

country. I did and do. I had short, sharp spasms of homesickness, even then, and I would have defended America eagerly if anyone had attacked her with a word of dispraise. Yet nothing would have tempted me, at that time, to go back. I was standing on tiptoe to catch the glory of the world, and Italy was the hospital of my mind and soul. I had gone through a cure for my body. Now I was having a cure for spirit and brain.

It may seem strange to you how sparsely I write about the best part of my life, and also of the worst part, though I spared you few details of my childhood. It is easy to explain why I give you only scattered incidents of my good years. Already I have talked to you of them, though never connectedly. When we were together, I have told you anecdotes of my two years in Italy, and of beautiful things which struck me in travelling there. I am not sure now what I spoke of, and it would be foolish to repeat. The rest is less easy to explain.

The worst years I hate to dwell upon. In recalling them and writing of them, on the one side I fear to distress you needlessly; on the other, I feel that my real desire to be truthful may make me morbid. It is difficult to steer between rocks in that channel. One thing I cannot myself quite understand. The years after I met Barron do not seem as much a part of me, the real Me, as the years before I knew him, and the years after I went to Italy. I feel as if my life were a puzzle, one of those picture-puzzles cut in little pieces to be matched together, and as if a part of the wrong puzzle had got fitted in. If it could be taken out, and the first half and the last half put together, then it seems to me that the picture would be complete, as it was meant to be by the Maker.