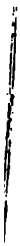

# FOREST LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A NEW HOME."

Mrs. Caroline M. Kirkland.

"Where are the advantages, beyond the means, first, of mere subsistence, secondly, of information, which ought not to be indifferent to true philosophers? And yet, where exists the true philosopher who has been able, effectually, to detach himself from the common mode of thinking on such subjects?"

SIR W. SCOTT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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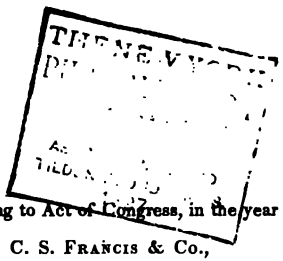



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# PREFACE.

Some great man of antiquity said that if one were carried up to the skies, and permitted to behold all the wonders of heaven and earth, his pleasure would not be complete until he had returned to the lower world to recount what he had seen. And it must be true, for, even on the most petty scale, the feeling to which he alludes is constantly discoverable. We cannot migrate from one point on this little ball to another, without a disposition to give those we have left behind an idea of what is to most of them an unseen world.

The first plunge into print costs indeed a desperate effort; but when the instinctive shivering is once conquered, the chilly element loses half its terrors, especially if we see kind hands outstretched on all sides to encourage our attempt. That such has been my own fortune, I gratefully acknowledge.

The following pages constitute rather a continuation than a sequel to the sketches offered to the public more than two years ago, under the title of "A new Home — who'll follow?" I say a continuation, — not that I mean to threaten, in this day of the decline and fall of Annuals, a Western Biennial — but simply to reserve my right to prate further in the same strain if I should feel thereunto prompted.

I am credibly informed that ingenious malice has been busy in finding substance for the shadows which were

called up to give variety to the pages of "A new Home," — in short, that I have been accused of substituting personality for impersonation. This I utterly deny; and I am sincerely sorry that any one has been persuaded to regard as unkind what was announced merely as a playful sketch, and not as a serious history.

A landscape, however true its outline, however correct its coloring, is only a study for the artist, unless something human appear in the foreground to give an air of life to the scene; and in attempting to paint a mountain or a cathedral, it is considered essential to introduce human figures, as a standard by which the imagination may be aided to a just conception of these objects. For reasons somewhat analogous, it appeared to me at once the easiest mode of relieving the tediousness of mere narrative, and the most effectual means of conveying a general idea of the aspect of society in those regions where what is elsewhere mere abstraction is made the practical rule of life, to bring on the stage a phantasm of men and women who should as naturally as possible act in illustration of my subject. If, in drawing on experience for this purpose, I have inadvertently given offence, I regret it, as I said before. I would fain "avoid all appearance of evil," in this as in every other particular. It has appeared to some few of the more enthusiastic of our Western patriots, that there is something treasonable in exhibiting the settlers of a new country as deficient in some of the amenities of life and language. A *recueil de pièces justificatives* would be very amusing, but I shall forbear to defend myself.

I shall not readily renounce my privilege of remarking freely on all subjects of general interest. In matters of opinion I claim the freedom which is my birthright as an American, and still further, the plainness of speech which

is a striking characteristic of this Western country, the land of my adoption. I shall not consider myself in the position of a foreign tourist, whose one stinging truth, though varnished over with a thick layer of compliment, shall rankle in the sensitive heart of my countrymen long after the flattery is forgotten. Who more justly entitled to the privilege of speaking the truth about us than one of our very selves, — one whose lot is cast in, for better for worse, with the settlers of the backwoods?

Be it remembered that what I profess to delineate is the scarce reclaimed wilderness, — the forest, — the pioneers, — the settlers, — the people who, coming here of their own free will, — each with his own individual views of profit or advancement, — have, as a mass, been the mighty instrument in the hands of Providence of preparing the way for civilization, for intelligence, for refinement, for religion. I eschew and disclaim all notice of the older settlements — the towns and villages in which the spirit of emulation and of imitation has nearly annihilated all that was characteristic of new country life. Of these I have nothing to say; for has not their aspect been painted a thousand times? There is still a dash of Western wildness about them, it is true; — a freshness of coloring may still be traced by a close observer; — but my theme lies elsewhere, and this should be borne in mind.

It must be confessed that I have found, this time, scarcely even the shadow of a thread on which to string my wandering thoughts. I felt quite unequal to "Michigan, 'historical, statistic, and descriptive,'" and I was as little inclined to a *mere* fiction. So I throw myself on the indulgence of the reader, hoping he will allow me to say my say in my own fashion, and be content to gather whatever is worth having — as imparting a correct general idea of this new world — from all sorts of incongruous things

and places; as the gold-hunter shakes the precious dust from the points of the moist rushes, — nay, but that is too ambitious a comparison! — or as the chemist scrapes the tiny stream of opium from the stalks of a thousand poppies; — that again has unlucky associations, but we will let it pass. I shall take all kindness for granted.

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I.

What power benign, bestowed by bounteous Heaven,
Links in one chain the hearts of human kind?
Binds, when by Fate each bond beside is riven,
Man to his fellow, — mind to distant mind?
One spring for all our tears, one chord entwined
With all our smiles, — is Nature's blest decree:
O, priceless gift! to forest-life consigned,
What were our soulless hours, bereft of thee,
Shorn of thy gracious aid, divinest Sympathy!

II.

The careless world, of worldly hearts the school,
Thrills yet within its ice at touch of thine;
Its genius, knowledge-chilled and bowed to rule —
Trained but to analyze, dispute, refine,
And crush with critic skill the light divine,
Owns yet this tie of brotherhood, and sees
With answering drops the dew of sorrow springing,
Or joins in heart the dance beneath the trees
With forest-girls their simple carols singing,
While, through deep-sounding woods, young Mirth is sweetly ringing.

III.

"Time rolls his ceaseless course." 'Twas soothly sung
By HIM, the Minstrel well beloved, whose lay,
By Echo borne, o'er these far shores has rung,
And found even to the Wilderness its way:
And though, in these still shades, the sober day
Shine not on ventures strange and deed of power,
Yet human hearts throb warmly 'neath its ray,
And Hope, and Love, and Grief — our mortal dower —
And Joy, with tearful smile, here rule by turns the hour.

IV.

What though in Time's swift tide HIS gifted eye
Caught mirrored hosts and pageants passing fair;
Though glittering arms and robes of gorgeous dye
Lent to his visions their enchantments rare,
The mighty Master's magic lay not there;
The power that stirred the universal heart
Dwells in the forest, in the common air —
In cottage lone, as in th' o'erburdened mart —
For Nature's painter learned from Nature all his art.

V.

Not ours the wand, — not ours the Wizard's lore, —
Not ours the touch that made the heart-strings thrill,
That woke the smile where smile ne'er played before,
And called from stony eyes sweet tears at will!
A thousand years must mourning drops distil
From pallid flowers, and groaning oaks reply
To breezes sighing o'er the wood-crowned hill,
Ere earth again shall borrow from the sky
A poet for all time — a name that cannot die.

VI.

But Nature offers yet her holy feast,
  Herself presiding, shrined in softest light;
Showering rich tokens on her sacred priest,
  And him vouchsafing visions dazzling bright;
  But scorning not the lowliest acolyte
Whom love allures within her blest domain;
  And so propitious to each willing rite,
Even hand like mine may weave, nor weave in vain,
Frail wreaths and garlands wild to deck her rustic fane

# FOREST LIFE.

## CHAPTER I.

'Tis to create, and in creating, live
A being more intense, that we endow
With forms our fancy.

BYRON.

If any body may be excused for writing a book, it is the dweller in the wilderness; and this must, I think, be evident to all who give the matter a moment's reflection. My neighbor, Mrs. Rower, says, indeed, that there are books enough in the world, and *one too many;* but it will never do to consult the neighbors, since what is said of a prophet is doubly true of an author. Indeed, it is of very little use to consult any body. What is written from impulse is generally the most readable, and this fact is an encouragement to those who are conscious of no particular qualification beyond a desire to write. People write because they cannot help it. The heart longs for sympathy, and when it cannot be found close at hand, will seek it the world over. We never tell our thoughts but with

the hope of an echo in the thoughts of others. We set forth in the most attractive guise the treasures of our fancy, because we hope to warm into life imaginations like our own. If the desire for sympathy could lie dormant for a time, there would be no more new books, and we should find leisure to read those already written.

This accounts for a second attempt to delineate some of the very ordinary scenes, manners and customs of Western Life. No wild adventures, — no blood-curdling hazards, — no romantic incidents, — could occur within my limited and sober sphere. No new lights have appeared above my narrow horizon. Common-place all, yet I must tell it. Those who have been accustomed to live in the midst of a wide circle of pleasant acquaintance, — and another, a dearer though narrower circle of beloved friends, — where every taste finds its appropriate gratification, and every feeling of affection its warm response, — can scarcely be expected to appreciate the yearning with which the dweller in the far distant wilderness looks back upon the land of his early love; the land of society, of conversation, of that collision of differing yet kindred minds, — without which the best of us become stupid, — the land of churches, of books, of music, of pictures, — of all that can delight the imagination as well as all that ministers to our better nature.

Those only whom fate or a wayward choice has removed from these advantages can describe the

aspect which they wear when viewed from an almost hopeless distance; or the sense of alienation, of isolation, of loneliness, which is apt to beset the heart or the imagination of the emigrant in moments of depression, or long hours of ill health. I have sometimes smiled to detect myself indulging feelings nearly akin to those which Cowper ascribes to the "gentle savage" who was carried to England, and then most unmercifully returned to his island. He fancies Omai

> Asking of the surge that bathes his foot
> If ever it has washed those distant shores.

And we might be disposed to ask just such questions, if an ocean, instead of two or three inland seas, rolled between us and our ancient home.

Every thing that awakens associations connected with the cherished idea — grown doubly dear by the aid of time and distance — is hailed with a strange pleasure. Faces that we have viewed with indifference in the company of those we loved, bring with them to the wilderness the impress of those beloved looks, and win from us at once some share of the liking which belongs of right only to the friends whose image is called up by their presence. The man whom we have passed in the streets a thousand times, without knowing or caring to know his name, if he enter our cot by accident to inquire his way to "the West," is hailed as a friend, and plied with questions, as if it were probable that, in those crowded thoroughfares,

his objects of interest should have been the same with ours. As the earth is perfumed with the fragrance of the rose which has reposed on its bosom, so the most trivial occurrence seems important when it is entwined with a reminiscence of all we have loved and left.

Is it surprising then that those, who are shut out from almost every thing that taste or habit has endeared, should desire to link themselves with the absent by describing the objects around them, the affairs which form their occupation, the people with whom they associate, the modes of life which contrast so oddly with the customs of the older world? There is, to be sure, but little to be told; but that little, being told, renews in some degree the bond of union with those from whom we are separated at an almost impossible distance. It helps too to give some degree of distinctness to the ideas that our friends have formed of our condition; and if the view should frighten some to whom certain ameliorations of existence are of the last importance, it may console others, who are able to perceive that humble quiet is of itself a great good, even though much else that is desirable be lacking.

This communication with the distant world — this viewless chain — this mental telegraph, more rapid than electricity itself, has a value beyond all computation or comparison. It is another vitality — a newly-explored world of inexhaustible enjoy-

ment; within, but undisturbed by a world of turmoil and care. It affords a charm that can make even society forgotten, at least at times, and which in fact supplies in some measure its place, by a magic as potent as that which enabled the sage to show to Surrey

> The ladye of his heart,
> Albeit betwixt them roared the ocean grim.

For those who write are never without a magic mirror, within which they can discern at pleasure the shadowy forms of those who are to read.

Here then is another tissue — not without many a rent and many a seam — of Western sketches; — more "skimble-skamble stuff" about woods and wilds, and every-day, plain people, — men who would "shake a king by the hand," or perhaps "ask him the price of the throne he sat on," without a misgiving; — and women, who, after conning over the splendors of the young queen's nuptials, talk with majestic philosophy of "so much fuss about nothing!"

In describing those in whose minds this estimate of worldly advantages is sedulously cherished, it is difficult to avoid awakening occasionally an idea that we suppose the present aspect of society in the new country is susceptible of improvement; that we may be in favor of adding some finishing touches to our present degree of civilization and refinement. To this charge it would be in vain to

plead not guilty; and we shall attempt no disguise. A portrait, however showily painted, is worth nothing, if it be not a resemblance. A painter would show his skill but poorly, who, in his zeal for beautifying his subject, should leave out a wart, even though it grew on the tip of one's nose. Equally unwise is he who exaggerates a wrinkle, or throws too heavy a shade over a complexion that needs no deepening. But he must be allowed superlatively silly, who will quarrel with a portrait which is sufficiently like, merely because the outline is not that of another whom he affects to despise, but whom he secretly considers much handsomer than himself.

I profess to offer only rambling impressions, not a sober view, the result of deliberate and discriminating judgment. This I leave to wiser heads and more industrious investigators. Women's wisdom is always laughed at, so that we have no inducement to be profound, and least of all on themes connected with political economy, the discussion of which our master seems to regard among his exclusive rights. Indeed, we are fairly threatened that, if we persist in claiming to run neck and neck with the nobler sex on these subjects, we lose our precious privilege of irresponsibility.

> "No more nonsense! no more fiddle-faddle!
> There must be grain in your chaff!"

I, for one, am warned. I adhere deliberately

to fiddle-faddle and its immunities. As I consider it beyond question that a copy of this incontrovertible view of the aspect of things in the infancy of our dear state, will be provided with an especial crypt in the corner-stone of the great University buildings, I have however judged it necessary to be very exact in all things calculated to throw light on our primitive manners and customs.

I acknowledge at the outset that I have no story to tell. What follows is like Ariosto's poem in *one* respect — "it has neither beginning nor end, further than any detached period may be said to possess them." I should like to carry the resemblance further, for "*he* had the art of giving to individual parts an interest which the work does not possess as a whole;" but it is only the defects of the great which it is easy for the little to imitate.

My rambles will, as I foresee, carry me all over our beautiful state. If, in the course of my wanderings, I should venture occasionally to lead my reader to the borders of one of those deep but waveless little lakes, which abound in this land of looking-glasses, — lakes which not even the offer of being transformed into mill-ponds, could bribe to give a false or a flattering reflection, — and if he should chance therein to discern features which he does not admire, I trust I may pass unvisited for the almost unpardonable sin, when I state that I have made all due and solicitous inquiry for a pair of those truly American, and never-sufficiently-to-

be-extolled "glorification-spectacles," first introduced and recommended to the world by my much-respected friend, Major Downing. Numerous are the communications I have addressed to the major, both at his principal residence of Downingville, and at his Washington lodgings; but receiving no answer, I conclude, knowing the well-principled punctuality of my friend, that he must be absent just now, on one of those pieces of secret service, so many of which are found requisite for the well-being of these States — perhaps negotiating with the émperor of Russia for the purchase of a herd of polar bears, to be trained to eat Florida Indians; which training, I should think, might be easily managed, by supplying them for a few months with other dark-complexioned people, who might be had at a cheaper rate.

## CHAPTER II.

Visions of faery, stay! ye leave me dark!
Your magic flashes pale the healthful ray
That I must live by; your deceptive glare
Strikes out the light of the pure, holy day,
And steals the beauty of the skies away.

Tu fais une mine d'une aune.
GOETHE.

I CAN realize very sensibly the power of the patent glorifiers to which I have alluded; for I once borrowed of a political friend the optics he had used in travelling through the state, with a view to qualify himself to illustrate, by apt local allusions, a speech he intended making, preparatory to his nomination for some highly-dignified office in the gift of the people — an office in which he expected to have an opportunity to sacrifice his private feelings to the public good, by accepting a pecuniary compensation of considerable amount. After his object was attained, he had of course no further use for his magic glasses; and, by his kind leave, I obtained their invaluable aid for a tour of observation, certain that I should now be able to give the most fascinating and satisfactory accounts of all I saw and heard. But my usual ill fortune pursued me, and all my hopes of writing travels, with which no fault could be found, were nipped

in the bud by an accident which I shall now proceed to describe.

All my preparations for this journey, so fraught with pleasurable anticipations, had been made with unusual care. My travelling-basket (an old and tried friend, somewhat the worse for wear) was supplied with two or three capacious note-books — not French toys, "shell of tortoise, clasped with gold," but real, serviceable journalizers. The old lumber-wagon, with a pair of plough-horses, equipped in working-harness, to withstand the *corduroy* and swamp-holes, received me and my luggage; and with a veil of green sarcenet closely drawn to save my precious eyes, — precious especially, because without their aid the generosity of my friend would be of no avail, — I commenced my journey. I deferred placing in their appropriate position the instruments which were to make me the most popular of sight-seers, until I should have reached new localities, where the force of habit would not be likely to diminish their power. Old Dobbin and Dagon jogged along at their usual pace, and I occupied myself for some time in completing our little internal arrangements, and ascertaining, by the most rigid ransacking of my treacherous memory, that nothing essential to the success of my undertaking had been left behind.

These cares being disposed of, and the immediate vicinity of our village passed, I drew forth my treasures, and prepared a note-book for actual ser-

vice. The first look was cast in my lap, as charity begins at home. There lay my simple basket and note-book, each faded tint renewed, each time-worn corner reburnished; while about the edges of both played a prismatic halo — an edging of rainbow; such (only more brilliant) as will sometimes be the effect of that bewitched condition of the eyes, which is the consequence of over-dosing with quinine. So dazzling was the whole, that I carefully drew down my veil before I ventured to look abroad in the sunshine.

At first the view by the road-side seemed scarcely altered from my old habit of seeing with my own eyes; but I soon found this was to be ascribed to the green veil, which softened all hues to a sort of neutral tint, leaving very little brightness to the brightest, and adding several not very pleasing shades to the darker ones. I could not help wondering whether some foreign travellers might not thoughtlessly have equipped themselves with sarcenet veils for their American tour — but to my story.

No sooner was the envious shade removed, than a scene of wonders opened upon me. We were passing over Snake Hill, — an elevation which had always before appeared to me covered with stunted oak bushes, relieved at intervals by a huge stump or a girdled tree. What was my surprise to find its gently-swelling sides planted with luxurious sugar-maples and lofty elms, with fantastic arbors formed here and there amid their stately trunks by

garlands of honey-suckle and eglantine, so closely interlaced, that no ray of the fervid sun penetrated their flowery depths, even at high noon! The only vestige I could discover of the wild oak growth which I had supposed to characterize this region, was to be found in the most delicately-fancied garden-chairs, which abounded in these shady bowers, and of which the gnarled roots and twisted branches of the native tree furnished the material. As we proceeded slowly over the Macadamized road whose broad bosom courted the tread of our delighted steeds, I could discern youths and maidens habited with the simplicity of Arcadia, and the taste of Madame Vestris, "tending a few sheep," at picturesque intervals in the grove. Such, with little variation, was the aspect presented by what we have always considered as oak-openings!

When we approached the more settled part of the country, new and glorious views opened upon us. On every side pillared palaces of painted pine lined the thronged thoroughfares, while marble and mosaic marked the mansions of the more wealthy. Gorgeous peacocks unfurled their flagrant fans in courts musical with the murmur of magnificent fountains. Ladies lovelier than light reclined on lawns of emerald velvet, or loitered languidly at gilded lattices, lily-hung and lace-shaded, inhaling delicious perfumes, and listening to lays of love, warbled to thrilling lutes and silver-voiced lyres. Here would be seen a benevolent being bestowing

upon a bashful beggar burdens of balmy bounty; there a conscientious creditor calling back the careless calculator who had incautiously overpaid his account. Barristers with beaming eyes were evidently beseeching their clients to consider before they leaped into law; physicians prescribing to their pleased patients delicate diet and amusing excursions, rather than doleful dumps and odious doses. Now a band of blooming children sporting, blossom-wreathed, over the embroidered meadows; and again, a festive dance of happy villagers, — the damsels in pink bodices, the gallants in blue shorts, — threading the green alleys, and flinging flowers at each other in their fairy flight, at proper intervals in the music. In short, all seemed like the visions that hover over the pillows of poets who write for the opera, or like the still more enchanting reality of the Cashmerian Saturnalia of roses.

I was sadly loath to leave these delightful localities; but the modern mode of making tours while one is sitting stock still, staring at one set of objects, never suited my taste, and, since observation was my object, I felt obliged to go on.

