

was increased to 20,000 francs. The work thus provided for was carried out by M. Marié-Davy, who became director of the observatory in 1873; and later a number of minor co-operative stations were established in other quarters of Paris.

There are three principal sections into which the work of the observatory is divided, and these are as follows:

First, the observation of the usual elements of terrestrial physics and meteorology, made with special reference to their application to the climatology and hygiene of Paris; also the control of similar work in the subsidiary stations for observing in various quarters of Paris.

Second, the chemical analysis of free air in various quarters of Paris and in the municipal buildings; the study of the chemical composition of the water distributed in Paris for public and private use; the study of the chemical composition of the water in the sewers, and of the water which returns to the river (Seine) after the drainage has passed through the ground; analysis of subterranean water taken at regular intervals from pits at points above and below Paris; study of the action of processes of filtration of water which may be proposed for municipal use.

Third, a micrographical study of the air, the soil and water, by obtaining statistics concerning microbes and bacteria that may in any way affect animal life or agriculture; the variations produced by changes in meteorological conditions to which bacteria are subjected; the comparative study of organisms to be found in free and confined air; and, in general, this section investigates micrographically the same material that the *second* section submits to a chemical analysis.

Each year this observatory publishes a little volume containing a vast amount of interesting matter, the result both of compilations and observations; this is in addition to the frequent regular bulletins showing the condition of the city so far as the elements under consideration are concerned. This book is sold for half a dollar, which low price enables every one who has need of a copy to purchase it. It contains a good current almanac for Paris; a description of the various meteorological instruments used at the observatory, with the tables necessary for interpreting their readings; a complete résumé of the old meteorological observations made at Paris (to date); a complete description of the climate of Paris based on these observations; a complete and detailed review of the weather in Paris during the preceding year: this occupies perhaps two hundred and twenty-five pages. Then follow about one hundred and sixty pages giving the results of the chemical analyses, and one hundred and fifty pages giving the results of the micrographical studies. Moreover, the different forms of apparatus used are carefully described.

It would take pages to give any idea of the full extent of the matter published, and all that can be done here is to call attention to its usefulness. There is scarcely a point on which the authorities of Paris, or the individual engineers, physicians, etc., desire information concerning the conditions prevailing at Paris, which cannot be found among the records of the observatory. In matters concerning local climate, here is indisputable evidence of exactly what has occurred; as regards polluted water the observatory can furnish warning to users before it can become injurious; and in times of contagious diseases the earliest appearance of microbes will be detected by the skilled observer having this section of the work in charge.

We need just such an observatory in each one of our large, and prospectively large, cities. In some cases a portion of this work is already performed under the jurisdiction of different boards of control; and where this is so, a reorganization will bring the whole work under the management of a single scientist. In New York, for instance, there is the Central Park meteorological observatory, which is well equipped for its special work, and it is very well located for the supervision of the chemical and microscopical examinations above enumerated. So that, if the work of this nature which is now done by experts employed by the water-works and Board of Health were transferred to the Central Park observatory, and provision made for the uninterrupted continuance of these at present only

occasional observations, the total expense would probably not exceed the present amount expended. The establishment of such a municipal observatory in a single city in our country would undoubtedly be followed by a like provision for the continuous, systematic study of local hygienic conditions by other cities.



The Greater Glory¹

By Maarten Maartens

Author of "God's Fool," "Joost Avelingh," "An Old Maid's Love," etc.
(Begun in *The Outlook* for July 1.)

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"ALL THE COMFORTS OF A HOME"

That night the Baron went back to Cleves.

An hour or two before his arrival Wendela sat strumming wearily on the boarding-house piano. It was a very bad piano, but this, to Wendela, was no additional affliction.

"One, two, three," counted the Baroness. "Wendela, you are not keeping time."

"Oh, what does it matter, mamma? The tune comes right all the same."

"Not to those who distinguish properly. I thought it was my daughter's ambition to do everything well?"

"So it is, mamma. Oh dear; one, two, three!" And Wendela paddled on.

Presently a nervous little Swiss body thrust her head through the door, then drew back with a couple of openings and shuttings, and finally entered and sat down. Many people cannot enter a public sitting-room in any other way. "Shall we be disturbing you, Mademoiselle?" asked the Baroness. "Not in the least," replied the little lady, in much trepidation, certainly saying the reverse of what she meant. Fräulein Drix was "exceedingly musical," and as Wendela's ten fingers went staggering over immovable stumbling-blocks, the poor creature vibrated behind the Review she was endeavoring to read.

