THIRD PART.

THE PITTSBURG DISPATCH.

PAGES 17 TO 24.

PITTSBURG, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1890.

AT THE BRAKE WHEEL

Heroes of the Rail Who Handle Freight Trains in Biting Winter Blasts.

NO JOB FOR TENDERFEET.

Frost-Bitten Feet, Hands and Ears the Public Never Hears About.

VALLEYS WORSE THAN MOUNTAINS

Clothing the Average Brakeman Wears to Defy the Cold Weather.

A WILD CHASE DOWN A STEEP GRADE

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

WINTER is a hard season on freight brakemen. In the performance of their duties they are subjected to the most pitiful exposure, and very frequently without any opportunity whatever to secure shelter or warmth. All railroads have in their employ a class of brakemen known as "summer men." These are brakemen, or "tenderfeet," as the older men dub them, who desert the business with the first approach of cold weather. They are afraid of winter on top of a box car.

The record of frost-bitten ears, frozen fingers and ice-benumbed feet has never been kept along the various railroads. The cases are too numerous. It is only when some poor fellow's frame becomes so thoroughly deadened with the cold that he stumbles beneath the wheels, that the perils of winter for railroaders are publicly noticed. It is hard even then to appreciate them, for the interior of a passenger car or the parlor

The Act of Coupling.

coach is so warm and cozy that the traveler is apt to regard the passenger brakeman as a fair specimen of the comfort of winter railroading. But that is not fair.

NOTHING CERTAIN ABOUT TIME.

Freight brakemen are either paid by the day or by the trip. In either case the length of time to be occupied in a trip is not known beforehand. His train is running "on orders" and may be side-tracked 20 times before it reaches the station where crews change. There may be wrecks ahead or delays from other causes. These delays are most common in winter, and therefore the labor of running a freight train is greater in cold weather than in the midst of summer. To every regular through freight train there is attached a caboose, in which there is a good stove and bunks furnished with sufficient bed clothing. But the caboose is nearly useless sometimes. There are frequently freight trains between Pittsburg and Derry, and between Derry and Altoona, on which the brakemen never see the inside of the caboose. The tracks have been unusually crowded, or from various causes there have been a larger number of stops than usual, and the crew has been kept on top of the cars the whole time.

If this happens to be in the midst of cold weather the stove in the caboose is of little value. After an hour's steady service at the brake, side-tracking or shifting, the brakeman has gone back to the rear car with his hands numb, ears frozen and feet about lifeless.

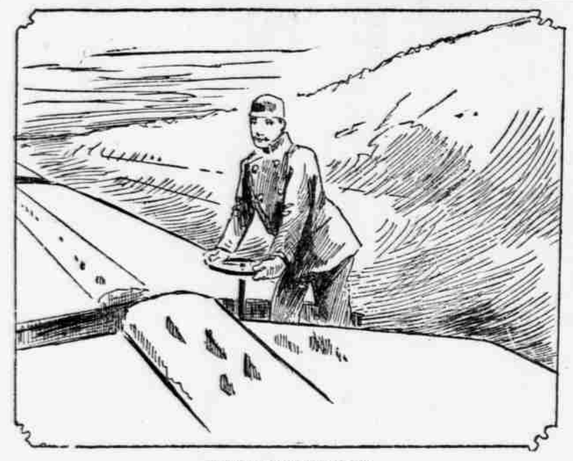
CLEARING THE TRACK OF FREIGHT.

At some time or another the train to which your warm and luxuriant car is attached has been delayed along the route. As the minutes have sped by in fives and tens, and still your train was held there, you have grown impatient, and commenced complaining about the loss of time. The winds are whistling a perfect hurricane around the train, and the cars almost rock with their violence, but there is a comfortable rattle down the chimney of the big stove in the corner of the car, and you feel none the colder for the storm which is raging without. Perhaps the snow is scurrying past the windows in such fine, blinding sheets that the landscape is hidden from view, but you are just as cozy for all that. The passenger train may lay there for two hours, and you would be in no danger of suffering from the cold.

