

XVIII

ASSISI

WHEN you get to Assisi—reached by a forty-five minute motor drive down the Perugian heights, across a fertile valley through which flows the Tiber, and up a stiff pull to the city gates—you may well imagine yourself back in San Marino, because of the precipitous streets, and their utter disregard for direction.

You will like this quaint old town with its mediæval atmosphere. You will like the occasional glimpse of a girl, coming down the stone steps that connect streets of different altitudes, and the way she carries a sack of grain upon her head, and the way her pretty fingers curl beneath the handle of an Etruscan vase! With eyes half closed you will picture all sorts of intrigues being acted among its twisted alleyways, and you will know the frowning Rocca, that immense gray ruin, which from its higher perch keeps a sullen eye upon the town, was the scene of unparalleled deviltry—or your imagination has deteriorated.

Among the famous people born here were the poet Propertius; also the founder of the Franciscan mon-