Doubt.

I long to go
And clasp once more the hand that holds my chain,
And feel her presence, whose delicious reign
Enthralls me.

I long to stay;
For what if Love forget the silence taught,
And win but cold contempt? The thought
Appalls me.

So in uncertainty,
Whose dusky cloud my universe doth cover,
With drooping wing my soul doth vainly hover
Eternally.

Peradventure.

Mr. John Selwyn sat in his easy-chair at Rivermouth toasting his feet at the open fire. It was in the latter part of October, and just the delicious hour between light and darkness, when one, as he grows old, likes to sit before the glowing coals and reminisce, if I may coin an expression. To explain a little farther, I had been spending some time in relaxation from business cares with my old college friend, and we used to delight in this quiet hour before dinner. Mr. Selwyn was one of those vigorous elderly gentlemen whose minds seem only to polish with the friction of the years, and his conversation was very charming,—like that of Josiah Quincy, whose contemporary and friend he was, in fact.

We had just come in from a six miles' walk about the beautiful shores of the Colonna where it flows into the broad Atlantic at the base of Holbachs Tower, where

"We heard the sea-maids on the outer rocks
Splash in the falling tide, and dimly saw
What seemed their tresses, undulating there."

There had been a few minutes' silence, which my friend ended by a slight exclamation, and then began talking: "Rather a startling experience happened to me in this room about fifty years ago. As you perhaps know, my father built this house with a wooden L and large halls running to the top after peculiar ideas of his own about ventilation. As a matter of fact, however, all noises below came up in this way with great distinctness. One evening I had been out playing chess until quite a late hour, and, on reaching the house here, found it all dark, and, as I supposed, everybody in bed and asleep. So, entering and shutting the door as quietly as possible, I made my way as best I might to my room in the third story, and, lighting the candle, was preparing to retire when a peculiar noise attracted my attention. The house was otherwise perfectly quiet, and, after listening attentively, I perceived that the sounds came up through the hallway from the windows on the ground floor, apparently, as if some one were trying the catches. The noises increased. Doubtless some one was trying to enter the house, I thought. So, putting on my coat and taking down a couple of pistols which I had bought the winter before in Paris, but had as yet never used, I proceeded cautiously downstairs. Cautiously, but not from timidity. I am not easily alarmed, even now, and my nerves then were as firm as health and confidence could make them.

"As I neared the lower part of the house, the sounds seemed to centre and proceed from the dining-room, which was formerly this room. It was brilliant moonlight, and, as I reached the door, there, sure enough, was a man with his body half in and half out of the farther window, and of course entirely unaware of my presence. I had him so completely at the mercy of my pistol that I indulged in a little indignation before shooting him, and said gruffly, 'What are you doing there?'

"Oh, is that you, John?" said the man, turning around. 'I heard these blinds rattling, and thought I would come down and fasten them back; the wind has come around to the east.'

"It was my father!

"My feelings can be more easily conceived than described. To have come so within an ace of shooting my own father, to have withheld my fire from the merest chance and whim of over-confidence, was rather a shock, I must say. I put up the pistol which had so nearly