

wiping it on her apron as she came into the room. We drank out of a couple of glasses my great man brought from a box in the corner. Then he talked of literature, and so well that the untidy bed, the unclean room, the wife and the baby were as if they never had been. In spite of his unwashed hands, in spite of the dressing-gown, he won his way back to greatness. He lifted the tumbler magnificently to watch the ruby of the wine, while he talked of Edgar Allan Poe, and of his methods, and of that wonderful article on the principles of composition. Poe was profound, he said, to have imagined that article, but the article represented him profounder than he really was. From Poe we came to detective and mystery tales, Gaboriau, Sherlock Holmes, and the analytical attitude, and so to the relations between criticism and art. It was a most opulent conversation.

I sat on a three-legged chair where I could see out of the window, and presently noticed the novelist's wife walking up and down on the opposite pavement, carrying the child and a blue parasol. She had not troubled to put on a hat, and she was evidently waiting till we had done our talk. It was clear that they had no other room. And so, regretfully, calculating a time that would leave her at the top of the street, while I escaped at the bottom, not wishing to put her to confusion, I told the novelist of an