The clock struck, and the musician dropped the piano-lid with a bang, which covered her mother's sigh of relief. The piece Wendela had been playing was Haydn's "Surprise." Very surprised would he have been to hear it was his.

"Do you consider it advisable, Madame," said Fräulein Drix, in a flutter of sudden resolve, "that *all* children should be taught the piano?" Wendela, who was gathering her books together, paused to listen. The Fräulein gasped at her own temerity as she met the stare of the Baroness's pale eyes. Pale eyes can look haughtier than dark ones, and it was the one lady's look which answered the other. Aloud, Mevrouw van Rexelaer merely said, "I like my daughter to learn it," in leaving the room. The doctor remarked next morning that Fräulein Drix was not so well.

The Baroness was white to the lips as she took her usual seat by the window. She was a woman of immeasurable pride; she had always been accustomed to a tranquil supremacy of gentle patronage, unassuming, doubtless, where only condescension was required. Seclusion—intermediary servility—it is the one great blessing which rank and wealth bestow. The Baroness knew little of the world outside her, till she differed with "Auguste" about the cleanness of the dinner-plates. Nor did she know too much of the world within her—what stronghold still lay there unconquered—till intercourse with the ladies of Frau Schultze's second-rate Pension came unpleasantly to her assistance. She loathed the little, squalid, quarrelsome life.

"But, mamma," began Wendela, abruptly. "Perhaps she is right. I hate playing. And you said yourself I had an excellent voice."

"Your ear must be trained first, Wendela; it is far too imperfect. Allow your mother to judge. And do you remember: Seed-time is my time; Harvest-time is God's."

Wendela threw her arms round her mother's neck with a warmth of embrace which would have astonished Fräulein

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lein Drix: "I wonder whether it ever really happened," she said, "Guido van Rexelaer casting his seed on the submerged fields in the Spanish troubles, and the harvest coming up just the same. Tell me about it again, mother. When you tell me, it sounds true."

"Of course it is true. How often have I not told you before?"

"Yes, I know. But it all seems too beautiful to be real. Beautiful things never really happen, I think. It's only the ugly and nasty and wicked that come true." The girl spoke with passionate conviction, shaking back the brown locks from her honest brow. Then, suddenly, she embraced her mother again with vehement hugs and kisses. "You tell me, mother," she repeated, "about good things, and God, and the Saints. When you tell me it sounds true, and I think I understand."

"Hush, hush!" answered the Baroness, gently disengaging herself. "My little daughter must not wish to understand too much. Go and wash your hands, dear child; it is nearly time for supper."

Wendela ran off to her own room, a pale-cheeked, earnest-eyed child, impetuous of thought and movement, yet dreamy withal. In the hideousness of the present, the dream-life had deepened around her as a sheltering cloud. Nurturing her beauty-sick soul upon the splendors of fairy tales, she had escaped into regions of blissful unreality, where she delighted to wander, in endless imaginings, with a fairy hero of her own creating, to whom she did homage as her lord. Of course he was handsome, though she had never distinguished his features, virtuous as one of her mother's saints, and as a lion strong.

She would not have been a daughter of her race had she not identified this fairy prince with one of her own great ancestors; he was Pilgrim van Rexelaer, the "Knight Pilgrim," whose marble effigy sleeps in the Chapel (its visor closed in its saintly humility), the Crusader to whom the modern version of the family legend ascribes the deliverance of the maiden Wendela. Not for one moment did the girl's strong brain confuse the actual and the unreal. All things existent, as she had said to her mother, were ugly and evil; she deliberately turned her back upon them and roved away into the mystic forest, where a Saracen Chieftain pounced forth from behind the pine-trees and Knight-Pilgrim came riding up on a milk-white steed.

"For shame, Wanda!" said her mother, entering. "The supper-bell has rung!"

Wendela tumbled off the bed. "Oh, mamma," she said, "I wish you need never have disturbed me. I was so happy, over yonder, in the wood. In the dear wood."

The Baroness knew nothing of her daughter's dreamings, except that she was too often dreamy; but it did not require any such knowledge to understand the allusion to Deynum. "God sends us the present to live in, not the past," she said. "Get ready, child, and come down."