But at last the four short toots of the whistle on your locomotive call in the flagman from the rear, and then you start on the journey again. The interruption is over, and you breath a sigh of relief. Slowly your train pulls past a labyrinth of switches and side-tracks on either side, and even yet you have faint recollection of the long lines of freight trains lying there, with their ponderous black locomotives panting as though impatiently awaiting your passage. Yes, it was those freight trains which had blocked your pathway for so long, but you have no conception of the tremendous amount of labor expended on top of their cars to get them quickly out of your way. You just caught a glimpse of the red-faced brakeman through the snow, all muffled up in greasy clothes, but you did not think that for well on to an hour he had been out there, running along the roofs of those cars, working to get the main track clear.

SOME ONE MUST SUFFER.

Perhaps if you had calculated the number of times he had to climb down to the snow drifts and crawl between the cars to uncouple and then couple up again, in order to split trains where they were too long for a single switch; or if you had seen the way he winced every time he grasped a cold iron brake wheel, and held on to it until the locomotive whistle gave him privilege to let go; and then if it had been possible for all the passengers to see the risky way he recovered a slip on the icy car roofs as he ran swiftly from brake to brake along the train—had all these little facts been known inside your well-heated parlor coach there might have been less complaint about the delay. For of all hard jobs in winter for the brakeman there is none that he dreads so much as



ALONG THE CAR ROOFS.

The first freight division of the Pittsburg, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad is nearly 70 miles long, from Allegheny City to Alliance. The other day in the yards of this railroad in Allegheny I talked with a brakeman who has been in the employ of the company 16 years. That length of time has given him some valuable experience with winters behind the locomotive.

HOW A BRAKEMAN DRESSES.

He showed me minutely how he was at that moment dressed. He was well fixed up for the cold weather, and indeed on this particular day it was very chilly. Here is the amount of clothing he wore:

1. Chamois skin chest protector.
2. Heaviest red flannel undershirt.
3. Barred flannel overshirt.
4. Pair of pulse heaters.
5. Woolen vest.
6. Double-breasted coat.
7. Hand-knit woolen wamus blouse.
8. Dark blue overcoat, extra heavy, buttshort.
9. Socks, in cold weather, two pairs.
10. Heavy sheep skin gauntlet gloves.
11. Ear tops, but only occasionally.

"Yes, I have had my ears frost-bitten several times," said this man, "but do you know I would rather brake in winter than in summer. Oh, no, I don't mean to say that all brakemen would. They all have not had the long experience that I have had. Tenderfeet dread the winter. Very often we brakemen are called upon to do extra duty. Our day consists of 12 hours, and for every hour after that time we are paid overtime. I have frequently worked 36 hours at a stretch. To do the work that long right, you must keep awake. It's too dangerous to get sleepy over. Yet, in summer it is hard to keep awake. The hot weather makes us sleepy in spite of ourselves. We are easily worn out in the midst of summer, and drowsiness quickly follows exhaustion. But in winter all is different. No danger of going to sleep, even if you do work 35 hours in the open air. I can stand the work better. But I have to beware of a fire. Coming in suddenly out of the cold, and approaching a stove, will make anyone sleepy, and it is doubly hard to keep awake if you have been up all day and and nearly all the night besides."

THE COMPANY IS LENIENT.

"The company never compels a man to work over-time if he says he is played out. That happens every now and then. It is not so frequent in winter, however, as in summer, for the reason that I have explained."

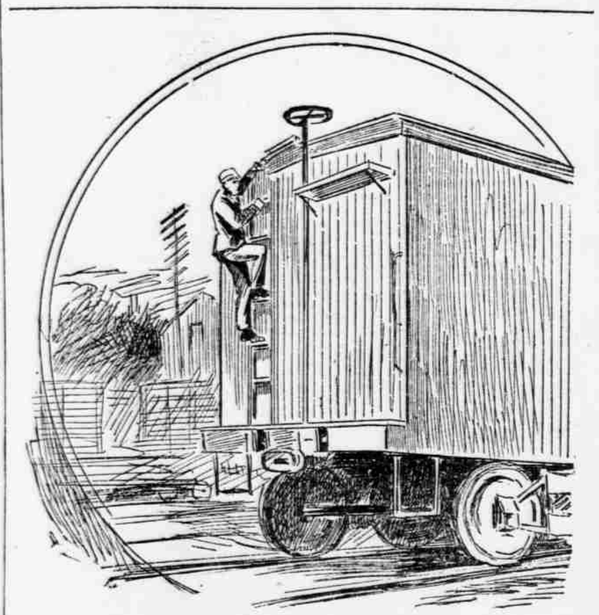
Some time ago a brakeman conductor on one of the most important through freight trains of a great railroad entering Pittsburg told me how he got his promotion from brakeman. "We were going down the other side of the mountain," he said; "it was the middle of the night, and as usual on mountain slopes, we were all at our posts beside the brake wheels. I was managing the brakes of about half of the train. To do this of course I had to run from car to car, but as the cars were all for cattle that was easy. The roofs were level.