The scene became gradually more rural as we receded from the regions of rare splendor, which I have been attempting to describe. Cottages now appeared, roofed with golden thatch, and enriched with mosses, like silk-plush; every casement was curtained with veined ivy, satin-leaved, and every door surrounded with its group of lovely mothers,

and children whom Sir Thomas Lawrence could not have rendered more bewitchingly beautiful. Odors of ineffable purity and power filled the transparent atmosphere; gushing streams of crystal water sparkled and whispered along beds of silver sand, on whose borders the sportive infant slaked his thirst from cups of agate and ivory.

As we stopped, for a moment, to contemplate this scene, I felt that the heat of the day and the excitement of my feelings had rendered me inconveniently thirsty, and I made this an apology for alighting, and entering one of these poetical paradises, to ask one of its lovely inmates for — I tried in vain for a redeeming paraphrase — a drink. I had only time to cast a hasty glance around at the exquisite symmetry and neatness with which the few articles required by a life of Arcadian simplicity were arranged, when a brimming goblet of the sparkling water was presented, with a deep reverence, by a girl of seraphic beauty. After this refreshment, I had no decent excuse for remaining longer, and I was preparing to remount the vehicle, which I then, for the first time, observed to have been fresh painted and resplendently varnished, and in short made to correspond in some degree with the scenery through which it was passing, while old Dobbin and Dagon had new coats well brushed, and harness which gave back, at every point, with interest, the rays of the burning sun. But ere I had placed my foot on the step, no longer

mud-incrusted, but glowing with Brussels carpet, a voice from one of those charming mothers arrested my course.

"Lovely lady!" she began, — and my ears were too sweetly enchanted to allow of disputing the propriety of the expression, — "lovely lady, will you let my Coralie look for one moment at your glasses?"

Who could hesitate? In an instant the precious loan of my friend was intrusted to the dimpled fingers of an infant cherub; in another, — lay scattered in a million of fragments on the ground!

"Well! I swan!" exclaimed the mamma, giving a round box on the ear to a dirty little urchin; "what made you let the little hussy have your specs?"

I raised my aching eyes to her face, and stood speechless. Why should I describe the dingy locks, — the check-apron, — the shoeless feet of the object of my admiration! Why picture anew a tumble-down log-house, with its appropriate perfumes of milk-emptins, bread, and fried onions? Why speak of Dobbin and Dagon, shorn of their beams, and lopping down their heads, to crop the scrub-oaks, which surrounded them, or of the old wagon, patched and mended more than enough, yet requiring more patching and mending?

It is needless to dwell on these particulars. It is painful to tell of log-causeways, now seeming far rougher than of old, or of rustic maidens, looking

coarse only by contrast with the illusions of the past. Homeward I took my melancholy way, resolutely closing my eyes upon prospects of merely ordinary beauty, which I knew would be, for the present, divested even of their real charms, and concluding in my own mind it would be better to content myself with seeing with my own eyes. And after all, where would be the use of giving a very flowery description, unless I could be sure that such of my readers as might be attracted to see for themselves could be furnished with patent glorifiers too? Upon the whole, I have concluded to be satisfied without pleasing every body.

This journey may have been only a dream, but if so, it certainly contained, like some other dreams, much of the "inner life of things."

## CHAPTER III.

Let's take the world as some wide scene,
Through which, in frail but buoyant boat,
With skies now dark and now serene,
Together thou and I must float.

MOORE.

As, in this fitful and fancy-led world, it is prudent to secure one faithful and confidential friend, rather than to seek to be generally beloved, so it is better for one who is desirous of communicating thoughts and impressions which have proved interesting to himself, but which may yet possess little intrinsic value, to aim steadily at pleasing a single reader, — to seek for the sympathy of one alone, to throw himself upon the indulgence of an individual, rather than hope to interest the undistinguishing crowd. We are all apt to be cross or stupid sometimes, — how delightful to be so with impunity! And if we *have* any bright moments, how pleasant to feel that we are making some amends to the dear patient soul who has borne our vagaries with unruffled brow!

It is on this principle that I have resolved to write solely for that generous being who was so easily pleased with the earlier history of Montacute; who entered so readily into our moving difficulties

and disappointments; who laughed so heartily at our new-country expedients, and bore our grumblings with such unexampled equanimity. To you exclusively then, O best of readers! to you whose tried kindness encourages me to speak out my whole mind, without fear of reproach or ridicule, are the following pages addressed. Let a league be established between us at the outset, — a league offensive and defensive. Bear with me when I am dull, and take my part when I am abused, and I, on the other hand, will wink at your napping over my best stories, and maintain your infallible taste against all challengers. Is it agreed? I read in your intelligent smile an answer favorable to my undertaking; so I begin without dread of unfriendly criticism.

Shall we venture to unite the new thread with the old? to take up our portfolio just as we laid it down, and continue in the old strain our desultory notices of the village and its vicinity? New-country customs and ways of thinking favor such an arrangement of our materials, for we consider twenty miles round only a moderate extent of neighborhood, — a fact which must in all reason be supposed to prevent every approach to a narrow and contracted view of things. And indeed I must protest against being limited even to this liberal allowance of scope, since I mean the history of one settlement to include that of many others. My

daguerreotype is of a new and improved construction, making nothing of distance, so there be only plenty of sunshine, and no intervening mists.

But though I have named the daguerreotype, it must be acknowledged that the restless, ever-shifting character of our population would make a faithful chronicle of their doings bear no small resemblance to the phantasmagoria exhibited by that pretty scientific toy, the magic-lantern; for our neighbors seem bit with the strange madness of ceaseless transit, flitting mostly westward, like ghosts that shun the coming day. Some of them — not a few indeed — are now living on their third or fourth Western farm; — successive purchases and residences in scarcely more than a corresponding number of years. The effect of this blundering search after happiness is what might be expected. One would think they must have vowed themselves to a nomadic life, and, as a natural consequence, renounced all the dear delights of home; all idea of providing domestic comforts; all interest in public improvements; all local attachments and neighborly sympathies. These have indeed the true spirit of pioneers, and their peculiarity of taste has done much to expedite the rapid settlement of the wilds. They purchase a lot or two of "government land;" build a log-house, fence a dozen acres or so, plough half of them, girdle the trees, and then sell out to a new comer; one whose less resolute spirit has perhaps quailed a little before

the difficulties of the untouched forest. The pioneer is then ready for a new purchase, a new clearing, and a new sale. How his wife and children enjoy themselves meanwhile is matter of small doubt, but this is a trifle for the present. The future — the bright, far-ahead, vague Western future — is to make up for all. The eager adventurer, unscared by difficulty, undiscouraged by disappointment, still "chases airy good," contenting himself with mere existence *en attendant*, forgetting that only to-day is his own.

There was at one time some show of reason in all this; so profitable was the flitting plan during the early speculating times, that many who began with an "eighty" only, found themselves, after a few such changes, possessed of great farms, — whether of stock or implements in proportion may be another question, — but land — the grand object of ambition — was easily tripled by those who were able to turn their strength and hardihood to account in breaking the way for the less adventurous. Now the case is far different, and the advantages of these frequent changes are not always evident to the unconcerned spectator.

Nor is the spirit of change evinced in migratory habits only. Horses, oxen, wagons, carts, are equally subject to mutation. Some people scarce ever have the same for six months at a time. I do not observe that such of our community as are especially attached to this system, grow rich any

faster than the less enterprising, but they never seem to doubt that each change is for the better. "Any thing for a trade," is a common expression. We have seen the scrip or certificate for eight hundred acres of soldiers' bounty land, lying in some far south-western region, sold for ten sheep; and in a week resold for a drove of cattle, — each dealer well satisfied with his bargain. A broken-down hack will be exchanged for another stone-blind, to the great chuckling of both parties. This sort of traffic in horses is, I believe, of foreign origin, but it would appear to be a thing easily learned. When regular business is dull, these *entr'acte* proceedings are more common. They serve to keep the spirit of trade from stagnation, a state which it dreads above all others. Not but there are many among us who are as averse to this shifting plan as if they had been born and bred under the shadow of the dikes of the king of Holland — but the enterprising, being the majority, rule the hour. And it is not to be denied that the quietists, though willing to follow in the track of the more adventurous, would never have penetrated and ploughed this wide-spread and teeming land, so lately the home of the deer, the bear, and the wild wolf, now fast becoming one wide expanse of industry and abundance.

Our little village has of course been affected, like the rest of the Western world, by the depressed state of the times. It has not increased with the

gourd-like suddenness, which marked the upw career of such settlements a few years ago. Ev thing but the outpouring abundance of mot Earth has dwindled and looked blighted since great commercial revulsion which succeeded land-mania. Even our little, isolated, unimport village was not too insignificant to be swept by skirts of the great whirlwind; and distances — "magnificent," like those of our seat of gove ment, — but simply blank and bare, or cumbe with oak-brush, intervene between the houses e in the "business part" of the place. Buildi are still less ostentatious in size than former fences content themselves without pickets, and pe is forgotten by general consent. Corn-cribs and p sties are as large, and — truth to say — as w filled as ever; but they are made of slender tai rack poles, which need no cost of sawing. T men wear their old coats; the women turn a alter their faded dresses; and the children taught that it is wholesome to go barefoot. short, if the axiom that "economy is wealt have any value, we are all in a fair way to be ri and as soon as we are rich, we all intend to very happy indeed.

## CHAPTER IV.

We were not made to wander on the wing,
But, if we would be happy, we must bring
Our buoyed hearts to a plain and simple school.
PERCIVAL.

NEXT to talking about ourselves, the pleasantest thing is talking about our neighbors. This is a fact which every body concedes in general, yet nobody is willing to apply in particulars; so I trust I shall secure a reputation for candor by confessing that my foible (if I have one) is love of gossip. I am no great tea-drinker, nor yet an immoderate snuffer; I am not able to knit a stocking during a ride of ten miles on a hard-trotting horse; nor have I ever taken geese away from home to pick rather than refuse an invitation for an afternoon visit. So there are people that excel me in the true tokens of gossipry, — yet I am a hopeful scholar. If we should ever establish an "Order of the Golden Cricket," or any other sociable sisterhood, in these parts, I shall be a candidate for secondary honors at least. I know who will have the Grand Cross and Collar.

Now, if there be a propensity in the feminine nature on which it is barbarous to place any restriction, it is this. What should we say of the man who should rivet down the safety-valve of a

steamer? Should we not hold him accountable for all the mischiefs that might follow? Or of him that should build a mill-dam, and omit the flood-gate? Ought he not to pay for all the fences that might be carried off by the consequent inundation?

My former sketches were of the safety-valve and flood-gate kind. They were the overflowings of a reservoir of new sights, new sounds, and new notions. They wrote themselves, so to speak. They were "First Impressions" — which, by the bye, is the most fortunate title ever yet devised for a book of travels. First impressions are the only ones worth recording for the amusement or enlightenment of those who stay at home; and they must be arrested on the instant, or they lose their sparkle. It is in vain, after new things have become familiar, to attempt to make them amusing. The bead is gone forever.

After all that is said of the influence of habit, I was never fully aware of its power until after some residence in the new country. I never knew or believed that the oddest, most inconvenient, or even odious customs, the most incorrect modes of speech, and the most incongruous jumbling of all that ought to be kept separate, could have become so familiar as to be almost forgotten. I had supposed that whatever might be the opposing influences around us, our own views, and the imperious requisitions of our habits, would continue to wage war with every particular of the new life. Such a

change is at first so violent that we might apply to it some of the characteristics of the final one: — "a separation from all that has hitherto engaged or delighted us; a change not only of the place, but of the manner of our being; an entrance into a state not only which we know not, but which perhaps we have not faculties to know;" — yet it is only while the novelty lasts that these things strike us with that vividness, which prompts us to describe them. At first nothing is more natural than to think and speak of the contrasts that are shocking us at every turn, but a few years' familiarity with what we dislike makes it nearly indifferent. As far as modes of speech are concerned, we find ourselves much more likely to adopt unconsciously the quaint and incorrect expressions that assail our ears in daily intercourse, than to inspire our neighbors with a desire for habits of greater correctness; and after this assimilation takes place, we do not recollect to describe what at first seemed so odd. I confess myself to have become too much Westernized to be a competent painter of Western peculiarities.

Still, there is enough to say; but, bless me! when I attempt to draw fancy-pictures, bearing only some general resemblance to particular classes of the human family, I am horror-stricken to find myself a Mephistopheles. Every creation of my not very lively imagination instantly becomes a living, breathing, and very angry reality. Shadows adopt sub-

stance, and forthwith avenge themselves upon this unlucky potency of mine, by looking hideous, and shaking their unkempt locks at me as if I were really in league with the arch-enemy! What is to be done in such a case? Can one hope to be agreeable in such disagreeable company? Did Damocles eat his dinner with his usual self-complacency after he discovered the suspended sword?

Having in vain tried all my little power of exorcism on these unquiet spirits, I take this opportunity to declare that all the naughty and unpleasant people — all the tattlers and mischief-makers, — all the litigious, — all the quarrelsome, — all the expectorant, — all the unneat, — all the unhandsome, — have emigrated to Iowa, Wiskonsan, or Texas, or some other far distant land, to this deponent unknown; and that there is not — *meo periculo* — one single specimen of any of these classes remaining in this wide peninsula. So that any description of such characters which I may hazard in future must be mere phantoms of the brain, and cannot have been drawn from real life within these bounds. Some subjects being thus precluded, I shall content myself with offering such general sketches of life and its chances and changes, as shall exempt me from any charge of being too correct or too sincere; avoiding thus the sour glances of the conscious and the critical, though at the expense of some little amusement to my chosen friend and constant ally, the reader.

Of the adventurous spirits who cast in their lot with us at the beginning, few have been content with our jog-trot rate of advancement. A large proportion of this class have been, as we have said, attracted by the alluring prospects held forth by the "West," and have started off at a tangent, determined to see with their own eyes grass growing higher than a giant's head, and fields of corn through which a mounted horseman might gallop unobserved. These and many other things of similar character they went to see. They have not come back to tell us what they did see; but some of them who left their land under mortgage having forgotten to send money to make the requisite payments, we conclude they must have seen a great deal that was very interesting, or they would not have been so oblivious. Peace be with them! Wiskonsan or Iowa will doubtless profit by our loss, since states are nothing without men.

The successors of these original settlers (and some of them have already had a succession of successors) we, who have been here four or five years, look upon as new people — mere mushrooms; — and we are slow in admitting them to our confidence; except they dress uncommonly well or own more stock than usual. This of course alters the case, for we are all apt to believe with the merchant-princes of one of our great cities, that "the mere possession of property necessarily implies some kind of merit." Fortunately our belief in this

great principle is not put to any very severe test, since we have no reason to suspect that any of our new neighbors got their cows or horses by piracy, or even by slave-driving. They are emphatically "nice people," and present a sufficient variety of characteristics; so that we think we shall like them very well if they will stay long enough for our present favorable impressions to take root.

Of outward changes, the tax-gatherer, as he paces on his tall gray steed our roomy avenues, can trace but few, — of public improvements still fewer. Times of general discouragement, when the entire spirit of the country is lowered by the stagnation of commerce, and such depression of prices that the labor of the husbandman becomes an almost hopeless toil, are not those when what is popularly termed public spirit is wont to be very warmly evinced in any community, least of all in those which, during the most favorable times, know superfluity only by name. Smile not, kindest reader, at this somewhat formal apology for the homely and primitive aspect of our vicinity. We are of much more importance in our own eyes than we are in yours, and we choose not to have our case considered an isolated instance, but rather as a part of the great whole.

While the great tide of emigration was rolling westward, its waves, though finding their limit far beyond us, still added something in their course to our population and our prosperity. But at present,

if we see now and then a great wagon with its load of household utensils, — bedsteads walling up the sides, — a washing-tub turned up to serve as a seat for the driver, — a bundle of window-sash sticking out behind, surmounted by a new broom or two, — pots and kettles dangling below, — bundles of beds and bedding tied up in coverlets, enthroning children of all the smaller sizes, — a rocking-chair topping all, — we do not expect to see it make a final stop in our Main Street. We know that it is destined for the deep woods far beyond us, and we conjecture that the stout farmer who guides the whole *cortège*, including perhaps cattle, sheep, and hogs, driven by the boys on foot, has tired of his Michigan farm, and is going out to the "diggings" in Illinois, Wiskonsan, or Iowa. He only stops long enough at our hotel to refresh his weary wife and children, and to buy provisions for a further march, and then bravely sets forth again, to eat and sleep in the woods as long as may be necessary. If you should ask him why he thus forsakes all that most of us think worth living for, he would tell you perhaps that he thinks there is more room at the West; that a poor man can get along better where there is not so many folks; and that he can get twice as much good land for his boys where the country is quite new. If you ask his wife how she likes the change, she will try perhaps to put the best face on the matter, and say that she hated to break up, but th' old man thought

he could do better for the children; — or if she be of the more timid and gentle nature, (as there are indeed many in this rough West,) she will answer with silent tears, which however will be carefully concealed from her husband. Such have indeed a hard lot before them. But to return to ourselves.

Our school-house still serves all denominations as a place of worship, and its walls, venerable with the gathered blackness of two years, have had as yet no taste of paint. The various lawsuits, to which its location, construction, erection, and furnishing, gave rise being still undecided, the building remains an object of the first interest. The library which ought to decorate its western wall is still unpurchased, nor have I heard any thing lately said of an appropriation for the purpose. Nor is there a tree yet planted whose shade may soften to the rising generation the fervors of the noon-spell. It is sometimes a term of reproach among us in speaking of a silly fellow, that he is "not half baked:" our district scholars may all be wise, if baking have any efficacy.

Various masters and mistresses have "swayed the sceptre of the infant realm;" the men in winter, the young ladies in summer; — alternating on the interesting plan of the tenants of the weather-house. I was proceeding to speak of the improvement evident in the manners of the young hopes, but that little rogue in the red and black striped cap just then threw a snow-ball against my win-

dow, and I resolved not to say any thing about it at present.

One of the teachers — a fair, slender girl of eighteen or thereabouts — was to every one an object of peculiar interest. She was soft-voiced and dark-eyed, with a most lady-like quietness of manner, and a temper which could not be disturbed even by a school. Her home was at no great distance, and her parents, though highly respectable and well-educated, found it not easy to make comfortable provision for a very numerous family; so Miranda, being the eldest, volunteered, for the meanest conceivable stipend, — scarce more than sufficient to furnish her own unpretending dress, — to undertake the wearisome task of drilling lisping tongues through the long hours of a sultry summer. She soon began to fade. She was always cheerful; — ever answering with a pleasant smile your questions about her health, her decreasing waist, and narrowing chest; — but she declined evidently and rapidly. She had intervals of delusive hope; but after months of suffering and heavenly resignation, we had at last the melancholy task of arraying her for the grave, and carrying her home to her father's in her coffin. She came of a consumptive race, they said, but I could not help fearing that confinement to a sedentary employment, and the lack of the ordinary amusements and gratifications of youth, had some share in removing her so early. I have seen so many heart-rending instances of a

similar kind, that I always tremble for young girls who undertake such a difficult and trying office while the constitution is yet unconfirmed.

If our dear young friend's life was a sad and short one, her death at least was all light and love; and like a dew-drop, first sparkling in the morning sun and then exhaled by its beams, she seemed to our watching eyes to be gradually absorbed in the great Fountain of purity and blessedness; so gradually that the change from an earthly to a heavenly state was scarce perceptible. May her closing scene be ours!

## CHAPTER V.

Our doom is near: behold, from east to west
The skies are darkened by ascending smoke;
Each hill and every valley is become
An altar unto Mammon and the gods
Of man's idolatry — the victims we.

COLE.

I WISH our people cared more for the beautiful! I do wish that simple and inexpensive recreation entered into their plan of life, if it were only in the shape of pleasant, shaded walks, where young girls and children whose feelings still have the natural leaning towards harmless pleasure, might spend some of the long hours of our short summer. If the experiment were once made — if there were such resources for the young, I cannot help thinking that their elders, who have been willing scholars to the creed that this is only a working world, would learn in time a better philosophy, even that the bow unbent when out of use is the one which will be longest fit for service. These opinions are heretical, I know. There is a sort of vague notion that only the dissipated and the irreligious can possibly covet amusement of any kind, and the practical effect of this notion is in many cases absurd beyond belief. But I began without the most re-

mote intention of scolding, and this tirade was elicited only by a passing thought connected with the subject which was in fact uppermost in my mind.

