of a café the gilded façade of which faced the main street. In it the liquor that sold here for four sous the litre would have cost us a half-franc. One of the miners, having gained my consent to the extravagance, invested two sous in raw, salt pork which he and his companion ate with great relish. I was content to do without such delicacies, for the wine and bread made a very appetizing feast after hours of trudging under a broiling sun.

In the course of the afternoon I photographed the miners, a proceeding which caused them infantine delight, both declaring that this was the first time in their begrimed existence that they had ever



Canal-boats laden with lumber from Nièvre entering Paris

"They are excellently built, the Routes Nationales of France"

been *tirés*. We found lodging in a peasant's wheat stack. I was a bit chary of spending the night in so deserted a spot with two such vagabonds, for the kodak and the handful of coins from which I had paid for our dinner was a plunder worth a roadster's conspiracy. My anxiety was really ungrounded. Morning broke with my possessions intact and, after an hour's work in picking straw and chaff from our hair and clothing, we set off at sunrise.

I left my companions behind soon after, for their mode of travel resulted in far less than the thirty miles a day I had cut out for myself, and passed on into the vineyard and forest country of Nièvre. Harvest was over in the few fertile farms that were not given up to the culture of the grape; the day of the gleaners had come. In the fields left bare by the reapers, peasant women gathered with infinite care the stray wheat stalks and, their aprons full, plodded homeward. To the thrifty French mind there is nothing so iniquitous as to waste the smallest thing of value. Before this army of bowed backs one could not but wonder whether it had ever occurred to them that labor also may be wasted.

The most extravagant of its inhabitants were already lighting their lamps when I entered the village of La Charité. To whatever benevolence the quiet hamlet owes its name, it was typical of those rural communities that line the highways of France. A decrepit grey church raised a time-mellowed voice in the song of the evening angelus. Squat housewives gossiped at the doors of the drab stone cottages lining the route. From the neighboring fields heavy ox-carts, the yokes fastened across the horns of the animals, lumbered homeward. In the dwindling light a blacksmith before his open shop was fitting with flat, iron shoes a piebald ox triced up on his back in a frame.

In lieu of the familiar sign, *Ici on loge à pied et à cheval,* the village inn was distinguished from the private dwellings by a bundle of dried fagots over the door. I entered, to find myself in a room well-stocked with wooden tables, with here and there a trio of villagers, over their wine and cards, blowing smoke at the unhewn beams of the ceiling. In answer to the customary signal, the tapping of pipes on the tables, an elderly woman appeared and inquired bruskly wherein she could serve me.

"You have lodgings, n'est-ce pas?"

A sudden, startling silence greeted the first suggestion of foreign accent. Cards paused in mid-air, pipes ceased to draw, tipplers craned their necks to listen, and madame surveyed me deliberately, even a

bit disdainfully, from crown to toe. Satisfied evidently, with her inspection, she admitted that she had been known to house travelers and hurried away to bring the register, while the smoking and the drinking and the playing were slowly and half-heartedly resumed. Madame scrutinized intently each stroke of the coarse pen as I filled in the various blanks, puzzled several moments over my "passport," and dropping all her stiff dignity, became suddenly garrulous:

"What! You are an American? Why, another American has lodged here. It was in 1882. He was making the tour of the world on a bicycle. He came from Boston"—she pronounced it with a distressing nasal—"but I could not understand his French. He did not pronounce the R. He said 'foncé' when he meant 'français.' for 'terre' he said 'tèah.' I will give you his bed. He had not many hairs on his head. Do you eat ragoût also in America? He wore such funny pince-nez. Fine wine, n'est-ce pas? He had hurt his foot—" and thus she chattered on, through my supper and up the stairs to my chamber.

The room once graced by the man from Boston was stone-floored, with whitewashed walls, and large enough to have housed a squad of infantry. Of its two beds, hung with snow-white curtains, I preferred the one nearer the window. Unfortunately, my compatriot of the pince-nez had chosen the other and madame would not hear of my violating the precedent thus established. The price of this lodging, and the usual one in the rural inns of France, was fifteen cents.

There were times when my zealous efforts to spend for lodging as few sous as possible brought me to temporary grief. The night following my sojourn in La Charité is a case in point. I reached St. Pierre le Moutier some time after dark, and, upon inquiry for the cheapest auberge, was directed up a dismal alleyway. On the fringe of the open country I stumbled upon a ramshackle stone building, one end of which was a dwelling for man, while the other housed his domestic animals. Inside, under a sputtering excuse for a lamp, huddled two men, a woman and a girl, around a table that canted up against the wall as if it had borne too much wine in its long existence and become chronically unsteady on its legs thereby. So preoccupied was the quartet in devouring slabs of dull-brown bread and a watery soup from a common bowl in which floated a few stray cabbage-leaves that my entrance passed unnoticed.

Advancing to attract attention I brought disaster. For in the semi-darkness I stepped on the end of a board that supported two legs of

the tipsy table, causing the bowl of soup to slide into the woman's arms, and the loaf to roll about on the earth floor. The mishap, evidently no new experience, aroused no comment, but it gained me a hearing and brought me into the conversation. Of the two men, one was the proprietor and the second a traveler of the tramp variety who, though posing as a Parisian, spoke a decidedly mongrel language. With the fluency of a stranded tragedian he launched forth in a raging narration of his misfortunes. French at all resembling the educated tongue had become as familiar to me as English, but the patois and slang in which the fellow unfolded the story of a persecuted life would have daunted an international interpreter. I caught the drift of his remarks by making him repeat each sentence twice or thrice, but he ended with a: "Heing! Tu comprinds ma'reux le frinçais;" and I was forced to admit that if the jargon he got off were "frinçais," I certainly did.

The younger, and consequently less begrimed of the females, led the way to my "room," which turned out to be a hole over the stable, some four feet high, approached by an outside stairway, and containing two of the filthiest cots a vivid imagination could have pictured. To my disgust I found that one of the beds was reserved for my friend of the uncouth tongue. A half-hour later, unstable after a final bottle of wine with the *aubergiste,* he stumbled into the den and proceeded to make night hideous — awake, by his multiloquence, asleep, by a rasping snore. A dozen times I awoke from a half-conscious nap to find him sitting cross-legged in his cot, puffing furiously at a cigarette, above the feeble glow of which glistened his cat-like eyes as he stared at me across the intervening darkness. At daybreak he was gone and I departed soon after.

There is really no reason why the French roadster should go hungry in autumn. That he does, is due to a strange national prejudice unknown in America; for at that season half the highways of France are lined with hedges heavy with blackberries. At first I looked with suspicion on a fruit left ungathered by the thrifty peasantry, but, coming one morning upon a hedge unusually burdened with berries, I satisfied myself as to their identity and fell to picking a capful. A band of peasants, on the way to the fields, halted to gaze at me in astonishment and burst into uproarious laughter.

"Mais, mon vieux," cried a plowman. "Que diable vas tu faire de ces choses-là?"

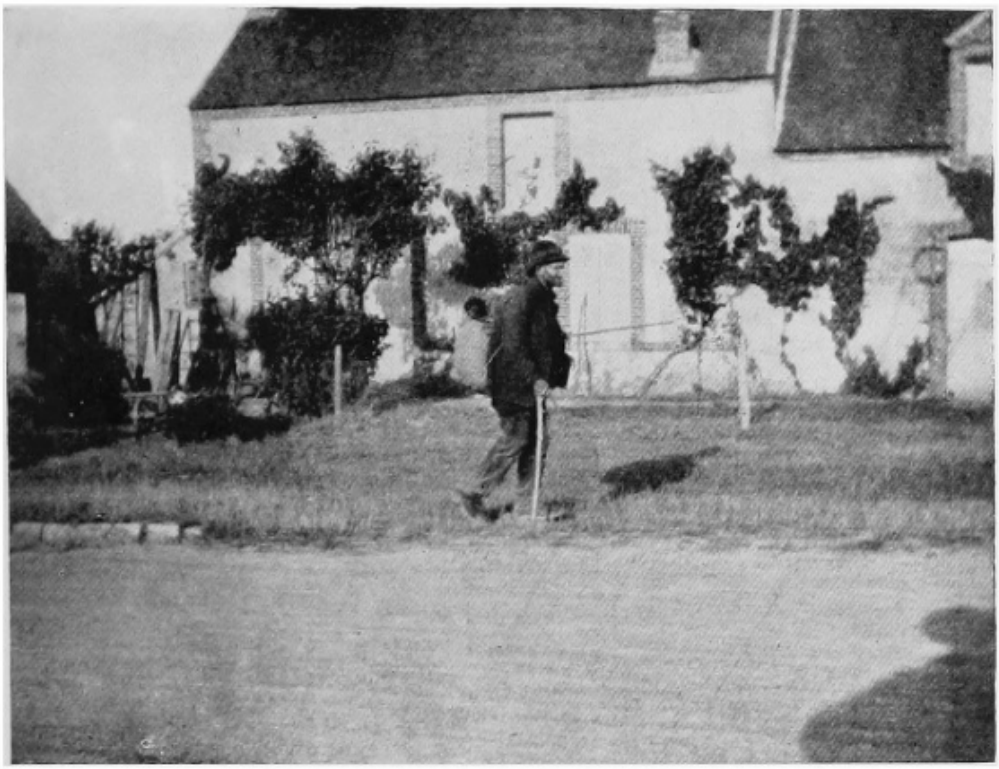
"Eat them, of course," I answered.

"Eat them!" roared the peasants, "but those things are not good to eat," and the notion struck them as so droll that their guffaws still came back to me long after they had turned a bend in the highway. Every Frenchman I approached on the subject held the same view. The two miners traveled for hours with a gnawing hunger, or invaded lonely vineyards at imminent risk of capture by the rural gendarmerie, to eat their fill of half-ripe grapes, sour and acrid. But when I, from my safe position outside the hedge, held up a heavily-laden bush, their answer was always the same: "Ah, non, mon vieux. Not any for me." Obviously I could not regret the bad repute in which the fruit was held, for when hunger overtook me I had but to stop and pick my dinner, and except for the few sous spent for bread and wine, my rations from Fontainebleau to the Swiss frontier cost me nothing.

My tramp continued past Nevers and Moulin, down through the department of Allier to the city of Roanne, stretching along both banks of the upper Loire. A few kilometers beyond, the highway began a winding ascent of the first foot-hills of the Alps. Even here the cultivation bespoke the thrift of the French peasant. Far up the rugged hillside stretched terraced farms, each stone-faced step of the broad stairways thickly set with grapevines. Higher still a few wrinkled patches in sheltered ravines gave sustenance to the most sturdy toilers. Here it is that may be seen the nearest prototype of that painful figure known far and wide, that stolid being who leans on his mattock, gazing helplessly away into meaningless space; nearest, because his exact original no longer dwells in the fields of France; he has moved southward. Down a glen below the highway the trunk of a tree, broken off some six feet above the ground and with a huge knot on one side, stood out in silhouette against the distant horizon. But for a crudeness of outline one might have imagined the stump a clumsy, ragged peasant, with a child astride his shoulders. I stood surveying this figure, wondering what forces of the elements could have given a mere tree so strange a likeness to a human form, when it suddenly started, moved, and strode away across the gully.

The highway continued to climb. The patches of tilled ground gave way to waving forests where sounded the twittering of birds, and here and there the cheery song of the woodsman or shepherd boy. Some magic there is inherent in the clear air of mountain heights that calls forth song from those that dwell among them.

With sunset came the summit. The road began to descend, the forests fell away, the tiny fields appeared once more, and the ballad



A typical French roadster who has tramped the highways of Europe for thirty years

The two French miners with whom I tramped in France.
Notice shoe-laces carried for sale

of the mountaineer was silent. A colony of laborers, engaged in the construction of a reservoir, gave me greeting from the doors of their temporary shacks, and lower still I turned in at an auberge half-filled with a squad of soldiers.

He is an interesting figure, the French conscript. In his makeup is none of the boisterous braggadocio of the American trooper and of Tommy Atkins, never that scorn for civilians so often characteristic of the voluntary, the mercenary soldier. He feels small inclination to boast of his wisdom even in military matters, for well he knows that the jolly innkeeper may be able to tell a tale of his own days *sous le drapeau* that makes the conscript's favorite story weak and insipid by comparison. Then, too, it is hard to be boastful when one is sad at heart; and the French conscript is not happy. To him conscription is a yoke, akin to disease and death, which fate has fastened upon the children of men. He dreads its coming, serves under unexpressed protest, and sets it down in his book of life as three years utterly lost.

There is, indeed, a note of pessimism everywhere prevalent among the masses of France. It is not a universal note, not even a constant one: loud-voiced "calamity-howlers" are less in evidence than in our own optimistic land. But even amid the merry chatter there hovers over every gathering of French workmen a gloominess, an infestivity that speaks of lost hope, of fatalistic despair. Briefly and unconsciously, a craftsman of chance acquaintance summed up this inner feeling of his class: "Ah, mon pauvre pays," he sighed, "elle n'est plus ce qu'elle était."

Chattering groups of Lyonese, mounting to the freer air of the hills in Sunday attire, enlivened my morning tramp down the descending highway. By early afternoon I came in sight of the second city of France and the confluence of the Soâne and Rhône. The vineyards ceased, to give place to mulberry trees. Even on this day of merry-making the whir of silk-looms sounded from the wayside cottages, well into the suburbs of the city. The humble dwellings were succeeded by mansions; the national highway, by a broad boulevard that led down to the meeting-place of the two rivers, and the first stage of my journey to southern Europe was ended.

From Lyon I turned northeastward towards Geneva and the Alps. A serpentine route climbed upward. Often I tramped for hours around the edge of a yawning chasm, having always in view a rugged village and its vineyards far below, only to find myself at the end of that time within stone's throw of a long-forgotten kilometer-post.

Near the frontier hovered a general air of suspicion. The aubergiste of the mountain hamlet of Moulin Chabaud hesitated long and studied every dot and letter of my papers before offering me a chair under the big fireplace; he remained surly and distraught all through the evening, as if convinced in spite of himself that he was harboring one whose career had not been unsullied. When I awoke, a mountain rain was falling, cold and ceaseless; but preferring always a certain amount of physical discomfort to sour looks, I pushed on, splashing into Geneva long after nightfall.

It would doubtless require a frequent repetition of such experiences to stifle that indefinable dread, akin to fear, which oppresses the weary pedestrian who, entirely unbefriended, enters an unknown city in the darkness of night. Limping aimlessly through the streets of Geneva in my water-soaked garments, I felt particularly dismal and forlorn. Genevese, huddled under their umbrellas, pushed me aside when I attempted to speak to them or snapped a few incoherent words over their shoulders. In vain I attempted to escape from the district of jewellers' shops and watch-makers' show-windows, little suspecting that I was virtually on an island given over almost entirely to business houses and rich dwellings.

A slippery street led to a bridge across the Rhône, and a policeman beyond pointed out the district gendarmerie as the proper place to prosecute my inquiries. From a window of the building shown a dim light, and within sounded a brisk "entrez" in answer to my knock. Two police sergeants, engrossed in a game of cards, turned to scowl at me across the room.

"Eh bien, toi! Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?"

"I am looking for a lodging house and the policeman —"

"Lodging! At this time of night? Do you think the city provides a hotel de luxe for vagabonds, that they may come and go at any hour — ?"

"But I intend to pay my own lodging."

"Pay! Quoi! Tu as de l'argent?"

"Certainly I have money!" I cried indignantly, though to tell the truth the weight of it was not making me stoop-shouldered.

"Ah!" gasped the senior officer, speaking the word high up in his mouth after the fashion of Frenchmen expressing supreme astonishment. "Que je vous aie mal jugé! I thought you were asking admittance to the night shelter."

The shock of hearing one he had taken for a vagabond admit that

he had money was clearly a unique experience in the sergeant's constabulary career. He had by no means recovered when I turned away to the inn he had pointed out.

Three days later I boarded a steamer that zigzagged between the cities flanking blue Lac Léman, and descending at Villeneuve, set out along the valley of the upper Rhône. Here all was free and open as the mountains bordering the fertile strip, for the close-hedged fields of France are not to the taste of the Swiss peasant. No gendarme waylaid me at each hamlet; I had but to step off the highway to gather apples under the trees or to escape from the glaring sun.

Night overtook me at St. Maurice, a sure-footed mountain village, straddling the Rhône where it roars through a narrow gorge on its way to the lake beyond. Even within doors the villagers speak a high-pitched treble, so fixed has become the habit of raising their voices above the constant boom of the cataract. In my lodging directly above, the roaring intruded on my dreams, and in fancy I struggled against the rushing current that carried me down a sheer mountainside.

Church-bound peasants fell in with me along the route next morning, peasants lacking both the noisy gaiety of the French and the gloominess of the Sunday-clad German. Wayside wine-shops, or a pace too rapid for a day of rest cut short my acquaintance with each group, but I had not far to plod alone before the curiosity of a new band gave me companionship for another space.

At Martigny the highway bent with the river to the eastward; the mountain wall crowded more closely the narrow valley, pushing the road to the edge of the stream that mirrored the rugged peaks. Here and there a foot-hill boldly detached itself from the range, and taking its stand in the valley, drove off the route on a winding detour.

Two such hills gave Sion a form all its own. An ample Paradplatz in the foreground held back the jumble of houses tossed upon an undulating hillside. Back of the village, like gaunt sentinels guarding the valley of the upper Rhône, stood two towering rocks, the one crowned by the ruins of an ancient castle, the other by a crumbling church that gazed scornfully down on the jostling buildings of modern times. A Sunday festival was raging on the parade-ground. Around the booths and puppet-shows surged merry countrymen in gay attire; from the flanking shops hung streamers and the flags of many nations.