"Suddenly I observed a strange bumping and that told me that the train had parted. It was so dark and such a blinding snow storm was raging that I could not see just how the train was separated. I was nearly frozen as it was and I feared I would be unable to control my section of the train if it was necessary. Running forward I investigated and found the engineer must be unaware of the split. The safest way, and, in fact, the only way was to bring the rear end of the train to a full stop. We would not be down to the bottom of the mountain for 15 minutes yet, so I ran from brake to brake, tightening up. It seemed as though I could not budge the wheels much tighter than they were. It seemed to get colder and colder every minute.

HIS HANDS WOULDN'T WORK.

"I could not have known how cold I really had been before that, for presently both hands and feet commenced to get numb. I did not feel the bumping any more, so I knew that I had slackened the speed of the rear end of the train enough to fall back of the engine, but still my severed train was going down at a speed that I knew would cause a wreck if we ran into the other half of the train at the foot. I pulled and pulled at the brakes, but my fingers were now nearly powerless. The locomotive ahead let go a lot of shrieks that told me the engineer had discovered the accident, and he kept on whistling to let me know he was not stopping. That was encouragement. But at last one hand fell away from the brake wheel utterly paralyzed. I only had the right hand left.

"Well, I can scarcely tell how I did it, sir, but with one hand I finally got the train stopped. Yes, it did avert a big accident. I had supposed the cars were all loaded with live stock. But in two of them was an assignment of dynamite large enough to blow every car up had we collided with



UP TO THE BRAKE.

Oiling the Wheels.

WITH THE AUTHORS.

A Column of Christmas Sentiments From Noted Men and Women.

GEMS IN POETRY AND IN PROSE.

Verse From Mrs. Stowe, Edna Proctor, Margaret Deland and Others.

RESPONSES FROM FAMED NOVELISTS

Acting for THE DISPATCH a little lady who loves literature recently wrote to a number of the most highly honored of American authors asking for a Christmas sentiment. She has received the following symposium from her favorite authors—large-hearted men and women, representing all that is brightest and best in our native American literature. They are precious gems fit to sparkle from the Christmas trees of THE DISPATCH'S friends:

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

No book or play written in our century has ever been read or acted so many times as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and no one has ever occupied a more honored place in American literature than its authoress, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who contributes the following Christmas verse:

Hail, blessed Christmas morn
When Christ a child was born
Of Mary, holy maid
In heavenly grace arrayed,
Amen, Hallelujah!

Louise Chandler Moulton.

Probably few signatures are better known to readers of newspapers and magazines as well as books than the simple initials, "L. C. M.," which stand for Louise Chandler Moulton. She writes as follows:

I would gladly tell which was the merriest Christmas of my life if I, myself, knew—but oh, there have been so many Christmasses; and long ago it seems to me they all were merry, and I cannot tell which was merriest. I think that no one who has reached middle life can be really merry—things have grown, by that time, too solemn and too earnest for mirth. Youth is the time for gayety, so let all young folks be happy now. And the deepest, dearest happiness of all—at Christmastide and at all other times—is to feel one's self loyal to one's very highest ideal. I will wish all my readers that best happiness and a very merry Christmas besides.

Edna Dean Proctor.

This sweetest and purest of native singers contributes this exquisite poem:

The maiden months are a stately train—
Veiled in the spotless snow,
Or decked with blooms of paradise
What time the roses blow,
Or wreathed with the vine and the yellow wheat
When the noons of harvest glow.
But O the joy of the rolling year,
The queen with peerless charms,
Is she who comes through the waning light
To keep the world from harms—
December, fair and holly crowned,
With the Christ-child in her arms.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Admirers of the authoress of "Poems of Passion" and Poems of Pleasure" will be glad to learn from the appended letter that she is happy.

