

complete seclusion. I had no visitors; there was no one near, indeed, except the landlord of the little hotel in the bay, and his wife. All through the Island, however, were people whom I knew, like the Malet de Carterets, the Lemprières, and old General Pipon, for whom the Jersey of three hundred years ago was as near as the Jersey of to-day, so do the Jersiais prize, cultivate, and conserve every hour of its recorded history.

As the sea opens out to a vessel making between the promontories to the main, so, while writing this tale which originally was short, the larger scheme of *The Battle of the Strong* spread out before me, luring me, as though in the distance were the Fortunate Isles. Eight years after *Michel and Angèle* was written and first published in *Harper's Weekly*, I decided to give it the dignity of a full-grown romance. For years I had felt that it had the essentials for a larger canvas, and at the earnest solicitation of Messrs. Harper & Brothers I settled to do what had long been in my mind. The narrative grew as naturally from what it was to larger stature as anything that had been devised upon a greater scale at the beginning; and in London town I had the same joy in the company of Michel and Angèle—and a vastly increased joy in the company of Lemprière, the hulking, joyous giant—as I had years before in Jersey itself when the story first stirred in my mind and reached my pen.

While adverse reviews of the book were few if any, it cannot be said that this romance is a companion in popularity with, for instance, *The Right of Way*. It had its friends, but it has apparently appealed to smaller audiences—to those who watch the world go by; who are not searching for the exposure of life's grim realities; who do not seek the clinic of the soul's tragedies. There was tragedy here, but there was comedy too; there was also joy and faith, patience and courage. The book, taken by itself, could not make a permanent reputation for any man, but it has its place in the scheme of my work, and I would not have it otherwise than it is.