The first time I saw John Bradford apologized for not having a card, and was shown into my room. He walked with a stumbling gait, and held his felt hat fightly between his hands. He sat far out on the edge of the chair, and looked about the room for some moments before he spoke.

"Pretty comfortable," he said, presently, with an assuring smile. "I don't want anything just now, but they youth. told me at home I ought to call on the consul, and, besides, I knew your folks when they used to come to Jersey in the summer. You don't remember me, I guess. You were a kid in never made an effort to force myself Late in the afternoon I got to going short trousers. I used to sell crabs to the boarding house."

"And have you come to Florence," more he smiled, apparently at my ignorance of the great events which COURTRY. S. F.

"Well," he said, "I made a good morning. deal crabbing, and then pa made 🚉 deal in land to some summer, folks and see me said he. If live very for cottages, and ma said I was to go quietly, but if you can drop in this to college. I went to Peddle's for a afternoon or this evening. I should year, and there I took to singing and be very much pleased." playing. I had a kmack for music, and played at home on the melodian to schoo of duty and not from any and at church, but I never knew how good I was until I got to college. Why, I made the rest of them feel foolists. The professor said I had talent, and I guess I have. 'Go abroad,' he said, 'and come back great.' And-well; here I am."

By this time he seemed very much more at home, and he crossed his legs and tossed his hat on the table. Then he went on to tell me that it was a question of Paris. Dresden or Florence. Paris was to dear, Dresden was good for opera, but the professor had said the teachers of Florence were the best. "And so, I've come; but it's an old, gray place, and music lessons are terrible high," he said. "Seven france a clip, but I'll take only two a week, and then I'll spend my extra time in learning Italian and French. English is no good over here. I think in two years I ought to know pretty much all of it. don't you?"

Two years seemed to me at the time but a short period to "learn it all," but I could not help feeling a distinct belief in the powers of the excrabman. Twice a week he came to the consulate, and twice a week he received a letter addressed in a rough, womanly hand, and postmarked "Freehold, New Jersey." He received his letters in the outer office. and only once or twice came to my door to nod a pleasant "good morning" to me. When I met him, by chance, he was civil, but that was orabs to my folks" was apparently an intimacy.

As well as I can remember I had never exchanged more than a word with him after our first interview unitil over a year had elapsed. It was a rainy day in the early spring, and I was hurrying across the Piazza Signora, when I was attracted by the solitary figure of my friend Bradford standing under a large blue umbrella, and gazing in rapt silence at the figjure of the Medusa in the Loggia. A woman in rags, as unpicturesque as a Tuscan woman can be, sat at the base knitting and half a dozen children who had escaped from the rain were playing about the other statues.

I stopped and stood at Bradford's side. At first he seemed not to notice me, but after a moment he turned and nodded to me and smiled with the same lovable, comprehensive smile with which he had honored me at our first meeting. "Pretty good, eh?" he said, modding in the direction of the Medusa. "And that woman sits there with her back against it as if it were a pine tree and she was only waiting to drive the cows back to the yard."

For a minute we stood there under our dripping umbrellas. I had just been to a marriage at the old palace, and I had been detained far beyond. time, and was consequently annoyed and in a hurry to get back to my office, and yet there was something about the queer, lank figure of the Jerseymian, standing alone in the old gray square, that attracted me to him. I must admit that I had become callous to the great beauty of the Medusa and felt a trifle abashed in the presence of the ex-crabman who stood before it in such stient and devout admiration.

"They say," he went on, without taking his eyes from the statue, "that David is the best of them all, but I can't see it. Somehow, it hasn't got the strength and —oh, well, you know some things hit and some things don't, and it don't seem to me quite possible that the man who made that could have done it from models and -and all that. It seems to me that it must have come to him just as a song sometimes comes to a man who writes music when be is in bed, and he is obliged to get up and write it all down, and the next morning he plays it over and finds that he has written better than he knows how. And, do you know, that music always makes him feel, and everybody else who hears it, just so much better than they really are?"

