

drive a tandem, and a four-in-hand sleigh, too. Ugh! how cold it was up-stairs along the passage! The bedrooms were ice-houses. No fires had been lit for years, perhaps, and the windows couldn't be made to shut. They were fine lofty rooms, about 16 feet high to ceiling, and averaged some 18 to 20 feet square. The bed sheets were positively wet, and but one blanket was on each bed. Never shall I forget that night. We were nearly suffocated in trying to get the fires to light, but that was useless; we only made ourselves cough and filled the rooms with smoke.

Next day was Sunday; but it was not long after my matutinal cup of tea that I sallied forth into Exeter to look for rooms.

Now Sundays, in England, are the worst days to look for private lodgings, that is, if there be a theatre in the town, as my readers will discover. After passing three or four houses with apartments cards up, but which I did not stop at because the word 'dollars' was too plainly written on the lace window curtains up-stairs, I finally struck a small street, which a stalwart policeman had directed me to. "You have rooms to let?" said I, smiling my very nicest at the first (vacant) house-keeper who came to the door. "'M; you're an actor; ain't got no rooms; never lets apartments a-Sundays;" and the door went bang in my face. So I tried a little higher up. Same question, with a still nicer—if possible—grin on at the slavey who came to the door. The girl looked first at my boots, then slowly ran up my great coat, finally stopping at my top buttonhole, where it was very frayed and the button was off. "I'll ask Missus," replied she; and I was left standing for fully ten minutes, till at last a yellow, very wrinkled face showed itself round the dining room door, surmounted by a high lace cap set on two corkscrew curls hanging from a palpably evident false front. "I never, never let my hap-partments to professionals, young man; you may shut the door Maria." Well, thought I, "the profession has got itself decidedly disliked somehow. I wish I could hire a false moustache, then I should have a better chance, I suppose." It was nearly 3 p.m.; I had walked in five miles, and wandered about the city for nearly two hours, and had only had a cup of tea to start with. My cough was worse than ever, after sleeping in that confounded "cottage,"—it was a mansion, any how—and, worse than all, I had on a pair of huge

'ammunition' hob-nailed, unblackened boots, and I felt that my feet were not looking to advantage. I began to feel decidedly *desventuroso*, as the Portuguese put it; so, turning up my coat collar and standing close in to the doorstep of the next house I tried, with my feet sideways, thus partly hid, I boldly rang. A woman, a typical lodging-house keeper, came to the door. Such a sour face; rusty black hair, smoothed down on either side of an accurately made parting, head bald at the top, and cone-like as to shape; a violet ribbon bow fastened to an imitation lace collar by an old-fashioned oval brooch about the size of a small saucer; a once-upon-a-time good silk dress, which just allowed the toes of much-worn carpet slippers to show, and two very thin hands, with short, black-tipped nails, the third finger of the left hand being ornamented with a thin, plain ring. Such was the figure I saw. Two cat-like eyes gleamed at me over a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles. "Well?" commenced she. "Pardon me," I began, in my most toney English, "pawdon me, but I believe you have some rooms to let?" Those beastly eyes wandered away down to my infernal boots, skimmed me rapidly all over, and then flew over my buttonless front, which I hid by holding a sadly discoloured handkerchief over it as, if about to sneeze. "How is it you want them to-day? To-day is Sunday—won't you step in?"

Now if I "stepped in" my boots might attract attention; but I hardened my heart, and did enter, swiftly closing the door so as to darken the passage. "Thank you," I answered, "if you'll lead the way I'll look at the rooms;" then, before she could stop me, I began, "Charming place, Exeter, such lovely scenery, you know; and, h'm—er, I—er, want rooms for some time; recommended to come here by my doctor." By this time I found myself in her parlour. "How many rooms have you?" asked I. "How many do you want, Sir?" Yes, she positively said *Sir*. "Three." "Oh, I've only two; but perhaps you have a family?" I admitted that I had two, fondly hoping that I could smuggle in little number three between my plaid shawls. "Ah, I *never* let to children; I'm very sorry, 'm sure; but Mrs. Bolton has two uppers and one small back, I know, vacant. Say I sent you; good afternoon;" and I despondently quitted, walking on the tips of my boots so that I should make no clatter on the oilclothed