I had barely reached the town when a rumble of thunder sounded. Dense, black clouds, flying before a wind that did not reach us in the

ared from the north, tearing themselves on the jagged
Close on the heels of the warning a storm broke in true
The festooned multitude broke madly for the shelter of the shops, the gaudy streamers and booths turned to drooping rags, the puppets humped their shoulders appealingly, and the parade-ground became a shallow lake that reflected a bright sun ten minutes after the first growl of thunder.

The oppressive heat tempered by the shower, I rounded the greater of the sentinel rocks and continued up the valley. Rolling vineyards stretched away on either hand to the brink of the river or the base of the enclosing mountains. A burning thirst assailed me. Almost unconsciously I paused and picked two clusters of plump grapes that hung over the stone coping of a field above the highway.

A stone's throw ahead, two men stepped suddenly from behind a clump of bushes and strolled towards me.

"Do you know what that is?" demanded one of them, in French, as he waved a small badge before my eyes.

I certainly did. It was the official shield of the rural gendarmerie.

"Yes," I admitted.

"Back you go with us to Sion!" roared the officer. He was a lean, lank giant who, evidently in virtue of his length, assumed the position of spokesman. His companion, almost a dwarf, nodded his head vigorously in approval.

"Eh bien?" I answered, too weary to argue the matter.

"Yes," blustered the spokesman, "back to Sion and the magistrate —" he paused, squinted at the dwarf, and went on in dulcet tones, "unless you pay thirty francs."

"Thirty francs! Where on earth should I get thirty francs?" In my excitement I somewhat bungled my French.

"Where go you?" asked the pocket edition of the law. His voice was soothing and he spoke in German.

"To Italy. I am a workman."

"Ja! Und in deinem Lande — in your land you may pick grapes when you like, *was?*" shouted the long one.

"A couple of bunches? Of course!"

"*Was!* In Italien?" In his voice was all the sarcasm he could call up from a tolerably caustic nature.

"I am no Italian. I come from the United States."

"United States!" bellowed the gendarme, looking around at his companion. "What is this United States?"

"Ah-er-well, there *is* such a country," suggested the midget, "but —"

"And in this country of yours you do not speak French, nor German, nor yet Italian?" snapped the officer, relapsing unconsciously into French.

"No, we speak English."

"Mille diables! English! What then is that?"

"Ja. Es gibt so eine Sprache," ventured the dwarf.

The spokesman ignored him.

"Well, pay fifteen francs and we have seen nothing."

"Impossible."

"Then back to Sion and the gendarmerie."

"Very well, en route."

The pair scowled and turned aside to whisper together. The tall one continued, "My comrade says, as you are a pauvre diable on foot — five francs."

"Five francs for two bunches of grapes, comme ça?" I gasped holding them out.

"Ach! Ein, unglücklicher Kerl," urged the dwarf. "Say three francs."

"No!" I cried, "C'en est trop. Two bunches, like that? I have here two francs —"

The leader shook his head, glanced at his mate, and took several steps in the direction of Sion.

"Ah! A poor devil on the road," breathed the other.

"Well, two it is," growled the moving spirit.

I took two francs from my pocket and dropped them into the outstretched palm. The officer jingled the coins a moment, handed one to his companion, and pocketed the other with the air of a man who had well performed an unpleasant duty. His threatening scowl had vanished and a smile played on his lean face.

"Merci," he said, dropping his shield into a side pocket and turning back to his hiding-place, "au revoir, monsieur!" And the small man, following close on his heels, turned to add, "Bon voyage, monsieur l'américain."

I plodded on into the dusk, eating the high-priced grapes, and wondering just where the owner of the vineyard entered into the transaction.

Somewhere near the treacherous clump of bushes I passed the unmarked boundary between French and German Switzerland. Thus far

the former tongue had reigned supreme, though pedestrians often greeted me with "Bon jour," "Guten Tag." But the voice of the street in Sierre, where I halted for the night, was overwhelmingly Teutonic, and the signs over hospitable doors no longer read "auberge," but "Wirtschaft" and "Bierhalle." There I lay late abed next morning, and once off, strolled leisurely along the fertile valley, for a bare twenty miles separated the town from Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon pass.

You who turn in each evening at the selfsame threshold, you who huddle in your niche among the cave-dwellers of great cities, you who race through foreign lands in car and carriage as if fearful of setting foot on an alien soil, can know nothing of the exhilaration that comes in tramping mile after mile of open country when life blooms forth in its prime on every hand. A single day afoot brings delight. Yet only he who looks day after day on an ever-changing scene, who passes on and ever on into the great Weltraum that stretches unendingly before him, can feel the full strength of the Wanderlust within. To stop seems an irreverence, to turn back a sacrilege. In these days of splendid transportation we lose much that our forefathers enjoyed. There is a sense of satisfaction akin to self-pride, a sense of real accomplishment that thrills the pedestrian who has attained a distant goal through his own unaided efforts, a satisfaction which the traveler by steam cannot experience.

The highway over the Simplon, constructed by Napoleon in 1805, is still, in spite of the encroachment of railways, a well-traveled route, though not by pedestrians. The good people of Brieg burst forth in wailing sympathy when I divulged my plan of crossing on foot. Traffic between the village and Domo d'Ossola in Piedmont has for generations been monopolized by a line of stage-coaches. There was more than the exhilaration of such a tramp, however, to awaken my revolt against this time-honored means of transportation, for the fare on one of these primitive bone-shakers ranged from forty to fifty francs.

With a vagrant's lunch in my knapsack I left Brieg at dawn, for the first tramontane hamlet was thirty miles distant. Before the sun rose, the morning stage rattled by and the jeering of its drivers cheered me on. The highway showed nowhere a really steep grade, though it mounted seven thousand feet in twenty-three kilometers. With every turn of the route the panorama grew. Three hours up, Brieg still peeped out through the slender *Tannenbäume,* far below, yet almost

directly beneath; and the vista extended far down the winding valley of the Rhône, back to the sentinel rocks of Sion and beyond. Across the chasm sturdy mountaineers scrambled from rock to boulder with their sheep and goats, as high as grew the hardiest sprig of vegetation. Far above the last shrub, ragged, barren peaks cut from the blue sky beyond figures of fantastic shape; peaks aglow with nature's most lavish coloring, here one deep purple in the morning shade, there another, with basic tone of ruddy pink changed like watered silk under the reflection of the rays that gilded its summit.

Beyond the spot where Brieg was lost to view began the *réfuges,* roadside cottages in which the traveler, overcome by fatigue or the raging storms of winter, may seek shelter. In this summer season, however, they had degenerated one and all into dirty wine-shops where squalling children and stray goats wandered about among the tables. I peered in at one and inquired the price of a bottle of wine. A spidery female rose up to fleece me of my slender hoard and I beat a hasty retreat, thankful to have come prepared against the call of hunger, and content to drink the crystalline water of wayside streams.

The roadway found scant footing in the upper ranges, and burrowed its way through several tunnels. High above one of them a glacier sent down a roaring torrent sheer over the route, and through an opening in the outer wall of the subtorrential gallery one could reach out and touch the foaming stream as it plunged into the abyss far below.

Light clouds, that had obscured the sterile peaks during the last hours of the ascent, all but caused me to pass unnoticed the hospice of St. Bernard that marks the summit. I stepped inside to write a postal to the world below, and turned out again into a drizzling rain that soon became a steady downpour. But the kilometers that had been so long in the morning fairly raced by on the downward journey, and a few hours brought me to the frontier.

As if fearful of losing sovereignty over a foot of her territory, Italy has set a guard-house exactly over the boundary line, amid wild rocks and gorges. A watchful soldier stepped out into the storm and hailed me while several yards of Switzerland still lay between us:

"Any tobacco or cigars?"

I fished out a half-used package of Swiss tobacco, wet and mushy. The officer waved a deprecatory hand.

"What's this?" he demanded, tapping the pocket that held my kodak.

"A picture machine," I explained, showing an edge of the apparatus.

"Bene, buona sera," cried the officer, as he ran for his shelter.

At nightfall I splashed into the scraggy village of Iselle. From a yawning hole in the mountainside poured forth a regiment of laborers who scurried towards a long row of improvised shanties, hanging, on the edge of nothing, over a rushing mountain river. Having once been a "mud-mucker" in my own land, I followed after, and struck up several acquaintanceships over the evening macaroni. The band was engaged in boring a tunnel, thirteen miles in length, from Brieg to Iselle. With its completion the Simplon tourist will avoid the splendid scenery of the pass; the stagecoaches will be consigned to the scrap-heaps they should long since have adorned; and an hour, robbed of sunshine and pure air, will separate Italy from the valley of the Rhône. Then will the transalpine voyager degenerate into the subalpine passenger.

CHAPTER III

TRAMPING IN ITALY

THERE was next morning nothing to recall the dismal weather of the day before except the deep mud of the highway and my garments, still dripping wet when I drew them on. The vine-covered hillsides and rolling plains below, the lizards basking on every rock and ledge, peasant women plodding barefooted along the route gave to the land an aspect far different from that of the valley of the Rhône. It was hard to realize that the open fields and chilling night winds of Switzerland were not hundreds of miles away, but just behind the flanking range.

The French and German that had so long served me must now give place to my none too fluent Italian. In the grey old town of Domo d'Ossola I halted at a booth to buy a box of matches.

"Avete allumette?" I demanded of the brown-visaged matron in charge.

I have always had an unconquerable feeling that the French "allumette" ought really to be an Italian word; but my attempt to introduce it into that language failed dismally.

"Cose sono allumette?" croaked the daughter of Italy, with such overdrawn sarcasm that it was all too evident that she understood the term, but did not propose to admit any knowledge of the despised *francese* tongue.

"Fiammiferi, voglio dire," I replied, recalling the correct word.

"Ah! Ecco!" cried the matron, handing me a box with her blandest smile.

I quickly discovered, too, that the language of the Divine Comedy was not the one in which to make known my simple wants. But being more familiar with the phraseology of the famous Florentine than with the speech of the masses, I found myself, in those first days in the peninsula, prone to converse in poetrics despite a very prosaic temperament. As when, in the outskirts of Domo d'Ossola, I turned to a chestnut vendor at a fork in the road, and pointing up one of the branches, demanded:

"Ah! — er — Perme si va nella città dol — Confound it, no, I mean is this the road to Varese?"

To which the native, to whose lips was mounting a "non capisc'" at sound of the Dantesque phrase, answered in a twinkling:

"Di s'guro, s'gnor', semp' dritt!"

Across northern Italy, almost in a straight line, are scattered several famous cities, all invaded by the broad highway that leads from the Simplon to Venice. Most beautiful among them is Pallanza, a village paradise on the shore of Lago Maggiore, in the lakeside groves of which I should have tarried longer but for the recollection of how wide the world is to the impecunious wayfarer. I fished out, therefore, from the bin of a second-hand book dealer a ragged Baedeker in French, and, thus armed with a more trustworthy source of information than dull-eyed peasants, boarded the steamer that connected the broken ends of the highway. During the short journey a band of English tourists sauntered about on the deck above me, and my native tongue, unheard since Paris and not to be heard again until — well, until long after, sounded almost foreign to my ears.

Beyond Varese next morning, within sight of five snow-capped peaks of the range I had crossed three days before, I espied from afar the white sun-shields of two officers, armed with muskets, and marching westward. Anticipating a quizzing, I turned aside from the sun-scorched route and awaited their coming in a shaded spot. Strange to say, in this land burdened with a tax on salt and an unholy visitation of soldiers and priests, vagrants enjoy far more liberty than in France. Thus far the indifference of the gendarmerie had been so marked that I had come to feel neglected. Yet tramps abounded. This very freedom makes Italy a favorite land among the *Handwerksgesellen* of Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, many of whom I had already met, marching southward full of Wanderlust, or crawling homeward with bitter stories of the miseries of the peninsula.

The *carabinieri,* spick and span of uniform, their swords rattling egotistically on the roadway, drew near, and, stepping into the shade, opened a conversation that needs no translation.

"Di dove siete?"

"Di America, dei Stati Uniti."

"Di America! Ma! E dove andate?"

"A Venezia."

"Ma! Come! A piedi?"

"Di siguro. Come volete che fare?"

"Ma! Perche andare a Venezia?"

"Sono marinaio."

"Ah! Marinaio! Bene!" and without even calling for my papers they strutted on along the highway.

A wonderful word is this Italian "ma." Let not the uninitiated suppose that the term designates a maternal ancestor. But — and that is its real meaning — it is a useful vocable and like all useful things is greatly overworked. If an Italian of the masses wishes to express disgust, surprise, resignation, depression of spirits, or any one of a score of other impressions, he has merely to say "ma" with the corresponding accentuation and timbre and his hearers know his opinion exactly. It takes the place of our "All right!" "Hurry up!" "Quit it!" "Let 'er go!" "The devil he did!" "Rot!" "Dew tell!" "Cuss the luck!" "Nuff said!" "D—n it!" and there its meanings by no means cease.

Poverty stalks abroad in Italy. Even in this richer northern section it required no telescope to make out its gaunt and furrowed features. Ragged children quarrelled for the possession of an apple-core thrown by the wayside; the rolling fields were alive with barefooted women toiling like demon-driven serfs. A sparrow could not have found sustenance behind the gleaners. In wayside orchards men armed with grain-sacks stripped even the trees of their leaves; for what purpose was not evident, though the beds to which I was assigned in village inns suggested a possible solution of the problem.

The peasant of these parts possesses three beasts of burden: a team of gaunt white oxen — or cows — an undersized ass, and his wife. Of the three, the last is most useful. The husbandman does not load his hay on wagons; a few blades might fall by the wayside. He ties it carefully in small bundles, piles them high above the baskets strapped on the backs of his helpmeet, and drives her off to the village, often miles distant. They are loads which the American workman would refuse to carry — so does the Italian for that matter; but the highway is animate with what look, at a distance, like wandering haystacks, from beneath which, on nearer approach, peer women, or half-grown girls, whose drawn and haggard faces might have served as models to those artists who have depicted on canvas the beings of Dante's hell.

A traveler, ignorant of Italian, wandering into Como at my heels on that sweltering afternoon, would have been justified in supposing that the advance agent of a circus had preceded him. Had he taken the

trouble to engage an interpreter, however, he would have learned that a more serious catastrophe had befallen. The very night before a longed-hoped-for heir to the throne of Vittore Emanuele had dropped into his reserved seat on the neck of the Italian tax-payer. On the city gate, on house-walls everywhere, on the very façade of the cathedral, great, paste-sweating placards announced the casuality in flaunting head-lines, and a greater aggregation of adjectives than would be required in our own over-postered land to call public attention to the merits of Chow Chow Chewing Gum, or the Yum Yum Burlesque Company. Worst of all, the manifesto ended, not with expressions of condolence to the proletariat, but with a command to swear at once loyalty and fealty to "Il Principe di Piemonte." Everywhere jostling groups were engrossed in spelling out the proclamation; but it was quite possible to pass through the streets of Como without being trampled under foot by its citizens in their mad rush to carry out the royal order.

Nightfall found me in quest of a lodging in Pusiano, a lakeside village midway between Como and Lecco. It was no easy task. The *alberghi* of Italy — but why generalize? They are all tarred with the same stick. The proprietor, then, of the Pusiano hostelry, relying for his custom on those who know every in and out of the town, had not gone to the expense of erecting a sign. I found, after long and diligent search, the edifice that included the public resort under its roof; but as the inn had no door opening on the street, I was still faced with the problem of finding the entrance. Of two dark passages and a darker stairway before me, it was a question which was most suggestive of pitfalls set for unwary travelers, and of dank, underground dungeons. I plunged into one of the tunnels with my hands on the defensive; which was fortunate, for I brought up against a stone wall. The second passage ended as abruptly. I approached the stairway stealthily; stumbled up the stone steps, over a stray cat and a tin pan, and into the common room of the Pusiano inn — common because it served as kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and office.

My wants made known, the proprietor half rose to his feet, sat down again, and motioned me to a seat. I took a place opposite him on one of the two benches inside the fire-place, partly because it had been raining outside, but chiefly on account of an absence of chairs that left me no choice in the matter. Shrouded in silence I filled my pipe. The landlord handed me a glowing coal in his fingers and dropped back on his bench without once subduing his stare. His wife

wandered in and placed several pots and kettles around the fire that toasted our heels. Still not a word. I leaned back and, gazing upward, watched as much of the smoke as could find no other vent pass up the chimney. Now and then a drop of rain fell with a hiss on pan or kettle.

"Not nice weather," grinned the landlord, and the ice thus broken, we were soon engaged in animated conversation. Too animated in fact, for in emphasizing some opinion mine host had the misfortune to kick over a kettle of boiling macaroni and was banished from the chimney corner by a raging spouse. Being less given to pedal gesticulation, I kept my place, and strove to answer the questions which the exile fired at me across the room.

By meal time several natives had dropped in, and our party at table grew garrulous and in time so numerous that to serve us became a serious problem to the hostess, who was neither lithe nor quick of movement. The supper began with *una minestra,* a plate of soup containing some species of macaroni and, as usual in these cheap alberghi, several species of scrap-iron. Then a bit of meat was doled out, somewhat to my surprise; for the price of this article is so high in Italy that a stew of kidneys, liver, sheep's head, or fat-covered entrails is often the only offering. He who has the temerity and a heavy enough purse to order a cutlet or a *bistecca* in such an inn is looked upon with awe and envy as long as he remains. I seldom had either.

Following the meat dish — it is never served with it — came a bowl of vegetables, then a bit of fruit and a nibble of cheese for each of us. Wine, of course, had been much in evidence; the Italian has no conception of a meal without his national drink. The wayfarer may call for nothing to eat but the three-cent minestra, and la signora serves it as cheerily as a dinner at one lira; but let him refuse to order wine, and her sympathy is forever forfeited. When drowsiness fell upon me the hostess led the way to an airy, spacious room, its bed boasting a lace canopy, and its coarse sheets remarkably white in view of the fact that the Italian housewife does her work in the village brook, and never uses hot water. Such labor is cheap in the peninsula and for all this luxury I paid less than ten cents.