They went into the supper-room together, and there they found the meal and its appendages awaiting them: tea made from hay, fat liver-sausage, and frizzling potato-pancake; and, furthermore, half a dozen superfluous-looking personages who talked, dismally, at intervals, about the weather and about themselves. "Superfluous-looking," because there really seemed no reason why any of these creatures should exist, excepting the fact that each of them probably possessed a pittance to spend upon herself and thus to keep herself carefully, grumblingly, and uselessly alive. Before the repast was concluded, Mynheer van Rexelaer joined the party, and was greeted with a little rattle of interest. Most of the ladies felt a certain tenderness for the good "Herr Baron;" true, he was married.—My dear, if you will shut the door, we will have a talk about that wife of his—he was married, undeniably, but he was the only gentleman in the house. As a rule, he gave them very little satisfaction. To-day, again, after lengthening periods of silence, they picked themselves up one by one, and carried themselves away—for thus only can the manner be described in which they departed from the table with their various shawls, work-bags, and other weaknesses.

Even when left alone with his wife and child, the Baron did not break through his reserve. He confined his brief

utterances to the incidents of the journey, and answered all questions with reluctance. "But I want to know everything about everything," said Wendela. He told her that her pets at the Castle had been disposed of: "Then I want to hear nothing about nothing any more," said the girl. A year ago she would have burst into a passion of crying; now she sat gazing silently, until, with an especially affectionate farewell to the Baroness, she wished her parents good-night.

The Baron took up the little German "Tageblatt." Presently he said, without lifting his eyes from it: "I hope you have been comfortable during my absence?"

"Oh yes, we are comfortable. How can you ruin your eyes, mon ami?"—the Baroness did not read German—"by this wretched light? The lamp smells again; the woman refuses to clean it."

The Baron laid down the newspaper. He sat shading his face with his hand, and presently he said, as one who thinks aloud: "The old home."

Madame van Rexelaer dropped her cards. "Tell me," she said; "I am longing to know. It is that still?"

He drew back his hand quickly and looked full at her. "Is it?" he said, eagerly. "To you?"

"I envy you, dearest, for having seen it again."

He started to his feet. "Would you," he said, in a trembling voice. "Could you—" he remained looking dumbly at his wife, unable to proceed.

She stretched out both her arms to him. "Come here to me," she said. "It is the one thing I have been longing for, but not daring to ask."

And thus it was that the old Rexelaers came back to live at Deynum.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE BORCKS

The village meanwhile had got accustomed to the new ones.

As, day after day, the green shutters were flung open, to the slow rising of the winter sun, all round the weather-beaten sides of the Castle, those villagers whose errands brought them up to the offices gazed in pleasant approval of the fact that these numerous eyes still smiled down upon them and their merchandise. The saying had been that the family was only coming for Christmas. They were still here, and Joost Hakkert's monthly bill alone exceeded a hundred and fifty florins. Joost Hakkert was delighted. The Baron had left no debts, it is true, but he had always paid slowly, while buying little; Count Rexelaer's ready money came pouring into the village, and the village, as it felt, smelt, jingled, and crackled it, hurrah'd for Count Rexelaer. One morning the tailor met Hakkert's youngest son in the Castle courtyard bending beneath his basket-load of meat. "And does your father still insult the strangers?" he asked in passing. The foolish, beefsteak-faced lad stopped and stared.

One class there was which had full cause to regret the White Baroness. It is a large one, and at Deynum that lady had perhaps unnecessarily enlarged it. Margherita, on her part, had no wish not to be charitable, but that very common attitude is of little practical avail. The Count intrusted his systematized charities to Dievert, and every gentleman who has found out his steward (some, alas! have not yet done so) will understand what that meant. Dievert now often deplored that he had not had the management of the old Baron's largesse.

Meanwhile the whole regiment of workmen were busy all over the Castle, and herein he could find sufficient cause for rejoicing. Margherita, who possessed genuine taste and considerable knowledge of the lower forms of art, had thrown herself, with fitful energy, into the work of renovation and redecoration, and her husband did not check her capricious expenditure, although, unfortunately for Dievert, he checked the resultant bills. He was glad to afford some relief to the melancholy which would settle on the Creole's face as she stood looking forth on the ice-bound moat, and the snow, and the scraggy trees. Much as she had complained at the Hague, she had never yet understood how wintry winter is. Would she go back? Ah,

no; she had a nervous dread, at this moment, of the city's tittle-tattle about the "Scene at the Railway Station," which was being diligently worked by the "Rads." Margherita had plenty of passion at her command for a fine burst of emotion, but she could not stand the wear of a lagging, nagging annoyance.