My merriest Christmas? Well, I think each Christmas of my life is better than the last. Memories of all bygone days in which we have been happy are very pleasant, but those of Christmas are especially sweet. I have now got such an ideally happy home, and my private life is such a blessed one, that I feel each of my coming Christmases will be still brighter and better than any of its predecessors.

Margaret Deland.

Few writers have ever been brought into such marked prominence or have won such great and widespread reputation by a single book as has that now well-known writer of prose and verse, Mrs. Margaret Deland, of Boston, by her novel, "John Ward, Preacher." Her contribution to this Christmas symposium is as follows:

Against the hollow sky, the earth,
Folded in starry darkness clear,
Chimes like a bell Emmanuel's birth,
And heaven's great angels stoop to hear.

The frosty air is strangely still;
The world is waiting for the light
That long ago, on Eastern hill,
Broke on the shepherds' dazzled sight.

Marion Harland.

This favorite writer, whose first novel, "Alone," appeared when she was only 18 years of age, and who has followed up that first success with a host of other equally charming stories of American life which, according to the testimony of the booksellers, seem to steadily increase in popular favor as the years roll by, sends the following beautifully expressed Christmas thoughts:

Of our queen mother, Nature, it may be truly said that as custom cannot stale her infinite variety, neither can ingratitude chill her infinite kindness. Each springtime is a resurrection; each fruit season brings the thrill of a pleasant surprise; each Christmas-tide stirs our souls as if the birthday of birthdays—the red heart all a-throb with living fire, set in the mid-breast of white winter—were now celebrated for the first time.

Still, as when the morning stars chanted the completion of the young earth, all things leave the Father's hand fair and new.

W. D. Howells.

Of all living American novelists W. D. Howells, who prides himself on writing plotless stories, which are intended to be simple chronicles of experiences and events as they occur in life, is probably one of the best known and best liked among the more cultivated class of American readers of fiction. His contribution to this Christmas symposium—brief as woman's love—is appended:

The merriest Christmas I ever had is the first one I can ever remember. The question of who experiences the greater happiness and sense of triumph, the child who has received a much-coveted toy on Christmas morning or the military hero who has captured a great city, has been often discussed, but never satisfactorily decided.

Lucy Larcom.

This sweet singer of New England, who has written so much that is both healthful and helpful, sends Christmas greetings in both prose and verse:

As Christmas draws near I long more than ever to be doing something for all girls, for I regard myself as being still included among their number, though I have seen more than three-score Christmas days. But I do not feel a bit old and I do not believe I am, for we are always young while we see a great deal before us yet to live for, and that I surely do. Some one has said—and I think with a very great deal of truth—that we are old only according to our feelings, not our years. I will write you a verse embodying a cheering thought, which I think it is well for us to bear in mind, not only upon Christmas, but upon all the other 364 days that go to make up the rolling year:

The soul to God's heart moving on
Owns but the infinite for home;
Whatever with the past has gone,
The best is always yet to come.

Donald G. Mitchell.

It is many years since "Reveries of a Bachelor" created a furore in literary circles. Its author, Donald G. Mitchell, writes for the Christmas symposium, as follows:

Thanks for your kind note which came to me duly. It is worthy of a longer reply than a crippled arm will permit me to make. I can only wish you ever so many pleasant Christmases and thank you again for your pleasant greeting.

An Autumn Poem.

Washington Star.]

Little drops of water,
Little pools of slosh,
Little slip and tumble—
By goshi

thsu

JOAQUIN MILLER'S WRITING.

Story About the Author Whose New Story Will Soon Appear in The Dispatch.

Joaquin Miller's handwriting is said to be most bewildering. A stereotyper who has made the plates for several of Mr. Miller's books told me the other day that, well-schooled as he was in the enormities of caligraphy, Mr. Miller's was beyond his powers.

On one occasion he went to interview Mr. Miller about a certain word which he was unable to decipher. The author looked at it very attentively, first in one way, then in another. Finally he remarked, "Well, my dear sir, I'll be hanged if I know myself what I meant. If you will take a seat for a few minutes, I'll substitute something more intelligible." And he did.

Joaquin Miller's new story, to be published exclusively in THE DISPATCH next month, has been read in the cold type by the author and approved by him.

Among His Grandchildren.