Early next day I pushed on toward Lecco. A light frost had fallen during the night, and the peasants, alarmed at this first breath of winter, had sent into the vineyards every man, woman, and child capable of labor. The pickers worked feverishly. All day women plodded from the fields to the roadside with great buckets of grapes to be

dumped into hogsheads on waiting ox-carts. Men, booted or shod with wooden clogs, jumped now and then into the barrels and stamped the grapes down. Once full, the receptacles were covered with strips of dirty canvas, the *contadino* mounted his cart, turned his oxen into the highway, and fell promptly asleep. Arrived at the village, he drew up before the chute of the communal wine-press and shoveled his grapes into a slowly-revolving hopper, from which, crushed to an oozy pulp, they were run into huge vats and left to settle.

Halting for a morning lunch in the shadow of the statue of Manzoni, I rounded that range of mountains, so strangely resembling a saw, which shelters Lecco from the east wind, and continuing through the theater of action of "I Promessi Sposi," gained Bergamo by nightfall. Beyond that city a level highway set an unchanging course across a vast, grape-bearing plain, watered by a network of canals. The Alps retired slowly to the northward until, at Brescia, only a phantom range wavered in the haze of the distant horizon.

About the time of my arrival in Italy, a strike had been declared in Milan. The Milanese motormen had refused to groom their horses or something of the sort. Once started, the movement was rapidly growing general and wide-spread. The newspapers bubbled over with it, the air about me was surcharged with raging arraignments of capitalistic iniquities. Strikes and lock-outs, however, were no affairs to trouble the peace of a foot-traveler. When trains ceased to run, I marched serenely on through clamoring groups of stranded voyagers; when the barbers closed their shops, I decided to raise a beard. The butchers joined the movement and I smiled with the indifference of one who had subsisted for weeks chiefly on bread.

The bakers of northern Italy concoct this important comestible in loaves of about the size and durability of baseballs. Serving in that capacity there is good reason to believe that one of them would remain unscathed at the end of a league game, though the score-book recorded many a three-bagger and home-run. Still, hard loaves soaked in wine, or crushed between two wayside rocks were edible, in a way; and, as long as they were plentiful, I could not suffer for lack of food.

A few miles beyond Brescia, however, the strike became a matter of personal importance. At each of the bakeries of a grumbling village I was turned away with the cry of: —

"Pane non ch'è! The strike! The bakers have joined the strike and no more bread is made!"

To satisfy that day's appetite I was reduced to "paste," a mushy mess of macaroni; and at a Verona inn I was robbed of half my sleep by the discussion of this new phase of the situation, that roared in the kitchen until long after midnight.

I was returning across the piazza next morning, from an early view of the picturesque bridges and the ancient Colosseum of Verona, when I fell upon a howling mob at the gateway of the city hall. Joining the throng, I soon gained an inner courtyard, to find what seemed to be half the population of Verona quarreling, pushing, and scratching in a struggle to reach the gate of a large wicket that shut off one end of the square. Behind it, just visible above the intervening sea of heads, appeared the top of some massive instrument, and the caps of a squad of policemen. I inquired of an excited neighbor the cause of the squabble. He glowered at me and howled something in reply, the only intelligible word of which was "pane" (bread). I turned to a man behind me. He took advantage of my movement to shove me aside and crowd into my place, at the same time vociferating "pane!" I tried to oust the usurper. He jabbed me twice in the ribs with his elbows, and again roared "pane." In fact, everywhere above the howl and blare of the multitude, one word rang out clear and sharp—"pane! pane! pane!" Sad experiences of the day before, and the anticipation of the long miles of highway before me, had aroused my interest in that commodity. I dived into the human whirlpool and set out to battle my way towards the vortex.

With all its noise and bluster, an Italian crowd does not know the rudiments of football. Even the wretch who had dispossessed me of my first vantage-ground was far behind when I reached the front rank and paused to survey the scene of conflict. Inside the wicket a dozen perspiring policemen were guarding several huge baskets of that baseball bread already mentioned. Beyond them stood the instrument that had attracted my attention—a pair of wooden scales that looked fully capable of giving the avoirdupois of an ox. Still further on, an officer, whose expression suggested that he was recording nominations of candidates to fill the King's seat, presided over a ponderous book, a pen the size of a stiletto behind each ear, and one resembling a young bayonet in his hand.

One by one the citizens of Verona shot through a small gate into the enclosure from the surging multitude outside as from a catapult; to be brought up with a round turn by the shouted question, "Pound or two pounds?" Once weighed out, the desired number of loaves

traveled rapidly from hand to hand on one side of the official line; while the applicant, struggling to keep pace with them on the other, paused before the registering clerk to answer several pertinent personal questions, corralled his purchase at the table of the receiving teller, and made his escape as best he could.

Almost before I had time to study the workings of this system, the press of humanity behind sent me spinning through the gate. "Two pounds!" I shouted, as I swept by the scales en route for the book. Just in front of me a gaunt creature paused and gave his residence as Florence. "No bread for you!" roared every officer within hearing; policemen, sergeants, and clerks, in a rousing chorus, "Only bread for Veronese! Get out of here!" and, impelled by two official boots, the stranger stood not on the order of his going.

That Florentine was a god-send to me. In my innocence I had already opened my mouth to shout "Americano" to his Self-Complacency behind the volume, and, had that fateful word escaped me, I should have gone "paneless" through the long hours of a long day.

"Residenza?" shouted the registrar, as I entered his field of vision.

"Verona, signore."

"Professione?"

"Calzolaio, signore."

"Street and number."

I remembered the name of one street and tacked on a number haphazard.

"Bene! Va!" An official hand pushed me unceremoniously towards the teller. I dropped ten soldi, gathered up my bread, and departed by the further wicket-gate down a flagstone alley.

Let him who has not tried it take my word that to carry two pounds of edible baseballs in his arms is no simple task. A loaf rolled in the gutter before I had advanced a dozen paces. The others squirmed waywardly in my grasp. With both hands amply occupied, I was reduced to the indignity of squatting on the pavement to fill my pockets, and even then a witless observer would have taken me for an itinerant juggler. Never since leaving Detroit had I posed as a philanthropist, but the burden of bread called for drastic measures; I must either be charitable or wasteful.

He who longs to give alms in Italy has not far to look for a recipient of his benefaction. I glanced down the passageway, and my

eyes fell on a beggar of forlornly mournful aspect crouched in a gloomy doorway. With a benignant smile I bestowed upon him enough of my load with which to play the American national game among his confrères until the season closed. The outcast wore a sign marked, "Deaf and dumb." Either he had picked up the wrong placard in sallying forth, or had been startled out of his rôle by the munificence of the gift. For as long as a screeching voice could reach me I was deluged with more blessings, to be delivered by the Virgin Mary; Her Son; every pope, past, present, or to come; or any saint, dead, living, or unborn, who had a few stray ones about him; than I could possibly have found use for.

I plodded on towards Vincenza. All that day the hard-earned loaves, which I dissolved in a glass of wine at village inns, aroused the envy of pessimistic groups gathered to curse the strike in general and that of the bakers in particular.

When morning broke again I summoned courage to test the third-class accommodations of Italy, and took train from Vincenza to Padua. At least, the ticket I purchased bore those two names, though the company hardly lived up to the printed contract thereon. We started from somewhere off in the woods to the west of Vincenza and, at the end of several hours of jolting and bumping, not excused, certainly, by the speed of the train, were set down in the center of a wheat field, which the guards informed us, in blatant voices, was Padua. I had a faint recollection of having heard somewhere that Padua boasted buildings and streets, like other cities. It was possible, of course, that the source of my information had been untrustworthy; I am nothing if not gullible. But fixed impressions are not easily effaced, and I wandered out through the sequestered station to whisper my absurd delusion to the first passerby.

"Padova!" he snorted, "Ma! Di siguro! Certainly this is Padua! Follow this road for a kilometer. Just before you come in sight of a whitewashed pig-sty turn to the left, walk sempre dritt', and the city cannot escape you."

I set out with the inner sense of having been "done" by the railway company, but the good man's directions proved accurate and brought me in due time to the city gate.

The Italian stammers two excuses for this enchanting custom of banishing his stations to the surrounding meadows. If the city admitted railways within her walls — and every town larger than a community of goat-herds *is* walled — how could the officials of the

octroi collect the duty on a cabbage hidden in the fireman's tool-box? Or in case of foreign invasion! A regiment of Austrians ensconced under the benches of the third-class coach might, if they survived the journey, butcher the entire population before their presence was suspected. Besides, who could live in peace and contentment knowing that the sacred intermural precincts might at any moment be deluged with a train-load of cackling, beBaedekered tour — But no, now I think of it, my informant offered only *two* apologies.

Those who are victims of insomnia should journey to Padua. There may be in the length and breadth of Europe another community as conducive to sleep, but it has thus far escaped discovery. The sun is undoubtedly hot in Italy during the summer months. There runs a proverb in the peninsula to the effect that only fools and the English — which of course, includes Americans — venture forth near noonday without at least the protection of a parasol. But having suffered no evil effects during weeks of tramping in the country with only a cap on my head, I, for one, should hesitate to charge entirely to climatic conditions the torpor of the Padovans.

At any rate the city was lost in slumber. The few horses dragged their vehicles at a snail's pace; the drivers nodded on their seats; those few shopkeepers who had not put up their shutters and retired to the bosom of their families could with difficulty be aroused from their siestas to minister to the wants of yawning customers. The very dogs slept in the gutters or under the chairs of their torpescent masters, and, to judge from many a building that was crumbling away and falling asleep like the inhabitants, this Morpheusatic tendency was no temporary characteristic.

However, the general somnolence permitted me to view in peace the statues and architecture for which the drowsy city is justly renowned, and leaving it to slumber on, I set off at noonday on the last stage of my journey across northern Italy. The phantom range of the Alps had disappeared. Away to the eastward stretched a land as flat and unbroken as the sea which, tossing its drifting sands on a lee shore through the ages, has drawn this coast further and further towards the rising sun. Walking had been easier on the long mountain ascents behind, for a powerful wind from off the Adriatic pressed me back like an unseen hand at my breast. Certain as I had been of reaching Fusiano on the coast before the day was done, twilight found me still plodding on across a barren lowland.

With the first twinkling star a faint glow appeared to the left and afar off, giving center to the surrounding darkness. Steadily it grew until it illuminated a distant corner of the firmament, while the wind howled with ever-increasing force across the unpeopled waste.

Night had long since settled down when the lapping of waves announced that I had overtaken the retreating coast-line. A few ramshackle hovels rose up out of the darkness, but still far out over the sea hovered the glow in the sky — no distant conflagration, as I had supposed, but the reflected lights of Venice. Long cherished visions of a cheering meal and a soft couch, before my entrance into the city of the sea, vanished; for there was no inn among the hovels of Fusiano. I took shelter in a shanty down on the beach and awaited patiently the ten-o'clock boat.

By the appointed hour there had gathered enough of a swarthy crowd to fill the tiny steamer that made fast with great difficulty to the crazy wharf. On the open sea the wind was riotous, and our passage took on the aspect of a trans-atlantic trip in miniature. Now and then a wave spat in the faces of the passengers huddled aft. A ship's officer jammed his way among us to collect the six-cent tickets. Behind him the officials of the Venice octroi were busily engaged in levying dues on produce from the country. Two poor devils, gaunt as death's heads, crouched in the waist, guarding between them a bundle of vegetables that could be bought a few centessimi cheaper on the mainland than in the city. The stuff could not have satisfied the normal appetite of one man; yet in spite of their pleadings, the pair were compelled to drop their share of soldi into the official bag.

By and by the toss of the steamer abated somewhat. I pushed to the rail to peer out into the night. Off the port bow appeared a stretch of smooth water in which were reflected the myriad lights of smaller craft and the illuminated windows of a block of houses rising sheer out of the sea. We swung to port. A gondola, weirdly lighted up by torches on bow and poop, glided across our bow. The houses born of the sea took on individuality, a wide canal opened on our left and curved away between other buildings, the splendor of their façades faintly suggested in the light of mooring-post lamp and lantern. It was the Grand Canal. The steamer nosed its way through a fleet of empty gondolas, tied up at a landing stage before

a marble column bearing the lion of St. Mark, and the passengers hurried away across the cathedral square to be swallowed up in the night.

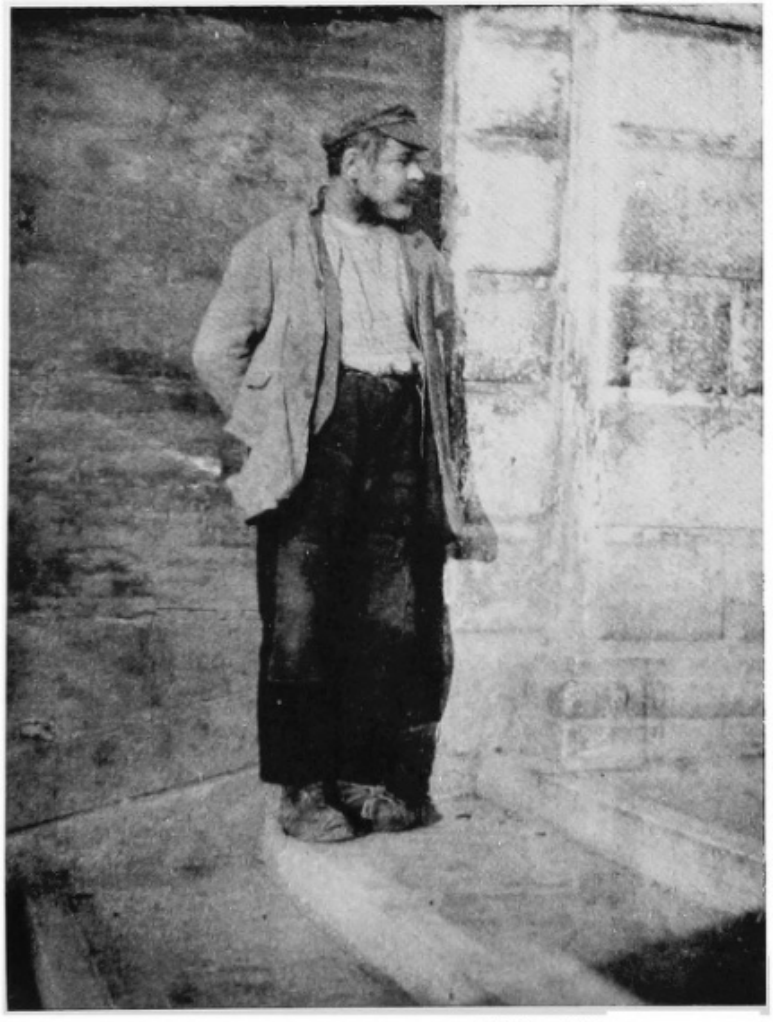
In a city of streets and avenues there are certain signs which point the way to the ragged section, but among the winding waterways and arcade bridges of this strange metropolis such indications were lacking. A full two hours I tramped at utter random, on the blisters of the highway from Padua, only to turn up at last in an albergo within a stone's throw of my landing-place and the Palace of the Doges.

The squares and alleys of Venice are strewn with human wreckage. In the rest of Italy the most penurious wretch may move from place to place in an attempt to ameliorate his condition; but on this marshy island the man unable to scrape together a few soldi for boat or car fare is a prisoner. The captives are little accustomed to sleep within doors. Lodging, obviously, must be high in a city where space is absolutely limited; but there are "joints" where food sells more cheaply than anywhere else on the continent.

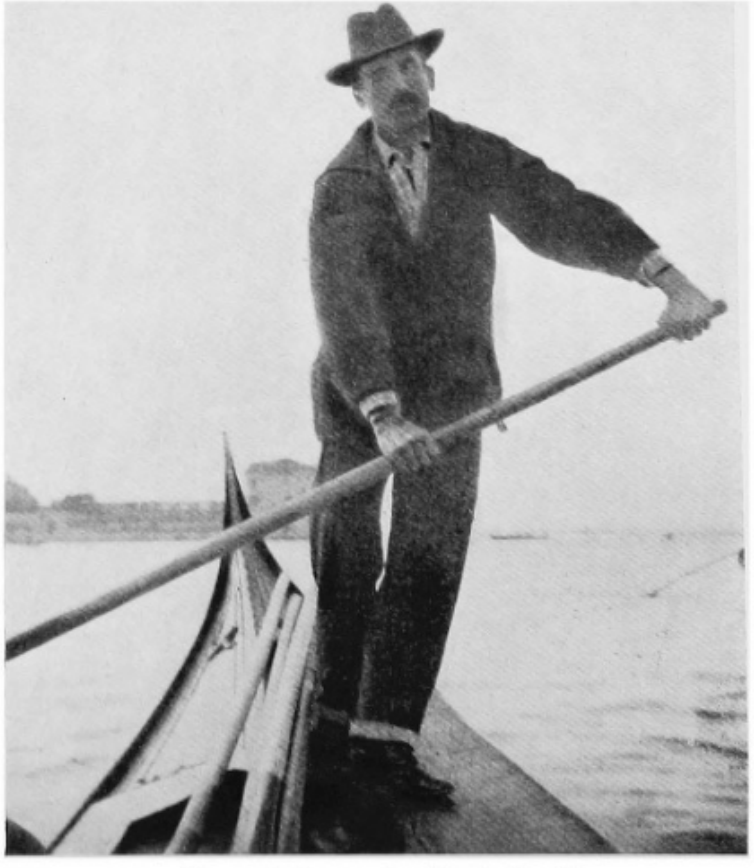
On the evening following my arrival, I came upon one of these establishments which rubbed shoulders with the cathedral of St. Mark. Appetite alone certainly could not have enticed me inside, but eager to scrape acquaintance with the submerged tenth — the fraction seems small — of Venice, I crowded my way into the kennel. A lean and hungry multitude surged about the counter. At one end of it was piled a stack of plates; near them stood a box which, to all appearances, had long done service as a coal scuttle, filled to overflowing with twisted and rust-eaten forks and spoons. The room was foggy with the steam that rose from a score of giant kettles containing as many species of stew, soup, and vegetable ragoût.