Though our "public square" was intended to become in time the glory of our village, it is still in a state of nature, — unsubdued, as the agriculturist, with an unconscious poeticalness, is wont to describe that condition; and this is at once the effect of the hard times before mentioned, and of that indifference to ornament and amusement which is a prominent characteristic of our people. If this bare, open space had been neatly fenced, provided with seats and planted with trees, four years ago, — but it was not, and I dare say never will be. The only alteration it has undergone was the work of a passing flock of sheep, which sowed it thickly with Canada thistles, with which their fleeces were abundantly stored. These have yielded a crop sufficient to supply all the country round, and an unfortunate feature in the affair seems to be that the authorities cannot agree as to whose business it is to cut them down. The subject is annually discussed until the seed begins to fly, and then abandoned as being disposed of for the present.

A similar difficulty occurs with respect to the planting of shade-trees on this debatable land. We cannot approach unanimity in deciding what kinds we shall select, in what order they shall be

placed, or in what manner protected, so that blackened stumps are likely to continue the sole ornaments of our Prado.

Would I could hope that the fine remnants of the original forest that still remain to us, were to be allowed foothold on this roomy earth. They too must fall ere long before the "irresistible influence of public opinion." The Western settler looks upon these earth-born columns and the verdant roofs and towers which they support, as "heavy timber," — nothing more. He sees in them only obstacles which must be removed, at whatever sacrifice, to make way for mills, stores, blacksmiths' shops, — perhaps churches, — certainly taverns. "Clearing" is his daily thought and nightly dream; and so literally does he act upon this guiding idea, that not one tree, not so much as a bush, of natural growth, must be suffered to cumber the ground, or he fancies his work incomplete. The very notion of advancement, of civilization, of prosperity, seems inseparably connected with the total extirpation of the forest.

"Le bucheron Américain," said the keen-witted Talleyrand, "le bucheron Américain ne s'intéresse à rien; toute idée sensible est loin de lui. Ces branches si élégamment jetées par la Nature — un beau feuillage — une couleur vive qui anime une partie du bois, un vert plus fort qui en assombroit une autre, — tout cela n'est rien; il n'a de souvenir à placer nulle part; c'est la quantité de *coups de*

*hache* qu'il faut qu'il donne pour abattre une arbre, qui est son unique idée. Il n'a point planté ; il n'en sait point les plaisirs. L'arbre qu'il planteroit n'est bon pour rien pour lui ; car jamais il ne la verra assez fort pour qu'il puisse l'abattre." *

In preparing for a residence in the wilderness it is really ludicrous to observe the warm opposition made by every strong-armed agent of one's plans, against leaving a scattered remnant of the forest by way of shelter to the rude dwelling. Though one might suppose the matter would be quite indifferent where only the taste of another is concerned, yet this is far from being the case. So inveterate is the prejudice that an angry battle must be fought for every tree. Pretended blunders — accidents — all stratagems will be resorted to in order to get rid of those marked for preservation ; and the few that one may succeed in retaining by dint of watching and scolding, become the frequent subject of wondering remark : " Well ! I *should* think there was oak-trees enough without keeping 'em in a body's door-yard ! Jus' like the woods ! "

* The backwoodsman of America feels no interest in any thing ; ideas connected with sentiment are foreign to his nature. Those branches so elegantly disposed by nature — splendid foliage — the brilliant colors which animate one part of the wood, the deeper green which gives a touch of sadness to another — all is nothing to him ; he has no associations with any thing ; the number of blows with the axe which he must bestow in felling a tree is his only idea. He has never planted — he knows not the pleasure of planting. A tree which he should plant would be good for nothing to him, for it would never grow large enough to be felled by his hand.

However, we as yet enjoy the privilege which belongs to nooks and corners whose insignificance protects them in some degree from the influence of "public opinion." We are still lulled to sleep by the plaintive iteration of the whippoorwill. We can still occasionally catch the wild note of the owl as he chides the moon from his nest in the hollow tree; and we hear with ever-new delight the welcome with which the thousand songsters of morning hail the approach of the sun. There is still leafy shelter enough for multitudes of pretty flutterers of all hues and sizes; and even the bare girdled oaks which still abound on the farm of our thriving neighbor Ainsworth afford homes for the feathered tribes. Not only are their gaunt branches occasionally blackened by immense flocks of pigeons or blackbirds, but their knotty outline is rendered more grotesque by the frequent nest of the red-headed woodpecker, which delights in such rough "locations." This busy creature — gaudy as an Indian, but far more thrifty — though the most inoffensive of bores, will yet sometimes contrive to discompose one; for it is almost impossible to distinguish the screwing of his bony auger from the creaking of a gate left to swing in the summer wind; and the idea of intrusive pigs and demolishing cows is apt to break the reveries of country people very unpleasantly.

Yet I, for one, shall regret even the girdled trees, sad remembrancers of past shade and freshness; of

morning readings, and it may be of noon-tide naps; — of evening rambles and next-day agues. One would rather have girdled trees than none, and it seems a long time to wait till our locusts and horse-chestnuts grow.

One darling tree, — a giant oak which looked as if half a dozen Calibans might have been pegged in its knotty entrails — this one tree, the grandfather of the forest, we thought we had saved. It stood a little apart, — it shadowed no man's land, — it shut the broiling sun from nobody's windows, so we hoped it might be allowed to die a natural death. But one unlucky day, a family fresh from "the 'hio" removed into a house which stood at no great distance from this relic of primeval grandeur. These people were but little indebted to fortune, and the size of their potato-patch did not exactly correspond with the number of rosy cheeks within doors. So the loan of a piece of ground was a small thing to ask or to grant. Upon this piece of lent land stood our favorite oak. The potatoes were scarcely peeping green above the soil, when we observed that the great boughs which we looked at admiringly a dozen times a day, as they towered far above the puny race around them, remained distinct in their outline, instead of exhibiting the heavy masses of foliage which had usually clothed them before the summer heats began. Upon nearer inspection it was found that our neighbor had commenced his plantation by the

operation of girdling the tree, for which favor he expected our thanks, observing pithily that "nothing wouldn't never grow under sich a great mountain as that!" It is well that "Goth" and "Vandal" are not actionable.

Yet the felling of a great tree has something of the sublime in it. When the axe first falls on the trunk of a stately oak laden with the green wealth of a century, or a pine whose aspiring peak might look down on a moderate church steeple, the contrast between the puny instrument and the gigantic result to be accomplished approaches the ridiculous. But as "the eagle towering in his pride of place, was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed," so the leaf-crowned monarch of the wood has no small reason to quiver at the sight of a long-armed Yankee approaching his deep-rooted trunk with an awkward axe. One blow seems to accomplish nothing: not even a chip falls. But with another stroke comes a broad slice of the bark, leaving an ominous, gaping wound. Another pair of blows extends the gash, and when twenty such have fallen, behold a girdled tree. This would suffice to kill, and a melancholy death it is; but to fell is quite another thing. The *coups de hache* now fall thicker and faster — only on opposite sides however, — not all round the trunk, as before. Two deep incisions are made, yet the towering crown sits firm as ever. And now the destroyer pauses, — fetches breath, — wipes his beaded brow, — takes a wary

view of the bearings of the tree, — and then with a low and watchful care recommences his work. The strokes fall doubtingly, and many a cautious glance is cast upward, for the whole immense mass now trembles, as if instinct with life, and conscious of approaching ruin. Another blow! it waves — a groaning sound is heard — something like that which struck the ear of the gallant Tancred:

> Un suon che flebile concento
> Par d'umani sospiri e di singulti;
> E un non so che confuso instilla al core
> Di pieta, di spavento, e di dolore.*

Yet another stroke is necessary. It is given with desperate force, and the tall peak leaves its place with an easy sailing motion accelerated every instant till it crashes prone on the earth, sending far and wide its scattered branches, and letting in the sunlight upon the cool, damp, mossy earth, for the first time perhaps in half a century.

If moralizing were in fashion, how quaintly one might string wise saws on the vast results of persevering effort!

* A sighing, sobbing sound,
Which breathes of human woe, and to the heart
Brings whispers vague of pity, terror, grief.

## CHAPTER VI.

> And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
> Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tasselled horn
> Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
> Number my ranks, and visit every sprout.
>
> MILTON.

MRS. AINSWORTH has been to York state. Nor is this all, — though such events do not often befall us, — but she has brought back as much of the show as she could carry, and enriches our ears with glowing accounts of all the wonders she saw and heard. She set out a desperate utilitarian. Her sleeves were only rationally large — her bonnet only moderately fashionable, and she wondered, for her part, how people could be so foolish as to care about such nonsense. She believed in being accommodating; would cut from the butter-plate with her own knife, and dip her tea-spoon times and again into the dish of preserves intended for the whole company, without a misgiving. If a wash basin was required, she could not see where was the harm of using for that purpose the bowl, which would in a few minutes be on duty on the breakfast table, and she did not mind mislaying her pocket-handkerchief, since an apron did just as well for her. She always washed and combed in the kitchen, though she had a bedroom adjoining,

and she considered it amiable to appropriate the space under her bed to her husband's best boots, a spare bridle or two, and the saddle when it happened to be at home: it was "so handy."

Her good man was so much of her mind that he thought the true and sole use of a garden was to raise onions and cabbages; and he went even a little beyond her, and ploughed up every spring the rose-bushes and lilacs with which she had decorated her "posy-yard," saying that he could not tell one kind of *brush* from another.

But, dear me! how things are changed now! Mrs. Ainsworth's heart is removed to the right side. She made so long a visit among her Eastern friends, who are now "fore-handed" folks, that she has come back imbued most satisfactorily with a loving appreciation of the advantages of civilization. In dress, she is even ultra, according to our sober ideas. The little wreaths of flowers which decorate her cap, meet under her chin, and mingling there with certain dangling blonde ringlets, give her face no slight resemblance to that of the individual with the flowing beard who used to figure in the school-books as saying,

Pity the sorrows of a poor old man!

the sleeves out-bishop any body, and she is never without a neck-chain, to which we are bound to believe a watch is appended.

Then her table — here the change is all for the bet-

ter — since what table can be too neatly arranged? The dishes are marshalled with military precision, and, when tea and talk rule the hour, a *plat* of preserves is sure to appear in the van, flanked on one side by a pile of little plates, and on the other by a reserve of tea-spoons. No more fishing in public property with one's own spoon! No more fragmentary specimens of the different sorts of food edging the cut side of the pat of butter! Mrs. Ainsworth would be ready to faint if any body should reach across the table to plunge his dripping tea-spoon into the sugar dish, to supply a deficiency in his tea. Not but that her husband still occasionally transgresses, in spite of curtain lectures; but he will come round in time, since neatness like truth is mighty, especially when urged only by good-humor.

But improvement is no less evident in the garden than in the house and its mistress. Mrs. Ainsworth returned in the autumn and brought a load of treasures of this sort; the greater part useful, — some only ornamental. And without a murmur, though no doubt with some suppressed groans, did Mr. Ainsworth delay his wheat-sowing until roses and honey-suckles, and peonies and tulips, with multitudes of their fair or fragrant brethren, were duly committed to the bounteous soil. Walks were laid out, and "currant-brush" planted; and great beds of Alpine strawberries, and whole thickets of Antwerp raspberries, took the place of fireweed and

sorrel, grubs and dwarf-willows. So excellent an example will, it is to be hoped, wake up the whole village.

We ought all to have good gardens by this time, but then we have so much else to do. Wheat and indian corn, and oats, and buckwheat turn directly into one's pocket; lilacs and lilies, and even cauliflower and celery, are mere superfluities, and we are a practical people. The tomato has hitherto been considered heathenish and abominable; asparagus useful only to put above the looking-glass as a fly-trap. These things are common enough in the older settlements, but we are only just beginning.

Many currant and raspberry bushes have been planted, and they have shown a disposition to thrive most luxuriantly. But the cows will get in once in a while and eat them off, which checks their growth sadly. And besides, the birds, free commoners by prescriptive right — having been accustomed to a boundless range of bushes of all kinds, just where our little clearing now usurps their place, make no scruple of helping themselves without stint or measure to our half-formed fruits; and so numerous are they that it would seem in vain to attempt planting for them and ourselves too. Strawberries however grow without planting, and this is the sort of gardening that most of us like best. These are so abundant that in the spring the very road-sides are damasked with their silver blos-

soms, and in their ripe season the foot of the passing traveller crushes them every where on the uncultivated uplands and on the moist borders of the marshes. It is however on fields that have been once ploughed that we find them in their greatest perfection. This rude sort of cultivation doubles their size without impairing their exquisite flavor. Transplanting them to your garden seems to affect them as a change from rural to city life does some people. They branch out into splendid foliage, but bear good fruit more sparingly than before. All the fruits that ever grow in northern climates, including even the peach, have been successfully cultivated throughout this state. The apple attains great perfection, as is usual on this side the ocean, in these latitudes, and even in those somewhat farther north. Plums — such as grow on trees, not in pockets — are becoming very abundant; and cherries are already so in the more advanced settlements, and promise well in the new. Pears, those terribly slow bearers, have reached perfection only where planted by the old French inhabitants of the regions in the vicinity of Detroit River, where, we are told, some trees are still productive, which are known to be centenarians. The peach and the apricot, — especially the former, which is so much the most valuable, — grow well and bear abundantly; but the fruit is very liable to be cut off by the "sneaping frosts" which sometimes occur so late in the spring as to nip the trees when

in full blossom, and sweep their garlands from the boughs. Yet we have seen noble specimens of this delicious fruit raised in Michigan; and as greenhouses and nurseries abound, and men skilled in such mysteries are not wanting, we have high hopes for future desserts.

But to finish our notice of Mrs. Ainsworth. She has not only provided for the kitchen-garden, but ventured upon a little stand of exotics for the parlor. And there is a rumor, — a floating report, — (and they say where there is smoke there must be some fire,) that Mrs. Ainsworth has a plan for an underground conservatory, to be constructed on the south side of a little descent which slopes obliquely near her house. This extravagance is not expected to be more than six feet square, but I am sure it will hold acres of happiness. I would not wish to have it mentioned however. Let her break the matter to her husband herself.

Connected with this same notion of "acres of happiness" a thought suggests itself. Our neighbor has just made a large addition to her innocent enjoyment, by means of the improvements in her garden. Now suppose her in the course of a year or two to come into the possession of a handsome establishment, such as may be found in this Western world — a garden containing a couple of acres — a corresponding variety of plants; a good greenhouse, and people competent to keep such things in order. There would then be no weeding in the

morning, and coming in to breakfast well draggled with dew — (none for the lady, I mean) — no transplanting in showery weather armed with a pointed stick, and so shrouded in an old bonnet, thick shoes, and dirty gloves, that her own husband will scarcely own her — no solicitude about any of the contingencies on which depends the success of so much care and labor. To walk about and enjoy what has been done, and question the gardener as to what *may* be done — and to feel very sure that he will object to whatever she wishes to do — now constitute her gardening pleasures.

We will go on still further, and suppose good Mrs. Ainsworth made, in process of time, the mistress of such a garden as may be found in the neighborhood of any of our Eastern cities. Here, American wealth shall have done its utmost, and extensive graperies and pineries, with all things on a corresponding scale of expenditure, shall court the charmed eye of the delighted guest; — the lady herself having risen in condition and manners accordingly.

Thus far all is easily supposed, and would imply no greater ascent in the scale than has been the lot of perhaps some of the very proprietors of those delicious gardens. But we will strain a point, and see Mrs. Ainsworth, our happy neighbor, pleased with her little garden, pleased yet more with her ample one, and thinking that her third and more

elegant one ought to give still greater pleasure; we will suppose her at last transplanted to the twelve acre garden at Chatsworth; with a greenhouse at every turn, and two or three gardeners to every greenhouse;—flower-baskets of cut stone thirty-two feet square, and hundreds of people employed in sweeping every aisle in her spacious pleasure-grounds, that not a stray leaf shall offend her majestic eye.

Tell us now, O sagacious philosopher! keen sifter of the human heart and its desires and enjoyments,—which of these gardens shall afford the greatest amount of pleasure to Mrs. Ainsworth?

## CHAPTER VII.

The hearts in sun and shadow known —
The kind hands lingering in our own —
The cords of strong affection spun
By early deeds of kindness done —
The blessed sympathies which bind
The spirit to its kindred mind.

WHITTIER.

Why do the gods indulge our store
But to secure our rest?

PRIOR.

I know it is time to say something of our own selves. In our first attempt at Western sketches, that good reader for whose eye I write dwelt, I am sure, longer and more kindly upon what interested us personally, than upon the more elaborate parts of our simple narrative. And when after many trials (of patience) and many hardships (in a small way) we emerged from the dark precincts of the loggery into the bright atmosphere of the "framed house" — exchanged worm-eaten beams for a plastered ceiling — and miniature Rocky Mountains for a tiled hearth — and succeeded in excluding the pigs, and discovered some amiable traits in the neighbors — I know that one kind heart rejoiced with us, and found a benevolent satisfaction in prophesying still better times for the future.

Better times did come — that is, they would have

come, if there had been good times any where. Better times — so far as our own personal accommodation was concerned — did come; and the sojourn in the log-house, though "ugly and venomous" enough while it lasted, fulfilled yet the sweet uses of such things, by giving to very humble arrangements a charm which they would have lacked if we had come into possession of the new abode directly from the city.

The children in particular, to whose minds the present is every thing, and to whom five months is "a little forever," considered the new house as the realization of the most romantic dreams of fancy. They could imagine nothing more convenient or more elegant. One of them, a tolerably intelligent child of six years old, had been snapping one of those detonating "mottoes" which usually scatter French sugar-plums and French sentiment together upon the carpet. She desired an explanation of the two short lines, which, oddly enough for such a purpose, ran thus: —

Le palais qui presse la terre
Tremble au voix du tonnerre.*

I could make intelligible the general drift of the wise saw wrapt in this poetical guise readily enough; but when I tried to explain familiarly the word "palace" my efforts were fruitless. All my

* The splendid pile of massive stone
Must tremble at the thunder's tone.

descriptions of a large and elegant mansion elicited but one exclamation, and we could never get beyond that:

"What! nicer than *our* house?"

Blessed simplicity of youth! Why do we not strive to perpetuate it? Why are almost our first practical lessons those of fastidiousness and empty pride — that "living for the eyes of others" which has been so long the censure of the wise?

To desire perfection in every thing — to prize grace, delicacy, beauty, elegance, and even splendor, as gratifications of taste, and as aids to mental refinement, is rational and commendable. To make these things, and others that money can purchase, the ground of distinctions in society and the excuse for a haughty exclusion of our less fortunate fellow-creatures is surely contemptible and unworthy of a reflecting and accountable being.

I fear those of us who can subscribe to this sentiment do not always act in consistency with it. Republican simplicity, though so evidently the dictate of our real interest and the foundation of our true dignity, is scarcely thought of, except on one day in every year, when it serves to round a period for the orator. Yet not one of us is ignorant that no republic has ever survived the universal prevalence of luxurious habits and the blind and weak pride, which seems to be their inevitable consequence. Ought we not to consider ourselves as giving a stab to the land we love and the institu-

tions we venerate whenever we leap forward in the race of petty emulation in mere outward show?

But I set out to say something of self — "the theme on which all are eloquent but none agreeable." To live comparatively alone is apt enough to make one dreadfully egotistical — but there is absolutely nothing to tell. Hopelessly humdrum has been our course of life. Not an event darkens our doors once a year. We seem omitted in the general revolution of human affairs. The world goes round without us, and if we try to "run in" as children do while others are jumping the rope, we are sure to get a rap over the knuckles, if nothing worse.

One solitary incident — a momentary glimpse of the busy world, where I was so much out of place, so staring, so rustic, so *brusque*, so oblivious of the *bienséances*, that I had the satisfaction of being called "Mrs. Rip Van Winkle" more than once — this and this alone gave a ripple to "life's dull stream." It was a marvellous pretty ripple — not only breaking the monotony of the said stream, but throwing back so many cheerful gleams — giving occasion to so many agreeable reflections — that the mere remembrance will serve to brighten the lonely hours of a long winter or two at the very least.