J. R. Dodds, editor of the daily and weekly Arbor State, of Wymore, Neb., says: "I have seen the magic effect of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy in cases of croup and colds among my grandchildren. We would not think of going to bed at night without a bottle of this remedy in the house. Chamberlain's medicines are growing more popular here every day."

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED

A NOVEL DEALING WITH LIFE IN LONDON AND EGYPT,

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH]

BY RUDYARD KIPLING,

Being the First Serial Story From the Pen of the Gifted Young Author of "Soldiers Three," and Many Other Popular Sketches of Army Experiences in India.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER XI.

But I shall not understand,—
Shall not see the face of my love,—
Shall not know her for whom I strove,—
Till she reach me forth her hand,
Saying, "Who but I have the right?"
And out of a troubled night
Shall draw me safe to the land.
—*The Widower.*

Dick felt his way back to the big chair, and wondered what these things might mean. He did not wish to be tended by the housekeeper, and yet Torpenhow's constant tendernesses jarred on him. He did not exactly know what he wanted. The darkness would not lift, and Maisie's unopened letters felt worn and old from much handling. He could never read them for himself as long as life endured; but Maisie might have sent him some fresh ones to play with. The Nilghai entered with a gift—a piece of red modeling-wax. He fancied that Dick might find interest in using his hands. Dick poked and patted the stuff for a few minutes, and, "Is it like anything in the world?" he said, drearily. "Take it away. I may get the touch of the blind in fifty years. Do you know where Torpenhow has gone?"

The Nilghai knew nothing. "We're staying in his rooms till he comes back. Can we do anything for you?"

"I'd like to be left alone, please. Don't think I'm ungrateful; but I'm best alone."

The Nilghai chuckled, and Dick resumed his drowsy brooding and sullen rebellion against fate. He had long since ceased to think about the work he had done in the old days, and the desire to do more work had departed from him. He was exceedingly sorry for himself, and the completeness of his tender grief soothed him. But his soul and his body cried for Maisie—Maisie who would understand. His mind pointed out that Maisie, having her own work to do, would not care. His experience had taught him that when money was exhausted women went away, and that when a man was knocked out of the race the others trampled on him.

"Then at the least," said Dick, in reply, "she could use me as I used Binat—for some sort of a study. I wouldn't ask more than to be near her again, even though I knew another man was making love to her. Ugh! what a dog I am!"

A voice on the staircase began to sing joyfully:

When we go—go—go away from here,
Our creditors will weep and they will wail,
Our absence much regretting when they find
that we've been getting
Out of England by next Tuesday's Indian mail.

[Following the trampling of feet, slamming of Torpenhow's door, and the sound of voices in strenuous debate, someone squeaked, "And see, you good fellows, I have found a new water bottle—firs'-class patent—eh, how you say? Open himself inside out."

Dick sprang to his feet. He knew the voice well. "That's Cassavetti come back from the Continent. Now I know why Torp went away. There's a row somewhere, and—I'm out of it!"

The Nilghai commanded silence in vain. "That's for my sake," Dick said, bitterly. "The birds are getting ready to fly, and they wouldn't tell me. I can hear Morten-Sutherland and Mackaye. Half the war correspondents in London are there—and I'm out of it."

He stumbled across the landing and plunged into Torpenhow's room. He could feel that it was full of men. "Where's the trouble?" said he. "In the Balkans at last? Why didn't someone tell me?"

"We thought you wouldn't be interested," said the Nilghai, shamefacedly. "It's in the Soudan, as usual."

"You lucky dogs! Let me sit here while you talk. I shan't be a skeleton at the feast. Cassavetti, where are you? Your English is as bad as ever."

Dick was led into a chair. He heard the rustle of the maps, and the talk swept forward, carrying him with it. Everybody spoke at once, discussing press censorships, railway routes, transport, water supply, the capacities of Generals,—these in language that would have horrified a trusting public—ranting, asserting, denouncing and laughing at the top of their voices. There was the glorious certainty of war in the Soudan at any moment. The Nilghai said so, and it was well to be in readiness. The Keneu had telegraphed to Cairo for horses; Cassavetti had stolen a perfectly inaccurate list of troops that would be ordered forward, and was reading it out amid profane interruptions, and the Keneu introduced to Dick some man unknown who would be employed as war artist by the Central Southern Syndicate. It's his first outing," said the Keneu. "Give him some tips—about riding camels."