Each client, conducting himself as if he had been fasting for a week past, snatched a plate from the stack; thrust a paw into the box for a weapon of attack, and dropping a few coppers of most unsanitary aspect into the dish, shoved it with a savage bellow at that one of the kettles the contents of which had taken his fancy. A fog-bound server scraped the soldi into the till, poured a ladleful of steaming slop into the outstretched trencher, and the customer fought his way into a dingy back-room.

Amid the uproar I had no time to inquire prices. I proffered six cents to a wrinkled hag presiding over a caldron of what purported to be a tripe and liver ragoût. She cried out in amazement,



A Venetian pauper on the Rialto bridge



My gondolier on the Grand Canal

handed back four cents, and filled my plate to the rim. I reached the back-room with half the mess — the rest being scooped up in the coat sleeves of the famished throng — and took my place at an already crowded table. Neither bread nor wine was to be had in the house. On a board propped up across a corner of the room were several cylinders of corn mush, three feet in diameter and half as thick. A hairless creature, stripped to the waist, cut off slabs of the cake for those who would have something to take the place of bread. The yellow dough sold at two cents a pound, yet each order was carefully weighed, and purchaser and server watched the scales jealously during the operation. As a substitute for wine there was a jar of water, that abominable, germ-infested water of Venice, from which each drank in turn.

Every type of wretch which the city shelters was represented in the emaciated gathering. Rag-pickers snarled at cathedral beggars. Street urchins jostled bearded bootblacks. Female outcasts rubbed elbows with those gruesome beings who pick up a few cents a day at the landing stages. My boisterous appetite dwindled away at sight of the messes around me and in the exploration of the mysteries of my own portion. All at once there burst upon me the recollection that I had seen neither a dog nor a cat during all that day in Venice, and I turned and fought my way to the door. Behind me rose a quarrel over my unfinished portion. Outside, on the square beside the fallen campanile, kind-hearted tourists were feeding wholesome grain to a flock of pigeons, above which magnificent statues looked down upon a crowd of homeless waifs huddled under the portico of the Palace of the Doges.

I turned down to the landing stage one morning resolved on the extravagance of a gondola excursion. The water cabmen of Venice are not wont to solicit men in corduroys and flannel shirt. A score of them, just recovering from a stampede on a tow-head in regulation tourist garb, greeted my arrival with the fishy eye of indifference. When I boldly announced my plan, they crowded around me to laugh in derision at the laborer seeking to play the lord. For some time they refused to take my words seriously, and even then the first skeptic to be convinced insisted on proof of my financial solvency before he proffered his services.

Along the Grand Canal passing gondoliers, without passengers to keep them decorous, flung cutting jests at my propeller.

"Eh! Amico! What 's that you 've got?"

"Ch'è un rico, colui quà, eh?"

"Sangue della Vergine, caro mio, dove hai accozzato quello?"

But once assured of his fare, the fellow lost his smirk and became all servility, pointing out the objects of interest with a mien of owl-like solemnity, and rebuking his fellow-craftsmen with an admonishing shake of the head.

Fear drove me forth from Venice before I had rested the miles from Paris out of my legs — fear that in a few days more the mosquitoes would finish their nefarious work and devour me quite. On the Sunday evening following the opening of the carnival, I fought my confetti-strewn way to the station and "booked" for Bologna. I had not yet, however, learned all the secrets of Italian railway travel. The official who snatched my ticket at the exit to the platform and the midnight express handed it back and pushed me away with a withering glare:

"No third-class on this train," he growled, "wait for the slow train at five in the morning."

How any particular one of the trains of Italy could be discriminated against by being called slow was hard to comprehend. Perhaps I misunderstood the gateman. He may have said "the more slower train." At any rate, I was left to stretch out on a truck and await the laggard dawn.

Under a declining sun our funereal caravan crawled into Bologna, and I struck out along the ancient highway to Florence. Between the two cities stretches an almost unbroken series of mountain ranges, a poverty-stricken territory given over to grazing and wine-production, and little known to tourists, for the railway sweeps in a great half-circle around the northern end of the barrier. A few miles from the university town the highway began a winding ascent in Simplon-like solitude, save where a vineyard clung to a wrinkled hillside. At such spots tall, cone-shaped buckets of some two bushels' capacity stood at the roadside, some filled with grapes, others with the floating pulp left by the crushers.

What species of crusher was used I did not learn until nearly nightfall. Then, suddenly rounding a jutting boulder, I stepped into a group of four women, their skirts tied tightly around their loins, slowly treading up and down in as many buckets of grapes. One of them, a young woman by no means unattractive, sprang out of the bucket with a startled gasp, let fall her skirts over legs purple with grape-juice far above the knees, and fled to the vineyard. Her com-

panions, too young or too old to find immodesty in the situation, gazed in astonishment at the fleeing girl and continued to stamp slowly up and down.

Darkness overtook me in the solitude of an upper range, far from either hut or hamlet. A half hour later, a mountain storm burst upon me.

An interminable period I had plunged on when my eyes were gradually drawn to a faint light flickering through the downpour. I splashed forward and banged on a door beside an illuminated window. The portal was quickly opened from within, and I fell into a tiny wine-shop occupied by three tipplers. They stared stupidly for some time, while the water ran away from me in rivulets along the floor. Then the landlord remarked with a silly grin: —

"Lei è tutto bagnato?" (You are all wet.)

"Likewise hungry," I answered. "What 's to eat?"

"Da mangiare! Ma! Not a thing in the house."

"The nearest inn?"

"Six miles on."

"Suppose I must go to bed supperless, then," I sighed, drawing my water-soaked bundle from beneath my coat.

"Bed!" cried the landlord, "you cannot sleep here. I keep no lodging house."

"What!" I protested, "do you think I am going on in this deluge?"

"I keep no lodging house," repeated the host, doggedly.

I sat down on a bench, convinced that no three Italians should evict me without a struggle. One by one they came forward to try the efficacy of wheedling, growling, and loud-voiced bluster. I clung stolidly to my place. The landlord was on the verge of tears when one of the countrymen drew me to the window and offered me lodging in his barn across the way. I made out through the storm the dim outline of a building, and catching up my bundle, dashed with the native across the road and into a stone building, with no other floor, as I could feel under my feet, than Mother Earth. An American cow would balk at the door of the house of a mountain peasant of Italy; she would have fled bellowing at a glimpse of the interior of the barn that loomed up as my host lighted a lantern, and pointed out to me a heap of corn-husks in a corner behind the oxen and asses. Fearful of losing a moment with his cronies over the wine, he gave the lantern a shake that extinguished it and, leaving me in utter darkness, hurried away.

I groped my way towards the heap, narrowly escaped knocking down the last ass in the row, and was about to throw myself down on the husks when a man's voice at my very feet shouted a word that I did not catch. Being in Italy I answered in Italian:

"Che avete? Voglio dormire qui."

"Ach!" groaned the voice. "Nur ein verdammter Italiener!"

"Here friend!" I protested, in German, prodding the prostrate form with a foot, "who are you calling verdammter?"

Before the last word had passed my lips the man in the husks sprang to his feet with a wild shout.

"Lieber Gott!" he shrieked, clutching at my coat and dancing around me. "Lieber Gott! Du verstehst Deutsch! You are no cursed Italian! Gott sei dank! In three weeks I have heard no German."

Even the asses were protesting before he ceased his shouting and settled down to tell his troubles. He was but another of those familiar figures, a German on his Wanderjahr, who, straying far south in the peninsula, and losing his last copper, was struggling northward again as rapidly as strength gained by a crust of bread or a few wayside berries each day permitted. One needed only to touch him to know that he was thin as a side-show skeleton. I offered him the half of a cheese I carried in a pocket, and he snatched it with the ravenous cry of a wolf and devoured it as we burrowed deep into the husks.

All night long the water dripped from my elbows and oozed out of my shoes, and a bitter mountain wind swept through the unmortared building. Morning came after little sleep, and I rose with joints so stiff that a half hour of kneading barely put them in working order. Outside a cold drizzle was falling, but the peasant grew surly, and, bidding farewell to my companion of the night, I set out along the mountain highway.

Two hours beyond the barn I came upon a miserable hamlet, paused at an even more miserable inn for a bowl of greasy water, alias soup, in which had been drowned a lump of black bread, and plodded on in the drizzle. A night and day of corn-husks had given me a rococo appearance that I only half suspected before my arrival at a mountain village late in the afternoon. It was a typical Apennine town; surrounded on all sides by splendid scenery, but itself a crowded collection of hovels where steep, narrow streets reeked with all the refuse of a common habitation of man and beast. The chief enigma of Italy

Going for the water. A village north of Rome

Italy is one of the most cruelly priest-ridden countries on the globe

Missing Page

the vast Florentine valley, the winding Arno a bluish silver under the declining sun. By evening I was housed in the city of Dante and Michael Angelo.

During four days in Florence I played a sort of Jekyll and Hyde rôle, living with the poorest self-supporting class, but spending hours each day in cathedral and galleries. Paupers were everywhere in evidence, fewer than in Venice, perhaps, for here they could escape. Lodgings all but the utterly penniless could afford. I paid a half-franc daily for an uncramped chamber within a hop, skip, and jump of the roasting-place of Savonarola. But those ultracheap eating houses of the canal city were lacking. Florentines on the ragged edge patronized instead a species of traveling restaurant. As night fell, there appeared at various corners, in the unwashed section of the city, men with push-carts laden with boiled tripe. Around them gathered jostling throngs whose surging ceased not for a moment until the last morsel had been sold. Each customer seemed to possess but a single soldo, which he had carefully guarded through the day in anticipation of the coming of the tripe-man. Never did the huckster make a sale without a quarrel arising over the size of the morsel; and never did the vendee retire until a second strip, about the size of a match, had been added to the original portion to make up what he claimed to be the just weight.

I spent an undue proportion of my fourth day in Florence viewing her works of art; for Sunday is the poor man's day in the museums and galleries of Europe, there being no admission charged. When the throng was driven forth from the Pitti palace in the late afternoon, I decided not to return to my lodging and wandered off along the highway to Rome. The mountain country continued, but the ranges were less lofty and more thickly populated than to the north, and when night settled down, I was within sight of a hilltop village.

It is doubtful if there is another nation on the globe whose people are such general favorites as our own citizens. The American is a popular fellow in almost every land, certainly not the least so in Italy. Through all the peninsula there hovers about one, from that — to the Italian — magic world of America, a glamor which is sure to arouse interest to the highest pitch. More than that; there is, among the lower classes, an attitude almost of deference towards the man in any way connected with the El Dorado across the sea, as if every breast harbored the vague hope that this favored of the gods might be moved to carry home on his return a pocketful of his admirers.

Longing for America, however, does not imply any great amount

of knowledge thereof. In this northern section especially, where one rarely meets a man whose remotest friend has emigrated, ignorance of the western hemisphere is astonishing.

An average village crowd, showing some evidence of education, was gathered in the hostelry of this first town beyond Florence. My arrival at first aroused small interest in the groups before fire-place and table. In ordering supper, however, I betrayed a foreign accent. Immediately there passed between the cronies of the band sundry nods and occult signs which they fondly believed were entirely incomprehensible to a newcomer, but which, in reality, said as plainly as words:—

"Now where the deuce do you suppose he comes from?"

I volunteered no information. The cronies squirmed with curiosity. Several more mysterious symbols flitted across the room, and one of the tipplers, clearing his throat, suggested in the mildest of tones:—

"Hem — ah — you are German, perhaps?"

A *tedesco* being no unusual sight in Italy, the listeners showed only a moderate interest.

"No."

The speaker rubbed his neck with a horny hand and turned an apologetic eye on his fellows.

"Hah! You are an Austrian!" charged another, with a scowl.

"No."

"Swiss?" suggested a third.

"No."

Interest picked up at once. A voyager from any but these three countries is something to attract unusual attention in wayside inns.

"Ah!" ventured a fourth member of the group, with a glance of scorn at his more obtuse companions, "You are a Frenchman?"

"No."

The geographical knowledge of the party was exhausted. There ensued a long, wrinkle-browed silence. The landlady wandered in with a pot, looked me over out of a corner of her eye, and retreated slowly. The suspense grew unendurable. A native opened his mouth twice or thrice, swallowed his breath with a gulp, and purred, meekly:

"Er — well — what country does the signore come from?"

"Sono americano."

A chorus of exclamations aroused the cat dozing under the fire-place. The hostess ran in, open-mouthed, from the back room. The landlord dropped his pipe on the floor and emitted the Italian variation of

"dew tell!" The most phlegmatic of the party abandoned their games and stories and crowded closely around me.

My advent seemed to two of the habitués to be providential. Some time before, a wager had been laid between them which, till now, there had seemed small chance of deciding. One man had wagered that the railway trains of America run high up in the air above the houses, a tenet which he sought to defend against all comers by an unprecedented amount of lusty bellowing, and one which his opponent pooh-poohed with equal vehemence. For a time I was at a loss to account for his claim that he had read the information in a newspaper. In the course of his vociferations, however, he mentioned "Nuova York," and inquired if it were not also true that its buildings were higher than the steeple of the village church, and whether the railways were not thus built to enable the people to get into such high houses; implying, evidently, his conviction that Americans never come down to earth. Only then was the source of his mental picture of an aërial railway system clear. He had read somewhere of the New York Elevated and had applied the article to the whole country.

Moreover "Nuova York" was synonomous with America to the entire party. Not a man of them knew that there were two Americas, not one had ever heard the term "United States." America represents to the Italian of the masses a country somewhere far away, how far or in what direction he has no idea, where wages are higher than in Italy. Countless times I have heard questions such as these from Italians who were not without education:—

"Is America further away than Switzerland?"

"Did you walk all the way from America?"

"Who is king of America?"

"Why! Are you a native American? I thought Americans were black!"

Once a woman added insult to injury by inquiring in all sincerity:—

"In America you worship the sun, non è vero?"

On some rare occasions a wiser native appeared, to display his erudition to the assembly. One evening I mildly suggested that the United States as a whole is as large, if not larger, than Italy. My hearers were deafening me with shouts of derision, when one of the party came to my rescue.

"Certainly, that 's right!" he cried, "it *is* larger. I have a brother in Buenos Ayres and I know. America, or the Stati Uniti, as this

signore prefers to call it, has provinces just like Italy. The provinces are Brazil, Uruguay, Republica Argentina, and Nuova York."

Squelched by which crushing display of geographical erudition, the gathering maintained a profound silence for the rest of the evening; and the authority on America began a lecture on that topic, in the course of which I learned many a fact concerning my native land which I had never suspected.

One can be little surprised that the Italian fears to embark for a country so little known. I met often with people who had set out for America, gone as far as Genoa, and there abandoned the journey, *perché aveva paura.* Many, indeed, journey to the seaport, never suspecting that to reach this land of fabulous wealth they must travel on the ocean; more than one has only the vaguest notion of what an ocean is. When the endless expanse of water stretches out before them, all the combined miseries of their native land and the wheedling of the most silver-tongued steamship agent cannot induce them to trust themselves on its billows; and in dread and fear they hurry home again.

It may be said with little danger of error, too, that the average American knows very little of the Italian of this northern section. He is, quite contrary to popular notions, a very kind and obliging, even unselfish fellow, decidedly a different person from the usual immigrant to our shores. The riffraff and off-casts of their native land, that are spreading far and wide in our country, living in clans and bands wherein the moving spirit seems to be he whose record at home is most besmirched, the "dagoes" of common parlance, are no product of this northern portion of the peninsula. We have, possibly, been too quick to attribute to all Italians the characteristics of those undesirables with whom we have come in contact, more than seven-eighths of whom hail from the southern section. The Neapolitan, the Sicilian, the Sardinian, from lands where congested districts breed characters held in as much contempt by the Italian of the north as by our own citizens, have little in common with the Venetian, the Florentine, and the Sienese.

CHAPTER IV

THE BORDERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

THERE are few stretches of roadway in Italy that wind through finer scenery than that panorama which spreads out along the highway between Florence and Siena. The pedestrian, however, finds small opportunity to contemplate the landscape, for his progress is beset with strange perils. Each peasant of this section possesses a yoke of white oxen, a bovine type indigenous to the Apennine region, the distinguishing feature of which is the length of the horns, measuring often six and even seven feet from tip to tip. Now meet two such beasts, yoked together, and it is a wide highway that leaves you room to pass. Moreover, their drivers being invariably sound asleep, the animals wander at sweet will about the right of way, tossing their heads toward the passer-by. When one considers that every twenty or twenty-five acres through this territory constitutes a farm, that every farmer has his pair of oxen, and that he does his best to lay out his work in such a manner as to give him the greatest possible amount of time on the road, leaving real labor to his wife and daughters, it is easily understood that to make one's way on foot, requires no mean amount of vigilance, nimbleness, and endurance.