O! it *was* sweet to see again the old, familiar faces, — to hear once more the well-known voices, whose tones were music in years long past, and had lost none of their power to charm! to meet

the glance of ancient friendship — to clasp the kind hand that has so often traced lines of cheering comfort for our solitude — to find affection still warm in the bosom of venerable age — to read in the eyes of a younger race that tenderness for the long absent had not been forgotten in the training of their guileless hearts — and to feel that in spite of absence, change, sorrow, and disappointment, our own hearts were still capable of a thrill of grateful pleasure in answer to all the kindness lavished upon the returning wanderers! In the enthusiasm of the moment I was almost tempted to think years of trial in the cold atmosphere of a strange land had been repaid by the delight of that visit.

It was during this crowded dream of enjoyment that I made the discovery of a change in my own views, which may be ascribed according to the reader's humor — to natural simplicity or rudeness — to want of means or want of taste — to indolence or an enforced philosophy; — for I will plead guilty to any thing but a disposition to undervalue advantages which I do not possess.

It was a change in my estimate of the splendid accessories which are so much an object of desire and ambition among the inhabitants of our cities. I can refer easily to the time when these things wore to me the same enchanting aspect which they seem now to present to their possessors, and still more to those who can scarcely hope ever to become their possessors. I too thought large and elegant

houses, trains of servants, and imposing equipages, if not the constituents of happiness, at least most potent auxiliaries to earthly bliss. In my darker estimate of country life, the want of these things — the certainty that they would never be transplanted to these remote shades, so that I could even take the spectator's (often the best) part of the show — formed one prominent item of my desponding prognostics.

After several years spent among the plainest people, living in the plainest manner — people whose very wishes reached not beyond the most ordinary comforts and decencies of life — what would naturally be the effect of a return to scenes of comparative splendor, toward which early impressions had inspired me with respect, if not with envy? Would the contrast in externals be the most striking? Would the decorated drawing-room, the delicately fancied carriage with its well-trained horses — the triumph of Parisian art in costume — would *these* be likely to awaken the longing sigh of the dweller in the wilderness?

They were beautiful and in some respects desirable, it is true. We do not grow so obtuse as not to appreciate in some degree the elegances of life. But the true attraction lay in the aspect of society itself — in the thousand graces of manner which are unknown in ruder atmospheres; in the refinement of sentiment; in the display of thoroughbred intellectual power; in the moral and not the

physical contrast which is exhibited between life in the city and life in the woods; in the people and not in their style of living. The magnificent edifices of the great city awake in no low degree the admiration of the exiles; but her painters, her sculptors, her musicians, her men of letters, her poets, her preachers — her monuments of genius and of art — these filled the soul even to the pain of pleasure, and in these lay the points of difference which alone appeared, for the time, worthy of notice.

So great has been the power of habit in simplifying our wants and reducing their number, that many things which are considered essential to comfort among those who make modes of life a study and a science, appeared to us absolutely cumbersome and harassing. Mr. Edgeworth is said to have collected, in his family mansion at Edgeworthtown, so many ingenious contrivances to spare his visitors every kind of trouble, that people were puzzled and put to great inconvenience by the multiplication of conveniences. It seemed to me that some of our city friends had fallen into a kindred error. They have secured so many of the comforts and luxuries of life, that life is itself expended in the solicitudes attendant upon such extensive and costly arrangements. In our country, where good domestic service is scarcely a thing within the limits of hope, every new necessity for the aid of such people seems to entail a new slavery

on the proprietor, and to multiply his cares, his risks and his vexations much more rapidly than his enjoyments.

I see thee smiling, O reader! — but I care not. I really believe that both for myself and my children, I shall never cease to bless the training that has procured us some little insight into even an "enforced philosophy." So smile on, and be careful that thou err not through too lavish and too unsympathizing use of the gifts of an all-beneficent Providence.

## CHAPTER VIII.

What dire necessities on every hand
  Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
Of foes intestine what a numerous band
  Against this little throb of life conspire!
  Yet science can elude their fatal ire
Awhile, and turn aside Death's levelled dart;
  Soothe the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart.

BEATTIE.

THE French character has been supposed to surpass all others in flexibility — in the power of adapting itself to circumstances, even the most adverse and uncomfortable, and surely no people have been more fully tried. I think it was a practical philosopher of that race who asserted that a change of condition, however severe, ceased to be keenly felt after the first three months. The truth of this remark has been questioned, but I believe many, who have emigrated to these new countries, will be ready to confirm it by their own experience. It appears to me indeed that we must partake, in no slight degree, of the mobility of the French character, in order to maintain even a moderate share of spirits and resolution, under a change of situation which is certainly what, in their superfine phrase, is termed *vraiment desolant*, though it must be con-

fessed that to say in plain English, *desolating*, too much might be implied. No English word that I can remember does express precisely this compulsory uprooting of all ancient memories, and the substitution of new and not very attractive associations in their honored place.

I know not whether we may not push still further our claim to the philosophical character, and consider ourselves as surpassing our prototype; for the French in their lowest estate have usually contrived so to place themselves as never to lack that elixir of life — society. A faithful friend or two — and they are too imaginative a people not to be tender and faithful in friendship — a friend or two and something to talk about, rank next to shelter and before food in their estimate of the comforts of life. But the emigrant to the wilderness must dispense even with society, as well as almost every thing else which he has been accustomed to consider essential to happiness, and it is only after a weary interval of solitary rule that he may hope for neighbors and *de quoi causer*.

And happy would it be if even this were the worst. But what would the lively Frenchman say of his lot if he had witnessed, as so many of us have, the complete prostration of his family by agues? if he and his wife and his children, his man-servant and his maid-servant, and the good neighbor who tried to alleviate their sufferings, should be succes-

sively deprived of health, and reduced to a state of the most dispiriting helplessness, until scarce a hand retained power to draw water for the sick?

Such things are experienced annually by many of the settlers in the Western country; and, to finish the picture to the life, we must add the entire failure of the supply of *quinine*, on which alone we can rely for relief. This medicine, which acts like a charm on intermittents, is sometimes not to be procured in the interior at any price, and many lives are doubtless lost in consequence.

The cures wrought by means of this powerful agent are wonderful, and yet there exists a violent prejudice against its use. Agues are often suffered to "run," as we phrase it, the whole year round, in preference to curing them in two or three days with quinine, and it is perhaps only when the miserable patient is reduced to the last extreme of pallor and emaciation, and the grave seems opening to receive its prey, that the cure will be resorted to. A thousand prescriptions are in circulation, each of which is infallible in the estimation of a circle of believers, though experience is constantly demonstrating their fallacy. Mountain flax, prickly-ash, bark, bitter root, Cayenne pepper, laudanum, raw eggs, strong coffee, wormwood, hop tea, — but I might fill a page with the names of nauseous bitters, narcotics and stimulants which we are solicited to try, rather than subject ourselves to the terrific array of evils which are supposed to follow in the wake of the

only true elixir. These are, dimness of sight, palpitation of the heart, obscurity of intellect, and general debility, even to the entire loss of the use of the limbs.

Now, it so happens that some or all of these are, in different degrees, the natural consequence of the agues themselves, and we have never seen them so severely experienced as in a case where not a particle of quinine had been used. But all this is as nothing in refutation of a popular prejudice; and one of our neighbors has been twice *in articulo mortis* under his own prescriptions, when his friends have taken advantage of his nearly insensible state to send for a physician who administered quinine every hour for some time, to the evident saving of life in both cases.

But what is, in fact, the result of a class of diseases which requires the frequent exhibition of this powerful agent? Disastrous, undoubtedly; and it seems really marvellous that any who have experienced the disorder can suppose otherwise. The effect of an ordinary course of agues — say from six weeks to three months if no quinine be used, — is of a most discouraging character. The sight is usually a good deal affected, at least for the time, and, I almost fear, for life. There is a constant sense of feebleness, as well of mind as of body; — a confusion of ideas and a sombre view of ordinary circumstances. The limbs are prone to stiffness and inability, and the fearful shrinking or quivering

sensation about the heart, is, as I can avouch, most depressing.

Why then is it that this condition, which I have described with all care and accuracy according to general as well as personal experience, — why is it that such a train of ills does not drive away the population in despair? What an inconsistency does it seem for such as can at any sacrifice strike the tent and remove to more fortunate regions, to remain a month in such an atmosphere? This has occurred to me a thousand times, yet I, like the rest, am content to live on, with the aid of that which supports all the world under every variety of difficulty and misfortune — hope. Every body hopes this particular fit is to be positively the last visit of the foul fiend. If we can only get through to-day — if the shake does not dislocate the neck-bone, or the fever set the house on fire, — we feel sure that we have had it so long, or we have had it so hard, or we have been so little subject to it, — that it is not likely to return. This is certainly the most violent shake or the most delirious fever; — there is more perspiration, or less headache; or in some respect this attack differs from all that have preceded it; so that we feel confident there has been a change in the system, and any change must be for the better. And many times these prognostics at a venture prove true as if by miracle. An ague will quit one as suddenly and as inexplicably as it came on, without the use

of remedies, whether of diet or medicine, and one may feel nothing of it for a year, perhaps for life. The consequences wear away, and we forget them. We look around us, through a translucent atmosphere, at a stout and even ruddy population; we see on every side a fertile and smiling country, abounding in natural resources and improving with unsurpassed rapidity, — a country where population is wealth; — and we ask ourselves, Is it really best to fly — to leave behind so many advantages, — and to lessen, even by our mite, the comforts of those who remain? Can we elude disease? And, since disease and death are every where, are the hopeless pulmonary ills of the seaboard less to be dreaded than these curable intermittents? All old people who have weathered the storm tell us that these troubles are concomitants only of new settlements, and that we shall see them diminish year by year, — to be replaced, however, by the less frequent but more fatal diseases of older countries.

Thus we live on, content to bear the ills we have, perhaps from a sense that there are ills every where; and that after all there may be worse things even than agues. Nine out of ten ague patients (as I suppose) are able to eat with good appetite as soon as the fit is over, and many continue about their ordinary business during all the time, save that absolutely occupied in shaking and burning. Those who have the complaint in this form generally keep up their spirits, and can, of course, be the more

readily cured. Others see the matter in a different light, because they suffer agonies of pain, and perhaps rave during the long hours of fever. But there are few cases so desperate that they cannot be cured, at least temporarily, although again it must be confessed that it takes but a breath to call back the tormentor. The quivering of an aspen leaf will set one shaking from sympathy.

Among the rather novel remedies may be reckoned a cold shower-bath once or twice a day, which one may well believe would frighten away ague or any thing else; and among those sanctioned by the learned, bleeding in the cold stage, which has been found successful in many cases. But neither of these modes is popular with us. We stick to thoroughwort, — balmony, — soot tea, — "number six," — and the like; and avoid, as if for the very life, all "pothecary medicines." Yet if a petticoated professor of the healing art — a female physician so called — should prescribe the most deadly drugs, (purchased at the nearest druggist's,) or tell a man that his liver was grown fast to his side, and that he must release it by reaching upward while leaning on his elbow in bed, — or if she should pronounce oracularly that a dose of centipeds procured from beneath a fallen tree whose head should lie toward the east would cure "the spinevantosey that comes in the breast," — she will find supporters who would not employ an educated physician on any account. I have been assured, with all seriousness,

that the hepatic experiment alluded to had been tried with signal success; the patient having had the satisfaction of "hearing it tear" very distinctly. Happily this order of practitioners is not numerous, and from the general intelligence of the people, may be expected rather to diminish than to increase.

Of all the prominent curative theories of the day, that of the disciples of Hahnemann is, I think, the only one which we have not tried in some shape. It may be thought from what has been said, that we must be an imaginative community, and ought therefore to be good homœopathic subjects; but we have an instinctive disrespect for every thing weak — except indeed coffee, which we take only in the "decillionth potence." And besides, it would never do to cure the ague by medicines which might be rendered destructive by much shaking. It would be safer indeed, upon the principle *similia similibus curantur*, to shake the patient soundly, without exhibiting a single globule or pellet of medicine, since we should thus avoid all danger of "drug-sickness" from overdosing.

After all, though I believe homœopathy to be in advance of our present degree of Western civilization, I wish all my countrymen were converts to the doctrine that "it is impossible to give (or take) doses too small." They are terribly apt to err on the other side.

## CHAPTER IX.

While warring in the Holy Land, Richard was seized with an AGUE * * * He became convalescent, and the first symptom of his recovery was a violent longing for PORK.

SIR WALTER SCOTT — *Introduction to the Talisman.*

THIS is the only historical notice which I have been able to discover of the connection or *rapport* between pork and ague, but here they are evidently "in a concatenation accordingly;" and this one instance is amply sufficient to satisfy the unprejudiced mind that human nature, high and low, is every where the same. The Wolverine in his log-hut need not blush for a *penchant* which has been sanctioned and rendered classical by the heroic example of Richard the lion-hearted. It is true the king's ague was the consequence of being exposed to the burning heats of Palestine, enclosed in iron, like a waffle; — ours, the effect of as hot a sun, boiling the moist meadows and cooking man by steam, like a potato. The result is the same. Ague is "one and indivisible" in whatever station or clime it may be found. There is no possibility of confounding it with any of the other varieties of life; as little of changing its nature or evading its persecutions by the best use of the best gifts of fortune. The utter self-abandonment — the

wretched good-for-nothing-ness, — the invincible conviction that gradually gets possession of the mind, that life is destined to be one long shake, with occasional varieties of fever and headache, — these, we venture to assert, will be found inseparable concomitants of ague, whether the silken hangings of the palace or the pendent cobwebs of the log-cottage, quiver under the influence of the malignant fiend. I quote Armstrong, who knew all about it, and who would not, I dare say, have characterized "Quartana" as a "fiend" if he could have found any thing worse to call her.

And the appetite for pork — nay, this is a cold term, — the affection for pork, so far as my observation in this Western world extends, is a natural consequent upon ague, as shadow follows substance or flattery power. In our neighborhood, where every body has, or has had, or expects to have ague, — where indeed ague begins to be looked upon as a condition of humanity, — pork, the *beau ideal* of good cheer every where in this region, bears also the highest reputation as an abracadabra. Those who are already shaking will often ascribe their low estate to a lack of this indispensable luxury, and expect certain relief to be the consequence of a fresh supply. "If I only had some pork!" they exclaim pathetically. And when the fates are propitious and the necessary sacrifices are completed, they do not take the remedy on the homœopathic plan. They have no faith in infini-

tesimal doses. As much as can be swallowed, three times per diem, is the usual prescription; whether intended as preventive or as cure; — as a relief for present ills or a talisman against those which may come. And many of the stout old settlers adhere to this regimen with a religious strictness which implies full faith. To them "sweetnin'" is nothing; nor "garden-saase;" — nor even whisky itself, unless pork crown the good cheer, or at least play the part of *pièce de résistance*, be the occasion what it may. To them "killing-time," so dreaded by travellers in America, affords a sort of Saturnalia. They do not approve the saying that "one may have too much of a good thing." Of "fresh," — which term includes every description of unsalted meat, — they soon tire; with respect to pork they are insatiable. They are certainly practical believers in extreme unction.

This exalted estimate is often exhibited incidentally. Is it desirable to awaken your compassion and relax your purse strings? You are told, with a pensive sigh, that the complainant has not had a bit of *meat* in a month — meat having but one signification with us. Is the rising prosperity or overflowing abundance of a family to be typified? "They have as much pork as they can eat." In short, if we should set about contriving a Western emblem of happiness and plenty — something that should mean all that the ancients associated with Amalthea's horn and a little more, — I believe

nothing could be found so closely significant as a magnificent porker, — six inches on the ribs, and weighing from three to six hundred pounds.

From all this it follows, as a matter of course, that we take excellent care of these greasy treasures. Their privileges among us are unlimited — indeed they are generally preferred to their human dependants, in all ordinances devised for the public well-being. Not the sacred cow of Isis was the subject of more reverential attention. They form the theme of much anxious consultation at our town-meetings, and the result has hitherto been to make them free commoners; i. e., to give them unbounded range of the fields and gardens of the neighborhood, since few fences can be found in a new country which will hold good against so enterprising a forager when sent out to get his own living. This arrangement is, to be sure, rather trying to those who attempt to keep gardens; but who ever thought of putting "garding-saase" in comparison with pork?

This high stand in public estimation has the effect that might be expected, in changing and exalting the characteristic propensities of these darlings of fortune. Far from being content with the grovelling habits and coarse fare which satisfy their brethren, in those countries where man, under the benighted prejudices of civilization, denies them their true place in society, our porkers will leap a garden fence with the agility, if not with the grace of an antelope. Once in, they show their

refined taste by banqueting upon tidbits selected here and there from your tomatoes and cauliflowers, your bulbs and your grape-vines; resembling the butterfly in one respect at least, inasmuch as they never complete their feast upon one or two varieties, but rather choose to try every thing in the garden. In fact, I have sometimes thought we ought scarcely here to call man the lord of the creation, since he is in so many respects at the mercy of these very imperious masters.

Some people have professed to find a connection between national character and national food. They have imagined the waveless calm of the German to have some mysterious affinity with the cool and heavy nature of his beloved cabbage; the mercurial agility of the Frenchman with the saltatory propensities of the frog; the remarkable modesty of the Englishman with the blushing red of the half-cooked beef in which he is said to delight; and the tameless wildness of our own Indians with that of their venison which must be chased before it can be eaten. But we protest against such illiberal pseudo-philosophers and their doctrine. We are not greater gormandizers than our neighbors. We do not, to be sure, like to be penned up, but we are slow in jumping fences. Our proclivity to pork is not fairly to be considered so much typical of the characteristics of the inhabitants, as of the exuberant fatness of their soil. And we are

not at all prone to cut our own throats as we swim in "the tide of commercial prosperity."

But there is one trait in the character I have attempted merely to sketch, which we need not blush to own as a national one. The bristly citizen, — (I speak of him whose nature has been exalted by his privileges,) — when he once fixes his keen eye upon a desirable object, — be it corn, be it cabbage, — is indomitable in perseverance. "Go ahead" is his motto, whatever be the obstacles in the way. He may get dozens of knocks over the pate, but none the less forces his nose into the pail. So his biped compatriot, if he be full-blooded, whether the general term Yankee, or the more especial and local Wolverine, Buckeye or Hoosier be his designation, when he has a point in view, never stops, come weal come woe, until he has accomplished the desired end.

We had once the pleasure of spending a short time on the British side of Niagara where a "broad" Scotchman, in the literal as well as the figurative sense of the term, was sojourning with his family. This worthy was a merciless talker; no voice but his could be heard, whether at table or elsewhere; under the very brow of the Falls his self-satisfied tones were audible above the ceaseless roar of the mighty cataract; and the one, only, darling theme of his conversation was contemptuous abuse of the Americans, or "*Yenkees*," as he called them. We

were told he had written a book of some sort which carried the same burden.

On the day we left, as he concluded his wine and his tirade together, he made one sweeping and significant observation:

"After all, it is ra'ally asto-nishin' to see how these Yenkees get on! They DO a thing while we're talkin' aboot it!"

And as a postscript is often found to contain the pith of a letter, so we thought we had discovered, in this concluding exclamation, the real source of all Mr. F.'s cherished enmity to our pork-eating nation.

"Nous n'aimons pas toujours ceux que nous admirons."

## CHAPTER X.

I sighed to hear
Once more earth's breezy sounds, her foliage fanned,
And turned to seek the wilds.

MRS. HEMANS.

"GIVE"—every body—"his due." After all that has been said and thought about ague,—and it must be confessed, that while the fit is on, or its recollection fresh in the memory, this includes almost all kinds of hard thoughts and evil speaking,—there are good things connected with it. The sympathy of one's friends is not of this number certainly: "It is nothing but the ague!" is very commonly all the consolation one gets. One is sometimes (in the fever) almost desperate enough to wish to die just once to make people a little less unfeeling. The same amount of pain and suffering under any other name would excite abundant commiseration.

There is however no disease that leaves more strikingly melancholy traces on the countenance; and pallid lips and languid eyes and feeble steps are a fair enough warrant for some little self-indulgence, when that is practicable. If a good, high rolling salt surf were an importable article, I am sure the inhabitants of Ague-land could enter into no more profitable speculation, than to club their

entire available means for the purchase of Rockaway or Nahant. The sum would draw enormous returns in the best of all possible shapes — accumulated strength and energy. But as this is hardly to be compassed even in this age of wonders, we, who are recovering from protracted agues, claim as our right the next best thing — travelling. Which brings me back to the proposition with which I set out — that there may be some pleasant results even from ague.

