

THE OPEN DOOR

quite inessential to the spectator. His appreciation is only slightly and indirectly influenced by these things. Sunk in his arm-chair — of velvet or of canvas — he puffs hard and silently at his cigar, watching and listening as the pageant and the conversation eddy by.

Of such hotels I number that gaudy and polysyllabic hostelry the Grand Hotel du Louvre et de la Paix at Marseilles. I am indifferent to the facts that it is situated on that fine thoroughfare, the Rue de Cannebiere, which the proud and untravelled native devoutly believes to be the finest street in the world; that it possesses a dining-room of gilded and painted repousse work so elaborate and wonderful that it surely must be intended to represent a tinsmith's dream of heaven; that its concierge is the most impressive human being on earth except Ludwig Von Kampf, whom I have never seen; that its head waiter is sadder and more elderly and forgiving than any other head waiter, and that its hushed and cathedral atmosphere has been undisturbed through immemorial years. That is to be expected; and elsewhere to be duplicated in greater or lesser degree. Nor in the lofty courtyard, or the equally lofty halls and reading rooms, is there ever much bustle and movement. People sit quietly, or move with circumspection. Servants