the cabman to drive her to a certain number in Victoria-street. She was staring as she went at the two type-written lines which the mysterious boy had brought in the mysterious envelope.

"I will inquire of Miss Bewicke. It will be better to begin there than—at the other place. There will be time enough for that afterwards. If — if she should have locked him up!"

The potentiality was too horrible. She could not bear to contemplate it. Yet, willy-nilly, it intruded on her fears.

She ascended in the lift to Miss Bewicke's apartments. She knocked with a trembling hand at Miss Bewicke's door. She had to knock a second time before an answer came. Then the door was opened by a tall, thin, saturnine-looking woman to whom the visitor took a dislike upon the spot.

"Is Miss Bewicke at home?"

"Will you walk in?" It was only when Miss Broad had walked in that she learned that her quest was in vain. "Miss Bewicke is not at home. She went to Brighton this morning."

"This morning? I thought she was going last night?"

"Who told you that?"

There was something in the speaker's voice which brought the blood to Miss Broad's cheeks with a rush. She stammered,

"I—I heard it somewhere."

"Your information was learned on good authority; very good. Oh, yes, she meant to go last night, but she was prevented."

"Prevented—by what?"

"I am not at liberty to say. Are you a friend of Miss Bewicke's?"

There was something in the woman's manner which Miss Broad suspected of being intentionally offensive. She stared at her with bold, insolent eyes, with, in them, what the young lady felt was the suggestion of an insolent grin. That she knew her, Miss Broad was persuaded; she was sure, too, that she was completely cognisant of the fact that she was not Miss Bewicke's friend.

"I am sorry to say that I am not so fortunate as to be able to number myself among Miss Bewicke's friends. I have not even the pleasure of her acquaintance."

"That is unfortunate, as you say. About her friends Miss Bewicke is particular."

The suggestion was so gratuitous that Miss Broad was startled.

"Are you a friend of hers?"

"I am her companion; but not for long. You know what it is for one woman to be a companion to another woman. It is not to be her friend. Oh, no. I have been a companion to Miss Bewicke for many years; but soon I go. I have had enough."

The woman's manner was so odd that Miss Broad wondered if she was a little touched in the head, or if she had been drinking. She looked round the room, at a loss what to say. Her glance ligated on a large panel photograph which occupied the place of honour on the mantelpiece. It was Mr Holland. She recognised it with a start. It was the best likeness of him she had seen. He had not given her a copy, nor any portrait of himself, which was half as good.

Miss Bewicke's companion was watching her.

"You are looking at the photograph? It is Mr Holland, a friend of Miss Bewicke's, the dearest friend she has in the world."

"You mean he was her friend?"

"He was? He is—none better. Miss Bewicke has many friends—oh, yes, a great many; she is so beautiful—is she not beautiful?—but there are none of them to her like Guy."

The woman's familiar use of Mr. Holland's Christian name stung Miss Broad into silence. That she lied, she knew; to say that, to-day, Mr. Holland was still Miss Bewicke's dearest friend, was to attain the height of the ridiculous. That the young lady knew quite well. She was also aware that, for some reason which, as yet, she did not fathom, this foreign creature was making herself intentionally offensive. None the less, she did not like to hear her lover spoken of in such fashion by such lips. Still less did she like to see his portrait where it was. Had she acted on the impulse of the moment, she would have torn it into shreds. And perhaps she might have gone even as far as that had she not perceived something else, which she liked, if possible, still less than the position occupied by the gentleman's photograph.

On a table lay a walking-stick. A second's glance was sufficient to convince her of the ownership. It was his—a present from herself. She had had it fitted with a gold band; his initials, which she had cut on it, stared her in the face. What was his walking-stick—her gift—doing there?"

The woman's lynx-like eyes were following hers.

"You are looking at the walking-stick? It, also, is Mr. Holland's."

"What is it doing here?"

The woman shrugged her shoulders.

"He left it behind him, I suppose. Perhaps he was in too great a hurry to get away, one forgets little things which are of no importance."

She called his walking-stick—her gift to him—a thing of no importance! What was the creature hinting at? Miss Broad would not condescend to ask, although she longed to know.

"As I tell you, Miss Bewicke is not at home. She is at the Hotel Metropole at Brighton. Would you like to take Mr. Holland's walking-stick to—her?" There was an accent on the pronoun which the visitor did not fail to notice. "What name shall I give to Miss Bewicke?"

"I am Miss Broad."

"Miss Broad—Letty Broad? Oh, yes, I remember. They were talking and laughing about you—Mr. Holland and she. Perhaps, after all, you had better not go down to Brighton."

When the young lady was back in the street, her brain was a tumult of contradictions. That the woman who called herself Miss Bewicke's companion, had, for reasons of her own, been trying to amuse herself at her expense she had not the slightest doubt. That Mr. Holland's relations with Miss Bewicke were not what were suggested she was equally certain. None the less she wondered, and she doubted. What was his portrait doing there? Still more, what was his walking-stick? He was carrying it when they last met. Under what circumstances, between this and then, had it found its way to where it was? Where was Mr. Holland? That there was a mystery she was convinced. She was almost convinced that Miss Bewicke held the key to it.

Should she run down to Brighton and find it out? She would never rest until she knew. She had gone so far; she might as well go farther. She would be there and back in no time. The cabman was told to drive to Victoria. At Victoria a train was just on the point of starting. Miss Broad was travelling Brightonwards before she had quite made up her mind as to whether she really meant to go. When the train stopped at Clapham Junction, she half rose from her seat, and all but left the carriage. She might still be able to return home for luncheon. But while she dilly-dallied the train was off. The next stoppage was at Croydon. There would be nothing gained by alighting there; so she reached Brighton, as she assured herself, without ever having had the slightest intention of doing it. Therefore, and as a matter of course, when the train rattled into the terminus, she was not in the best of tempers. She addressed sundry inquiries to herself as she descended to the platform.