Our travels are, to be sure, very limited. There are no Himmalehs to be scaled — no Nile to be traced — no Aztalan or Palenque to be explored. But the source of Nile gave Bruce but a moment's rapture in payment of his toils and dangers, and we console ourselves for our lack of romantic adventure by considering that we gain at least as much *in proportion*. It costs but little trouble to get sight of

> Those heathen goddesses most rare —
> Homer, Venus, and Nebuchadnezzar —
> All standing in the open air —

thanks to our nomenclators. Is it not something to be able, in the course of a few days' travel, to see not only Homer, and Milton, and Byron, and Napoleon, and Romeo, but Scio and Athens as well as Marengo and Lodi, and a host of other celebrated spots?

> While Fancy, like the finger of a clock,
> Runs the great circuit and is still at home.

Barring these advantages, a journey through the wilds, if performed by steam or by post chaise, is just like a journey any where else, except a lack of some of the more refined accommodations for travelling. To find a spice of novelty, — to reap an advantage from position which shall in some degree counterbalance the deficiency necessarily observable in public conveyance so far from the great thoroughfares, we have devised a new mode of travel, or rather, we have adopted one which is new to us, although highly popular in these tramontane regions.

This resembles in no small degree that of the tinker in the story-book, whose equipage was a gigantic tea-kettle, the spout of which served for a chimney and the *tout ensemble* both for professional sign and family domicile; while its owner jogged along cosily, hammering as he went, chatting with the good wife within, and occasionally encouraging by a cherup the praiseworthy donkey that drew the entire establishment.

A pedler of genius — a Yankee of course — has added yet one improvement to this ingenious plan. His *cow* serves a double purpose as a beast of *draught*, for she goes well in the harness, and he has only to stop and milk her when he is thirsty.

The nearest approach we have yet made to this compression of comforts took place last summer, when after a most justifying course of agues we set out in the great wagon for a rambling tour of dis-

covery, with every thing we should be likely to want — including a large basket of provisions — embraced within its ample verge. Umbrellas good store — books and blankets — trunks and *sacs de nuit*, — besides some oats for the dear old ponies, and a pail wherefrom to give them drink, in case they should be athirst where water is more plenty than buckets, — all these made some ingenuity requisite in bestowing ourselves and our conveniences within the compass of even a regular backwoods wagon — the most capacious of vehicles; — and it took from early breakfast time until fully ten o'clock to "load up."

It may be that my dear reader being as I well surmise a dweller in cities, shall suppose this same farm wagon, which is so often referred to as a regular family vehicle, to be a sort of exaggerated britska — an able-bodied barouche, capable of containing, on crowded occasions, six ladies in bishop's sleeves: and that when we take a *fantaisie* for a week's ramble, it is only to send to John to drive round at the appointed hour. Illusions all! The wagon consists of an oblong box of rough boards, mounted on the clumsiest of all possible wheels, and for springs we have two long slender tamarack poles placed within on iron hooks appended to the sides. On these springs are board seats, with cushions or not, as the case may be, but always with buffalo skins by way of drapery. In the harness, all that is not leather is iron chain, except

that there are generally weak points which are to be frequently fortified with twine or, alas! with the strings from your husband's vest if you forget to carry twine. Then your John, if you are so lucky as to have one, requires goodly notice of your errant intentions. Shoes are to be reset — harness to go to the *shoemaker's* for repairs — white paint to be bottled for Quicksilver's shoulder, galled in ploughing. To secure a happy issue for your expedition requires only less deliberate preparation than Napoleon ought to have made for the jaunt to Moscow. It is awkward to discover important omissions when you are miles from efficient aid.

But every body is waiting while I discuss these particulars. It was a cloudy day in July; a cloudy day after heavy showers, — showers which we felt confident had exhausted the watery reservoirs for the present, so that we congratulated ourselves upon the tempering clouds, and thought of leaving the umbrellas at home. However, it was not long before the sun shone out in such force as to call forth the parapluies as parasols, and we were almost fainting under that peculiarly oppressive heat which belongs to such dropping weather in the midst of our summers. After we reached the boundaries of "the clearing" and plunged into the "timbered land," this heat was exchanged for a grotto-like coolness, and the horses trod leisurely as if to enjoy the damp, mossy soil and the grateful shade.

It was not long after noon when we began to

think favorably of dinner, and we had not far to seek for a pleasant spot of green turf whereon to spread our couches of buffalo-skins and blankets. In the midst of a circle thus formed was the table-cloth with its accompaniments; and there, in a '*café à mille colonnes*' which required no multiplying aid of mirrors, we took our first rustic repast, — all highly delighted with the novelty, but especially the young fry, who were allowed to go as often as they liked to a clear spring that welled from the hill-side, and dabble in the water which widened into a small, glassy pond below. They fed Prince with bread, which he took from their fingers with a care and delicacy worthy of his gentle blood, while poor Quicksilver showed his awkward rusticity by hanging his head or turning it sedulously aside when the same civility was offered him. But what they found most delightful of all was to see Leo's enthusiastic plunges in pursuit of the crackers which they sent skimming along the water as far as they could, trying his patience occasionally by the substitution of a flat stone by which he obligingly allowed himself to be deceived as often as they thought proper.

This said Leo is a particular friend of the family, not on account of his beauty, for he is an enormous creature with a ferocious bull-dog aspect — nor on the score of his services, for a more useless and chicken-hearted monster never ate goslings, — but

just — because. This is the only assignable ground of Leo's popularity, and it is sufficient to secure his impunity in spite of many a misdemeanor, as well as to make him an inamissable member of the party whenever we go from home *en famille*. And indeed I have seen people admitted into society on slighter pretensions.

Speaking of Leo calls up tender reminiscences. My poor D'Orsay! introduced to the world in the earlier sketch of our village annals — like many of the delicate and beautiful things of this ever-shifting panorama, was but short-lived. He was not made for rough usage, and one sharp night in May, when his master with unconscious cruelty locked him out in the chill dew, he took a cold from which he never recovered. He died of a regular consumption, resembling in all its stages the same disease in the human sufferer, and a more patient creature never coughed away his poor life. They said it was "the distemper." D'Orsay with the distemper, indeed!

When his last days came, the weather was oppressively warm, and he could lie nowhere but in the open air. There a kind hand formed a thick roof of boughs to exclude the sun, and D'Orsay's last bed was visited with unceasing interest as long as he continued to breathe. I could not but think he looked at his mistress as if he had something to say, but I could only guess at what might perhaps

be the sentiments of a very graceful and elegant greyhound dying thus untimely. My thoughts took naturally the form of an epitaph:

> D'Orsay! to thee, O thrice-blest imp of fame!
> I here resign, unsoiled, the illustrious name.
> In all things happy else, one grief is mine —
> I quit the scene ere thou hast ceased to shine.

Poor fellow! I hope he had forgotten the leg of mutton which lay too near his nose on the kitchen table! but we must not judge him hardly, especially as the pitiless cook bestowed upon him blows enough of that odious ladle to have sowed the seeds of that melancholy which shadowed o'er the latter part of his life. Ah, D'Orsay! let none be too severe upon thy one fault, but rather remember, as I do, thy exceeding beauty! uncorsetted, — without false curls, — bishop sleeves, — tight shoes, — tourneurs; unindebted, in short, to any of those adjuncts which do so much towards the enchantingness of beauty, — how faultless was thy slender waist! how classical the contour of thy head and neck! how silky the pendent ears, asking no aid from tassels of pearl to enhance their graceful undulations! How light and active thy limbs, and how fleeter than the fleetest thy softly patting feet! Alas! I might expatiate upon thy better qualities, — thy gentleness, thy forgiving temper, thy docility, thy faithful attachment — but my readers never knew thee, and I forbear.

## CHAPTER XI.

**Assured that no mock shower is shed.**

WHERE was I? as the *causeurs impitoyables* always say. Oh! telling of our dinner in the woods.

When all was done, the cold beef and its attendant pickles, — the pies and the cake and the huge loaf were returned "each to the niche it was ordained to fill" in the champagne basket that served to hold our treasures. The little tin pail of butter which had been carefully placed in the water, was now re-wrapped in its shroud of fresh leaves, and we set forth again, but under a threatening aspect of the heavens. We had been so amused watching Leo's gambols in the still transparent water, that we had not noticed the gathering clouds, which now grew apace thicker and heavier than we could have desired. Nevertheless on we went, and at a good pace, for our steeds had been as well refreshed as ourselves, and seemed to understand beside that there might be reasonable ground for haste. Not a house was to be descried, for in the back route we had chosen, settlers are few and scattered, and much of the road lay through tracts of untouched timber, where one was obliged sometimes to take good heed of the great H hacked on the trees by

the surveyor's axe, to be sure that we were on the Highway.

And now the rain came down in earnest. No pattering drops, — no warning sprinkle, — but a sudden deluge, which wet every thing through in half a minute. Onward, good Prince! — *en avant*, Quicksilver! (for thou art of French extraction;) shining and smoking as ye are, with torrents streaming down your innocent noses, adopt David Crocket's motto, so often quoted and acted upon by our compatriots, — "Go ahead!" If bonnets and veils, — if gingham and broadcloth or their wearers find any favor in your eyes, let not water extinguish your fire! Think of our soaking bread! 'Think of your own swimming oats, and as ye love not "spoon-vittles," hasten.

The rain spatters up from the rail-fences so as to create a small fog on every rail. The puddles in the road look as if they were boiling, and the sky seems to grow more ponderous as it discharges its burden. We have emerged upon a clearing, and there is a liquid sheet between us and the distant woods.

But there is a roof! I see a stick chimney! and there is a drenched cow crowding in beneath a strawy barrack, and some forlorn fowls huddled under an old cart. We approach the habitations of men, and we may not doubt a good fire and a kind welcome, — so forward, good steeds!

The log-house proved a small one, and though its neat corn-crib and chicken-coop of slender poles bespoke a careful gudeman, we found no gate in front, but in its stead great awkward bars which were to be taken down or climbed over; and either of these is no pleasant process in a pouring rain. But by the aid of a little patience we made our way into the house, which had only a back door, as is very usual among the early settlers.

Within, marks of uncomfortable though strictly neat and decent poverty were but too evident. No well-stored dresser, — no snug curtains, — no shining tins, — no gorgeous piece-work bed-quilts, exhibiting stars of all magnitudes and moons in all quarters. Not even the usual display of Sunday habiliments graced the bare log walls. The good woman was of a shadowy thinness, and her husband, with a green shade over his eyes, wore a downcast and desponding air. One little girl with her yellow hair done up in many a papillote sat in a corner playing with a kitten. The mother put down her knitting as we entered, but the father seemed to have been sitting in listless idleness.

We were received with that free and hospitable welcome so general among the pioneers of the West. Our wet garments were carefully disposed for drying, and even the buffalo-robes and blankets found place on those slender poles which are usually observable above the ample fireplace of a regular

log-hut; placed there for the purpose of drying — sometimes the week's wash, when the weather proves rainy, — sometimes whole rows of slender circlets of pumpkins for next spring's pies, — sometimes (when we can get them) festoons of sliced apples. The rain gave no sign of truce; the eaves poured incessantly, and we heard the rumbling of distant thunder. There was every prospect that we should be constrained to become unwilling intruders on the kindness of Mr. Gaston and his family, for the night at least.

When this was mentioned, the good woman, after expressing her willingness to do the very best she could for us, could not forbear telling us there *had been* a time when she could have entertained us decently under such circumstances. "But those days are gone by," she said with a sigh; "trouble has followed us so long that I don't look for any thing else now. We left a good home in York state because my old man couldn't feel contented when he saw the neighbors selling out and coming to the West to get rich. And we bought so much land that we hadn't enough left to stock it, and improve it; but after a while we had got a few acres under improvement, and begun to have enough for our own consumption, although nothing to sell, and we had to part with some of our land to pay taxes on the rest — and then we took our pay in wild-cat money, that turned to waste paper

before we got it off our hands. And my husband took on dreadful hard upon that,—and we all had the ague,—and then his eyes took sore,—and he is almost blind—too blind to see to work more than half the time. So we've been getting down, down, down! But I needn't cry," said the poor creature, wiping her eyes; "for I'm sure if tears could have bettered our condition, we'd have been well off long ago."

Here was an apology for poverty, indeed! How many complain of poverty, sitting in silks and laces, at tables covered with abundance! What groans over "hard times" have we not heard from jewelled bosoms within these two or three years! What rebuffs are always ready for those who take upon themselves the pleasant office of soliciting of the superfluity of the rich for the necessities of the poor! "Hard times!" say the unthinking children of luxury, as they sip their ice-cream, or hold up to the light the rosy wine!

This log-cabin with its civil and respectable inhabitants would furnish a lesson for such economists, if indeed they were willing to learn of the poor to appreciate the over-abounding comforts of their lot.

Our hostess was a very active and tidy person, and she busied herself in all those little offices which evince a desire to make guests feel themselves welcome. She had small change of gar-

ments to offer, but she was unwearied in turning and drying before the fire such as we could dispense with for the time; for we hoped the storm would be but shortlived, and did not wish to open our trunks until we stopped for the night. The rain however slackened not, but on the contrary frequent flashes of lightning, and a muttering thunder which seemed momently to draw nearer, threatened still longer detention. The eaves poured merrily, and it was amusing to see our little hostess, with an old cloak over her head, fly out to place tubs, pails, jars, basins and milk-pans so as to intercept as much as possible of the falling treasure, intimating that as soap was pretty scarce she must try to catch rain-water, any how. A trough scooped from the portly trunk of a large whitewood-tree was so placed as to save all that fell from one side of the roof, but on the other almost all the utensils of the house were arranged by the careful dame, who made frequent trips for the purpose of exchanging the full for the empty — apologizing for not calling upon "th' old man" to assist her, because getting wet might increase the inflammation of his eyes.

Mrs. Gaston had carried out her last milk-pail and was returning to the door when the sound of wheels was heard above the rattling of the storm; and in another moment a loud "Hilloa!" told that other travellers beside ourselves were about to seek shelter.

"I'll tell 'em to drive on to Jericho," said Gaston, "for we can't make them any ways c fortable here." "What! two mile further in rain!" rejoined her husband; "no, no, tl never do. The shower won't last long; let come in." And he would take his great straw and go out to invite in this new windfall.

## CHAPTER XII.

Kinder than polished slaves, though not so bland,
They pil›d the hearth and wrung their garments damp,
And filled the bowl, and trimmed the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare — though homely, all they had.
BYRON.

"HILLOA there! hilloa! where under the canopy *is* all the folks? be a joggin', can't ye?" shouted one of the newly arrived.

Mr. Gaston hurried as fast as his poor blind eyes would allow, and his wife threw fresh wood upon the fire, and swept the rough hearth anew, as well as she could with the remnant of a broom.

This was scarcely done when we heard voices approaching — at first mingled into a humming unison with the storm, then growing more distinguishable. A very shrill treble overtopped all the rest, giving utterance to all the approved forms of female exclamation.

"O dear!" "O mercy!" "O bless me!" "O papa!" "O! I *shall* be drowned — smothered!" "O dear!" but we must not pretend to give more than a specimen.

A portly old gentleman now made his appearance, bearing, flung over his shoulder, what seemed at first view a bolster cased in silk, so limp and helpless was his burden. Behind him came as best

she might, a tall and slender lady, who seemed his wife; and after scant salutation to the mistress of the cottage, the two old people were at once anxiously occupied in unrolling the said bolster, which proved, after the Champollion process was completed, to be a very delicate and rather pretty young lady, their daughter.

After, or rather with, this group entered a bluff, ruddy, well-made young man, who seemed to have been charioteer, and to whom it was not unreasonable to ascribe the adjuration mentioned at the head of our chapter. He brought in some cushions and a great coat which he threw into a corner, establishing himself thereafter with his back to the fire, from which advantageous position he surveyed the company at his leisure.

"The luggage must be brought in," said the elderly gentleman.

"Yes! I should think it had oughter," observed the young man in reply; "*I* should bring it in, if it was mine, any how!"

"Why don't you bring it in then?" asked the gentleman with rather an ominous frown.

"I! well, I don't know but what I could, upon a pinch. But, look here, uncle! I want you to take notice of one thing—I didn't engage to wait upon ye. I a'n't nobody's nigger, mind that! I'll be up to my bargain. I came on for a teamster. If you took me for a servant, you're mistaken in the child, sir!

"However," he continued, as if natural kindness was getting the better of cherished pride, — "I can always help a gentleman, if so be that he asks me *like* a gentleman; and, upon the hull, I guess I'm rather stubbeder than you be, so I'll go ahead."

And with this magnanimous resolution the youth departed, and with some help from our host soon filled up every spare corner, and some that could ill be spared, with a multifarious collection of conveniences very inconvenient under present circumstances. Three prodigious travelling-trunks of white leather formed the main body, but there were bags and cases without end, and to crown all, a Spanish guitar.

"That is all, I believe," said the old gentleman, addressing the ladies, as a load was set down.

"All!" exclaimed the teamster; "I should hope it was! and what any body on earth can want with sich lots o' fixins, I'm sure's dark to me. If I was startin' for Texas I shouldn't want no more baggage than I could tie up in a handkercher. But what's curious to me is, where we're all a-goin' to sleep to-night. This here rain don't talk o' stoppin', and here we've got to stay if we have to sleep, like pins in a pin-cushion, all up on eend. It's my vote that we turn these contraptions, the whole bilin' on 'em, right out into the shed, and jist make up a good big shake-down, with the buffaloes and cushions."

The young lady, upon this, looked ineffable

things at her mamma, and indeed disgust was very legible upon the countenances of all these unwilling guests. The house and its inhabitants, including our inoffensive and accidental selves, underwent an unmeasured stare, which resulted in no very respectful estimate of the whole and its particulars. Nor was this to be wondered at, for as to the house, it was, as we have said, one of the poorest and not one of the best of log-houses, — there is a good deal of difference, — and the people were much poorer than the average of our settlers.

The young lady at least, and probably her parents, had never seen the interior of these cabins before; indeed, the damsel, on her first unrolling, had said very naturally, "Why, papa, is this a *house?*"

Then as to the appearance of our little party, it was of a truly Western plainness, rendered doubly plain, even in our own eyes, by contrast with the city array of the later comers. Theirs was in all the newest gloss of fashion, bedimmed a little, it is true, by the uncourtly rain; but still handsome; and the young lady's travelling-dress displayed the taste so often exhibited by our young country-women on such occasions — it was a costume fit for a round of morning visits.

A rich green silk, now well draggled; a fine Tuscan-bonnet, a good deal trimmed within and without, and stained ruinously by its soaked veil; the thinnest kid shoes, and white silk stockings

figured with mud, were the remains of the dress in which Miss Angelica Margold had chosen to travel through the woods. Her long ringlets hung far below her chin with scarce a remnant of curl, and her little pale face wore an air of vexation which her father and mother did their best most duteously to talk away.

"This is dreadful!" she exclaimed in no inaudible whisper, drawing her long damp locks through her jeweled fingers, with a most disconsolate air: "It is really dreadful! We can never pass the night here."

"But what else can we do, my love?" rejoined the mamma. "It would kill you to ride in the rain — and *you* shall have a comfortable bed at any rate."

This seemed somewhat consoling. And while Mrs. Margold and her daughter continued discussing these matters in an under tone, Mr. Margold set about discovering what the temporary retreat could be made to afford besides shelter.

"This wet makes one chilly," he said. "Haven't you a pair of bellows to help the fire a little?"

The good woman of the house tried her apron, and then the good man tried his straw hat — but the last wood had been wet, and seemed not inclined to blaze.

"Bellowses!" exclaimed the young man, (whose name we found to be Butts;) "we can do our own blowin' in the woods. Here! let me try;" and

with the old broom-stump he flirted up a fire in a minute, only scattering smoke and ashes on all sides.

The ladies retreated in dismay, a movement which seemed greatly to amuse Mr. Butts.

"Don't you be scart!" he said; "ashes never pison'd any body yet."

Mr. Margold was questioning Mrs. Gaston as to what could be had for tea, — forgetting, perhaps, that a farmer's house is not an inn, where chance comers may call for what they choose without offence.

"But I suppose you have tea — and bread and butter — and ——"

"Dear!" exclaimed the poor woman, "I haven't seen any but sage tea these three months; — and as for bread, I could make you some johnny-cake if you like that; but we have had no wheat flour this summer, for my old man was so crowded to pay doctor bills and sich, that he had to sell his wheat. We've butter, and I believe I may say it's pretty good."

