

**THE OLD
MAN'S HOME**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649368433

The old man's home by W. Adams

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

W. ADAMS

**THE OLD
MAN'S HOME**



THE
OLD MAN'S HOME

BY THE

REV. W. ADAMS, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD: AUTHOR OF
"THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS"

*For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a
country.*—HEB. xi. 14

New Edition, with Engravings



RIVINGTONS
London, Oxford, and Cambridge
1870

141. K. 389



CHAPTER I

EACH IN HIS HIDDEN SPHERE OF JOY OR WOE,
OUR HERMIT SPIRITS DWELL AND RANGE APART;
OUR EYES SEE ALL AROUND IN GLOOM OR GLOW—
HUES OF THEIR OWN, FRESH BORROW'D FROM THE HEART.

Christian Year

THERE is a scene on the coast of the Isle of Wight with which I have long since become familiar, but which never fails to exercise a soothing influence on my mind. It is at the eastern extremity of the landslip. Large portions of the cliff have fallen away, and formed a dell so broken and irregular, that the ground has the appearance of having at one time been agitated by an earthquake. But Nature has only suffered the convulsion to take place, in order that afterwards she might bestow her gifts upon this favoured spot with a more unsparing hand. The wild and picturesque character of the landscape is now almost lost sight of in its richness and repose. The new soil is protected from the storms of winter by the cliff from which it has fallen, and, sloping towards the south, is open to the full warmth and

radiance of the sun. In consequence of this, the landslip has, as it were, a climate of its own; and often, when the more exposed parts of the country still look dreary and desolate, is in the enjoyment of the blessings of an early spring. Such was the season at which I first visited it. The grey fragments of rock which lay scattered on the ground were almost hid by the luxuriance of the under-wood, and countless wild flowers were growing beneath their shade. Below, the eye rested upon a little bay, formed by the gradual advance of the sea; and all was so calm and peaceful, that as I watched the gentle undulation of the waters, I could fancy them to be moving to and fro with a stealthy step, lest they should disturb the tranquillity of the scene.

I have said that a visit to this favoured spot never fails with me to have a soothing influence. I feel as though I were treading on enchanted ground, and the whole scene were allegorical; for it reminds me that, in like manner, the wreck of all our earthly hopes and plans may but lay open our hearts to the influence of a warmer sunshine, and enrich them with flowers which the storms of life have no longer power to destroy. But I cannot now tell whether these thoughts have their origin in the scene itself, or in an incident that occurred the first time I visited it.

It was on the evening of the 18th of April, 1843. I had been long gazing upon it, and had imagined that I was alone, when my attention was arrested by a sigh from some one near me. I turned round, and saw a venerable old man seated upon a fragment of the fallen cliff, beneath which the violets were very thickly clustering. His hair was white as silver; his face deeply furrowed, and yet pre-*va*ded by a general expression of childish simplicity, which formed a strong contrast to the lines which must have been indented upon it by care and suffering, no less than the lapse of years. I cannot recall the words of the chance observation which I addressed to him: but it related to the lateness and inclemency of the season, and I was at once struck by the singularity of his reply. "Yes, yes," he said musingly, "the winter has indeed been very long and dreary; and yet it has been gladdened, from time to time, by glimpses of the coming spring."

I now observed him more closely. There was a strangeness in his dress which first excited my suspicion, and I fancied that I could detect a restlessness in his light blue eye which spoke of a mind that had gone astray. "Old man," I said, "you seem tired; have you come from far?"

"Ah, woe is me," he replied, in the same melancholy

tone as before; "I have indeed travelled a long and solitary journey; and at times I am weary, very weary; but my resting-place now must be near at hand."

"And whither, then," I asked, "are you going?"

"Home, sir, home," he replied; and while his voice lost its sadness, his face seemed to brighten, and his eye grow steady at the thought; "I hope and believe that I am going home."

I now imagined that I had judged him hastily, and that the answers which I had ascribed to a wandering intellect proceeded in truth from depth of religious feeling. In order to ascertain this, I asked: "Have you been long a traveller?"

"Fourscore and thirteen years," he replied; and observing my look of assumed wonder, he repeated a second time, more slowly and sadly than before, "Fourscore and thirteen years."

"The home," I said, "must be very far off that requires so long a journey."

"Nay, nay, kind sir, do not speak thus," he answered: "our home is never far off; and I might perhaps have arrived at it years and years ago. But often during the early spring I stopped to gather the flowers that grew beneath my feet; and once I laid me down and fell asleep upon the way. And so more than fourscore and