

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

PICTURES BY EDWIN A. ABBEY, R.A.



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Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train—
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway—
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfin'd;
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain—
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay—
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and an happy land.

*But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed*



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Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around;
Yet count our gains: this wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied—
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robb'd the neighboring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:
While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure—all
In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.
As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,

*As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign*



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Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes—
But when those charms are pass'd, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail—
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd:
In nature's simplest charms at first array'd—
But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourg'd by famine, from the smiling land
The mournful peasant leads his humble band—
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden, and a grave.
Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

*She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress*

The "Old Man" of Sand Key

BY T. JENKINS HAINS

HE was an "old man" when he first made his appearance on the reef at the Sand Key Light. This was years ago, but one could tell it even then by the way he drew in his chin, or rather pouch, in a dignified manner as he soared in short circles over the outlying coral ledges which shone vari-colored in the sunshine beneath the blue waters of the Gulf Stream. He had fished alone for many seasons without joining the smaller and more social birds, and the keepers had grown to know him. Sandy Shackford, the head keeper, knew him well, and relied implicitly upon his judgment as to the location of certain denizens of the warm Stream. He had come back again after a month's absence, and he was circling majestically over the coral banks not a hundred fathoms from the light.

His gray head was streaked with pencilled feathers, which grew longer as they reached his neck, and his breast was colored a dull mottled lead. His back and wings gave a general impression of gray and black, the long pinions of the latter being furnished with stiff quills, which tapered with a lighter shade to the tips. His beak and pouch were of more than ordinary proportions, for the former was heavy and hooked at the end, and the latter was large and elastic, capable of holding a three-pound mullet.

He soared slowly over the reef for some time, and the keeper watched him, sitting upon the rail of the lantern smoking his pipe, while his assistant filled the body of the huge lamp and trimmed its several wicks. To the westward a slight ripple showed upon the surface of the quiet sea. The pelican sighted it, and stood away toward it, for it looked like a mackerel that had come to the surface to take in the sunshine and general beauty of the day. In a moment the "old man" had swung over the spot at a

height of about a hundred feet; then suddenly folding his wings, he straightened out his body, opened his beak, and shot straight downward upon the doomed fish. It was literally a bolt from heaven from out of a clear sky. The lower beak expanded as it hit the water and opened the pouch into a dipper which scooped up the mackerel, while the weight of the heavy body falling from the great height carried everything below the surface with a resounding splash that could be heard distinctly upon the light. Then up he came from the dive, with the fish struggling frantically in his tough leathern sack. He rested a moment to get his breath, and then stretched forth his pinions again and rose in a great circle into the clear blue air.

"The 'old man's' fishin' mackerel this mornin'," said Sandy, "an' I reckon I'll get the dory an' try a squid over along the edge o' the Stream as soon as the breeze makes."

He shoved his small boat off and sprang into her. Then he stepped the mast, and hauling aft the sheet, swung her head round and stood off the reef, riding easily over the low swell. High above him was the lantern, and he looked up, to see Bill gazing down at him and pointing toward the southward, where a ripple showed the breaching fish. His lines were in the after-locker, and he soon had them out, one of them with a wooden squid trolling over the stern as the little craft gathered headway.

The old bird had satisfied his present needs and had flown away to a distant part of the outlying bank, where he was now proceeding to enjoy his catch at leisure. Far away to the northward, where Key West showed above the horizon, a long line of black specks was rapidly approaching through the air. They were the regular fishermen of the reef, and they were bound out to sea this morning for their daily meal. On they