After a few weeks Mevrouw Elizabeth van Rexelaer returned to her relations at the Castle. She brought Jane with her, and also Cécile Borck, her dead brother's child, a shy, simple-hearted girl. Grandmamma Borck had her dear friend, the Countess de Bercy, staying with her, and Cécile's presence hampered their talk. In spite of her orphanhood and modesty, Cécile was not a nobody in the Borck family; her father had misallied himself to one of the Koopstad Lossells and had left her fifty thousand pounds in the funds. Grandmamma looked after her and them.

She came, therefore, to see, and be seen of, her cousins, the Borcks of Rollingen, and Mevrouw Elizabeth, her aunt (who had missed the dear people at Christmas), ostensibly did the same. The new owners of Deynum were glad of this bridge of communication with their powerful neighbor, but they would hardly have tolerated Mevrouw Elizabeth's early reappearance, had not other considerations come to the fore. Young Simmans, the functionary charged with the Countess's "procès-verbal," was very intimate at the house of Judge Rexelaer; he was even credited with aspiring to the hand of the Freule Jane. Had Jane been less plain, this presumption would have been resented, for Simmans was nobody's son but his father's.

"When you are down there," said the Dowager to her daughter, "you can write to Henry Simmans to come and see you and find out the facts from Margherita. She is a fool. I barely know her, but you can tell her so from me. In my youth the populace took pleasure in the noble arrogance of their superiors; the times have changed, and the best thing for us to do is to keep as quiet as we can. Like the rich Jews of the Middle Ages that used to wear the filthier rags. From the height of my eighty years' experience I say: Society scandals to-day are society suicides, and should be punished by society as such." She struck her cane on the floor, and sat angrily twitching her poor old mouth, which was fallen in over her peaked chin. She was seventy-three, but her daughter knew better than to contradict her. She had been thirty till she was fifty, and had then leaped into precipitate old age.

"Live as badly or as madly as you will," she added, after a moment, "but build your park walls high."

"Quite so," said Mevrouw Elizabeth, who was nothing if not practical. "And I shall take down Jane, mamma, and I might also take Antoinette. Dear René is so attached to Antoinette."

"They are children," replied the Dowager. "I have never paid much attention to the attachments of children. But, by all means, take Jane. It will be dull enough for Simmans."

"We shall have him proposing from ennui," laughed Mevrouw Elizabeth, with an attempt at playfulness which did not at all "suit her style."

"As most men do," retorted the Dowager.

So Mevrouw van Rexelaer departed for Deynum with Jane and Cécile, the Countess having declined the pleasure of Topsy's company, "because Reinout was once more occupied with his lessons." "As if I could not have brought Miss Wilson," said Reinout's disappointed aunt. Jane had pulled a face at the prospect of more Deynum in winter. "You can draw, you know," suggested her plump sister Rolline. "Yes; that's what I'm taken for," said plain-spoken Jane.

The Borcks of Rollingen called the day after their cousin's arrival, most unfortunately missing the Count, who had left for a period of "duty" at the palace. They were almost cordial to Mevrouw Elizabeth, and gracious to Margherita. "And was that dark, olive-complexioned boy the Countess's son?"—the lady from Rollingen put up her eye-glass. "He is very handsome; do you not think so, John? He understands French? Oh, never mind; plenty of people will tell him that." "I am glad

we are co-religionists," she said to Margherita in parting, not knowing, or forgetting, the Countess's change of creed. She promised to call again.

Margherita "did not care," as long as she knew people to bow to. Just now she was entirely engrossed by the construction of a glass excrescence to her sitting-room, which would hang like a huge balcony over the moat. She took her visitors to see this. "It does not match a bit with the rest of the fortress-like building," said Elizabeth. "It does not," admitted the lady of Rollingen, frankly. Margherita knew that better than her visitors, but she must have a corner for her plants and her pets. "Did Mevrouw Borck like pets?" Mevrouw Borck detested them, and had fortunately not observed the recumbent Florizel, who had soiled the train of her dress during the visit. It was Cécile who timidly hinted, in her desire to say something kind, that houses built out of the water were known to be less damp than houses beside it. The Baroness Borck, tactless as she herself was, lifted her perpetual eye-glass and looked kindly at this young bearer of her name. "You must come and stay with us some day, my dear," she said. "We ought to know you better." Cécile blushed crimson: "I should be delighted, Mevrouw, but I am always with grandmamma Borck." The Baron of Rollingen said little about the visit on the way home. Once only he opened his eyes, in the midst of his wife's chatter. "A tragedy in six words," he said. "'I am always with grandmamma Borck.'"