"Now what am I to do? I may as well go to the Metropole as I am here. I am not bound to see the woman even if I go. And, as for speaking to her"—she curled her lip in a way which was intended to convey a volume of meaning—"I suppose it is possible to avoid the woman, even if I have the misfortune to be under the same roof with her. The hotel's a tolerable size; at any rate, we'll see."

She did see, and that quickly. As she entered the building, the first person she beheld coming towards her across the hall was Miss May Bewicke.

Which proves, if proof be necessary, that a building may be large, and yet too small.

(To be continued.)

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A Record of Holiday.

By E. Œ. SOMERVILLE and MARTIN ROSS.

(Authors of "Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.")

Of summer holidays it may at least be contended that they involve two periods of undiluted enjoyment; the time of anticipation, and the calm—if sometimes chastened—season of retrospect.

I am glad, now that the mice are nesting in my trunks, and the spiders weaving fresh straps round my hold-all, that I have been to Switzerland, that the greasy visitors' books of several West of Ireland hotels hold my name. Also, I remember how very cheerful it was to study a scarlet-hued Bradshaw, and to reflect that, with certain financial restrictions, the Continent of Europe lay smiling before me. (I remember also that I lent that entertaining work to an American friend, and found the utmost difficulty in recovering it from him. It was only restored, indeed, on the morning of my departure, and my friend mentioned that he had sat up all night reading it, "just to see how it ended," he said.)

Between, however, these seasons of satisfaction, there stretches the actual time of holiday, and as I reflect upon it I am struck by the fact that its more salient features are misfortunes. From a literary point of view this has its advantages; the happy traveller has no history. If the converse is true it would need Gibbon or Macaulay to deal with our transit from the County Cork to that Alpine fastness for which we had trustingly, fearlessly labelled our luggage.

It began with fog in the Channel—the Irish Channel—solid, tangible fog, through which our bewildered steamer stumbled, uttering large, desolate cries of distress, stopping every now and then to bellow like a lost cow, sometimes, even, going astern, while muffled bootings told of another wanderer who had drawn nearer to us than was convenient.

"When I heard 'em giving the signal to go astern,' said a sailor officer of high degree, next morning, as he gobbled a belated mouthful of breakfast, "I thought it was about time to get up and put on my clothes. Said nothing about it to m' wife, though!"

I wonder if he has realised yet why everyone smiled.

In London, rain; in Paris, blinding heat. Dizzily we staggered round the elder Salon, and through its innumerable small square rooms, with their lining of flagrant canvases; it felt like exploring the brain-cells of a fever patient in delirium. One healing instant was ours, when at the public baths in Boulevard Mont Parnasse, the waters of a "Bain Complet" closed over the exhausted person; but that, even, was speedily poisoned by the discovery that towels and soap, being extras, were not left in the Cabinet de Bains, and the bather, having with dripping hands explored the pocket for the needed coins, had then to tender them to the attendant through a difficult slit of doorway, receiving in exchange a small fragment of slightly scented marble and a gauze veil.

After that, the night journey to Geneva. Heat, sardine-like proximity of fellow-travellers, two dauntless English ladies, who turned the long night into one unending and clanking tea party; a nightmare interlude of douaniers, then, when a troubled sleep had at length been bestowed, Geneva, and all the horrors that attend the finish of a long train journey.

At breakfast, at our hotel, a survey of what we had hitherto endured in the pursuit of pleasure stung us to a brief revolt. This was a holiday, we told ourselves, why hurry? Fortified by a principle theoretically unassailable, we strolled about Geneva. It was cold and very wet; still, in our newly realised leisure, we made a point of strolling. On our return to our hotel most of the staff were on the pavement, seemingly very much excited. A voiture, laden with our luggage, stood at the door. It appeared that our steamer left for Villeneuve in eight minutes. I imagine that the hotel staff's agitation arose from the fear that we should not have time to tip them all. This was, alas, unfounded.

The driver took us first to the wrong steamer. He then turned his machine too short, and locked the fore carriage. Then he shambled across the long bridge to the other steamboat quai, while we sat forward, like the coxswains of racing eights, in sweating agony, watching our boat getting up steam and preparing for instant departure.

We caught the boat, by springing like Spurius Lartius and Herminius across the widening chasm between her deck and the shore, and therewith fell into a species of syncope. Mists shrouded the mountains; a chilled rain swept the lake. For our parts, slowly recovering, we kept the cabin, and swept the tea-table. It was almost our first moment of enjoyment.

The Alpine fastness, already alluded to, was not gained for a further couple of days, during which an awakening distaste for Switzerland slowly grew in us, though it did not thoroughly mature till mellowed by a mule ride up a mountain. Reticence in narration is a quality that I endeavour to cultivate. It becomes a necessity in treating of the village and its surrounding slums from and through which our start was made. Having, in a state nearing starvation, been offered the sole refreshment available, namely, concentrated essence of typhoid in the guise of glasses of milk, and having retained sufficient self-control to refuse them, we started on mule-back for the mountain. Traversing, as I have every reason to believe, the open main drain of the village, our animals proceeded to totter up a narrow and precipitous watercourse.

'La voie la plus directe," explained the mule-driver, lashing his ancient cattle

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