

One incident, and only one, made any definite mark on those few days that were left to me. On a certain evening there was a succession of thunder showers, then all the night a heavy and ceaseless downpour. 'This,' said Sir Robert in the morning, 'ought to bring down the river.' I asked what he meant by this. He answered that the river below us was rarely anything more than a dry bed of pebbles, just as it was now. But generally once—sometimes three times—in the year, it would suddenly fill with water, flow for an hour or two, and again become dry and silent. I felt that the sight must be curious, and wished that I might be able to witness it. About four o'clock in the afternoon a servant came to my bedroom and asked me to go into the garden. There I found Sir Robert with an opera-glass, standing on the bank. 'Look!' exclaimed he, pointing; 'it is coming. Listen! you can hear it.' I listened and I looked. Very faint and uncertain I at last caught a sound like leaves rustling in a dream. Then suddenly far away on the plain I saw something flash, like the head of a pointed spear. Gradually this prolonged itself into a slim shining line, which presently took a curve. For a time its course was straight, then it curved again. In ten minutes, over the brown surface of the fields the water had stretched itself like a long silvery snake, and the sound I had heard, growing momentarily more distinct, explained itself to the ear as the voice of the stirred pebbles. The river channel