Nor is that all. On every highway of Europe the wayfarer must be always on the alert for the sound of an automobile horn. Continental chauffeurs have small respect for foot-travelers, and the pedestrian who does not heed their imperative honk is quite apt to come into collision with a touring-car moving at its highest rate of speed. Now the first note of protest of an over-burdened ass bears a similarity to the toot of an automobile horn that can scarcely be accounted for under the head of coincidences. Moreover, the time ensuing between the first and second notes is quite long enough for a car to shoot around a corner, send the unobserving wanderer skyward, and disappear into the gasoline-saturated Beyond. In consequence, my journey from Florence to Siena was no pleasure stroll; for when I was not vaulting roadside hedges before oncoming oxen, I was crouching on the edge

of the highway, peering anxiously round a turn of the route until a second asinine vocable broke on my ear.

He who would obtain an exact idea of the ensemble of the city of Siena has but to dump a spoonful of sugar on a well-heaped dish of rice. Some of the grains remain at the very top of the heap, others cling tenaciously to the sides as if fearful of falling to the bottom into the dish itself. For rice, read a rocky hill; for sugar, houses; for dish, a broad, fertile valley in which space is unlimited, and the visualization of Siena is complete. Except in that small quarter on the flat summit of the hill it is one of those up-and-down towns in which streets should be fitted with ladders; where every householder is in imminent danger, each time he steps out of doors, of falling into the next block, should he inadvertently lose his grip on the façade of his dwelling. I scaled the city without being reduced to the indignity of making the ascent on hands and knees; but more than once I kept my place only by clutching at the flanking buildings.

How little the knowledge of the world among the masses of Italy has increased, since the days of Columbus, was suggested during my evening in the perennial inn at the summit of the town. Engaged in a game of "dama" (checkers) with the innkeeper's small daughter, I strove at the same time to satisfy the curiosity of the host himself and a band of strolling musicians, of whom a blind youth accompanied both game and conversation on a soft-voiced violin.

"When you go to America," asked the innkeeper, pointing out a move to my opponent, "you get clear out of sight of land, non è vero?"

I admitted that such experiences were common.

"Ah, I once thought of going to America," he cried, turning to impress upon the attentive audience his fearlessness in having dared to conceive so intrepid a venture, "until they told me that. But you would n't catch *me* on a boat that went clear out of sight of land. I don't mind a trip from Genoa to Naples, or even to Bastia, where you always have the coast alongside; but when you leave the land and jump out into the universe, steering by the stars and going — La Santissima Vergine knows where — ah, not for me! Why, suppose the captain loses his way when the stars move? You come to the edge of the world and over you go. Ugh!"

The audience shuddered in sympathy, and the blind youth drew forth from his instrument a wail such as might have risen from the victims of so dreadful a fate.

By the time a new topic had been broached the hostess wandered

in and sat down before the register in which I had written my autobiography. Her eyes fell on the figures indicating my age.

"Aha!" she cried, jabbing the number with a stubby forefinger and winking good-humoredly, "soldiering *is* hard work, to be sure. I don't blame you a bit. Officers *are* hard masters."

I had too often been accused of running away to escape military service to be at all put out by this familiar accusation.

"Many a boy I know," went on the woman, "has run away to America just before he reached his majority and the beginning of his three years in the army. How strange you Americans should fly over here to Italy for the same reason!"

"You bet *I* don't blame them," growled the innkeeper.

"But military service is not required in America," I protested.

"Eh!" cried my hearers, in chorus.

"We don't have to be soldiers in America," I repeated.

"What!" shouted the host, "you have no army?"

"Yes; but the soldiers are hired, as for any other trade."

"But who makes them go?" demanded the blind musician.

"No one. They are paid to go."

The audience puzzled for several moments over this strange arrangement. Suddenly the landlady burst out laughing.

"You think to fool us!" she cried. "How, if nobody makes them go, can there be soldiers to pay?"

"Aye! That 's it!" roared the host.

"They want to go," I explained.

"Want to be soldiers!" bellowed the innkeeper. "What nonsense! Who wants to be a soldier and work three years for nothing?"

"But you don't understand. Those who want to be soldiers are paid wages."

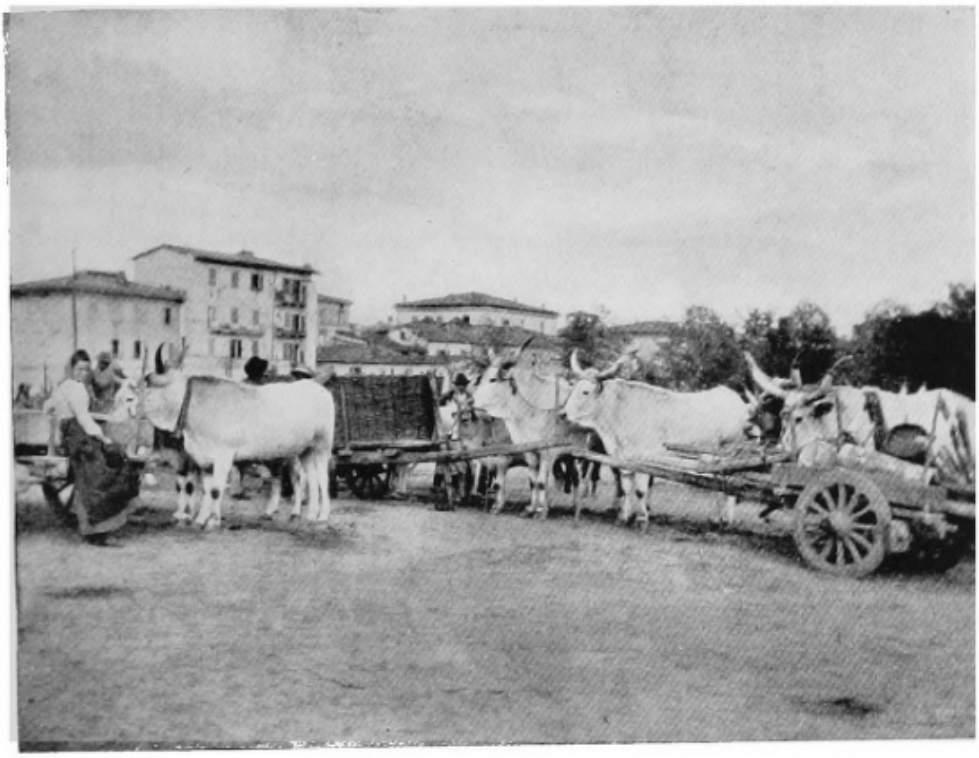
"Ah!" cried the musician, with a sudden burst of inspiration, "when your name is drawn, you pay a man to go for you?"

"No; the government pays him. Our names are not drawn."

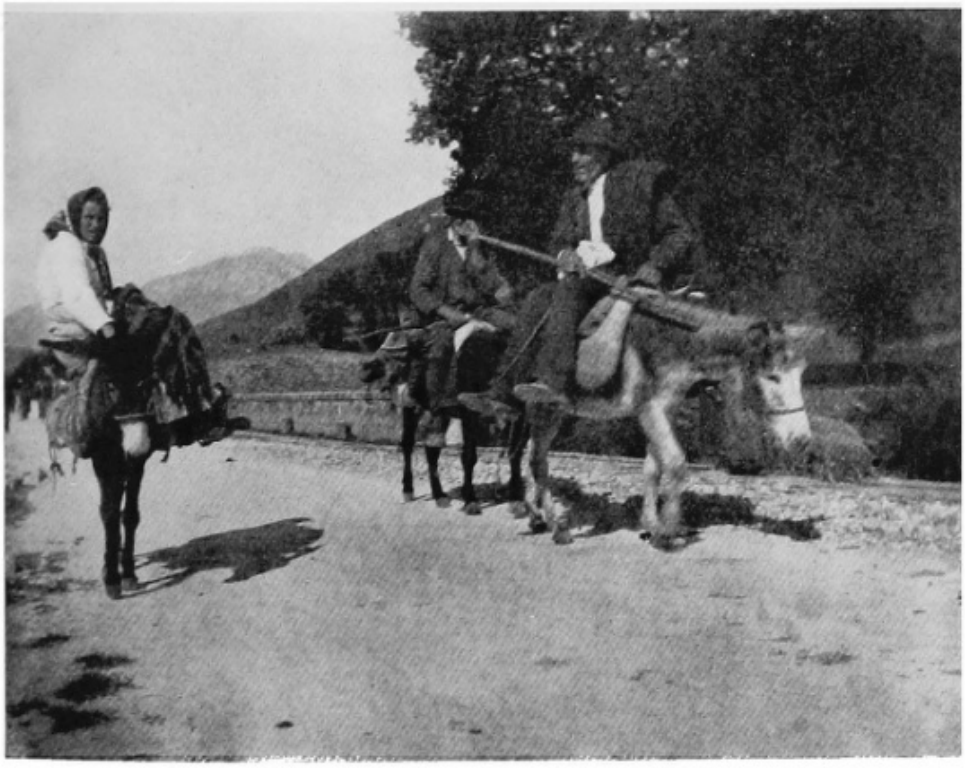
"How much money the king must spend, paying all the soldiers," mused my opponent.

"Ah! They are a strange people, the Americans," sighed the host, and he cast upon me a glance that seemed to say, "and liars, too, very often."

Weeks before, I had given up all hope of making clear to Italians our military system. The institution of compulsory service has been so woven into their picture of life since infancy that barely a man of them



Selling the famous long-horned cattle of Siena outside the walls



Italian peasants returning from market-day in the communal village

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the modern Roman builds only as far from the center of the city as his view of it remains unimpaired. Countless multitudes have caught their first glimpse of Rome from this low hilltop. Before the days of railways, pilgrims journeyed from Civita Vecchia, on the coast, by this same road — millions of them on foot, and entered the city by this massive western gateway. Through the portal poured a steady stream of peasants, on wagons, carts, donkeys, and afoot, checked by officers of the octroi, who ran long lances through bales and baskets of farm produce. I joined the surging bedlam and was swept within the walls.

Early that afternoon I made my way across the Tiber and through the narrow streets of the Borgo to the square before St. Peter's. About the papal residence the carriages of le beau monde kept up continual procession. I threaded my way towards the entrance to the Vatican galleries, though with little hope that one who had been taken for a beggar in the miserable villages of the Apennines could get beyond the door. At the base of the stairway a Swiss guard, resplendent in that red and yellow uniform which Michael Angelo is accused of having perpetrated, raised his javelin and accosted me in German:—

"Sorry, Landsmann, but the galleries are just closing; it is one o'clock."

Taking the speech as a polite way of saying that tramps were not admitted, I turned away. Another glance, however, showed that visitors really were leaving, and a "hist" from behind called me back. The guard, glancing around to see if he were observed by the other servants of the Holy Father, leaned on his lance and inquired in a low voice:—

"How 's business on the road these days?"

He had, it turned out, once been a penniless wanderer in nearly every corner of the continent. For some time we chatted in the jargon of "the road," that language made up of a mixture of slang and gestures that one can learn only by tramping the highways of Europe. The guard smiled reminiscently at each mention of the rendezvous of vagrants to the north, and, having heard such bits of news from the field of action as I could give him, carefully outlined for me the various "grafts" of the Roman fraternity. A companion in office called to him from the top of the steps and he hurried away with the parting injunction:—

"Come to-morrow, mein Lieber, early, if you want to see the galleries."

When I had inspected the interior of St. Peter's I sought out the

rendezvous to which the guard had directed me. A dozen birds of passage around the wine-tables greeted my entrance in several languages:—

"Ha! En voilà un de plus!"

"Woher, Landsmann? Was gibt's neues?"

"Y que tal la carretera, hombre?"

"Madre di dio, amico, che fa caldo! Vuoi bere?"

I sipped the glass of wine offered by the Italian — to have drunk it all would have been "bad form"— and sat down to give an account of myself.

"Aber du bist kein Deutscher?" cried a grizzled vagabond, when I had finished.

"Amerikaner," I replied.

"American!" shouted the band, in a chorus in which European tongues ran riot, "Why, there is another American knocking about town. He 'll drop in before long; meanwhile, have a drink."

I waited impatiently, for months had passed since I had spoken with a fellow countryman. In the course of a half-hour there strolled in a swarthy specimen of the genus vagabundus, attired in a ragged misfit.

"Ach! Du Amerikaner!" cried the chorus. "Here is a countryman of yours."

I accosted the newcomer. "How are you, Jack?"

He took place on a bench, stared at me a moment, and demanded, in Italian:—

"What country are you from?"

"Dei Stati Uniti," I replied. "But they told me you were an American, too."

"Certainly I am an American!" he shouted, indignantly. "I come from Buenos Ayres."

It had been my custom to ramble at random through the cities of Europe, visiting the points of special interest as I chanced upon them. The topography of Rome, however, is not of the simplest, and, having picked up a guide-book for a few soldi in a second-hand stall, I set out dutifully to follow its lead through the city. It was a work in Italian, published for the use of Roman Catholic pilgrims. For two days it led me a merry chase among the churches and chapels of Rome, calling attention here to the statue of a saint, the bronze foot of which had been kissed into a shapeless mass by devout *pellegrini;* there to a shrine in which was enclosed the second bone of the third finger of the right hand of some martyr or pope, or a splinter of the true cross

that had miraculously found its way to Rome. But as I hurried from chapel to church and from church to chapel I became suspicious of the profound silence of the book's author, a Father Guiseppe Somebody, on the subject of the monuments of ancient Rome. Having therein more interest than in martyrs' bones and kissed statues, I sat down on the steps of the forty-ninth church, and turned over the leaves in search of reference to the old-time edifices. Page after page the nomenclature of churches and chapels continued, interspersed with descriptions of more finger-bones and splinters; but, up to the last leaf, not a word of ante-Christian Rome and its ruins. On the final page, in a footnote, the devout author expressed himself as follows:—

"There are in Rome, besides all the blessed relics and holy places we have pointed out to the pilgrim, certain ruins and monuments of the days previous to the coming of Our Holy Saviour. The Faithful, however, will take care not to defile themselves by visiting these remnants of unholy pagan and heathen Rome."

I sold the "Pilgrims' Guide" for the price of a bottle of wine and set out to explore the city after my own fashion.

Cæsar, for some reason, has not seen fit to inform posterity whether he patronized the "Colosseum Tonsorial Parlors," or carried his own razor. If he sallied forth for his daily scrape, times were different then; for, had the conqueror of the Gauls had at hand such barbers as modern Rome harbors he would certainly have turned Vercingetorix over to their tender mercies instead of subjecting him to the mild punishment of an underground dungeon.

There was a shop not far from the wayfarers' retreat in the Borgo. Recalling painful experiences elsewhere in the peninsula, I avoided it as long as possible, but there came a day when I must sneak inside and take a seat. That, to begin with, was a mere chair, a decidedly rickety one that squeaked and writhed under me as if afraid, like myself, of the scowling proprietor, who stropped his razor in the far corner. By and by he laid the weapon aside, and picking up a small milk-pan, retreated to the back of the room. The only mirror in the establishment being some five inches square, there was no means of knowing what game he indulged in during a prolonged absence.

I had all but fallen asleep, stretched like a suspension bridge between the chair and the wooden box that did duty as foot-rest, when the barber, approaching stealthily, slapped me suddenly and emphatically on the point of the chin with the brush of a defunct or bankrupt bill-poster. The blow was nothing compared with the temperature of the

splash of lather that accompanied it. The cold chills set the ends of my toes tingling. There ensued a lathering of which no American so fortunate as to have spent all his days in the land of his first milk-bottle can form a conception. From ear to ear, from Adam's apple well up my nostrils, that icy lather was slapped and rubbed in with the paste-brush and the rasp-like palm of the manipulator, until my first notion that this thorough soaping was to lighten the work with the razor was succeeded by the fear that my torturer had decided to dispense with that instrument entirely. When he had covered all my face but one eye, the barber laid aside his brush, strolled to the door, and stood with his arms akimbo, evidently to give his biceps time to recover from their strenuous exertions.

A fellow-townsman sauntered by, and the two fell into a discussion that involved, not the batting averages of the major league, but the advance of a half-cent a liter in the price of wine. The lye on my face began to draw and tingle, the chair groaned under me, and still the dispute raged at the door. Fortunately, the townsman was called away before it was settled. The barber gazed after his retreating form, hummed an opera air in sotto voce, and glanced at the sky for signs of a storm. Then he turned slowly around, stared frowningly at me for several moments in an effort to recall how a man all soaped and ready for the razor had gotten into his establishment, and, with a sigh of regret at the task before him, hunted up the razor, stropped it again as if it had lain unused for six months, and fell to. A hack at one side of my face razed at least a dozen hairs. The torturer changed his mind concerning the point of attack and transferred his efforts to the other side — with no gratifying success, however. He began once more, this time at the point of the chin, worked his way upward by a series of cuts and slashes, and, having removed from my face most of the skin, a fair share of the lather, and even some of the stubble, stepped back to survey his handiwork.

"Here, you 're not finished!" I cried, pointing to my upper lip.

"What! Shave your lip?"

"Certainly."

"But why?"

"Because I want it shaved."

"Santissima Madonna!" he gasped, making several passes before a chromo print of the Virgin on the back wall. "Here is a man who wants the upper lip of a woman!"

However, having called the Lady's attention to his innocence, he

shaved the lip and relieved an anxiety under which I had labored since entering the shop. For, many a barber of Italy had refused point-blank to undertake any such unprecedented defilement of the human face, and driven me forth with a nascent moustache in spite of my protests.

Nearly a week after my arrival in the capital I turned southward again, on the highway to Naples. For three days the route led through a territory packed with ragged, half-starved people, who toiled incessantly from the first peep of the sun to the last waver of twilight, and crawled away into some foul hole during the hours of darkness. The inhabitants of this famished section bore little resemblance to the people of the north. Shopkeepers snarled at their customers, the "short-change racket" was always in evidence, false coins of the smallest denomination abounded — fancy "shoving the queer" with nickels — and, had not my appearance been quite in keeping with that of the natives, I should certainly have won the attention of those who live by violence.

