

Last night he came motoring to the village, but this morning the automobile has been sent away north, to Limoges, to wait there till he telegraphs for it; we saw him stand at the inn-door to watch it start away. Blart-blarting its harsh farewell it has vanished, beyond shifting clouds of dust, carrying off guide-books and goggles, wraps and road-maps, bag and baggage, and all the luxurious impedimenta of his journeying so far.

For he is to walk the rest of his wandering way. He is to make a fresh start. He is discarding system and wooing the accidental. He will foot it and chance it, he will let Luck have her errant and arrant way with him now, and with his quest. He will draw a bow at a venture. Why not? "One never knows," he reflects. "I'll give Luck a fair lead. It's always the ridiculous little causes which bring the splendid events. Dare say Luck's waiting for me somewhere—longing and languishing and expiring for me somewhere, the flirt and vixen! I'll chance it—ought to have chanced it earlier. One never knows!"

Now this was nothing strange in Dick Stewart, for a careless and dashing chessplayer with life he had usually been. "I was never a smug, systematic fellow till lately," he had reminded himself last night, at the inn. Light-heartedly he had played a random game with life until a few weeks before then; an audacious game, also, at any opportunity for dash and gay courage; but of late he had been systematic and cautious for a while. And now, after five or six weeks of this losing, now-fangled play of his, it seemed time to change his game. "Better be myself again," he thought. He had come to France in search of delectable treasure; for weeks he had searched systematically, cautiously, and unsuccessfully. So now, "Hang system!" he cries. "Smash into smallest smithereens all systems of systems!" What have his studied gambits availed him so far? He will try a new opening, he will give Destiny a random lead.

No doubt there is superstition in this. He remembers a maxim of Rory's—of his friend Rory—Rory Loxton-Phipps, M.D., of Mortimer Street, W., to wit. "Turn your back on a coveted thing and it will come after you,