"Bless my soul! no bread!" said the old gentleman.

"No tea!" exclaimed his wife.

"O dear! what an awful place!" sighed Miss Angelica piteously.

"Well! I vote we have a johnny-cake," said the driver; "you make us a johnny-cake, aunty, and them that can't make a good supper off of johnny-

cake and butter, deserves to go hungry, that's a fact!"

Mrs. Gaston, though evidently hurt by the rude manner of her guests, set herself silently at work in obedience to the hint of Mr. Butts, while that gentleman made himself completely at home, took the little girl in his lap with the loving title of "Sis," and cordially invited Mr. Margold to sit down on a board which he had placed on two blocks, to eke out the scanty number of seats.

"Come, uncle," said the facetious Mr. Butts, "jes' take it easy, and you'll live the longer. Come and set by me, and leave more room for the women-folks, and we'll do fust-rate for supper."

Mr. Butts had evidently discovered the true philosophy, but his way of inculcating it was so little attractive, that the Margolds seemed to regard him only with an accumulating horror.

Hitherto we had scarcely spoken, but, rather enjoying the scene, had bestowed ourselves and our possessions within as small a compass as possible, and waited the issue. But these people looked so thoroughly uncomfortable, so hopelessly out of their element, and seemed moreover, by decree of the ceaseless skies, so likely to be our companions for the night, that we could not help taking pity on them, and offering such aid as our more mature experience of forest life had provided. Our champagne basket was produced, and the various articles it contained gave promise of a considerable amend-

ment of Mrs. Gaston's tea-table. A small canister of black tea and some sparkling sugar gave the crowning grace to the whole, and as these things successively made their appearance, it was marvellous to observe how the facial muscles of the fashionables gradually relaxed into the habitually bland expression of politer atmospheres. Mrs. Margold, who looked ten years younger when she smoothed the peevish wrinkles from her brow, now thought it worth while to bestow a quite gracious glance at our corner, and her husband actually turned his chair, which had for some time presented its back full to my face.

We got on wondrously after this. Mrs. Gaston, who was patience and civility personified, very soon prepared a table which was nearly large enough to serve all the grown people, and as she announced that all was ready, Mr. Butts, who had been for some time balancing a chair very critically on its hinder feet, wheeled round at once to the table, and politely invited the company to sit down. As there was no choice, the strangers took their seats, with prim faces enough, and Mrs. Gaston waited to be invited to make tea, while her poor half-blind husband quietly took his place with the children to await the second table.

Mr. Butts was now in his element. He took particular pains to press every body to eat of every thing, and observing that Miss Angelica persisted in her refusal of whatever he offered her, he cut

with his own knife a bountiful piece of butter, and placed it on her plate with an air of friendly solicitude.

The damsel's stare would infallibly have frozen any young man of ordinary sensibility, but Mr. Butts, strong in conscious virtue, saw and felt nothing but his own importance; and moreover seemed to think gallantry required him to be specially attentive to the only young lady of the party. "Why, you don't eat nothing!" he exclaimed; "ridin' don't agree with you, I guess! now for my part it makes me as savage as a meat-axe! If you travel much after this fashion, you'll grow littler and littler; and you're little enough already, I should judge."

It was hardly in human nature to stand this, and Mr. Margold, provoked beyond the patience which he had evidently prescribed to himself, at last broke out very warmly upon Butts, telling him to mind his own business, and sundry other things not particularly pleasant to relate in detail.

"Oh! you're wrathy, a'n't ye? Why, I didn't mean nothing but what was civil! We're plain-spoken folks in this new country."

Mr. Margold seemed a little ashamed of his sudden blaze when he found how meekly it was met, and he took no further notice of his republican friend, who on his part, though he managed to finish his supper with commendable *sang froid*, was evidently shorn of his beams for the time.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Tune a deploring dump; the night's dead silence
Will well become such sweet complaining grievance.
SHAKSPERE.

Most lamentably amusing was the distress of Miss Angelica when it became necessary to concert measures for passing a night in a crowded log-cabin. The prospect was not a very comfortable one, but the view taken of its horrors by these city people was so ludicrously exaggerated that I am sure no spectator could help laughing. The philosophy that cannot stand one night's rough lodging should never travel west of Lake Erie. Not that the lodging any where in these Western wilds is likely to be found more really uncomfortable than is often the lot of visitors at the Springs during crowded seasons; but fashionable sufferings are never quite intolerable.

The sleeping arrangements were of a more perplexing character than those which had been fortunately devised for the tea. There were two large beds and a trundle-bed, and these, with a scanty supply of bedding, comprised our available means; and besides our tea-party, two little boys had come dripping home from school to add to our numbers. After much consultation, many propositions, and not

a few remarks calculated rather to wound the feelings of our civil entertainers, it was concluded to put the two large beds close together in order to enlarge their capabilities, and this extensive couch was to hold all the "women-folks" and some of the children. The trundle-bed by careful stowage took the little ones; and for the old gentleman, a couch of buffalo-robes and carriage-cushions was skilfully prepared by none other than the forgiving Mr. Butts, who seemed disposed to forget past rebuffs, and to exert himself very heartily in the public service. This disinterested individual was perfectly content to repose Indian fashion, with his feet to the fire, and any thing he could get for a pillow; and the master of the house stretched himself out after the same manner.

When all was done, Mrs. Gaston made the ordinary cotton-sheet-partition for the benefit of those who chose to undress; and then began to prepare herself for the rest which I am sure she needed. All seemed well enough for weary travellers, and at any rate, these poor people had done their best. I hoped that all fault-finding would soon be hushed in sleep.

But it became evident ere long that Miss Margold did not intend to become a person of so small consequence. She had disturbed her father several times by requests for articles from different parts of the luggage, without which she declared she could not think of going to bed. She had received

from her mother the attendance of a waiting maid without offering the slightest service in return, and now, when all her ingenuity seemed to be exhausted, she suddenly discovered that it would be in vain for her to think of sleeping in a bed where there were so many people, and she decided on sitting up all night.

A silence expressive of the deepest consternation held the assembly bound for some seconds. This was first broken by a long, low, expressive whistle from Mr. Butts, but the remembrance of past mischance bridled his tongue.

"Do you think you could sleep here, my dear?" inquired Mr. Margold from his snug nest in the corner.

The young lady almost screamed with horror. "Never mind, my darling," said the mamma, "I will sit in the rocking-chair by the fire, and you shall have plenty of room."

"Oh no, ma! that will never do — why can't the woman sit up? I dare say she's used to it." This was said in a loud whisper which reached every body's ears — but no reply was made.

Mrs. Margold and her daughter whispered together for some time further, and the result was that the lady drew one of the beds apart from the other, which movement caused Mrs. Gaston's little girl to roll out upon the floor with a sad resounding thump and a piteous cry.

This proved the drop too many. Outspoke at last

the poor half-blind husband and father. His patience was, as Mr. Butts would say, "used up." "Neighbors," said he, "I don't know who you are nor where you come from, and I didn't ask, for you were driven into my house by a storm. My family were willing to accommodate you as far as they could; such as we had, you were welcome to, but we are poor, and have not much to do with. Now, you haven't seemed to be satisfied with any thing, and your behavior has hurt my wife's feelings, and mine too. You think we are poor ignorant people, and so we are; but you think we haven't feelings like other folks, and there you are mistaken. Now, the short and long of the matter is, that as the storm is over and the moon is up, it's my desire that you pick up your things and drive on to the next tavern, where you can call for what you like, and pay for what you get. I don't keep a tavern, though I'm always willin' to entertain a civil traveller as well as I can."

> Hast thou not marked, when o'er thy startled head
> Sudden and deep the thunder-cloud has rolled —

I do not know whether this unexpected display of spirit in poor Mr. Gaston was more like a thunder-clap or a deluge from a fire engine. Like single-speech Hamilton, he was too wise to attempt to add any thing to the effect it had produced. He waited in silence, but it was very resolute silence.

The Margolds were in a very pitiable perplexity.

Miss Angelica, knowing that none of the trouble would come upon herself, was for being very spirited upon the occasion; her papa, who had already begun to dream of Wall Street and Waverley Place, did hate to be recalled to the woods; and Mrs. Margold had no opinion of her own on this or any other occasion. Mr. Gaston, seeing no demonstrations of retreat, went to Butts, who was or pretended to be asleep, and, shaking him by the shoulder, told him he was wanted to get up his horses.

"Get up the poor critters at this time o' night!" said he, rubbing his eyes; "why! what upon the livin' earth's the matter! has the young woman got the high strikes?"

"Your folks is a-goin' to try and mend their lodgin', that's all," replied the host, whose temper was a good deal moved. "They a'n't satisfied with the best we could do for 'em, and it's my desire that they should try the tavern at Jericho. It is but two miles, and you'll soon drive it."

"I'll be tipp'd if I drive it to-night though, uncle," replied the imperturbable Mr. Butts; "I don't budge a foot. I sha'n't do no sich nonsense. As for their trying the tavern at Jericho, the tavern's a deuced sight more likely to try *them*, as you know very well. Any how, this child don't stir."

"But if we are turned out of doors," said Mr. Margold, who aroused himself most unwillingly to the consciousness of a new cause of disturbance, "you are bound to ——"

"I a'n't bound to drive nobody in the middle of the night," said Mr. Butts, "so you don't try to suck me in there. But as to turning you out o' doors, this here chap a'n't the feller to turn any man out o' doors if he'll be civil. He's a little wrathy because your folks wa'n't contented with such as he had. I see he was a gettin' riled some, and I thought he'd bile over. You see that's the way with us Western folks. If folks is saasy we walk right into 'em, like a thousand o' brick. He'll cool down agin if you jist pat him a little. He's got some grit, but he a'n't ugly. You only make your women-folks keep quiet — get a curb-bridle upon their tongues, and we'll do well enough."

Poor Mr. Margold! here was a task! But sleep, though it makes us terribly cross when its own claims are interfered with, is a marvellous tranquillizer on all other subjects; and as Mr. and Mrs. Margold and Miss Angelica were all very, very weary — the latter of teasing her parents, the former of being teased — a truce was at length concluded by the intervention of Mr. Butts, who acted the part of peace-maker, and gave sage advice to both parties.

The conduct of these city people, who were evidently of a very numerous class — that which possesses more money than intellect or cultivation — is not, after all, very surprising; for it is still fresh in our recollection that an English traveller of intelligence — one notorious for ultra-liberal prin-

ciples too — made angry complaint because the mistress of a log-house somewhere on the Western prairies was not disposed to entertain a party of strangers, who found it convenient to enter her dwelling uninvited. It seems that this person, whoever she may have been, was insensible of the honor done her house by an Avatar of so much dignity. She thought, perhaps, that travellers who had abundant means might have arranged their distances so as to make public-houses their stopping-places. And if her dwelling had, by a chance which might not unnaturally occur in the wilds of the West, been the mansion of wealth and consequence, it may be doubted whether our "liberal" guests would have claimed hospitality at its gates. It was because the tenant of the log-cottage was supposed to be *poor*, that she was censured for her unwillingness to turn her humble lodge into a tavern.

Hospitality claimed as such is, I believe, *invariably* rendered among us, with a freedom worthy of Arcadia itself. It is only when there is evidently a supposition on the part of the guest that a poor man's house and family are necessarily at the service of any body, for the sake of a few shillings, that our cherished independence is called into action. It is under such circumstances that those who are disposed to lord it in log-cabins discover that people who are not afraid to be poor can afford to be

independent; and that uninvited guests must purchase civility by civility, or find themselves unwelcome in spite of money.

After much experience I can assert that I have never known or heard of an instance where those who have found it convenient to throw themselves on the kindness of a settler of any degree, have not been received with a frank welcome, which has appeared to me peculiarly admirable, because extended, in many cases, under circumstances of the greatest inconvenience. Nor have I ever known compensation demanded, whatever may have been the trouble given; and where it has been accepted at all, it has been only sufficient to repay actual cost, and that usually upon urgency.

Less than this I could not say in fairness to the justly praised hospitality of the West; and I believe every reader will scarcely think our friend Gaston's apparent departure from the practice of the land needed this apology. It suggested itself unbidden, under the recollection of many a kindness received from strangers in the course of our numerous peregrinations.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Est-ce que vous joueriez de la clarinette, docteur?

*Doct.* Il est, je crois, *loisible* à tout humain, vu l'égalité des hommes, de —

*Comte de V.* De jouer de la clarinette . . . C'est une vérité incontestable — mais, malheureusement, il n'est pas *loisible* à tout humain de ne pas en entendre jouer — c'est en cela que la nature est injuste.

EUGENE SUE.

WE had agreed to make a twelve-mile stage before breakfast in company with the city people, whose way lay with ours so far. When the morning came and our mutual arrangements were to be made, the Margolds were so prodigiously sulky under the consciousness of last night's disagreeables, that I felt rather ashamed of the companionship, and would have preferred waiting to breakfast on sage-tea with poor Mrs. Gaston, who was evidently very uncomfortable between the recollection of the affronts put upon herself, and the fear that her husband had gone too far in resenting them. The die was cast however, and we were obliged to seem to belong to the offending side, who carried their wounded dignity very high at parting. Mr. Margold asked for Mr. Gaston's "*bill;*" our host declined making any charge. Mr. Margold insisted on his receiving payment, and finished by placing a bank-note on the table as he left the house without saying farewell, in which latter civility he was

closely imitated by Mrs. Margold and Miss Angelica.

"*You* didn't think I was *on*civil, did ye?" said Gaston, somewhat anxiously, as we prepared to follow.

"Not in the least! You were quite right," was the very sincere reply, for we thought the poor blind man had borne more than enough.

"Well! you've had a pretty mean time, I reckon!" said Mr. Butts, who stepped in to bid good by, just as we were departing: and I heard him add, "You larnt 'em a good lesson any how! I wouldn't ha' missed of it for a cow!"

Mr. Margold was to be my husband's companion as far as Wellington, where we were to take our coffee, and I was exalted to the back seat of the jingling barouche, which I shared with Mrs. Margold, leaving the front for Miss Angelica and her guitar.

The morning was a charming one, and a strong breeze from the west came as if on purpose to refresh the spirits and cool the temper of the party after the *contretemps* of the night. But this breeze, bearing on its fresh pinions some of the balmy moisture of last night's shower, blew Miss Angelica's long ringlets about most intolerably, and her little forehead became quilted with very unbecoming wrinkles, when, as we drove through a narrow way where the bushes almost met above our heads, a provoking puff sent down a copious shower from

the leaves, demolishing the small remnant of curl and the smaller remnant of patience. and the young lady scolded outright.

"I never *did* see such an odious country as this is!" she exclaimed; "it is impossible to look decent for an hour!"

"Well! one comfort is," said Mr. Butts consolingly, "that there a'n't many folks to see how bad you look, here in the woods! We a'n't used to seein' folks look dreadful slick nother — so it don't matter."

Double-distilled scorn curled Miss Margold's lip, and she maintained an indignant silence, as the only shield against the impertinence of the driver, who found consolation in an unceasing whistle. They had picked up this youth at a neighboring village, supposing, from his pleasant countenance and obliging manner, that they had gained a treasure of civility. It had been at Miss Angelica's especial instance that the party had quitted the usual road and taken to the woods. She wished to be a little romantic, but she had not counted the cost. Butts was indeed all they had supposed from his address, smart, good-tempered and kind-hearted, yet, as we have seen, he was not the less lacking in the kind of knowledge which was requisite for the part he had undertaken. He had never lived with any but those who considered him quite equal to themselves. He was the son of a respectable farmer, whose ample lands would cut up well

among his heirs; and when our friend Dan engaged to "drive team" for Mr. Margold, he had no idea but that he was to be, to all intents and purposes, one of the party, saving and excepting his duty towards the horses, which he performed with scrupulous fidelity and no small skill. All this seemed so evident, that I almost wondered that Miss Margold could not have passed over his intrusiveness more good-humoredly, setting it to the account of sheer ignorance, and not evil intention. But unfortunately the young lady seemed to fear that her dignity would be irrevocably compromised if she did not resent each and every instance of impertinence, and as Butts was one of those who cannot take the broadest hint — even an Irish one — he only talked the more, thinking he had not yet hit upon the right way to make himself agreeable.

By and by, finding it impossible to extort a reply from the thready lips of the fair Angelica, he hailed a young man whom we overtook on the road.

"Hilloa! Steve! where are you a stavin' to? If you're for Wellington, scale up here and I'll give ye a ride. I swan! I'm as lonesome as a catamount! You won't have no objection, I suppose?" turning slightly to Mrs. Margold. The lady did not forbid, and the traveller was soon on the box, much to Mr. Butts's relief, as he now had an interlocutor.

"How do you stan' it nowadays?" was the salutation of Mr. Butts to his friend.

"O, so as to be a crawlin' most of the time. Be you pretty hearty this summer?"

"Why, I'm middlin' tough. I manage to make pork ache when I get hold on't."

"Are you hired with any one now, or do you go on your own hook?"

"I've been teamin' on't some for old Pendleton that built them mills at Wellington. I come on to drive a spell for this here old feller," (jerking his thumb backward,) "but I guess we sha'n't hitch long."

"Why not? Don't he pay?"

"Pay! O, no danger o' that! money's the thing he's got most of. But he wants a *servant*, and that, you know, Steve, is a berry that don't grow on these bushes."

"So he hired you for a servant, eh!" and at the thought "Steve" laughed loud and long.

"Why! a body would think you had found a haw-haw's nest with a te-he's eggs in't!" said Mr. Butts, who seemed a little nettled by his friend's ridicule.

"Well, but it's too funny, any how," was the rejoinder; and the two friends branched off into various discussions, and regaled each other with sundry pieces of intelligence referring to the fortunes and characters of the Toms, Dicks and Harries of their acquaintance; leaving my attention at liberty to profit by many parallel passages from the lips of Mrs. Margold, who was well acquainted with the

latest improvements in the choice and quality of refreshments at parties, the newest style of French embroidery, and the shape and trimmings of the bonnets by the last packet. I had become quite absorbed in these matters, and had fallen into a sort of doze, such as I suppose to be the only sleep needed by a French milliner, when I was aroused by a clear, manly voice, with just enough of a nasal twang to make me remember that I was still in the woods, singing an air that recalled "young Lochinvar," and which had doubtless originally been intended for none other. The words were those of a Western song which refers to that interesting period in our local history — the admission of Michigan into the Union, — on which occasion our General Government decided that between the States at least, "might makes right;" — the era of the Toledo war, which cost us so much inkshed, and the unfortunate borderers such numbers of water-melons and pumpkins. This song is *not*, I believe, the one written by Mrs. Sigourney on the occasion.

I.

Oh! dashing young Mick is the pride of the West!
Of all its bold hunters the boldest and best,
He has town-house and villa, and water-craft fair,
And parks full of red-deer, enough and to spare.
He has meadow and woodland, lake, river, and lick,
And prairie-land plenty, has dashing young Mick.

II.

Now Mick, while a minor, was under control
Of his loving mamma, a good careful old soul.

And to all her long lectures, so prudent and sage,
His pithy response was — "But, ma'am, I'm of age!"
Says she, "You must share with poor Philo and Dick."
"But a'n't I of age, ma'am?" cried dashing young Mick.

III.

One time, when a party of gentlemen came
To prose with his mother, Mick sent in his claim:
Says he, "Here's the record — my nonage is o'er;
In this year thirty-five I've exceeded my score;
Make o'er my estate, ma'am, and please to be quick!
I can shear my own wolves, now!" quoth dashing young Mick.

IV.

"But, my dear, there's your brothers — they worry my life —
And you know 'tis *my* duty to smother all strife!
They *will* have *that farm* — and — we'll pay on demand
Ten miles of good ice for an acre of land;
Of the pine-barrens north you the choicest may pick."
"I'll be blam'd if I do, ma'am!" growled dashing young Mick.

V.

The dame, with a sigh, put her spectacles on;
"Now tell me, grave counsellers, what's to be done!"
"Oh! let it lie by till we taste your good cheer;
A twelvemonth's discussion will make it more clear.
You know what stout fellows are Philo and Dick,
And they'll nibble, if we don't, from dashing young Mick!"

VI.

Poor Mick! he talked big, and most roundly he swore
He'd at least have his own, if he couldn't get more:
But his ma' kept the farm and the money to stock it,
And quietly buttoned her purse in her pocket,
While the gentlemen argued through thin and through thick —
"Oh! I'll share and be thankful!" quoth dashing young Mick.