The rain had suddenly ceased, and the sun shone brilliantly on the blistering pavements. The woman sitting haven't you, Tina?" at the base of the statue put her knitting in her gaping pocket, and the children, laughing as they went, ran down the steps of the Loggia into the sunshine of the plazza. My friend glanced up at the patches of blue sky, folded his umbrella, and took off his hat as a token that our talk was at

an end. After that I saw and heard little

or nothing of him. Sometimes I met him in the street, and once, on my met anyone who knew of his existence. Twice a week he continued to come to the consulate, and if I had not heard his familiar voice asking for his letter I too, I fear, should have forgotten this friend of

Although alone in Florence, the excrabman had not su far as I knew. lived in poverty, he had never sought my company or my aid, and so I had upon him to learn of his method, of life. I paid him but one visit and that was two years from the day I had said, "to see the sights?" Once first seen him in my office. He called for his letter in the morning and told me very simply that he had decided had been taking place in my own to return to his home in New Jersey and would leave on the following

I have never asken you to come

I thought he asked me purely from real desire to see me or know me better; but, under the circumstances, I could not well refuse his invitation. He lived in one of the old houses that face on the via San Spirito and run through to the Arno. His room was on the third floor, and from the

window one could look down on the river and beyond to the old bridge and still further to the tower of the Palaszo Vecchio and the Campanile. It was Saturday afternoon, and the pavements were crowded with the bourgeoisie on their way to the Cascine. Between the two lines of people there passed slowly a long file of smart carriages, carrying pretty girls and women in all their summer finery. The town was flooded with sunshine, and the waters of the Arno were very blue. Of all others, it seemed a day for one to be under the clear sky and far away from the small. warm room to which I had come. But when I turned from the window and glanced back into the room things were very different, and the sunshine faded as if the sun had been crossed by a black cloud. It was a small room, stenciled with modern Italian coloring; the floor was of stone, and the hangings cheap and bad. In one corner stood Bradford's trunk, packed, but open, and ready for the locks. The mantelpiece and table had been stripped of whatever ornaments they may have held-all save one, a copy in cheap plaster of the Medusa, standing and letters. Bradford was sitting at

"Are you really going?" I asked. "Yes," he said; "that is why l wanted you to come here to-night. I had something I wished to tell you lined against the sky. Then I went here." He motioned to a chair across the table from where he was standing. Then he raised himself from his elbows and started in slowly and with | Mediusa. She must be more than a much deliberation to tell me the story | memory." of his life in Florence.

the table, his chin resting between

his hands. His eyes looked straight

ahead at the miserably painted walls.

"There must be a good many young men and girls, too," he said, "that come there from the country to study music, or singing or painting, just as I did, and I suppose they go to you, when they arrive, for a little advice.'

I nodded assent.

"Well," he said, "that's why I brought you here. I wanted you to see the finish of it all for yourself, so that you will be able to tell them just how wrong and hard and bad it all He took a letter from his pocket

and shoved it across the table to me. It was much creased, and had apparently been handled many times. It was very short; the handwriting was most difficult to decipher and was unduestionably that of an uneducated woman. This is what it said:

"My Dear Son: You know what I told you in my last letter. Well, your father had another stroke. He is very bad. The house is going to pieces, and now that pa can't be in the saloon we are losing all the trade. You must come back and take his place. and look after him and your grandma. He can't last long.

"Your affectionate

"Mother." "I remember," I said; "your father kept the tavern on the Sea road." Bradford nodded.

I heard the latch of the door, raised but, as my host did not turn his head, neither did I. I heard the door open and close again, and then a young girl tiptoed over to his side and San Spirito. To many people this slipped down on her knees and rested same sunshine of Florence, as well as her head on the heavy arm of the the fragrance of its flowers and the

chair in which he sat. with a strange light of fear and hope done much good, and has left them in them. Still looking at me, he laid better and happier and finer than his hand very gently on her head. and brushed back the masses of thick gates. But, like great music, it has black hair from her forehead.

"This is Tina," he said. "She and I are great friends. She is the niece and art and flowers which have en

The girl looked up at him and ambitions. smiled as though she understood. She took his hand, placed it upon the arm of the chair and then rested her cheek upon it.