There were other difficulties unknown in the north. The language changed rapidly. The literary tongue, spoken in Florence and Siena, was almost foreign here. A word learned in one hamlet was incomprehensible in another a half-day distant. The villages, almost without exception, were perched at the summits of the most inaccessible hills, up which each day's walk ended with a weary climb by steep paths of rubble that rolled underfoot.

I found lodging at the wayside only on my fourth day out of Rome, in a building that was one-fourth inn and three-fourths stable. The keeper, his wife, and a litter of children had scarcely enough wardrobe between them to have completely clothed the smallest urchin. All were barefooted, their feet spread out nearly as wide as they were long, the thick callous of the soles split and cracked up the sides like the hoofs of horses that had long gone unshod. The wife and several of her brood lay on a heap of chaff in a corner of the room reserved for humans. The father sat on a stool, bouncing the *bambino* up and down on his unspeakable feet; another child squatted on the top of the four-legged board that served as table and, in awe of the new arrival, alternately handled his toes and thrust his fingers in his mouth.

"You have lodgings for travelers?" I inquired.

"Yes," growled the proprietor.

"How much for a bed?"

"Two cents."

I was skeptical and demanded to see the lodging that could be had at such a price.

"Giovanni!" bawled the head of the charming band, "bring in the bed!"

A moth-eaten youth threw open the back door and fired at my feet a dirty grain-sack, filled with crumpled straw that peeped out here and there.

When I had smoked a final pipe, the father bawled once more to his first-born and motioned to me to take up my bed and walk. I followed the youth across a stable yard towards a wing of the building, picking my way between the heaps of offal by the light of the feeble torch he carried. Giovanni waded inside, pointed out to me a long, narrow manger of slats, and fled, leaving me alone with the problem of how to repose nearly six feet of body on three feet of stuffed grain-sack. I tried every combination that ingenuity and some not entirely different experiences could suggest, but concluded at last to sleep on the bare slats and use the sack as a pillow.

I had just begun to doze, when an outer door opened and let in a great draught of night air, closely followed by a flock of sheep that quickly filled the stable to overflowing. Some of the animals attempted to overflow into the manger, sprang back when they found it already occupied, and made known their discovery to their companions by a long series of "baas." The information awakened a truly Italian curiosity. The sheep organized a procession and the whole band filed by the manger, every animal poking its nose through the slats for a sniff. This formality over, each of the flock expressed a personal opinion of my presence in trembling, nerve-racking bleats, which discussion had by no means ended, when the youth came to inform me that it was morning and carried off my bed, fearful, no doubt, of my absconding with that valuable ameublement.

In spite of the bruises on the salient points of my anatomy, I plodded on at a good pace, hoping, with this early start, to reach Naples before the day was done. Two pairs of gendarmes, who halted me for long interviews, made the attempt useless, however; and I was still in the country when the gloom, settling down like fog, drove into the highway bands of fatigued humans and four-footed beasts, toiling homeward. The route descended, the intervening fields between squalid villages grew shorter and shorter, finally giving way entirely to an un-

broken row of stone houses that shut in the highway. The bands of homing peasants increased to a stream of humanity against which I struggled to make my way.

Swept into the back-water of the human current, I cornered a workman and inquired for Naples.

"Napoli! Ma! *This* is Napoli!" he bellowed, shoving me aside.

I plunged on, certain that a descending road must lead to the harbor and its sailors' lodgings. Ragged, sullen-visaged laborers, now and then an unsoaped female, swept against me. Donkeys laden and unladen protested against the goads of their cursing masters. Heavy ox-carts, massive wagons, an occasional horseman, fought their way up the acclivity, amid a bedlam of shrill shouts, roaring oaths, the strident yee-hawing of asses, the rumble of wheels on cobble-stones, the snap of whips, the resounding whack of cudgels; and before and behind a bawling multitude filled the scene that resembled nothing more nearly than the hurried flight of its diabolical inhabitants from that inferno which the Florentine has pictured. It was long after my first inquiry for "Napoli" that I reached level streets and was dragged into a dismal hovel by a boarding-house runner. Fifty-five days had passed since my departure from Paris, thirty-four of which had been spent in walking.

If there is a spot of similar size in the civilized world that houses more rascals, knaves, and degenerates than Naples, it has successfully hidden its iniquities. The struggle for existence in this densely packed section of the peninsula has driven its lower classes in one of two directions: they have become stolid, unthinking brutes or incorrigible rogues. Even those who, by day, are employed at professions considered honorable and remunerative among us, spend their nights and idle hours as agents of every species of business and deception to be found in congested centers. Every steamship office, every restaurant, every hotel, shop, gambling den, or house of prostitution has its scores of "runners" to entice the stranger or unwary citizen within its doors. We have "runners" in America, but these procurers that fight for a meager percentage in Naples are not merely the dregs of city life; even the man who has left his telegraph instrument or bookkeeper's stool during the afternoon prowls through the dark streets in quest of a stray soldo. The barber roams at large to drag into his shop those whose faces show need of his services; the merchant stands before his door and bawls and beckons to the passing throng like a side-show barker; the ticket-agent tramps up and down the wharves striving to sell passage, at regular price if necessary; at an exorbitant one if possible.

To cheat is second nature to the Neapolitan of the masses. He cheats his playmates as a boy, cheats the shopkeeper at every opportunity, enters business as a man intending to cheat, and sticks to that intention with a persistence worthy a better cause to the end of his days — to be cheated by the undertaker and the priest at the finale of his life of deception and fraud. Yet this same Naples, corrupt, Machiavelian, is, with its environs, the breeding-ground of the vast majority of Italians who emigrate to America.

As is usual among poverty-stricken people, gambling is the principal vice of the southern Italian. Cards and dice are not unknown, but the game that is dearest to the heart of the Neapolitan is *mora,* the counting of fingers. The sharp call of " cinque! tre! otto! tre! dieci! " raised a never-ending hubbub in my lodging house. The sums of money hazarded were not fabulous; but had there been fortunes at stake the game could not have been more fiercely contended. Each player, at the beginning of the contest, jabbed his sheath-knife into the bottom of the table within easy reach of his hand, and at every dispute waved it threateningly above his head. A quarrel, one evening, went beyond the point of vociferations. One player emerged from the contest with a slash from nose to chin, and another with an ugly cut in the abdomen. But so ordinary an occurrence was this in the house that a half-hour later the game was raging as loudly as before.

One fine morning, soon after my arrival in Naples, I awoke to find myself the possessor of just twenty francs. Thus far I had been a tourist; for, if I had spent sparingly, I had given my attention to sightseeing rather than to searching for employment. Having squandered in unriotous living the money intended for photographing, the time had come when I must earn both the living and the photographs.

It had been my intention to ship as a sailor from Naples to some point of the near east. The cosmopolitan dock loafers assured me, however, that there was but one port on the Mediterranean in which I might hope to sign on, and that was Marseilles. The information had come too late, for the fare to Marseilles as a deck passenger — and that included no food en route — was twenty-five francs. To be left stranded in Naples, however, was a fate to be dreaded. I determined to take passage as far as possible, namely, to Genoa, and to make my way as best I could from there to the great French port.

By playing rival runners against each other, I reduced the regular fare of twelve francs to nine francs and a cigar, the stogie being the commission of the runner. With a day left at my disposal I ruined

my misused shoes among the lava-beds of Vesuvius, slept on a park bench to save the price of a lodging, and was rowed out to the *Lederer Sandor,* a miserable cargo-steamer hailing from Trieste. She did not sail until a full twenty-four hours after the time set, and my stock of bread and dried codfish gave out while we were but halfway to Genoa. I had noted, however, that, the ship's business being chiefly the carrying of freight, little watch was kept on the passengers. Upon arrival in the birthplace of Columbus, therefore, I purchased a second stock of provisions and returned on board, for it was cheaper to hire a boatman to row me out to the ship than to pay lodgings in the city. Among a score of through passengers my presence on board attracted no attention and, knowing that the Sandor was to continue along the Riviera, I was still seated on one of her hatches when she sailed out of Genoa at noon.

We cast anchor next morning at St. Maurizio and, in the early afternoon, steamed on towards Nice. As we slipped by gleaming Monte Carlo, and I was beginning to congratulate myself on having made my way thus far in spite of a flat purse, the first mate, a native of Trieste, sought me out on deck.

"What is your name?" he asked, in Italian, waving in his hand a bundle of tickets, each of which bore the signature of its purchaser.

Plainly my ruse was discovered; but, hoping to confuse the discoverer, I answered in English. But to no avail. For this young man, who swore at the sailors in German and cursed longshoremen impartially in Italian and French, spoke English almost without an accent. I had barely mentioned my name when he burst out in my own tongue: —

"What are you doing on board? Your ticket is only to Genoa."

"Yes!" I stammered, "but I want to get to Marseilles and I have n't the price."

"No fault of ours, is it?" demanded the officer. "Your ticket reads Genoa. You will have to pay the price from Genoa to Nice."

"Have n't got the half of it," I protested.

The mate stared at me a moment in silence and hurried away to attend to more pressing affairs. Whether he forgot my existence purposely or by accident, I know not; he was busy on the bridge until our arrival at Nice and, by dropping over the bow to the wharf as dusk fell, I dodged the vigilant eyes of both ship and custom officers and hurried away, once more in "la belle France."

I rose next morning with a one-franc piece in silver and a five-franc note, both in Italian currency. The silver passed as readily as a French

Italian peasants returning from the vineyards to the village

A factory of red roof-tiles near Naples. The girl works from daylight to dark for sixteen cents

Missing Page

"Where do you come from?" whispered one of them.

"From Nice. I am on the road."

"Quoi!" cried the three, in suppressed chorus, "on the road! Then why don't you go to the gendarmerie?" and they pointed away across the beach to a lighted window.

"They 'll give you a bed for three nights," went on one of the trio; "we 've been stowed away there as many times as the law allows or we would n't make our nests here."

I crouched out of sight until the patrol had passed once more and dashed across the sand towards the lighted window. A door stood ajar; inside, an officer, armed in a way more fitting to a chief of brigands than to the guardian of a peaceful watering-place, leaned back in his chair, puffing at a long Italian cigar.

"Bien! Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?" he demanded, laying the stogie on the table edge and surveying me leisurely from head to foot.

I waved the five-franc piece in the air. "I 'm a sailor, walking to Marseilles, and the innkeepers won't accept this."

"Ça!" he cried contemptuously, after examining the bill under the light; "Why, that 's Italian. No good at all! Why do you come to the gendarmerie so late? We can't let vagabonds into the Asile de Nuit at this hour."

"The Asile de Nuit!" I protested. "I 'm not looking for the Asile, but for an inn; and I don't see that I 'm a vagabond, with a five-franc note —"

"That 's no good," he finished, "perhaps not, legally, but — Where are your papers?"

I handed over the consular letter and the cattle-boat discharge. The officer studied them a moment as if English were not unknown to him and fell into a reverie.

"American, eh?" he mused, when his dream had ended; "Sailor? Hum! Well, go sit out in the hall until I am relieved and I 'll take you to the Asile."

I sat down against the wall on the flagstone of the entry and fell into a doze from which I was awakened by the entrance of another gendarme, in full armament like his colleague. The latter stepped out a moment later, growled a "viens," and hurried off through the deserted streets, his sword rattling noisily on the pavement in the silence of the night. I marched close at his heels, wondering what was in store for me; for, though I had often heard roadsters mention the

vagabond quarters which every city of France maintains, I knew nothing of the institutions at first hand.

Five minutes' walk brought us to a small brick building, at the door of which the gendarme drew out a bunch of gigantic keys and entered. The first door led into a hallway along which the officer walked some ten feet and, with more rattling of keys, opened a second that led into nothing, so far as I could see, but Stygian darkness.

"Voilà!" he shouted, pushing me past him through the door; "Te voilà à l'Asile de Nuit."

"But where do I sleep?" I demanded. The darkness was absolute and, at my first step inside the door, I bumped against what appeared to be the edge of a heavy table.

"Hein! Diable! Sleep on the shelf," snapped the gendarme; then, comprehending that I was unfamiliar with the architectural arrangements of an Asile de Nuit, he struck a match and by its brief flicker I caught a glimpse of the night asylum of Cannes.

It was a room about twenty feet long and seven wide, with a single, strong-barred window at the end facing the street. The entire length of the room ran a sloping wooden shelf, six feet wide and some four feet above the floor at the highest edge, with an alleyway a foot wide between it and the wall behind me. The ledge was occupied by about fifteen as sorry specimens of humanity as it had as yet been my lot to see in one collection. They were packed like spoons, with nothing between their bodies and the twenty-foot bed but their own rags; and each of the fifteen braced his feet against a board projecting some four inches above the lower end of the shelf as if his life depended on keeping in that position.

As the wavering light of the match fell on their faces, a chorus of surly growls burst from the lips of the speakers, and increased to shouts and curses when the gendarme crowded a knee between two of the prostrate forms and exerted his strength to push more closely together the two divisions of the company thus formed.

"Sacré bleu, vous!" he bellowed. "Bougez vous, donc! Here 's a comrade. Do you want all the Asile to yourselves, non de Dieu!" "Crowd in there," he commanded, pushing me towards the six-inch space which he had opened between two of the sleepers. I crowded in, as per order, but did not succeed in widening the space to any appreciable extent. The gendarme went out, slammed and locked both doors, and left me to listen to the growls and oaths that by no means

decreased at his exit. The planks, for all I know, may have been soft enough; with all my struggling I could not force the slumberers far enough apart to reach the shelf; and I spent the night lying with one shoulder and one hip on each of my nearest companions, who alternated in turning over and pushing me back and forth between them like a piece of storm-tossed wreckage on the open sea.

The king of theatrical costumers, striving to dress unconventionally the beggar chorus of a comic opera, could have created nothing to equal the garments of the gathering of tramps from the four corners of Europe that slid off the shelf with the advent of daylight, and fell to brushing and rearranging their rags as if some improvement in appearance could result from such industry. Instinct is so strong in man that, were his only covering a fig-leaf, he would doubtless give it a shake and a pull upon arising, if only in memory of days when his attire was less abbreviated. I rubbed my eyes and waited for some of my companions to make the first move towards the door. But their toilet finished, they sat down one by one on the edge of the shelf as if the desire to get outside the building was the furthest from their thoughts, and fell to exchanging their troubles in at least four languages.

I rose and, climbing over a forest of legs to the door, grasped the knob and was about to give it a yank, when the exit of the officer the night before, with the clang of heavy bolts shot home, came back to memory. I sat down again with the others, and following their example, filled my pipe, as the only consolation left me. Nor was one of these outcasts, who told of days of fasting and the bitter pangs of hunger, without his supply of the soothing weed.

Traffic was already beginning in the street outside. Now and then some facetious passer-by stopped to peer through the bars at us and to sneer: "Bah! Messieurs les vagabonds. Sales bêtes!" Others carried their jocosity so far as to toss pebbles and clods of earth in through the grating; to which treatment my companions in misery were powerless to reply, except by spitting out viciously at their tormentors and promising them a summary vengeance when once they were released.

An hour after daylight a gendarme came to unlock the doors. I pushed out with the rest and set off in the direction of Marseilles. I had not gone five paces, however, when I heard a shout behind me:

"Eh, toi! Où est-ce que tu vas comme ça?"

I turned around in surprise.

"Come along here, you," roared the officer, and with the rest I filed back to the gendarmerie, the butt of the derisive grimaces of passing urchins.

At headquarters each of us was registered again, as we had been the night before, after which we were permitted to go our several ways. There was no means of changing my wealth into French coin until the banks opened, two hours later. Scorning to delay so long, I turned away breakfastless to the westward, convinced that some village banker would come to my assistance by the time France was wide awake. But at high noon I was still plodding on, dizzy with hunger and the fatigue of climbing a low, uninhabited spur of the Alps that stretches down to the Mediterranean west of Cannes, with that infernal Italian note still in my pocket. At four in the afternoon I reached the village of Fréjus. A merchant, whom I ran to earth after a long search, agreed to accept the likeness of Vittore Emanuele at a half-franc discount; and I sat down on the village green with an armful of bread and dried herring — my first meal in twenty-eight hours.

I paid, that night, for a flee-bitten lodging in Le Puget, but concluded next day that the three francs remaining could be better invested in food than in sleeping-quarters. When darkness again overtook me, therefore, I applied for accommodations at the gendarmerie of Cuers. The village was too small to boast an Asile de Nuit, but after long argument I induced the rustic in charge of the town hall to allow me to occupy the solitary cell which the hamlet reserved for the incarceration of its felons. It was a three-cornered hole under the stairway leading to the upper story, and I spent the night in durance vile; for the rustic, for some reason unknown, insisted on locking me in.

Next day I pressed steadily onward through a hungry Sunday of pouring rain, the mud of the highway oozing in through the expanding holes of my dilapidated shoes. From time to time a facetious innkeeper peered out through the down-pour to shout: "Hé donc, toi! You don't know it 's raining, perhaps?" But bent on reaching Marseilles before my last coppers had been scattered, I dared not linger to give answer.

Late Sunday evening is an inconvenient hour to look for the municipal officers of an unimportant French village. Back of the central *place* of Le Beausset I found the hôtel de ville, a decrepit, one-story building; but I knocked at the back door, the entrée des vaga-

bonds, for some time in vain. A passing villager advised me to "go right in." I opened the door accordingly and stepped inside, only to be driven out again by a series of feminine shrieks before I had an opportunity to make out, in a badly-lighted kitchen, the exact source of the uproar. I sat down in the rain outside the door that had been slammed and bolted behind me and waited.