The ditty might have extended to the length of Chevy Chase for aught I can tell, in spite of many

signs of indignation on the part of Mrs. Margold and her daughter, if we had not at that moment come in sight of the tavern at Wellington, which caused Mr. Butts to interrupt his vocal efforts, and give a rousing touch to his horses to insure "a trot for the avenue."

## CHAPTER XV.

What do they in the north when they should be in the south?
SHAKSPERE.

We found a decent inn and a tolerable breakfast, but the pla ` itself was the image of desolation. It was one of those which had started into sudden life in speculating times, and the great mill, the great tavern and various other abortions had never known the luxury of a pane of glass or a paint-brush, nor did they bear marks of having at any time been occupied. A "variety store," offering for sale every possible article of merchandise, from lace gloves to goose-yokes, — ox-chains, tea-cups, boots and bonnets inclusive, — displayed its tempting sign; but the clerk sat smoking on the steps, and a few loungers around him looked like whisky-customers only. There was a banking-house, of course; and (also of course) it was closed, though the sign still stared impudently at the cheated passenger. And this was "Wellington!" Hollow honor for "le vainqueur du vainqueur du monde!"

After breakfast — at which, by the bye, Mr. Butts and his friend filled high places, — we bade adieu to the Margolds, who were to regain the great road after a few miles of further travel, while we took to the woods again. Before we parted, however,

Mr. Butts sought occasion to call us to witness that he returned to Mr. Margold the bank-note which that gentleman had deposited on Mr. Gaston's table.

"You see, he a'n't no hand to make a fuss, Gaston a'n't; so he jist told me to give it to ye after you got away. And he said," added the agreeable youth with a smile, "that he'd rather you'd buy manners with it, if you could."

How Mr. Margold and his driver got on after we parted, I cannot pretend to say, but I must confess I did not find it difficult, on review of what had passed during our short acquaintance, to decide which party had been most deficient in propriety and good feeling.

Butts was certainly boorish and provoking enough, but what had been his advantages? He was rude and impertinent to a rich man, but how far greater the offence of wounding wantonly the feelings of the poor!

Mr. Margold's indignant estimate of the presumption of this young man was grounded entirely upon the difference of condition between employer and employed. This alone made the offence, for Butts had neither said nor done any thing which could be considered wrong in itself. And the opinion that this difference is such as to make disrespectful conduct particularly offensive, is one which is acted upon every day, wherever society has taken a settled and permanent form. It is invariably recognized *in practice*, by all parties.

But Mr. Margold was one of those whose lives are passed in strenuous efforts to make the people believe that they recognize no distinctions of rank or station, of whatever kind, in society. To this end (as we have since been assured) has he talked and voted, and by such talk and such votes has he risen to several profitable offices. Would that such mean inconsistency were less common! To preach unmeasured social equality — an equality differing in no respect from the fraternization which placed the fishwoman and the princess on a level — and at the same time to exhibit a most indignant sensitiveness under the slightest approach to a practical recognition of this principle, — such is the basely hypocritical system of too many among us. They insist loudly upon the theory, yet maintain a constant struggle against the natural — we do not say the rational and proper — workings of this vital principle of our political institutions.

To carry out into full practical effect the common view of the doctrines alluded to, would indeed imply nothing short of a lingering mental martyrdom to the cultivated and the refined. The sacrifices would be so ruinous that cultivation and refinement would become a curse instead of a blessing; and in charity to our children we should refrain from attempting to give them any instruction beyond that which is to be acquired at a district school, or to allow them to imbibe any tastes, or habits, or manners, which would unfit them for

the plough or the forge. Care would become cruelty with such a life in view, for who would wish his son to be thin-skinned if he knew it would be his lot to receive a hundred lashes daily?

Do we then contemn the principle? By no means; but we think it should be expounded to the people by the philosopher, and not by the demagogue. We protest against the disadvantages under which those who desire to act consistently labor, in consequence of the hypocrisy of place-hunters. We give our sincere, and hearty, and devoted support to that broad basis of our Constitution — the natural equality of all — but we are compelled to deny some of the inferences which are attempted to be drawn from it. The *social* equality of all is acted upon by nobody. The roughest farmer in the backwoods expects from the grown-up son who shares his business — from the man whom he has hired to assist him in his labors — nay, from the wife of his bosom — a deference which he does not look for from those over whom he has no control. He would as soon give up his right hand as relinquish this supremacy. Yet he would be indignant if you should attempt to prove to him by argument that the distinctions which he finds so necessary for the harmony and usefulness of the members of his family, are equally requisite for the well-being of society at large. This is a view of the subject which he has never heard discussed at town-meetings; never read in his news-

paper; never learned from the stump-orator who gained his vote and voice by declaring that the rich are the natural enemies and oppressors of the poor.

We do not need to have our privileges extolled, but we do sadly need faithful and fearless exposition of the duties which are entailed upon us by those privileges. Yet it would seem to be left for foreigners to discern and to explain the difficulties and peculiarities of our position, while those among us, who are qualified to render this essential service to their country, stand coldly aloof, disdaining to counteract, even by a whisper, the loud and hollow brawlings of the venal demagogue who pretends to long for agrarian laws, and to approve of universal and unmitigated coarseness. What *honest* man of tolerable intellect and information really believes that because men are "born equal," there ought to be no distinctions in society? Yet do we not see this put forth daily by those who claim to be directors of the public mind? While none can attempt to deny or conceal that the highest earthly reward of strenuous effort and consistent virtue is to be found in the respect, esteem, or admiration of our fellow-beings, there are those who advance, side by side with this reluctant confession, the insincere and futile dogma that virtue, talent, accomplishments, manners, wealth — should of right create no grades in social life.

Why not go one step further, and say that all these — art, science, intellectual power, virtue,

manners, wealth,—ought to be at once and forever annihilated? Some one has lately given this as the only consistent interpretation of the doctrine.

The distinction which arises from wealth alone —wealth ungraced by enlarged views, literary acquirements, virtuous aspirations, or even elegant manners — can indeed be but a sordid one. It was on this basis only, if I read aright, that Mr. Margold and his family built their lofty pretensions; and it is certain that those pretensions were felt to be supremely ridiculous by all who witnessed their display. But the haughty demeanor which such people suppose to be a representative of true dignity, though it may pass unrebuked as long as they remain within the circle of their dependants and their *semblables*, will be detected and exposed as counterfeit the moment it comes in contact with independent minds. And if one may judge by the angry remarks of such persons as our city acquaintances, it is hard to say what degree of servility, short of absolute slavery, would content their magnificent claims to the respect of those who chance to lack their *summum bonum*. It is, in fact, slavery which they desire. They are so intensely vexed when poor people stand up rudely and boldly for the rights which they suppose in danger, that it is hard to make them willing these offenders should be allowed any rights at all.

Politicians may talk of the simplicity of our national maxims, but those who have seen their

practical bearings, — those who have lived really among the people, — not in the great cities, where society is, in many particulars, but a reflex of the condition of the old world, — these will bear witness that nothing can be more complex and puzzling than the aspect given to our social relations by the honest carrying out of these maxims. Not that the maxims themselves involve contradictions when rightly understood; but that they are misinterpreted to inculcate impossible sacrifices, and so, like custom-house oaths, trouble only the honest.

There is indeed one key to the difficulty — the short and simple rule of Christian kindness. This would smooth all salient and rugged points. There need be no sacrifice of proper dignity or reasonable taste, and yet no wounding of natural human feelings. In fact, distinctions are never offensive, even among *us*, unless there be found haughtiness on the one part or envy on its opposite; and if any thing can be more inimical to the spirit of Christian love than a self-worshipping pride, it is that master-passion of the fallen angels which gnashes its teeth at the exaltation of another.

"A high look and a proud heart," saith the wise man, "is sin; — but who shall be able to stand before envy?"

## CHAPTER XVI.

And as each one is praised for her peculiar things,
So only she is rich in meadows, meres, and springs;
And holds herself as great in her superfluous waste
As others by their towns and fruitful tillage graced.
DRAYTON.

I TRUST I may be pardoned for having ventured to give words to a small part of the reflections which filled my mind after parting with the city travellers. The subject is with us an all-engrossing one, and so intimately is it connected with all that is most important to us, that it is difficult to enter upon it at all without enlarging to the extent of a volume at least — so I must be excused for a few lines.

Our way lay northward, through a broken and uneven tract, and the road wound round the base of high woody hills in many an intricate curve. This road is only one of Nature's laying. When it is what is technically called "laid," by the united wisdom of the district, — at present the owl and the fox are the only *savans* in the neighborhood, — it will go most determinedly straight up and straight down the hills, and in a "bee line," as we say, through the broadest marshes, if marshes lie in the way. We scorn to be turned aside when we are laying roads. Not that we run them in a direct line between the places we wish to connect.

Nothing is further from our plan. We follow section lines most religiously, and consequently, — the sections being squares, — we shall in time have the pleasure of travelling zigzag at right angles, from one corner of the state to another. We do not submit to have notches and slices cut off our farms, for the accommodation of the public. If fifty cents' worth of land would save digging down a hill or bridging a wide marsh at the expense of hundreds of dollars, no farmer would be found who would vote for so tyrannical a proceeding. Truly says Mons. De Tocqueville that ours is a most expensive mode of transacting public business. — But as I was saying, our road was not "laid," so it was a very even and pleasant one, although it led through a rough country.

We had not yet lost the fresh breeze of the early morning, but the sun had become so powerful as to make the flickering shade of these scattered woods very delightful to us all. The children were never tired of watching the vagaries of the little chipmonk as he glanced from branch to branch with almost the swiftness of light, but they screamed with pleasure when the noise of our wheels started three young fawns that were quietly nestled at the foot of a great oak, and now pursued their graceful flight over hill and hollow, lost to the sight at one moment, then reappearing on another eminence, and standing still to watch us, belling all the while. It was a pretty sight, and I was as

much disappointed as the little folks when I found our fairy company had indeed left us, as the children said, "for good and all." On the whole, that morning ride was one of the pleasant trifles which one remembers for a long time.

Our scenery has been called tame. What is tame scenery? Is every landscape tame which cannot boast of mountains or cataracts? Save these I know of no feature of rural beauty in which our green peninsula is found wanting. If the richest meadow-land shut in by gently swelling hills and fringed with every variety of foliage — if streams innumerable, not wild and dashing it is true, but rapid enough to insure purity — if lakes in unparalleled variety of size and figure, studded with islands and tenanted by multitudes of wild fowl — if these be elements of beauty, we may justly boast of our fair domain, and invoke the eye of the painter and the pen of the poet. No spot on earth possesses a more transparent atmosphere. If it be true of any region that

> The glorious sun
> Enriches so the bosom of the earth
> That trees and flowers appear but like so much
> Enamel upon gold —

we may claim the description as our own. The heavenly bodies seem to smile upon us without an intervening medium. The lustre of the stars and the white glittering moonlight seem more pure and perfect here than elsewhere.

"That's a little sun, papa!" said wee Willie, pointing with rapt admiration at the evening star; and it is not long since I uttered an exclamation at seeing what I supposed to be a crimson flame bursting over the roof of a house at a little distance, but which proved to be Mars just risen above the horizon, and showing an aspect which in warlike times could be considered nothing less than portentous.

This peculiar transparency in the atmosphere is strikingly evident in the appearance of the Aurora Borealis, which often looks to be so near us that one can almost fancy that the tall pines pierce its silvery depths and enjoy perpetual daylight.

Perhaps it is this that gives a charm to scenery which it has been the fashion to call tame. The waters are more like molten diamonds, and the herbage like living emeralds, because the lustrous sky brings out their hues in undimmed intensity, adding depth to shadow, and keeping back nothing of brilliancy. Philosophers might tell of refraction, — painters of *chiar oscuro* — I have but one word — Beauty! and this expresses all that I know about that which fills me with delight.

We can at least boast some features unique and peculiar in our landscape — our "openings" and our wide savannas are not to be found in Switzerland, I am sure. These — as to the picturesque which we are all wild about — bear something like the same proportion to the Alps that the fair, blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked and tidy daughter of one of our good farm-

ers, does to the Italian improvisatrice with her wild black eyes and her soul of fire. There are many chances in favor of the farmer's daughter being the most comfortable person to live with, though she will attract no tourists to her *soirées*.

It is well understood that a large portion of the *new* new world was found but scantily clothed with timber. Immense tracts are covered but thinly with scattered trees, and these are almost exclusively of the different kinds of oak. By contrast with the heavily timbered land these tracts seem almost bare, and they have received the appropriate name of "oak-openings." Innumerable are the hypotheses by which the learned and the ingenious have attempted to account for this peculiarity of the country. Many have ascribed it to the annual fires which the Indians are known to have sent through the forest with the intention of clearing away the almost impervious under-brush which hindered their hunting. But the fact that the soil of the openings is ordinarily quite different in its characteristics from that of the timbered land seems to oblige us to seek further for a reason for so striking a difference in outward appearance. Much of our soil is said to be diluvial, — the wash of the great ocean lakes as they overflowed towards the south. This soil, which varies in depth from one foot to one hundred, (say the explorers,) is light and friable, but it is based upon something emphatically called "hard pan," which is supposed to

prevent the roots of large trees from striking to a proper depth. Whether oak-openings are found only where the soil is one foot in thickness, or equally where it extends to one hundred, we are not informed, I believe; but in all cases the hard pan gets the blame, from one class of theorists at least, of the want of large timber in these park-like tracts of our pleasant land.

The other "feature" to which I alluded — a very wide and flat one — the prodigious amount of wet prairie or "marsh" — the produce of millions of springs which percolate in every direction this diluvial mass — is said to promise magnificent resources of wealth for — our great-grandchildren. At present it yields, in the first place, agues of the first quality, and, secondly, very tolerable wild grass for the cattle of the emigrant; which latter advantage is supposed very much to have aided in the rapid settlement of the country. People make their transit now as in the time of the patriarchs, with their flocks and their herds, certain of finding abundant though coarse food for the sustenance of all kinds of stock until they shall have had time to provide better.

As to future days, inexhaustible beds of peat and marl — the former to use as fuel when we shall have burned all the oaks, the latter to restore the exhausted soil to its pristine fertility — are to compensate to our descendants for the loss of energy and enterprise which we ancestors shall undoubt-

edly suffer through agues. So things will in time be equalized. We reap the advantages of the rich virgin soil; our hereafter is to find boundless wealth beneath its surface.

Not fewer than three thousand lakes — every one a mirror set in verdant velvet and bordered with the richest fringe — with a proportionate number of streams — the very threadiest capable of being dammed into a respectable duckpond — supply moisture to our fields. What wonder then that those fields "stand dressed in living green!" One acre of water to less than forty of land! Small need, one would think, for artificial irrigation! Yet we have seen much suffering from drought, even in this land of water. For eighteen months, at one time, we of the interior had not a heavy shower, nor even a soft rain long enough continued to wet more than the surface of the ground. This lack of the ordinary supply of falling water is supposed to have effected materially the decrease of depth in the great lakes. Their periodical subsidence (a knotty subject, by the bye) went on much more rapidly than usual during that time. A smaller, though not unimportant, concomitant of the parching process was the thirsty condition of the poor cattle, who had to be driven, in some cases, miles for each day's drink. They do not like their champaign without water, so that they really suffered. At such times, one is almost disposed to wish, in defiance of the picturesque, that

the state was laid out like a checkerboard — a lake in every other quarter-section. I suppose however that no country — except Holland perhaps — is more thoroughly soaked than ours; so that, notwithstanding this one arid period, we need scarcely fear that our history will be a dry one.

The quietly beautiful aspect of Michigan, tame though it be, is not without its consolations. Have not the learned agreed that people's characteristics usually bear some mysterious *rapport* to those of their native land? Few of our "natives" have as yet had time to show much character, but as we are bound to believe in the pretty notion that

> La terra molle, lieta e dilettosa
> Simile a se l'habitator produce * —

what of mildness, kindness and all the gentler virtues may we not augur for the rising race? It is true there may never be a William Tell among them, but the mountain hero was the bright creation of circumstances that will never arise in this sunny land of lakes. We can do without such, for we shall have no Gesslers.

* Lands gentle-featured, calm and softly fair,
Produce such men as should be dwellers there.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"'Tis a long rough road," said farmer John,
As he saddled his nag in haste to be gone;
"But cheer thee, Dobbin! for this old sack
Will be light of its load ere we come back;
For our good miller, a jolly old soul,
Takes ever the grist, and gives customers the toll."

WESTERN BALLAD.

WILDER and rougher grew our winding way after we lost sight of the fawns, and I began to think Constantinople must be farther off than we had supposed, when our wheel plumped suddenly into a great dry hole so deep that it brought our steeds to a stand still. They, like ourselves, had been unprepared for any thing of the sort, for the track had been as smooth, if not as level, as a bowling-green. It was green too, for it had not been enough travelled to destroy the original sward. What could be the meaning of this pitfall?

It was vain to question the trees or the chipmonks, and our own wits offered no satisfactory solution; so we drove on. A few yards more, and we came to a similar trap, and from this time onward they became more and more frequent. They were the oddest thing that could be, in this out of the way place, seeming freshly dug and without conceivable aim or purpose. We discussed the

point without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion, till we became sensible of a new wonder — a distant sound of "Yo heave!" recurring at regular intervals, and transporting one's mind at once to the borders of the well-beloved sea, whose various music was far more familiar to our youthful ears than the murmur of the forest.

"Yo heave! Yo heave!" the mingled sound of many voices, became more and more distinctly audible as we ascended a high bank broken every where by the holes I have mentioned. When we reached its summit, from which the road descended suddenly into a deep, woody dell, a scene of strange beauty met our eyes, and explained all. Over a small stream in the bottom of the dell — a mere brooklet as it seemed from that distance — some eighty or perhaps a hundred men were erecting the frame-work of a large mill — an object which seemed almost as much out of place in this primal solitude as would the apparition of a three-decker upon the stocks, which indeed it much resembled. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between this intricate specimen of human skill, and the majestic simplicity of nature around it. The trees which had been felled to make room for it, lay in their yet unfaded green on every side, and so scanty allowance had been made for the gigantic intruder, that the still living forest hung over its symmetrical spars. An immense *beat* was about to be raised, (borrowed learning this,) and as many

men as could find hands-breadths on its edge were applying their united energies to the task, bringing to mind inevitably the sleeping Gulliver under the efforts of his Lilliputians. As the huge mass left the ground, poles and handspikes assisted its ascent, and the "Yo heave!" was repeated as a signal for every fresh effort, as on shipboard. When it had reached its place high in air, it made one's heart stand still to see men perched upon it, and leaning over to drive its corners home with heavy mallets; those below tossing up the requisite pins, which were caught with unerring precision.

When we could withdraw our attention from this part of the scene, we found much to attract it below. The spectacle of a "raising," though so commonplace an affair elsewhere, is something worth seeing in the woods; and accordingly there were almost as many boys and idlers as efficient hands present on this occasion. These were making the most of their time in various games of skill or strength — wrestling, running, leaping; — and shouts of merry laughter mingled with the cheering song of the workmen. Not a few lounged around the door of a temporary building or "shanty," as we say — erected for the refreshment of the guests; for be it known that on these occasions neighbors one and all leave their own business, if possible, and lend their aid for love, and not for money — expecting only some good cheer, and in case of need a reciprocation of the kindness.

Where the country is settled but little, the assembling of so many able-bodied men is no small undertaking. I have no doubt the company before us cost several days' hard riding. And there were probably many there who would not have been hired to quit their own affairs to work for any body. It is considered very churlish to refuse in such cases, and nothing would make a man more unpopular than the habit of excusing himself from raisings. Indeed few are disposed to offend in this way, for these are considered in the light of friendly visits, and constitute almost the sole attempt at merry-making in which the men of the country take part.

The work went on rapidly and well. Every thing fitted, and the complicated structure grew as if by magic aid. When one only thinks of such undertakings, it seems wonderful that terrible accidents do not often occur — but when we see the operation, it is more natural to ask how it is that they ever occur, so great is the amount of skill, care and accuracy employed. The master mind, clear-headed and keen-eyed, stands by, calmly directing the minutest movement; and so complete is the confidence reposed in him that his commands are implicitly obeyed where the least mistake might cost many lives. This person took upon himself very properly the right of repressing, with some sternness, the jokes and laughter of the younger portion of his assistants; who, preferring

of course the highest and most perilous parts of the work, yielded to the excitement of the moment, greatly increasing their own risk as well as that of all concerned.