"When I first came to Florence," he said, "I didn't quite understand. The houses seemed so gray and the | "did you think I might git to be streets so very narrow, and the sky flyin' machine?"-Chicago Record no bluer, the sunshine no brighter Herald.

than it was in my own country. had no old friends, and not enough way to Fissole, I found him sitting on money to make new ence. I thought, The first time I saw John Bradford a stone wall, saying down on the town But when I had been here but a short was in the consulate at Florence. He of Florence and the brown dome of time I found that I needed no old time I found that I needed no old the cathedral; but he was always friends. I got to love the narrow alone, and among the students I never streets and the iron harred winheard his name mentioned or even dows and the darkened court and In time, the shopkeepers began to speak to me, and even some of the porters with the gold wands in front of the palace nodded to me. I needed no old friends, because I found myself surrounded by them everywhere I; walked. I got to know the eaven of every house on our street, and the doves that lived under them, and just where the patches of sunshine should lie in my path every bright morning. to Bardini's cafe at the corner, and so picked up much Italian as we sat and talked around the tin tables. The part of it all I found, I liked best were the students I met at the school. They seemed so foreign to my life."

"But you always came to the consulate," I said, "for your letters." "Yes," he answered; "they were from my mother.". .

For a moment Bradford's mind seemed to have turned back to his old home; finally, pulling himself together, he went on with his story.

"And then Tina came here to live, and I saw Florence through her eyes. I think I know this town as no other American ever knew it. We know every street and every picture and every gate and every path in the countrie for miles and miles around. We have wandered over forgotten roads, and climbed the green hills together; we have sat under the plive trees and looked down on the town from every hilltop, and, oh God, how we love it! It seems to me some times that everything worth while happened here or on these hills. Think of the maen and the history, and just think of the beauty of it all?"

"And the Meduca?" I saked. Are you going to take that home?" He looked at me curtously for some

moments. "I thought of it," he said. "I suppose they will put it in the barroom and my mother will drape it in cheesecloth." He suddenly stopped and clamped his hands above his head. "Forgive me, forgive me?" he gasped. "I didn't mean that. I swear I didn't. God, God, to think I should have come to that !"

He rose from his chair and walked across the room and back again to the table. "No, you're right," he said; "you're right. The Medusa, like the rest of it, must be a memory—that's all, just a memory." He suddenly raised his arm and struck the figure with his open hand, and the poor plaster thing fell back on the table and broke in many pleces. The head all, and the fact that he had "sold alone upon a table in the center of the rolled upon the floor, and Tina startroom, among a debris of torh papers ed to pick it up, but Bradford motioned her back.

> "Don't touch it," he whispered "don't touch it!"

The girl buried her head in her hands and cried softly. Bradford walked to the window and for a few minutes I watched his dark figure outover to him and put my hand on his shoulder. "And the girl?" I said. 'You can't treat her as you have the

Outside the air was gold with orange sunlight. The streets were black with the Florentines out for their holiday. We could hear the hum of their voices, and from a distant piazza came the faint echoes of music.

"Do you think," he said, "I could take her away from this? Where will she find anything to take its place at home? It is bred in her bone. She would die without it. Believe me, sir, I have lived with them and I know that the things which are beautiful and only pleasures to us are their very bread. They must feel the hot sun above them, and they must live and laugh with their own kind. You can't transplant a Tuscan rose, and I tell you sometimes it is very kind to be cruel. There is no music and no laughter, and nothing at all of beauty, on the Sea road."

As I left the room the girl was still crying gently to herself, and the man was still at the window looking out over the golden city.

And so, as I afterward learned, Bradford went back to the home on the Sea road, and Tina lived on in the old house of Madame Masi. The broken pieces of plaster which once formed a Medusa adorn her mantelshelf, and her aunt tells me that the young girl trembles curiously every time the bell clangs out in the courtyard and announces the arrival of a visitor.

The sunshine still filters through the eaves which overhang the via beauty of its palaces and the religion The gazed at me through big eyes of its pictures and its hills, has surely when they first entered the town sometimes, perhaps, worked for ill as well as for good. The sunshine of Madame Masi, who owns this nobled some have sapped the life and house. She is a very good girl, and destroyed the virility of others, and she has been very good to me, left them as they did Bradford, mere wrecks on the shores of their high

His Expectations.

"Well, my boy," said the piouslooking gentleman, "what do you expect to be when you grow up?" "A man," replied the smart child:

