

found an empty room with four windows all in good condition, and a water supply two floors below, at a rent of a few shillings a week. I paid for a week in advance and went home, ordering a grocer's van to call after lunch. The van drew up before the door. I announced its meaning, packed all my books into it, a railway rug, a bundle of clothes and my one large chair, said good-bye to my relations, and then, after lighting my clay pipe, and seating myself complacently on the tailboard, gave the order to start. I was as Columbus setting forth to a New World, a gypsy striking his tent for unknown woods; I felt as if I had been a wanderer in a caravan from my childhood as I loosened my coat, opened one or two more buttons in the flannel shirt that I wore open at the neck, and saw the red brick houses slipping slowly away behind me. The pride of it, to be sitting behind a van that I had hired myself; to carry my own belongings to a place of my own choosing; to be absolutely a free man, whose most distant desires seemed instantly attainable. I have never known another afternoon like that.

It was very warm, and the bushes in the tiny suburban gardens were grey with dust, and dust clouds blew up from the road, and circled about the back of the van, and settled on my face and in my nostrils as I broadened my chest and snuffed the air of independence. As we came