

4 THE TRAIL OF THE GRAND SEIGNEUR

burning eyes. A hundred other eyes, in which lurks nothing of human selfishness, will shyly peer at him; from every branch a burst of liquid melody will peal for him. Sweet springs, cold as the snows of winter, will gush for his good out of the brown earth; the flesh of the forest awaits to furnish him sustenance. In the grand, illimitable majesty of his environment the petty slings and arrows will be robbed of their poison tips. The forest's peace enters into him and a greater boon than this there cannot be.

Ah, early days! in this the winter of my span, I gaze through a blinding film out over the bared waste where once the forest found its way unchecked to my very door. I moved sadly along the dried beds of water courses that in the old days I was hard put to it to ford. It was very dismal to me. Desolate stretches of stumpy pasture land and struggling grain fields have succeeded the virgin splendor of old; the stones wither in the water courses, the sun glaring pitilessly down into their dried beds, where once the dream shadows wavered over the black pools that lay deep and still outside the shallows. It is the doom sounded by the woodsman's axe, a knell that had stark death in it. It was inevitable, but also pitiful. My eyes smart as I write and I am not ashamed.

But on this day no dirge dinned doom, no sinister chord clashed to drown a harmony that was divine. Ah me! youth will not be denied. The past a wistful memory untouched by gall, the pulsing present, the future a brave dream of snapping sails in the fair winds that feather with spray-drift the green of a boundless sea! The tempests quiescent in the womb of the Disillusionment, the gray of the Awak-