

XXIV.

WHEN I came to England, it was not so much because I wanted to see England, as that my money was nearly gone, and I needed to make more. I was not yet ready to go back to my own country. I shrank still from New York, and the people I might not be able to avoid there, and I had no eagerness to act. But I decided that, if I must act, I would rather it were in England than America.

So I left Italy, saying that I left the home of my heart, and that I could never feel for another land what I felt for it. But immediately I fell in love with England. I loved it even as the train took me from Dover to London. It was September, one of those dreamy, golden Septembers that come to England sometimes. I had never seen anything like the sweet peace of the English country, and I felt that London would be kind.

You know what one of my letters of introduction from Mr. Otis did for me. It seemed as if something had taken me by the hand and hurried me to England at precisely the right moment. The season that followed I thought perfect, for I did not guess what I lacked in not knowing you. It was then that I saw your photograph at A——'s, and she told me about you; but I had no presentiment of what was to