

THE WAR FOR THE WORLD

II.

I was returning to England from Italy with a through ticket *via* the Netherlands when suddenly from the corridor of the train appeared a new conductor, demanding my *Fahrkarte*. With a weary sigh—for I had shown it so often and would have to show it so often again before reaching London—I produced the be-clipped and mutilated pass that had begun life as a beautiful *Biglietto*. Alas! its conductor-crushing career seemed over. For my official was still aggressive. Ensued a duologue in German.

"But where is your seat-ticket?"

"This is it."

"No! You have no right to be sitting here without a seat-ticket!"

"I have been sitting here since Rome."

"You are not in Italy now; you are in Germany." (I began to feel it was indeed so.) "You must pay two marks for your place."

"But my ticket shows I have paid all the way to London."

"Nevertheless in Germany you must pay for your seat."

"But I must sit somewhere."

"And every seat must be paid for." (I believed him now, but I resented his manner.)

"Very well then—I will stand."

"*Es ist verboten*—the seats must be sat on."

"Then I will stand in the corridor." And I walked haughtily without. He was unimpressed.

"You cannot stand in the corridor. *Es ist verboten*. Either you pay for your seat or you leave the train."

"That is nonsense; on arriving at Munich I will pay, if I am assured the charge is correct."

"You will not get to Munich; I shall put you out at the next station."

"You cannot do that. *Es ist verboten*."

He glowered. "I will put you out at the next station."

"But my luggage is in the van."

"That is your look-out."

And deliberately placing in his wallet my elaborate and expensive ticket, which he had been holding in his hand, he closed the bag with the snap of a steel trap.

I felt caught in it! To be put down at a wayside German station, without ticket, luggage, or adequate funds, with no