And Harry Simmans came down to the Castle, to visit Mevrouw Elizabeth, and the Count asked him, after dinner, to stay for a day or two. Margherita took no notice. The weather being milder, the transfer of the tropical birds had been sanctioned by their medical attendant. They traveled down in glass cases, heated by spirits of wine.

"They are all that is left me of home," said the Countess. She cried as she let them loose in the "excrescence."

The Countess's only son, meanwhile, released from his early solitude, made friends with all the animate and inanimate world around him. As long as his tutor remained away, he multiplied unpleasant pets and fraternized with village urchins; Monsieur de Souza, on his return, represented this terrible state of affairs in no measured terms to the Count. "René s'encanaille." The words fell like a thunderbolt. It was the one thing which his whole education had been destined to avoid. The poor boy, who had been debarred from the friendship of his equals, found pleasure in the society of such children as could not distinguish his peculiarities. The Count listened horror-struck. "René s'encanaille."

"He never reads," said the Countess. "Intercourse with great minds is the sole education. I have always said so. Go into the library, René." And Reinout, who felt bored, wandered away, with his hands in his pockets, along the endless lines of books.

"Ma chère, I regretfully disagree with you," said the Count, following his wife into her boudoir. "The boy will get no good from all the rubbish in there. I never read through half a dozen books in my life, except when I was working for my degree. Reinout is to enter the diplomatic service. And for that he is being fitted as few men have been. He is learning by De Souza's experience what others have to learn by their own."

"Of course he will become a diplomatist," replied Margherita, languidly arranging some striped camellias. "But that is only the background. My son is to be more than that—a prophet, a teacher, an immortal!"

"Eh?" said the Count. "Oh, you mean: verses. Don't put foolish ideas into his head, Margot. Literature wouldn't keep you in bonbons; and, besides, it isn't work for a gentleman."

"And Hugo, then, who is a Count? And Musset? and Châteaubriand? And Lamartine?"

"Châteaubriand?" repeated the Count. "He is a beef-steak—or he invented one, or something. What has he to do with René?"

"Go back to your—diplomatic avocations," replied the

Countess, quietly. "And leave me to build up the future glory of my child."

"But why not?" said Van Rexelaer, carelessly, looking at his watch. "As long as you make a gentleman of him first."

The Countess Margherita dashed her flowers violently to the ground. "Gentleman! Gentleman!" she repeated, "I am sick of the refrain; and you, Monsieur le Comte, I suppose *you* are a type of a gentleman?"

"But—Margherita—"

She came close to him. Involuntarily he shrank back. "A gentleman," she said, "is a man who breaks all the commandments—genteelly, and who keeps his—linen scrupulously clean." And she quitted the room.

Hilarius was left standing opposite his own rather stupid face in the glass. "Follies!" he said, and went to keep his appointment with—never mind.

Surely no woman was ever wholly bad. Surely not even the best of men was ever entirely worthy of a good woman.

[To be continued]



The Spectator

Autumn had come, and the summer people, who each year swarm like so many drones in the more pretty New England villages, had gone. Accordingly, the church which had been built by the city people, and depended on them for both congregation and minister, was closed; and so it came about that one Sunday morning the Spectator, on his way to church, had to pass by this little house of worship, quite desolate now, though only a week before its approaches had been filled with a gay stream of white and pink and lilac gowns, crisp and cool with Sunday freshness. Moving on along the village street, the Spectator found himself one of a long but very different line of church-goers. The farmers who lived near enough the church to walk, trudged along in their Sunday boots, with jerky movements, as if expecting with every step to sink into a plow-furrow; the seafaring men had little of the sailor roll—these were men more used to fishing craft, small sailboats and yawls, and the roll of the deck had been stiffened out of their joints by cramped quarters and searching fogs. The thin, overworked women walked nervously and ungracefully; nor were the round-faced boys and girls much less awkward.

A half-mile beyond the village, between it and another one, stood the church. It was painted white, and glistened in the clear autumn air as if newly scrubbed. Built in the Colonial style, it had Grecian columns at the corners and a graceful cornice in front. Over the cornice were two dates—one telling of the founding of the church, centuries ago, the other of its rebuilding. It had not been without famous, or at least original, pastors; here preached the man who, for many years before his death, hid his face with a veil of black crape—the penance for some youthful offense. But now the Spectator found that the preacher was a young man, smooth-faced and curly-haired. He glanced about the church, smiling and nodding in an informal, boyish way at his parishioners; these returned his greeting in a manner that told of liking for their young pastor. A large bunch of stiff, bright-colored yard-flowers stood in a bowl on his desk; he bent over them, and for a moment buried his face among the gorgeous petals. A fresh-cheeked girl, who was one of the choir and sat behind the little parlor organ, blushed at this sign of the young minister's appreciation, looking so conscious and delighted that every one, who had not known it before, now knew the donor of the flowers.

