

be avoided, a glance from the window showed me it was already too late, the street was dark and silent, the whole town had gone to bed.

Well, there was nothing for it but to go to bed too. And that I did with many misgivings.

Next morning my first glance was at the mirror, and it was not reassuring.

I delayed as long as I could, and then went to the breakfast table in a troubled frame of mind. I was full of suspicion. The morning greetings and table chat had lost all their usual innocence and seemed now to have a double meaning, and for once I disliked that class of people who look one full in the face.

When the meal was over I explained that I intended to take a short stroll about the town. The family thought it a good idea and the son kindly offered to accompany me. I declined the offer. I wouldn't trouble him for anything. Indeed, I preferred to go alone. I wanted to think. That was true, I did want to think very much. But very little came of my thinking. My idea was that in a French town—it was mostly French—the Sunday closing laws would not be well observed. Unfortunately for my purpose, they were, and very strictly. The town was quaint, as French towns always are. The houses were of gray stone, many of them with sloping roofs and gable windows. The foliage was fresh, the sunshine warm, yet pleasant, and the streets, though singularly quiet, were yet alive with gaily-dressed women and girls on their way to mass. It was a beautiful day, and an ancient, substantial, restful town to any one who could enjoy it. I could not. I was ill at ease and anxious, for look where I would my hopes were dashed by the sight of unsympathetic wooden shutters over the shop windows.

I returned discouraged to the manse and shut myself in the study until church time. I had to submit to fate in the meanwhile, but a desperate purpose to master it later slowly hardened within me.

That morning service passed off somehow. Fortunately