

IV

A TRAIN

At the present moment probably the dearest bed of its size in the world is that to be obtained on the Calais-Mediterranean express, which leaves Calais at 1.05 every afternoon and gets to Monte Carlo at 9.39 the next morning. This bed costs you between £4 and £5 if you take it from Calais, and between £3 and £4 if you take it from Paris [(as I did), in addition to the first-class fare (no bagatelle that, either!)], and, of course, in addition to your food. Why people should make such a terrific fuss about this train I don't know. It isn't the fastest train between Paris and Marseilles, because, though it beats almost every other train by nearly an hour, there is, in February, just one train that beats *it*—by one minute.* And after Marseilles it is slow. And as for comfort, well, Americans aver that it "don't cut much ice, anyway" (this is the sort of elegant diction you hear on it), seeing that it doesn't even comprise a drawing-room car. Except when you are eating, you must remain boxed up in a compartment decidedly not as roomy as a plain, common, ordinary, decent Anglo-Saxon first-class compartment between Manchester and Liverpool.

* In 1904.