

works out his salvation painfully. The brief life of the moth reaches perfection at a single bound.

"Thou art faultless as a flower
Wrought of sun and wind and snow,
I survive the fault and failure
The wise fates will have it so.

For man walks the world in twilight,
But the morn shall wipe all trace
Of the dust from off his forehead,
And the shadow from his face."

And the musings end in this mood of grave hope.

I have not space to do justice to the rest of the book; the lyric appeals to the wandering instinct, the salt in our blood, that drives us to the sea; the Canadian background so delicately limned and with such truth; the subtle portrayal of those elusive moods, each lover thinks peculiar to himself. At some other time I may. Though Mr. Carman has not always reached the crystalline lucidity that distinguishes "Wayfaring," he has shown us the way he intends to travel, the goal that he has set before him. Along with this promise of good things to come, he has given us rare achievement. For subtlety of thought and grace of form, *Low Tide on Grand Pré* has few equals among the first volumes of poets.

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A Wedding in North Italy.

AMONG the papers and sketches in my old portfolio I have just come across a large and imposing envelope. It is inscribed with my name in a flourishing Italian hand, and contains a large double card announcing the approaching marriage of Giglia Alberti and Tommaso Guidi, and requesting, on the part of the parents, the honour of my company at the approaching festivities.

How plainly it all comes back to me! How well I remember that summer so many years ago in the pretty little town in North Italy, and all the details of the little drama which was now coming to a prosperous conclusion. The first appearance of the suitor on the scene, the preliminary overtures through relations conducted with due regard to the Italian proprieties, the short courtship, the friendly interest and sympathy of the kindly neighbours, and the picturesque wedding in the mountains at the bridegroom's native place. Domo d'Ossola, as travellers through the Simplon pass know, is the first town on the Italian side. It lies in the heart of the Ossola Valley, shut in on every side by mountains, and is a centre for the little industries of the mountaineers who live in the villages round.

The father of Giglia Alberti, like so many of his countrymen, had gone away early in life to Buenos Ayres, and made, if not a fortune, at any rate what was counted a fair competence in his native town. There, true to the mountaineer's love for the mountains, he had returned to settle down with his wife and only child, and here Tommaso Guidi had made the acquaintance of his bride. He, too, was a native of the country, born and bred at Varso, a small hamlet still higher up in the mountains. But he was now a wealthy merchant at Paris, and it was during one of his annual visits to his mother in the previous year that he had met Giglia at her cousin's wedding. He had only seen her once, and nothing further had taken place till the following summer, nor must it be supposed that he was even then so indiscreet as to address himself to his "innamorata" herself. He did not even apply to her parents, but to an aunt of Giglia, who had a well deserved reputation for arranging affairs of this nature and who had steered him safely through the rocks and shoals of courtship, and landed him safely in little more than a month as a "fidanzato." Every precaution was apparently taken to keep the person most interested in complete ignorance till the proposals had been made in due form to the father, but I am convinced that in spite of this, and her apparent ignorance, the young lady herself knew quite as much of the proceedings as any one else. But at last the preliminaries were all happily concluded, the wedding day was fixed, the trousseau ready, the parting visits paid, and the boxes of bonbons (the Italian substitute for wedding cake), distributed. I still possess mine, a round white satin box with a spray of orange blossoms across the top. All the details of the wedding preparations, which were on a scale of magnificence unusual in Domo d'Ossola were watched and dis-

cussed with the greatest interest by the friends of the bride elect. And they were all friends, though some were comparatively wealthy and some so poor as to have barely enough to live on; though some wore the dress common in polite society, and some the picturesque costume of the peasants of North Italy. There were no reasons to interfere with the kindly spirit of friendship which prevailed among them all. There is no democrat like the mountain peasant; they all feel on an equality, and take it for granted in a way that admits of no discussion. Giovanni goes out into the world to seek his fortune. He finds it, perhaps, and comes back a rich man to settle down in his old haunts. Giuseppe, his friend and playmate in former days, still cultivates his little plot of ground, wears his peasant dress, and lives as poorly as his fathers before him. But the old intimacy is taken up on the same lines as before, the old friend is welcomed back, and resumes his own place in the little community. It is no doubt this spirit of kindness and good fellowship which draws back the wanderers as surely as the thought of their dearly loved mountains. It was some feeling of this kind which made the young Paris merchant celebrate his wedding feast at his native village of Varso, some miles up the Simplon Pass.

The wedding day dawned bright and clear as heart could wish, and the bridal party were early astir. Both the legal and religious ceremonies were necessarily to be performed at Domo d'Ossola, and a long drive must be taken before the wedding guests could assemble at the breakfast at Varso. The greater number of guests came from Domo d'Ossola and its neighbourhood, so the whole country round was ransacked to provide the necessary vehicles for their transport. It was certainly a curious collection, and some of the vehicles were of such doubtful construction that one would think, like the famous Irishman who cavilled at the bottomless sedan chair, that, but for the honour and glory of the thing, one would rather walk. But no one was at all inclined to cavil, either at the carriages, or at the costumes of the guests which were also, in some cases, open to criticism. Then and there a startling effect was produced, when some modern device was grafted on to the pretty peasant costume, to the great detriment of the latter. Among the most conspicuous objects was a tremendous high black hat, which so overpowered its unpretending little owner that it seemed like a continuation of his long black body and legs, his meek shrivelled little face being apparently put in to mark the centre of his system.

Most of the guests assembled at an early hour at the bride's house, while her most intimate friends were admitted to assist at the toilet. The bride was a pretty plump girl, who never once throughout the long day's performances lost her smiling, composed demeanour. She was dressed in the conventional white satin, with veil, wreath and orange blossom, and her appearance on the stairs was greeted with hearty murmurs of applause. Here the bridegroom met her, and presented her, not with orthodox white bridal blossoms, but with a bouquet, so large, so gay, so ugly, that it remains imprinted on my mind as one of the most prominent features of the day's performances. And yet it was so characteristic of the scene, it had such an air of gay and prosperous good humour, that it seemed a fitting expression of the good-wishes of the honest and light-hearted company. It was received with great satisfaction amid a universal buzz of admiration. After slight refreshments, the whole party was disposed in the various vehicles, and driven first to the church, for the religious ceremony, and afterwards to the Town Hall, where the civil office was performed. There were no bridesmaids, but the bride was accompanied to the altar by two god-mothers, and a little boy and girl, the two latter kneeling one on each side of her, and each holding an immense lighted candle in one hand, and a large bouquet in the other. When this part of the proceedings was over, the guests set out for Varso, the long line of carriages making an imposing show with the bridal carriage, drawn by four white horses, at its head. For part of the way, the road lay along the Simplon pass, but it soon branched off, the scenery growing continually wilder and more beautiful, and the road more precipitous, with gigantic rocks and steep cliffs on either hand. At last we saw the little village of Varso in the distance, and the constant report of muskets saluting the bridal pair told us that we were reaching our journey's end.

The number of guests was so great that the bridegroom's house proved too small for the occasion, and accordingly the