When the last café had ceased its shouting, another villager, half in uniform, pushed past me and knocked for admittance. Certain that he was a gendarme, I followed him inside. At the back of the room, over a stove from which rose tantalizing odors, stood two women who, catching sight of me, deluged the officer with a flood of words.

"Here, mon vieux," he snapped, whirling upon me, "what do you mean by marching into my house and frightening my women out of their wits?"

I excused my conduct on the ground of advice too hastily taken. The gendarme scowled over my papers, tucked them away in a greasy cupboard behind the stove, and turned with me out into the night. The Asile was not far distant, and it was unoccupied. The officer set a candle-end on a beam and, bidding me not to set the place on fire and to exchange the key for my papers in the morning, departed. I burrowed deep into the straw with which the shelf was covered and fell to sleep in my water-soaked garments.

Short rations and plank beds had left me in no condition to cover in a single day the thirty-five miles between Le Beausset and Marseilles. I found my legs giving way when darkness caught me some distance from the harbor and, having no hope of finding a better lodging, sat down against a tree on an outer boulevard. A bitter wind blew, for it was the last day of October and well north of Naples. In the far west of my own country, however, I had learned a trick of great value "on the road." It is, that a coat thrown over the head is far more protection while sleeping out of doors than when worn in the usual manner. I was, therefore, unmolested as long as the night lasted, no doubt because passers-by saw in my huddled form only a grain-sack dropped by the wayside.

CHAPTER V

A "BEACHCOMBER" IN MARSEILLES

IT was well for my immediate peace of mind that no prophet accosted me on my way down to the harbor next morning, to foretell the hungry days that were to be my portion in Marseilles. One of the strikes that periodically tie up the seaport of southern France was at its height. Dozens of sailing vessels rode at anchor in the little "Old Harbor"; the *râde* behind the great V-shaped breakwater was crowded with shipping; at the wharves were moored long rows of ocean-liners, among which the white, clipper-built steamers of the Méssagéries Maritimes predominated, their cargoes rotting in their holds. In a season of customary activity it would have been easy to "sign on" some ship eastward bound. On this November morning, a blind man must have known, from the silence of the port, that there was small prospect even of finding work ashore.

Six sous rattled in my pocket. I squandered the half of them for a breakfast and set out on a tour of the warehouses on the wharves. But at every spot where twenty longshoremen were needed for the unloading of a mail steamer, there were hundreds surging around the timekeeper, clamoring for employment. I reached the front ranks of several of these groups by football tactics, only to be informed, when I shouted my name to the official on the top of a cask or bale, that he was hiring only those stevedores whom he knew personally, and could not find places for a fourth of them. As darkness came on, I gave over the useless tramping up and down the roadstead, wolfed a "stevedore's hand-out" in one of the open-air booths of the Place de la Joliette, and utterly penniless at last, turned away to the Asile de Nuit, as the only refuge left me.

The night asylum of Marseilles, situated beyond the Avenue de la République, just off the silent wharves, was no such one-room hovel as housed the wanderer in Cannes or Cuers. It covered what would have been a block in an American city and rose to a height of three stories; a plain, cold structure above the door of which the legend, "Asile de Nuit," cut in stone, seemed to suggest how permanent and

irremediable is poverty. Before the entrance were at least a hundred men of every age, from mere boys to wrinkled greybeards, chattering in groups, leaning against the building, seated on the sidewalk with their feet in the gutter, or strolling anxiously up and down. Not all of them were vagabonds in outward appearance. Here and there were men in comparatively clean linen and otherwise as faultless in attire as well-to-do merchants. A half-dozen of them wore dress-suits. *They* did not sit with their feet in the gutter; most of them held aloof from their ragged companions and strutted back and forth with the pompous air of successful politicians. But their conversation was, like that of the others, of the "grafts" of the road throughout the continent of Europe.

The "dress-suit vagabond" was a type new to me then. He became a familiar figure long before my wanderings ended. Wherever I met him, he hailed from the Kaiser's realm. The German is admitted by the vagabonds of every nationality to be the most successful beggar in "the profession." It is this well-dressed tramp who awakens the blatant sympathy of English and American tourists — those infallible judges of human nature — the world over. "Poor fellow!" will cry the hysterical lady abroad, when approached by one of this suave-mannered gentry; "He is, indeed, making a struggle to keep up in the world! Let 's give him something worth while, Arthur, for, surely, he cannot be ranked with those lazy, ragged tramps over there." As a matter of fact, "those ragged tramps over there" are, more often than not, unpresumptuous sailors reduced to tatters by the rascalities of shipping companies or their able assistants, the land sharks of great ports. They would jump at any chance of employment, while the "poor fellow," who has begged the very clothes that give him this false appearance of respectability, has been approaching just such hysterical ladies for years, fully intends doing so to the end of his days, and would not accept the presidency of a railroad.

The Asile of Marseilles was not controlled, as those of other French cities, by the gendarmerie, but was the branch establishment of a neighboring monastery. By eight o'clock the crowd before the building had doubled, the doors were thrown open, and we filed into an office where three monks, in cowl and *soutane,* sat behind a wicket. In Europe, man's fate often hangs on a few scraps of paper. The applicant for lodging in the Asile was irrevocably turned out into the night unless he could show two of these all-important documents, one to establish his identity and nationality, and another to

prove that he had been at work at a not-too-distant date. To forge certificates of employment is no unsurmountable task to those who cannot come by them honestly, and the most laudatory ones presented were those of the "dress-suit tramps." A grey-haired frère read my papers rapidly and asked me, in English, with hardly a trace of foreign accent, if I spoke French. Upon my affirmative reply he pushed the documents I had handed him to his younger colleague, who entered my name and biography in a huge book and gave me, with my papers, a check entitling me to a bed in the Asile for eight nights.

I passed into the common room, a sort of chapel, the long benches of which were already half-filled with grumbling tramps. In front was a plain pulpit, around the walls fifteen large crucifixes, and at the back a table where several men were writing letters with materials furnished by the establishment. The room was crowded when nine o'clock sounded from the great Asile bell. The outer door closed with a bang, the grey-haired monk marched in with a gigantic Bible in his arms, mounted the pulpit, and launched forth in a service worthy of note for the length of its prayers and a drowsy discourse on the life of some saint or other, to which the assembled vagabonds listened with stolid tolerance as something which must be endured as a punishment for being penniless. A gong rang out in the hall at the end of the sermon. We mounted the stairs and each, according to his check, entered one of several large rooms containing fifty beds apiece. Those who had registered at some previous date went at once to their cots. The newcomers filed by a frère in charge of a huge pile of bedding in the center of the room. As each one received two clean sheets and a pillow-case, he promptly sought out the cot assigned him, pulled off the soiled linen, carried it back to the monk, and returned to make up his bed. The cleanliness of the cots was truly monasterial. But they were so narrow that to turn over was a precarious operation, and so much harder than a plank bed as to suggest that they were filled with ground stone. In spite, however, of the chorus of snores which mocked the printed notices on the walls, commanding silence, I lay not long awake, for I had long since parted company with soft beds.

At five in the morning, long before daylight, we were awakened by a clanging bell and a trio of frères who marched up and down the room, shouting to us to be up and away. Woe betide the man who turned over for another nap, for one of the monks was upon him in an instant and, with an agility and a force that suggested that he

had been a champion wrestler before taking orders, dumped him unceremoniously on the floor. When we had made up our beds and soused our faces at a hydrant in the outer courtyard, we were driven out into the dreary streets.

I had fallen in with a stranded English sailor at the Asile. Not even on shipboard can one strike up acquaintances as quickly as in a band of sans-sous. For an hour we wandered about the city, shivering in the chill that precedes the dawn, and then made our way down to the harbor. A British merchantman was discharging a cargo at one of the wharves. We slunk on board and, keeping out of sight of the officers, dodged into the forecastle. The crew was struggling to do away with a plentiful breakfast.

"I sye, shipmites," cried my companion, "any show for a bite?"

"Sure, lads!" shouted several of the sailors, with that hearty unselfishness of the English seamen the world over. "Eat up and give the old ship a good name!"

"English? Eh, lad?" asked the old tar who gave me his seat at the table.

"My mate is, but I 'm an American," I answered, a bit dubiously.

"Oh, hell," rumbled the veteran salt, heaping his plate in front of me, "English *or* American! What 's the bloody difference? I mean you 're not a dago or a Dutchman? How long have you been on the beach?"

We did full justice to the ship's good name and left her with bread and meat enough in our pockets to stave off the hunger engendered by a day of tramping up and down the wharves. Next morning the only English vessel in harbor lay well out in mid-stream, and we subsisted on unroasted peanuts and broken cocoanut-meat imported for its oil, of which several vessels from the Orient were discharging whole shiploads.

Penniless sailors swarmed in the Place de la Joliette and the Place Victor Gélu, the rendezvous of seamen in Marseilles. As my acquaintance with these "beachcombers" increased, I picked up knowledge of the "grafts" of the port. On my fourth morning in the city I was aroused from a nap against the pedestal of the bronze Gélu by a Brazilian sailor, who had been long stranded in the city.

"Hóla! Yank," he shouted, "are you coming for breakfas'?"

"Busted!" I answered, shortly.

"Coño, me too," he returned; "come along."

He led the way round the *vieux port* and far out along the beach

by a steep road. In that section of Marseilles known as *les catalans,* once the home of Dumas' Monte Cristo, we joined a crowd before a granite building above the entrance of which was a sign reading, "Bouchée de Pain." When the door opened we filed through an anteroom where a man handed each of us a wedge of bread, *de deuxieme qualité,* from several bushel baskets of similar wedges, and we passed silently on into an adjoining room. The two rough tables it contained were each garnished with a jar of water, which, as we ate our bread, passed from hand to hand. On the walls hung copies of the rules governing the Bouchée de Pain, and in various parts of the room stood officials who strove to enforce them to the letter. The important ones were as follows:

"1. No talking is allowed in the Bouchée de Pain.

"2. The bread must be eaten at the tables and not carried away.

"3. Anyone bringing other food into the Bouchée de Pain to eat with his bread will be summarily ejected.

"4. Bread will be served daily at ten and at three to those who do not forfeit their right to the kind charity of the city of Marseilles by disobeying these rules."

But, as he who has come into contact with tramps and adventurers knows, it is difficult to suppress the inventive talents of the genus vagabundus by mere printed statutes, even with a cohort of officers to enforce them. The second of the rules, especially, was not strictly adhered to. The crowds that reported daily at the institution were so great as to fill the tables a third and even a fourth time. The wily ones about me, knowing that this was only the "first table," nibbled their wedges ever so slowly, until the uninitiated had finished their portions and the officers cried "allez," when they tucked what was left under their coats, and tumbled with the rest of us through a back door, there to trade the wedge for tobacco, or to eat it with what they had picked up about the city.

"Vámonos, hombre," said the Brazilian; "now for the soup."

A full two miles we walked over another steep hill to find, before a building styled "Cuillère de Soupe," much the same crowd as had been at the Bouchée de Pain. The soup was more carefully doled out than the bread had been. An officer at the door called for our papers, set down our names in his register, and handed us tickets which entitled us to soup at eleven and four daily, but only for eight days.

The fates preserve me from ever again tasting the concoction, misnamed soup, which was set before me when I had gained admittance. A bowl of water, grey in color, and of the temperature which the doctor calls for when he has by him neither a stomach-pump nor a feather with which to tickle the patient's throat, contained one leaf — and that the very outside one — of a cabbage, half an inch of the top of a carrot with the leaves still on it, and three sprigs of what looked like grass. When I had made a complete inventory of my own dish, I turned to peer into that of the Brazilian. He had the self-same portion of a carrot, a companion to my cabbage-leaf, and three quite similar blades of grass. Certainly, one could not accuse the soup officials of partiality, and if the cook was sparing of specimens from the vegetable kingdom he made up for it in ingredients from the world of minerals. There was salt enough in my mess to have preserved a side of beef, and pebbles of various sizes and shapes chased each other merrily around behind the spoon with which I stirred up the mixture. I know not who supplied the establishment with water, but the beach was not far distant.

Several times I returned to the Bouchée de Pain before I left Marseilles behind; the Cuillère de Soupe I struck off my calling list at once.

The city of Marseilles has established these two institutions in an attempt to reduce the begging class, and to provide an alternative for the indiscriminate asking of alms, which is strictly forbidden in the city. The buildings have purposely been placed in the most inconvenient sections of the municipality and far apart, in the hope that only those who are in dire want will visit them. As small an amount of food is given as will sustain life, because it is fancied that this arrangement will cause the penniless to redouble their efforts to become self-supporting. Yet the plan is not entirely a success, though the authorities may not know it. Many a man I have seen at these places whom I knew had money enough on his person to buy a dozen hotel dinners — money wheedled out of soft-hearted and soft-headed tourists, which he would have considered it a sin to pay out for food when cool, green absinthe could be bought with it. The "dress-suit tramps," if they had no "bigger game on the string," made this walk their daily exercise, and referred to it as their "constitutional." Those who wished really to look for work found that the long tramp twice a day used up both their time and their strength, until they had little of either left to prosecute their search.

The strike broke and business was slowly and half-heartedly resumed. All my efforts to find work, however, turned to naught. It became evident that if ever I "shipped" for the Orient it must be through the assistance of someone of better standing. A few of the "beachcombers" signed on, but every captain who wandered through the Place Victor Gélu to pick up a sailor was at once surrounded by a half-hundred seamen headed by their "boarding masters," and chose his man long before an "outsider" could gain a hearing. In many a city of Europe I had been advised by fellow-wayfarers to appeal to the American consul. In the opinion of my English companion and others: "That 's all the bloody loafers are shipped over here for, anyway, to give we honest chaps a lift when we 're down." Not quite sharing this view, I had, thus far, thanked the advisers and gone my way. But when I had seen several "beachcombers" sail away through the assistance of higher authorities, I determined to make my existence known to our Marseilles representative.

Accordingly, on my return from the Bouchée de Pain one morning, I stopped in at the consulate. My papers were inspected by a negro secretary in the outer office, passed on to the vice-consul, and finally to the consul-general. That official, calling me inside to satisfy himself as to my nationality, gave me a note to one "Portuguese Joe," whom I would find "hanging around on the Place Victor Gélu." Joe, the consul explained, was master of a sailors' boarding house, who undertook to shelter and feed such penniless mariners as the consul could vouch for, until he found them berths, and took his reward in a month's advance on their wages — the regular blood-money system that is in vogue in almost every port.

I found Joe "hanging around" as the consul had promised, hanging around a lamp-post in the center of the *place,* and if he had not been able to find some such support he would have been lying around the same public spot. He was a big, greasy, half-breed nigger — I should hate to say negro — and he had what, in Jack Tar's parlance, is known as "a full cargo." In a ring about him were a score of sailors of various nationalities and colors, from plain New Yorkers and Baltimore negroes, to East Indians and men from the Congo Free State, who were making the boarding master the butt of their raillery. These same men, except, perhaps, the Anglo-Saxons, would have quailed before this maudlin rascal, sober, whom they were repaying, now, by their ridicule, for many a perfidious trick he had played them.

I received a franc from the drunken lout as soon as I had made him

understand the note from the consul, and lost no time in leaving it in a restaurant. That night I slept on the floor of Joe's house, with a huge Antigua negro as a roommate. The house was a shack bordering on the fish-market and the red-light district, a quarter requiring six policemen to the block. Several times during the night I started up at some piercing scream or long-drawn wail, and I borrowed a morning paper fully expecting to read of deeds of unusual violence. But it was only the customary list of minor misfortunes that was chronicled; a carousing sailor run down in that street, an Italian stabbed by a fellow-countryman in this, a demi-mondaine thrown out of a window in a third.

Portuguese Joe was a totally different being the next morning from the besotted wretch that I had seen the day before. Fat and pompous, dressed as if to attend a fancy ball, he paraded up and down the seamens' rendezvous, interviewing a captain here, stopping for a tête-à-tête with another boarding master or a runner there, and scowling haughtily at the common sailors who ventured to approach him.

Joe was a fair example of the type that is the visitation of seamen ashore. Jack Tar is the most prodigal of existing beings, either with the earnings in his pocket or with those he has yet to toil for, and he bears with far too much resignation the knavery of these shipping masters. With all its romance, life on the ocean wave is a dreary and precarious enough existence to the man before the mast, yet many are the nations that enhance the misery of his lot by tolerating these human sharks and their nefarious practices in their ports. When Jack comes ashore, his one desire, in most cases, is to spend his accumulated earnings as soon as possible. At sea, money is the most worthless of commodities. The man in the forecastle on a long voyage would not sell his share of the soggy "plum-duff" that comes with his Sunday dinner for a month's wages in cash. Small wonder, then, that he is lavish with his pounds and shillings during his few days ashore, and that he rarely thinks of shipping again until his last coin is spent. It is then that the careless prodigal falls an easy prey to Portuguese Joe and his ilk. Joe boasted of "never having done a tap of work" in his life. His mixture of Portuguese and negro blood had made him a tolerably quick-witted fellow, with considerable tact, as that quality goes among seafaring men. He had picked up a practicable use of most of the European languages, and enough knowledge of the niceties of French law to know how far he

could go with impunity in fleecing his victims. In various ways he had ingratiated himself with captains and the agents of ships sailing from Marseilles, until he had become one of several absolute monarchs in that port over slow-witted, spendthrift Jack Tar. Was business going badly? Then Joe was down aboard some ship talking his way with his oily tongue into a seat at the captain's table. Were sailors in demand? Then he was picking them up everywhere, giving them a meal or two, and shipping them off with nothing but a bag of ragged "gear" to show for the month or six weeks' advance on their wages, which he hastened back to throw on the gambling table or to spend in the nasty vices of a great seaport. To be sure, some of this money would have gone the same way if the sailor had received it. But one could more easily have tolerated its squandering by the man who had undergone the sufferings and privations of a long voyage to earn it, and at least we "beachcombers" should have been spared the sight of Portuguese Joe and his cronies, strutting back and forth across the Place Victor Gélu, and putting their heads together to evolve new schemes for robbing other victims.

