

furtively away with his bleeding finger-end, he cried softly to himself, not for the pain, but for the shock to his hurt feelings. The incident aged him, thrust life at him in a fresh aspect ; and it was as a tired morsel of himself that he came soon after, and dropped to sleep long before bed-time, in Mrs Harbour's arms.

Thus from one and another, and only at times from himself, we get a few memorable factors of the child's life, its wild-honey storing itself in the cells of many diverse minds. Mrs Harbour, as she clasped him sleeping, and wondered at that early weariness, did not know how his small brain already held beginnings of an old age, which was to be so much before he was twenty-two.

Some days later at breakfast, while he sat mugging his bread and milk, Tristram's ears were ravished by hearing the name of his Aunt Doris read out to him from a letter which Mrs Nannie was holding. It was from the dear lady herself, and contained in one part devout messages addressed to her boy, ending in a long series of round O's, an established form of epistolary greeting between her and the illiterate eyes of her godchild.

Tristram demanded his own, and hugging them with a fondling remembrance of their author's niceness, babbled to have repeated to him once more all that the letter had said. While he kept fast possession, Mrs Harbour recited the substance of news which put a term to her own happy tenure of authority : within a few days he would be under his god-mother's roof, there to await the re-gathering of kindred, who had almost dropped out of recollection. In the names read over to him, those of his mother and of Marcia, his sister, were the fainter memories. The sunny South of France had held them estranged ; even now, with the former, his meeting was likely to be