After the usual prayers and singing, a short sermon was preached to the children—a kind of "children's page" prefacing the morning's discourse. Before beginning it, the preacher asked the children to stand up, so that he could see them; and when they had been duly urged and prodded by their parents, a goodly number got awkwardly to their feet. Perhaps in this little sermon the preacher went somewhat far in straining after absolute simplicity and childish simile. Yet, on the whole, it was a success; the children, feeling that this sermon was for them alone, listened with a kind of proprietorship interest. After this came the main sermon—a rather long discourse on the questions

involved in the Briggs controversy. The progressive spirit which pervaded it was tempered with a prudent conservatism; but, notwithstanding this, some of the congregation shook their heads and looked at each other gravely; others smiled in triumphant approval. Evidently they were divided as to doctrines; but there was something in their patient faces which indicated that nearly all the congregation (and this was especially true of the women) made common cause in striving after the Christian virtues.

In the pew in front of the Spectator were an old couple and their grown daughter. The man was still sturdy, though gaunt and bent, his rounded back telling of constant wrestling with a rock-ribbed New England farm. When the sermon was begun, he took off his spectacles, putting them into a shiny pewter case (at one time pewter spectacle-cases must have been fashionable in the community, for several of the older men had them), and leaned back comfortably in the corner of the pew. In a few minutes his eyes closed. The daughter, from beyond her mother, eyed him uneasily and at last whispered: "Wake him, ma; see how them Pardy girls are lookin' at him an' gigglin'. He does look foolish." The older woman looked at him placidly and benevolently. "I won't do no such thing, Abbie. I guess he worked hard enough yesterd'y gettin' in them oats to earn rest. An' it don't matter if he don't listen: he's made up his mind 'bout all this fuss 'bout Dr. Briggs long ago; an' as fur righteous livin', I guess father knows as much 'bout thet as this young man—likely as he is!"

In the first leaf of the hymn-book in the Spectator's pew there was written with painful care: "John, on his eighteenth birthday, from his loving mother, Sally Henderson." A few days before, while driving along a seldom-used road that led back from the highway, the Spectator had come upon one of those piteous little burial-plots with which most of the farms in that region are provided (as if New England farmers, like the world-loving Cæsars, had need to be reminded of death). One stone was quite new, but the grave it marked was already overrun with bushes. The superscription was visible: "Sally, wife of Jacob Henderson, aged 65 years." A sad picture had been suggested of the overworked wife of the tiller of this stony farm, her devotion probably unappreciated, her toil taken for granted. Here, in this hymnal, was perhaps another bit of news of that same Sally Henderson. There had been a little love-color in her later years, after all. Let us hope that only John's absence permitted the grave to look neglected.

Now the sermon was almost done, and the scrubbed, be-ribboned little girls who had sat bolt upright, stolid and fat, each holding a bunch of flowers in her chubby hand—such contrasts in every way to their thin, plainly dressed mothers—became expectant, as if relief ought to be near at hand. No sooner was the sermon ended and the benediction pronounced than the preacher hurried from the pulpit and down the aisle. At the door he turned and talked with the people as they slowly passed out. It was not merely formal. Inquiries for sick members of the family, news of absent ones—a hundred different matters had to be remembered and asked about; many of the church members lived on distant farms and could not often be visited. At last the Spectator's turn came, and, as the other people had gone, he and the minister talked for some time. "Though they live in an out-of-the-way corner, they're not far behindhand," said the young minister, summing up in the matter of his parishioners. "And when it comes to religion they're a match for any one. That little old man who was just talking to me takes three religious weeklies, and reads them—and don't get muddled by all he finds in them, either." As the Spectator came out of the door, he was joined by a man who had lingered a moment on the sunny church steps. They walked on together, the talk turning on the deserted look of the village, now empty of summer visitors. "To tell the truth," said the man, "we're glad to hev 'em go; they make lots of trouble, an' it's all work fur us when they're here. But we hev good times ourselves, I tell ye, after all these hoighty-toighty misses an' boys in their gay dresses and flannels. is gone. Yes, sir, there's not a better sociable in New England than we can get up right here!"