

THE FOOT-PATH WAY

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The Foot-Path Way by Bradford Torrey

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BRADFORD TORREY

**THE FOOT-PATH
WAY**

THE FOOT-PATH WAY

BY

BRADFORD TORREY

Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
And merrily hent the stile-a :
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

THE WINTER'S TALE



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1892

MADE IN
AMERICA

BIOLOGY
LIBRARY

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TO THE
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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THE FOOT-PATH WAY.

JUNE IN FRANCONIA.

"Herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds."

MILTON.

THERE were six of us, and we had the entire hotel, I may almost say the entire valley, to ourselves. If the verdict of the villagers could have been taken, we should, perhaps, have been voted a queer set, familiar as dwellers in Franconia are with the sight of idle tourists, —

"Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted."

We were neither "rapid" nor "gay," and it was still only the first week of June; if we were summer boarders, therefore, we must be of some unusual early-blooming variety.

TO VINA
IN SOUVENIR

JUNE IN FRANCONIA.

First came a lady, in excellent repute among the savants of Europe and America as an entomologist, but better known to the general public as a writer of stories. With her, as companion and assistant, was a doctor of laws, who is also a newspaper proprietor, a voluminous author, an art connoisseur, and many things beside. They had turned their backs thus unseasonably upon the metropolis, and in this pleasant out-of-the-way corner were devoting themselves to one absorbing pursuit, — the pursuit of moths. On their daily drives, two or three insect nets dangled conspicuously from the carriage, — the footman, thrifty soul, was never backward to take a hand, — and evening after evening the hotel piazza was illuminated till midnight with lamps and lanterns, while these enthusiasts waved the same white nets about, gathering in geometrids, noctuids, sphinges, and Heaven knows what else, all of them to perish painlessly in numerous "cyanide bottles," which bestrewed the piazza by night, and (happy thought!) the closed piano by day. In this noble occupation I sometimes played at helping; but with only meagre success, my most

brilliant catch being nothing more important than a "beautiful *Io*." The kind-hearted lepidopterist lingered with gracious emphasis upon the adjective, and assured me that the specimen would be all the more valuable because of a finger-mark which my awkwardness had left upon one of its wings. So — to the credit of human nature be it spoken — so does amiability sometimes get the better of the feminine scientific spirit. To the credit of human nature, I say; for, though her practice of the romancer's art may doubtless have given to this good lady some peculiar flexibility of mind, some special, individual facility in subordinating a lower truth to a higher, it surely may be affirmed, also, of humanity in general, that few things become it better than its inconsistencies.

Of the four remaining members of the company, two were botanists, and two — for the time — ornithologists. But the botanists were lovers of birds, also, and went nowhere without opera-glasses; while the ornithologists, in turn, did not hold themselves above some elementary knowledge of plants, and amused themselves with now and then point-