There were few accommodations in Joe's hovel, and on the second day I was transferred to a seamens' boarding house in the dingy backwater of the Avenue de la République. The establishment was run by Joe's brother, a burly mulatto known in all the lower quarters of the city as "Portuguese Pete" who, like his brother, lay claim to no family name; and by his wife, a slatternly white woman of French parentage. In the windowless upper story were a score of foul nests that ranked as beds. The one to which I was assigned was a broken-backed cot. After a vain attempt to sleep, doubled up like a pocket-knife, amid the uproar of my roommates, who were snoring in several languages, I crept down stairs to borrow a plank from the kitchen wood-pile, and propping up the pallet, fell asleep. Some time must have passed, for I was in deep slumber and not even the house cat was stirring, when the cot, mattress, bedding, and prop came down with a crash that certainly awakened the policeman in the next block, and left me entangled in a Gordian knot of sheets and counterpanes of the width of a ship's hawser. I slept on the floor during the rest of my stay with Portuguese Pete.

There was one advantage — and one only — gained by the change from the Asile to this new lodging. The habits of Pete and his spouse were by no means as austere as those of the monks who turned us out into the cold, grey dawn. The meals we were to pay so dearly for,

when we shipped, were on a par with the sleeping accommodations. Each morning, after taking turns in pounding on the proprietor's door for an hour or two, we usually succeeded in inducing his consort to descend, in négligé and a vicious temper, to serve us each a cup of tepid water with a smell of chickory about it, and a wedge of bread. At noon and night we did duty alternately before the black, smoky fire-place, in assisting Madame Pete to prepare the soup and macaroni that were served in painfully meager quantities with bread and brackish wine. Like the pupils of Squeers, we dared not ask for more, lest we call down upon our heads the mighty wrath of Pete.

Pete spoke a cosmopolitan language, an Esperanto of his own making, concocted from all the tongues represented around his board, with no partiality or predeliction for any particular one. He who did not know at least French, English, Italian, and Portuguese or Spanish, with something of the patois of Provence, had small chance of catching more than the drift of Pete's remarks. English words with Italian endings, Portuguese words with a French pronunciation, French words that started out well enough but ended with a nondescript grunt, all uttered in a voice that made the rafters ring and the wine-glasses on the table dance excitedly, were the daily accompaniments of our gatherings. Yet Pete, with all his bellow, was the exact antithesis of his brother. He had spent years before the mast and had been rated an excellent sailor, before he drifted into Marseilles and became the understudy of unscrupulous Joe. He was as slow of wit as the seamen who quailed before his wife's bleary eye — and as for tact! The only influence or coercion which Pete could bring to bear on those of his fellow-men who did not heed the roar of his mighty voice were his no less mighty fists. More than once he had threatened, like the giant Antiguan, to use these powerful arguments on his brother's anatomy; for Joe had never hesitated, when there was something to be gained by it, to entrap Pete in the meshes of his Machiavelian plots. As when, during a season of sharp demand for sailors, he had generously served Pete with "knock-out drops," dragged him on board a ship bound for the fever-infected, west-African coast, and made merry with the two months' advance offered for any seaman that could be captured. But Joe let himself be caught only in the glare of daylight and on the public squares, and there the wrath of Pete and many another who had fought his way back to Marseilles with the avowed intention of throttling the rascally half-breed, had vanished at the sound of that

oily tongue. Pete was kind-hearted and prodigal by nature, and years in the forecastle had by no means cured him of these faults. Those who knew told tales of his favors to boarders and of the groaning of his table in the days of prosperity. But evil times had fallen on Marseilles and, like my fellow-boarders, I always left Pete's hovel with a gnawing hunger, and divided my days between following the clue of some job and wandering with envious eyes through the market-places.

The band that rose from our table to follow Pete to the ship-chandler's office or to tramp at Joe's heels, by night or by day, to the far end of the breakwater, in pursuit of a rumor that a ship was "signing on," was as variegated in experience as in color. Two hulking, good-hearted Baltimore negroes were the heroes of the party. In a strike riot of two months before they had been arrested for killing a gendarme, a crime of which they were really, though unintentionally, guilty. The prosecution, however, had not succeeded in proving a case against them. The older had been sentenced to sixty days and the younger, who had been shot during the mélée, was left to recuperate in the city hospital. They burst in upon us almost at the same time during my first days at Pete's, and took the head of the board at once. Two nights later the hospital patient — a youth of nineteen — gave an exhibition of cool, collected grit that is rarely equaled even among seafaring men. A half-dozen of us had stepped into a cabaret in the unconventional section of the city. A quarrel began over some question of racial dislike. In the free-for-all battle that ensued an Italian drew a long, double-edged sheath knife and sprang for the youth from Baltimore. The latter had scarcely finished knocking down another assailant but, without stepping aside ever so little, he calmly grasped the finely ground blade in his left hand, and while the blood gushed down his forearm, as the Italian strove to twist the knife out of his grip of iron, he drew from his hip-pocket a razor, opened it behind his back as tranquilly as for a morning shave, and slashed his opponent from ear to chin. With the Italian's neck-tie bound tightly around his wrist, he marched homeward, singing plantation ballads at the top of his voice, washed his mutilated palm in a bucket, tied it up with the tail of a shirt, and sallied forth in quest of new adventures.

As near-heroes, there was a stocky little Spaniard, once a *banderillero,* who had abandoned the bull-ring for the forecastle with a dozen scars from sharp horns on his neck and body. His tales were rivaled

by a Jamaican negro, the only survivor of a shipwrecked crew, who had risen to power in a South-Sea island, and by an Australian who was credited with having thirty-six wives. An Italian who had been on the operatic stage — what for, we could not find out; a Finn who chewed tobacco while he ate; and a run-away boy from Madeira, who flooded his macaroni with tears so regularly that his portion was always served unsalted, were likewise on exhibition. Then there was "Antoine de la Ceinture" (Tony of the Belt). Tony was one of the last-but-not-least sort. Were we bound for the chandler's office? Then Tony could be trusted to bring up the rear. Was dinner late in being served? It was because Tony had not yet put in an appearance. Was Joe lining us up for inspection before some skipper? Then everyone knew without looking that it was Tony who answered to his name at the end of the line. But Tony's most remarkable feature was his belt. Many of the workmen of France wear in lieu of suspenders, long, gaily-colored sashes. Yet no belt in the length and breadth of France could rival Tony's. It was as red as the blood that flowed on the night of the mêlée — when Tony had lived up to his reputation by being the farthest from the center of action; — it was a good yard wide and longer than the longest royal brace ever rove through a block; and forty times each day Tony must unwind it from around his waist, give an end to one of us, with a warning to keep it stretched to its full width, and march off down the street with the other end. There he would take the first turn around his body, pull the sash taut; and with a flutter of coat-tails and arms, up the street would come Tony, spinning round and round as if carried along by a whirlwind, until he reached his temporary valet, when he would heave a sigh of regret because the belt was not longer, or brighter, or wider, or did n't make him look enough like the spool on which a bolt of cloth is wound, or for some other reason quite beyond our comprehension; and, tucking in the end, would tag at the *queue* of our company to some other section of the city, there to unwind and wind himself up again.

Workers were a drug on the market in Marseilles. There was one happy day when, in wandering about the *vieux port,* where the fleet of "wind-jammers" was rolling and pitching in a heavy gale, I was promised extraordinary wages by the captain of a clumsy barkentine, flying the checkerboard Greek flag, to help his depleted crew move the craft to a safer mooring. He had picked up the Antiguan and — strange to relate — Tony of the Belt; and together we tugged

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at hawser and brace for several hours, while the barkentine under our feet seemed undetermined after each roll whether to right herself again or turn turtle. But we got her re-moored at last, and the three francs which the skipper dropped into my hand had a merry jingle which I had almost forgotten. A day's work in the fish-market won me as much more, and I seemed to have struck prosperity when, the following morning, I spent three hours in rolling wine-barrels onto harbor trucks. But the only reward which the truckman and the official taster offered when the task was done was "all the wine you can hold," and my humble capacity forced me to accept much less than union wages. The six-franc fortune dwindled gradually away, though I spent it sparingly to supplement the meager fare of Pete's table, or for an occasional investment of two sous in tobacco. The French government does not sell the weed in such small quantities. But "beachcombers" hesitated to spend a half-franc all at once, especially as the invariable word of greeting from seemingly countless acquaintances was, "Any smokin' on you, Jack?" and the dealers — indifferent to the law and with an eye to business — broke up the legal ten-sous packets into ten two-sous lots, in their own wrappings. There were fellow-boarders who laughed at my extravagance. *They* sallied forth in the morning before the street-sweepers had made their daily round, and tramped up and down the Cannebière, a main thoroughfare which evening promenaders littered with cigar and cigarette butts. But the Anglo-Saxons, for the most part, refused to employ their talents in "shooting snipes on the Can o' Beer."

The boarding-masters of Marseilles refused to believe my assertion that I was bound away from, and not towards, my native land. Three times during my stay with Pete, I was called upon to sign on — once on a collier for Algiers, and twice on tramps bound for the "States." My refusal to accept these berths aroused the ire of Joe; and, on the day following the sailing of the last craft, I was turned out dinnerless from Pete's domicile on a world that had grown decidedly cold for a southern country. I could not greatly regret this ejection; it left Joe unable to make a demand on my wages, should I ever sign on. My list of acquaintances had increased; on some occasions I had spent a few sous to relieve the hunger of some unhoused beachcomber, and the thoughtfulness stood me now in good stead. As I wandered from Pete's house down to the Place de la Joliette, I fell upon one of these, a little, wizened Alexandrian Jew, who had "just made a haul of a franc" which, with that un-

selfishness universal "on the beach," he offered at once to share. That night I found myself again in the crowd before the Asile de Nuit.

Quarrels were frequent among the destitutes who collected at the asylum, but not often was it the scene of such a tragedy as was enacted on this frosty evening. Five minutes after I had joined the group before the building, a begrimed and tattered youth strolled up to within a few feet of me, glanced about him, pulled a revolver from his pocket, fired instantly at a group of vagabonds who chatted on the curb ten feet away, and dashed off towards the harbor. The victim, a German who could not have been over twenty, fell with scarcely a groan, rolled off the sidewalk into the gutter, gave a few convulsive kicks, and lay still. A doctor arrived as he was being carried into the office. He had been shot directly through the heart. My first impulse, when two gendarmes began inscribing the names of witnesses, was to offer my testimony. Luckily, it occurred to me in time that justice is a slow process in France, and that authorities are none too kind in their methods of assuring the presence in court of such witnesses as lodge at an Asile de Nuit. To be delayed in Marseilles several months would have put an end to my wanderings before they had well begun; I backed towards the outskirts of the increasing crowd and made answer to the excited officer with the book; —"Moi, monsieur? Je viens d'arriver."

The assassin was taken, before morning, and his story added to the annals of "the road." The dead man had been his companion during his Wanderjahre in Servia. The few dollars that had been their common possession he had trusted to his comrade — no unusual custom among tramps. At a dismal mountain village the treasurer had decamped, leaving the other to the tender mercies of the Servian police. When he was released from several weeks of imprisonment as a vagrant, the deserted man determined to have revenge. By methods peculiar to trampdom, and with a persistency that would have done credit to the best of detectives, he had tracked the absconder through Montenegro, the Turkish coast-towns, and Italy, only to lose all trace of him in Genoa. A chance meeting put him on the trail again; he tramped to Marseilles and ran the German youth to earth five months after his act of treachery. The sympathy of the beachcombers was entirely with the assassin. In the moral code of "the road" there are few crimes more iniquitous than that of the dead man. But sympathy availed him nothing, for months afterward the youth was guillotined in the Place Victor Gélu, that dreary square in

which Portuguese Joe and penniless seamen were accustomed to "hang around."

When excitement had abated somewhat, the Asile was thrown open — not for me, however. The second frère received my papers from his superior, as on the first night, but squinted at me above his glasses.

"Lodged here before?" he demanded.

"Yes."

"When?"

"Two weeks ago."

"Then I can't admit you."

"But I only stayed five of my eight days."

"Ça ne fait rien! When you have been admitted once you can't come back again for six months. Allez-vous en!"

This mandate proved inexorable. When I attempted to argue the matter a burly doorkeeper sent me spinning into the street. I wandered away through the city and, towards midnight, turned down to the wharves. An empty box car stood behind a warehouse. I crawled inside to find it already occupied by three English sailors of former acquaintance. To sleep was impossible, for it was bitter cold. After a couple of hours of shivering on the icy floor of the car, we crept out and took to tramping up and down the streets and byways — that most dismal experience, known professionally as "carrying the banner"— until daybreak.

Long, hungry days passed, days in which I could scarcely withstand the temptation to carry my kodak to the *mont de piété* just off the sailors' square. Among the beachcombers there were daily some who gained a few francs, by an odd job, by the sale of an extra garment, or by "grafting," pure and simple. When his hand closed on a bit of money, the stranded fellow may have been weak with fasting. Yet his first thought was not to gorge himself, but to share his fortune with his companions under hatches. In those bleak November days, many a man, ranked a "worthless outcast" by his more fortunate fellow-beings, toiled all day at the coal-wharves of Marseilles, and tramped back, cold and hungry, to the Place Victor Gélu to divide his earning with other famished *misérables,* whom he had not known a week before. More than one man sold the only shirt he owned to feed a new arrival who was an absolute stranger to all. These men won no praise for their benefactions. They expected none, and would have opened their eyes in wonder if they had been told that their actions were worthy of praise. The stranded band grew to be

a corporate body. By a job here and there I contributed my share to the common fund, and between us we fought off gaunt starvation. In a dirty alley just off the Place was an inn kept by a Greek, in which one could sleep on the floor at three sous, or in a cot at six; and every evening a band of ragged mortals might have been seen dividing the earnings of some of them into three-sou lots as they made their way towards *l'Auberge chez le Grec.*

One spot in all Marseilles was the sole oasis in this desert of dreariness and desolation, the Sailors' Home. Here, as winter drove us away from the sunny side of the breakwater, where we had been able to swim in early November, we congregated around the roaring stove to discuss the hopelessness of the situation, and to peruse the newspapers that kept us somewhat in touch with the moving world outside. But when dusk fell, the doors were closed behind us, and the biting air and the squalor of other quarters were only increased by contrast. I turned in at the Home one morning, to find that misfortune had overtaken the three Englishmen of the box car. My first acquaintance had arrived in Marseilles in the thinnest of overalls and jumper. Man can endure far more than most of us suspect; but night after night out of doors in such garb had broken the health of the Englishman, and the gendarme who had found him unconscious on the wharf had bundled him off to the Home. Sick as he was, it took four days of official red-tape and nonsense to get him admitted to the hospital, and it was only by strenuous efforts that we were able to pay his bad *chez le Grec* while the question was pending. His two companions had deserted from the British navy in Buenos Ayres, changed in name and dress, and signed on a "wind-jammer" for Genoa. To escape the king's service had cost them months of labor and danger, a year's wages, and their possessions. Nothing will better indicate the misery of Marseilles on strike than the fact that, with six months' imprisonment at Gibraltar and a re-serving of their time in prospect, they had resolved to endure "the beach" no longer, and had marched up to the consul's office to give themselves up. They were held under arrest at the Home for the first British steamer for the Rock.

There were those among the beachcombers who would not be outdone by the force of circumstances, who put on a bold front and set out to get the "living the world owed them." In beggardom as in the world at large, the brazenface carries the day, and the modest and unassuming are pushed into the background. Among the first vic-

tims of this class, in foreign ports, are the consuls. There was in Marseilles a certain Welshman who won fame for his exploits during this season. Signed off in Barcelona, he had made his way to the French port, and had received from the British consul, within an hour of his arrival, two francs and a promise of clothes, next day. In the morning, as per promise, he was well fitted out and given another franc. He promptly hunted up a pawn shop, got back into his rags, and made tracks for the nearest wine-shop. Next morning, penniless, he was back early to see the consul, spun a pathetic yarn, and came out with two more francs. This amount, however, could not last long in a café. The Welshman pocketed the money, marched over to the American consulate, and proved so satisfactorily that Pittsburg was his home that two more francs were added to his collection. Day after day new variations of his story were sprung in all sections of the city. On his ability to speak some German, he "worked" the Austrian, Swiss, and German consuls, besides several foreign charitable societies. These institutions gave only clothing for the most part, but one of the Welshman's experience had little difficulty in turning them into money.

Meanwhile, he was "pumping" his own consul, who twice more fitted him out, only to have him turn up again next morning as ragged and unkempt as ever. The consul was not blind, but when a vagabond sits down in your office and refuses to move until he receives a franc, it is often cheaper to give it than to take time to throw him out. The day came, however, when the consul determined to put an end to this system of blackmail, and, after giving the customary franc one morning, he ordered the Welshman not to come back again under pain of arrest. Bright and early the next morning the "beachcomber" turned up, a strong smell of absinthe entering the room with him.

"Good morning, consul," he burst out, gaily, and loud enough to be heard by those of us who were listening outside, "I wonder if you can spare me a couple of francs for a morning bite?"

The consul stepped to the telephone and called for a policeman. A few minutes later, a gendarme pushed past us, stepped inside, and received orders to put the offender under arrest. But the Welshman, who lolled undisturbed in an office chair through all this, had taken the trouble to make himself familiar with the fine points of international law. He grasped a heavy ruler from the table as the officer approached.

"If that Frog-eater touches me, I 'll brain 'im," he shouted, "I 'm a