"Oh, those camels!" groaned Cassavetti. "I shall learn to ride him again, and now I am so much all soft! Listen, you good fellows. I know your military arrangement very well. There will go the Royal Argalshire Sutherlanders. So it was read to me upon best authority."

A roar of laughter interrupted him.

"Sit down," said the Nilghai. "The lists aren't even made out in the War Office."

"Will there be any force at Suakin?" said a voice.

Then the outcries redoubled, and grew mixed, thus: "How many Egyptian troops will they use? God help the Fellaheen! There's a railway in Plumstead marshes doing duty as a fives-court. We shall have the Suakin-Berber line built at last. Canadian voyagers are too careful; give me a half-drunk Krooman in a whaleboat. Who commands the Desert column? No, they never blew up the big rock in the Ghizeh bend. We shall have to be hauled up, as usual. Somebody tell me if there's an Indian contingent, or I'll break everybody's head. Don't tear the map in two. It's a war of occupation, I tell you, to connect the African companies in the South. There's Guinea-worm in most of the wells on that route."

Then the Nilghai, despairing of peace, bellowed like a fog-horn and beat upon the table with both hands.

"But what becomes of Torpenhow?" said Dick, in the silence that followed.

"Torp's in abeyance just now. He's off love-making somewhere, I suppose," said the Nilghai.

"He said he was going to stay at home," said the Keneu.

"Is he?" said Dick, with an oath. "He won't. I'm not much good now, but if you and the Nilghai hold him down I'll engage to trample on him till he sees reason. He stay behind, indeed! He's the best of you all. There'll be some tough work by Omdurman. We shall come there to stay, this time. But I forgot. I wish I were going with you."

"So do we all, Dickie," said the Keneu.

"And I most of all," said the new artist of the Central Southern Syndicate. "Could you tell me——"

"I'll give you one piece of advice," Dick answered, moving toward the door. "If you happen to be cut over the head in a scrimmage, don't guard. Tell the man to go on cutting. You'll find it cheapest in the end. Thanks for letting me look in."

"There's grit in Dick," said the Nilghai, an hour later, when the room was emptied of all save the Keneu.

"It was the sacred call of the war-trumpet. Did you notice how he answered to it? Poor fellow! Let's look at him," said the Keneu.

The excitement of the talk had died away. Dick was sitting by the studio table, with his head on his arms, when the men came in. He did not change his position.

"It hurts," he moaned. "God forgive me, but it hurts cruelly, and yet, y'know, the world has a knack of spinning round all by itself. Shall I see Torp before he goes?"

"Oh, yes. You'll see him," said the Nilghai.

* * * * * *

"Maisie, come to bed."

"It's so hot I can't sleep. Don't worry."

Maisie put her elbows on the window sill and looked at the moonlight on the straight, poplar-flanked road. Summer had come upon Vitry-sur-Marne and parched it to the bone. The grass was dry burnt in the meadows, the clay by the bank of the river was caked to brick, the roadside flowers were long since dead, and the roses in the garden hung withered on their stalks. The heat in the little low bedroom under the eaves was almost intolerable. The very moonlight on the wall of Kami's studio across the road seemed to make the night hotter, and the shadow of the big bell-handle by the closed gate cast a bar of inky black that caught Maisie's eye and annoyed her.

"Horrid thing! It should be all white," she murmured. "And the gate isn't in the middle of the wall, either. I never noticed that before."

Maisie was hard to please at that hour. First, the heat of the past few weeks had worn her down; secondly, her work, and particularly the study of a female head intended to represent the Melancolia and not finished in time for the Salon, was unsatisfactory; thirdly, Kami had said as much two days before; fourthly, but so completely fourthly that it was hardly worth thinking about, Dick, her property, had not written to her for more than six weeks. She was angry with the heat, with Kami, and with her work, but she was exceedingly angry with Dick.

She had written to him three times—each time proposing a fresh treatment of her Melancolia. Dick had taken no notice of these communications. She had resolved to write no more. When she returned to England in the autumn—for her pride's sake she could not return earlier—she would speak to him. She missed the Sunday afternoon conferences more than she cared to admit. All that Kami said was, "Continuez, mademoiselle, continuez toujours," and he had been repeating his wearisome counsel through the hot summer, exactly like a cicala—an old gray cicala in a black alpaca

I AM MAISIE, WAS THE ANSWER.