

little pal." From these two comments, his wife's and the cabmen's, you can gather the position.

James Winter spent his life (apart, that is, from those hours of it devoted to business and sleep) in buying old furniture, old miniatures, fobs, candlesticks. Edwin Abbey might have paused in passing to look again, delighted, at the living picture of old James Winter scrutinising a bronze candlestick, one like a Doric column, in a dim and twinkling interior, an interior full of spindle-legged tables, and grandfather clocks, and long-handled brass bed-warmers, and three-cornered cupboards with Dresden shepherdesses behind their glass, and noted, over in a corner, Ruth, fourteen years of age, playing on a spinet. That was an incident that stood out in her life (memory niched it, or framed it), with a charm she could not ever define.

Do not imagine that she was ill-treated at home because you find her straying about with her uncle. Her mother was much better to her than the average Hastings mother to her offspring. When Ruth went down to the sea on stormy days and came home drenched, her mother only laughed. So she grew up with a love of the sea and of old candlesticks and corner-cupboards.

A quaint child. In her uncle's home she pored