"'Ta'n't play-spell, boys!" said the "boss."

"Law! I tho't 'twas! I seen the master out o' doors," replied one of the pickles.

"Well, now you know it a'n't, you'd better keep your teeth warm," shouted the master in return; "put your tongue in your elbow, and then may-be you'll work!"

And under such auspices it was not long before the last rafter found its appropriate place, and nothing was lacking, from the huge foundation stones which had left such yawning cavities in the wood, through which we approached the scene, to the apex of the airy pile, which showed its outline with beautiful distinctness on the heavy foliage around it. This was the moment of triumph. The men, who had been scattered in every direction throughout the frame, giving it the appearance of an enormous bird-cage, or rather aviary, now ranged themselves along the beams, and gave three thrilling cheers, presenting the most perfect image of the beautiful manœuvre of "manning the yards" on board a vessel of war, that can possibly be conceived. With me the illusion was complete for the moment, and I found my eyes filled with tears — the tears of ancient and well-preserved memories, — in spite of the great old trees and the deep lonely dell.

Nothing now remained but to name the structure according to the formula invariably used on such occasions, let the terms suit as they may.

> "Upon this plain
> Stands a fair frame —
> Who'll give it a name?"

To which a voice from a distant corner responded,

> "We'll call it 'the miller's delight,' —
> To take toll all day and count the cash at night."

This again reminded me of the ceremony of naming at a launch, but if there were libations on this occasion they were not poured upon the ground.

The whole company now adjourned to the shanty, where abundant refreshments were provided. We were very politely invited to partake, but the day was waning, and the scene had already beguiled us of so much time, that we declined any thing beyond a glass of excellent spruce beer, — a luxury which we of the woods know how to appreciate.

Sir Walter Scott observes that he always found "something fearful, or at least melancholy, about a mill." He had never seen one "raised," I am sure. Perhaps he had owned one when wheat, having stood at twelve shillings, fell to six — and after some fluctuation settled at four. This would account for his impression.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Near the moist brink
Of music-loving streams they ever keep,
And often in the lucid fountains peep.
H. Pickering.

The day had been sultry, and, spite of the woods, our horses began to look fagged and weary before we reached the place where we intended to pass the night. The sun was in mighty power, as if he had forgotten it was four hours after noon, but certain attendant clouds had already begun to "lay their golden cushions down" in preparation for his *coucher*. The land now lay low and level, much intersected by small streams, and covered with the long grass of our rich savannas. On these wide, grassy plains, great herds of cattle were feeding, or lying stretched in luxurious idleness under the scattered trees. We might have been surprised, such was the solitariness of the region, to find such numbers of these domestic animals; but we have not lived so long in the wilds without having discovered that a herd of cattle, with its tinkling bells, is not to be considered as a sign of close vicinity to the abodes of men. When cattle feed in wild and unfenced pastures, they soon exhaust or spoil those nearest home; and even without this excuse, they will often wander at their "own sweet will," till

the chase after them at milking-time becomes no small part of the day's business.

"Hunting cattle *is* a dreadful chore!" remarked one of our neighbors, with piteous emphasis, after threading the country for three weeks in search of his best ox.

This is one of the characteristic troubles of new-country life. In vain is the far-sounding bell strapped round the neck of the master ox or cow, (for we say *master*-cow by catachresis I suppose.) A good bell may be heard by practised ears four miles, if a valley or lake aid the transportation of sound; and a horse that has been accustomed to this species of coursing will prick up his ears and turn his head toward the sound of a well-known bell, thus serving as guide to the gudeman if he chance to be slow of hearing. Yet the herd will not always keep within bell sound. In vain too do we employ every ingenious artifice of temptation — supplying our "*salting-place*" with the great delicacy of the grazing people, and devoting the bran of each grist to the purpose of an extra feast, in the hope that the propensity to good feeding may overrule the national taste for unbounded liberty. "Home-bred memories" seem to have no place in the ruminations of the gregarious tribes. These expedients, which are resorted to only by the more provident, have indeed some efficacy, but they do not remedy the evil. It is sometimes mitigated by accidental causes.

When the flies become troublesome on the wide marshes, the whole herd, as if by previous agreement, will make for some well-known shade, near or distant, as the case may be, and there pass the sultry hours, only changing their position gradually, as the sun throws the coveted shadow eastward. And at the time of year when insects are most tormenting, the farmers make huge smokes in convenient spots near home, certain that to these all the cattle in the neighborhood will flock instinctively, — smoke being the best of all preventives against flies and mosquitoes. So that, in the six weeks of mosquito-time, cattle-hunting becomes a less formidable "chore," and thus good comes out of evil. Evil! ay, the term is none too strong! I appeal to those who have travelled in the timbered land in July or August, I will not say to those who *live* in those regions, for I would fain hope their skin is hardened or armed in some way, as the fur of the ermine thickens and turns white in preparation for a Siberian winter.

One may observe, *en passant*, that ours is a rare region for the study of entomology. Those virtuosi who expend their amiable propensities in transfixing butterflies and impaling gnats would here find ample employment from May till November. Indeed they might at times encounter more specimens than they could manage comfortably and without undue precipitation. First, in early April, appear, few and far between, the huge blue-bottle

flies, slow-motioned and buzzy, as if they felt the dignity of their position as ancestors. Next in order, if I forget not, come the most minute of midges, silent and stealthy, pretending insignificance in order that they may sting the more securely. These seem to be ephemera, and fortunately the race soon runs out, at least they trouble us but for a short time.

Flies proper — honest, sincere flies — come on so gradually that we can hardly date their advent; but it is when sultry weather first begins, when the loaded clouds and the lambent lightning foretell the warm shower, that twitchings are seen, — and quick slaps are heard, — and these, with the addition of something very like muttered anathemas, announce the much-dreaded mosquito. Then come evenings — fortunately not long ones, — passed in the dark, lest the light should encourage the intruders. Moonlight is praised; and even this must be admired through closed sashes, unless we can contrive by the aid of closely-fitted gauze blinds to turn the house into a great safety-lamp, — we burning within its sultry precincts. Then are white walls spotted with human blood, like the den of some horrible ogre. Then "smudges" are in vogue, — heaps of damp combustibles placed on the windward side of the house and partially ignited, that their inky steams may smother the mosquitoes while we take our chance. I have had a "smudge" made in a chafing-dish at my bed-

side, after a serious deliberation between choking and being devoured at small mouthfuls, and I conscientiously recommend choking, or running the risk of it, at least.

If one wished to make a collection for a museum, nothing more would be necessary than to light a few candles on any hot, close evening in August, especially when the weather is cloudy, and the open windows would be filled at once with a current of insect life, comprising all the varieties of *coleoptera* and their many-named kinsfolk; from the "shard-borne beetle with his drowsy wing," that goes knocking his back with unflinching pertinacity against every inch of the ceiling, to the "darning-needle," said to be an implement of Pluto himself, darting in all directions a body as long, and to all appearance as useless, as the sittings of our legislature.

We must not however claim preëminence for our dear Michigan in this particular point. The gallinippers of Florida are said to have aided the Seminoles in appalling our armies, and we have of late heard of a prodigious number of bites in all parts of the Union. And do we not know from unquestionable historic authority, namely, that of a British tourist in America, that a presumptuous proboscis once dared to penetrate even General Washington's boots, as he rode through Newark marshes?

Our butterflies are nothing to boast of, and there are few of them with which one would be willing

to change costumes, even to be "born in a bower." I have fancied that yellow predominates more than usual among them, and I have been tempted to believe they are bilious, like the rest of us. At any rate, the true ethereal and brilliant Psyche is but faintly represented by any specimen I have yet seen.

Mosquito-time, as before hinted, lasts, in its fury, but about six weeks, but flies are in season all summer. In the months of August and September particularly, black is the prevailing color of ceilings, looking-glasses and pictures, not to mention edibles of all classes. Much ingenuity is displayed in contriving what, in the paraphrastic tone of the day, we are bound to denominate destructive allurements for these intrusive and inconsiderate insects, — we used to call them fly-traps. These consist — in the more refined situations — of paper globes and draperies, delicately cut, so as to present externally an endless variety of cells and hiding-places, and these are well furnished within with poisoned sweets. Less fanciful people, frugal housewives and hard-hearted old bachelors, — place a large tumbler, partly filled with molasses, and covered with a piece of innocent-looking pasteboard having in the centre a hole large enough for a blue-bottle to enter *toute déployée*, but affording a poor chance for escape after he has clogged his feet and wings in the too eager pursuit of pleasure — a melancholy (and quite new) warning illustration of the *facilis descen-*

sus. And again those of us who may by some chance have attended a course of chemistry, show our superior advantages by using a little water impregnated with cobalt, which carries swift destruction in every sip; and having at least the recommendation of not being sticky, answers a very good purpose, unless the children happen to drink it.

Yet this ingenious variety of deaths makes no perceptible diminution in the number of our tormentors, and I have heard a good old lady exclaim against such contrivances altogether, saying that if you kill one fly, ten will be sure to come to his funeral.

Yet we must not be persuaded to fancy ourselves worse off than other people in this particular either. I remember well — and perhaps you too, reader — the appearance of an elegant array of confectionary displayed in a verandah which hung over a lovely moonlit lake in a region where flies and midges had been for many years under the civilizing influences of good society. A blaze of light illumined the flower-wreathed pillars, and the gay crowd were ushered from the ball-room to the delicately furnished table, when lo! every article in sight appeared as if covered with black pepper; and the purest white and the most brilliant rainbow tints of creams and ices presented but one sad suit of iron gray. The very lights waxed dim in

the saddened eyes of the gazers, for whole colonies of hapless gnats had found ruin in too warm a reception, and were revenging themselves by extinguishing their destroyers.

But return we to our herds feeding beside the still waters.

## CHAPTER XIX.

I am as free as Nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.
DRYDEN.

WHEN we miss our way in a labyrinth, — I have never attempted any thing in this line beyond following with my bodkin's point cunning trickery on paper, — our only hope of ultimate success lies in returning to the position whence we set out, and endeavoring by more disciplined attention to avoid further wandering. I believe some people's heads are labyrinthine by nature — but we will try.

We left the sun setting or preparing to set; the willows looking at their pensile tresses in the water; the herds making pleasant music at small cost as they cropped the dainty meadow-grass. As my memory recurs to that hour of beauty, I can recollect that we paused a moment under the shade of a spreading beech, and were wishing that the taste of some adventurous settler had led him to pitch his tent in this lovely spot, that we need not wander further in search of a shelter for the night, when we discovered that the light evening breeze, that had seemed so refreshing as we met it on our onward way, was in reality coaxing from their day

beds whole clouds of mosquitoes, whose detested horn was fast overpowering all sweeter sounds.

The charm of the scene was gone at once. To the practised ear the note of this enemy of mankind is "like signal guns in battle" — a sound which awakens at once a degree of passionate energy that would seem surprising to the uninitiated. Our good steeds felt the whip, probably for the first time that day, and we soon found ourselves at the summit of a gentle eminence which arose gradually from the borders of the wide tract of meadow. Here the eye wandered over a plain clothed rather sparingly with heavy timber, and affording a cheering though distant view of several newly-built log-houses peeping here and there between the tall and stately trunks of the original forest. Could this be Constantinople? or was it only a Pera or Scutari — a mere vestibule to more imposing localities?

We could not be long in suspense. Fumes of tobacco filled the air — I hope the Turks smoke a better quality — and lo! before we reached the first house or its clearing, an Indian, without any sort of covering for the head, not even a flaming handkerchief — his hair faded to a red brown by the burning sun — a cigar in his mouth — and in his hand — yet no! — it cannot be! — yes! it is — a book! An Indian with a book! This must be some missionary station that we had never heard of. And be-

sides, I thought our Indians had all been persuaded off to Green Bay, at the point of the bayonet.

"Can you tell us, friend,"— but what is this? Mr. Jenkins! our old neighbor, Mr. Simeon Jenkins — ruralizing with a volume such as used to grace the corner of his shop! the very same, I dare say; at any rate I warrant it full of hard words, or it would not have found favor in his eyes.

Our quondam neighbor seemed really glad to see us. Cordial greetings were exchanged, and many questions asked on both sides; but the one I most desired to put, I did not dare even to hint at, namely, what could possibly have transformed our friend into so near a resemblance to the aborigines? He never was particularly solicitous as to his outward man, but he used to wear Hyperion's curls, though he combed them but seldom; and his front, though not exactly that of Jove, was of a scholarly whiteness save when he rubbed it red in the anxiety of his deep cogitations. His dress, which had formerly carried with it as much of an outside show of humanity as that of most of his neighbors, was now, to say the least, none too much for the sultriest weather. He seemed systematically to have dispensed with every thing that could be deemed superfluous even by an Indian. Indeed, Red Jacket, if we may draw inferences from his name, must have been in the habit of devoting a greater proportion of his income to external decoration, than our literary friend in his rusticated state.

He was changed but little, otherwise. His flow of talk presented the old mixture of grand words, picked up in the course of his reading, with local peculiarities of diction which came unbidden.

"We had no idea that you lived in this quarter, Mr. Jenkins. I think, when you left our neighborhood, you were going into another part of the country?"

"True! you are correct. When I transferred my residence, I located for a pretty considerable space of time in Etny, which was then confidentially anticipated for to become the county-seat. But, by the influence of faction, sir, our plans was circumvented; nothing went as it had oughter; and when I see how things was a goin', and that we had got to be awfully taxed to pay for them county-buildin's that's a dilapidatin' every day for want of tenants and winder-glass, I concluded to cut stick; and as my cows *would* concentrate at Constantinople whether or no, and it took all my time to run after 'em, I thought I might as well come here at once, and devote myself to an agricultural profession."

"This is Constantinople then?"

"It is. This here eighty in your immediate vicinity is intersected with streets."

"And the stream which we have just passed — has it a name too?"

"I should think it had! That's the Wolgy. I named it myself, after considerable of a run in the

old country. Wolgy Creek, they call it here. There is not much book-learning among our neighbors."

This last observation was accompanied by a pitying smile.

"I suppose your own studies must be materially interrupted since you turned farmer."

"Mine! O no! far otherways, for I farm altogether by the book. I consider headwork to be by far the most important, so I generally let my boys perform the manual labor, while I exercise my mind in planning work for them. Farming requires a great deal of reflection, and I never could reflect much while I was hard at work."

"And how does your mode of farming succeed?"

"Why, as to that, I hardly consider myself in a suitable position for to answer determinedly. I got a number of plans, and made some improvements upon every one of them, but some how or another — the season wasn't propitiatious. My wheat was unaccountable chessy, though I turned water upon it, and kept it moist all summer. After all my care, we came pretty nigh bein' short on for bread-timber this spring. I hadn't good luck with my bees, neither; they all died off, though I washed the hives in sulphur-water to kill the worms. Some of the neighbors says it was the sulphur that killed 'em, but they are very much under the dominion of prejudice and superstition. Sulphur is a dreadful purifying thing, and there

a'n't nothing in the analogy of things to make a body suppose it would be bad for any thing."

"Your neighbors then do not agree with you in your fondness for experiments?"

"No! they are jined to their own ways, and adverse to any improvement. I got some silk-worms, and tried 'em upon oak-leaves, and they all died, and I ra'ally believe my neighbors was glad on't. Now you see them silk-worms had been foolishly kept upon one particular kind of food; but I am certain that if I could light upon some that had been left to foller the leadings of their own just appreciations, they would elongate the best of silk from oak-leaves, which is naturally, you know, a very tough sort of victuals, and would therefore, of course, be productive of causing the silk to be stronger. But, talking of victuals, won't you enter my cottage and partake of a little refreshment? It's a getting on towards night, and I reckon you can't get along much further."

This was declined, as we had a particular resting-place in view; but we could not think of proceeding without seeing Mrs. Jenkins, who is a woman of sterling worth, and bears her husband's oddities with admirable patience, evidently considering him as belonging to that high order of genius whose errors are more than pardonable.

The good lady received us with smiles somewhat tinctured with sadness. She had not found very pleasant the change of residence, from a little grow-

ing village, where plain wives and mothers often dropped in to take a quiet cup of tea, and discuss the floating, feminine news of the day, to a woodland solitude, where even her husband's grandiloquence was but sparingly bestowed, and where he — identifying himself alternately with Cincinnatus, Franklin, and Lord Byron — exacted the indulgence and the homage which he conceived to be the just due of a person whose exalted capacities and acquirements united all these claims, and some more besides.

Mrs. Jenkins did not appear to have participated in her husband's plan of extreme simplification of costume. Her gown and cap were neat as usual, though somewhat more worn than when I saw her last; and she enjoyed shoes, though not stockings. Perhaps Mr. Jenkins had discovered that the Albanian ladies did not consider them indispensable. The younger children were somewhat like Cupids, in drapery if not in contour; the elder had not yet returned from their field-work.

While we detailed our stories of village news,— births, deaths, marriages, and removals, — the last far the most prolific topic, — Mr. Jenkins vanished for a few moments, and when he reappeared it could not be unobserved that he had made material additions to his dress. His wife looked evidently pleased at this effort at humanization, and he replied to her looks with something of a sheepish air, as one might who had been caught betraying his principles.

"The evenings come on chilly, after these hot days," he said; "and I find that old habits requires more covering than an unsophisticated natural condition would render necessary. I am a trying to bring up my family upon rational principles, and to learn them not to want things that wasn't naturally required by the human constitution at the creation of the world. We all know that nature had its origin before the rise of human affairs, and that most of the inventions that men has sought out, is the offspring of pride and luxuriousness, no ways needed by man in his true, independent condition."

"But do you consider it desirable to exchange the habits of civilized life for those of the savage, of our own Indians for instance?"

"Certingly I do. Pride I consider to be the ruin of every thing in this world. Now there a'n't no pride among the Indians. They like a man just as well when he is dirty as if he was dressed up ever so grand, and better too, because it seems more sociable. Every body's alike among them, and so it ought to be. They all eat out of one dish, and drink out of one bottle."

"But would you like to eat and drink with them?"

"Why, as to that, the Indians is nasty creatures, and don't know how to cook any thing; and besides, my habits is fixed, as I was a saying a while ago — and my health a'n't very good neither"

(he might have stood for a Hercules) — "and besides, as to eatin', you know the Indians a'n't the same color that we be."

"Oh! your opinion that every body is alike does not extend to color then?"

"I should hope not! you'll never catch me eatin' with Indians nor niggers. They never were meant to associate with white folks. But I want my boys to be brought up rational, only their mother won't let 'em."

I could not help saying I was glad to hear it.

"Yes, I s'pose so!" was the reply. "Your ideas was all originated and begun where folks lived for nothing but pride — I don't mean no reflections, — but it is jes so with people that's brought up in cities — I don't blame you none, but I know you can't be expected to see things in their true light. We ra'ally need but precious little if it wasn't for pride."

We knew of old that Mr. Jenkins's passion for argument was insatiable, and we declined entering on the discussion of first principles on so short notice. We knew too that our old neighbor had been sadly unsuccessful in the many ingenious modes by which he had attempted to get a living without work; so that we had the more charity for his desire to prove that very little is needed in this world beyond a contented mind. He is one of a numerous class who solace themselves by decrying worldly advantages which they have not

been able to attain, and habits of neatness and refinement which contravene their own coarse and self-indulgent usages. They are self-deceivers undoubtedly, but they seldom deceive others. Their inconsistencies invariably tell the truth.

We might have been glad of a further opportunity to cheer the good wife, whose eyes told the pleasure our call was bestowing; but the westering sun warned us to depart, and we bade adieu after requesting a visit in return.

## CHAPTER XX.

Where were his friends when he sank low?
Knew they no strange presaging woe?
Ah, no! they talked, or laughed, or sang,
Unconscious of his dying pang.
MRS. RADCLIFF.

THE evening had fallen when we arrived at our lodging-place, and the stars were beginning to be visible, like specks of chaste silver in the dazzling but shaded gold of the western sky. We had left Constantinople several miles behind us, and the dwelling to which we had now come stood solitary in the centre of a wide clearing, with not a tree of the dense forest left to shade it from the burning sun. This was nothing new to us, for it is the prevailing taste of the country, but one can never get accustomed to so barbarous a fashion. The *new* feature on this occasion consisted in thirteen huge pillars, not supporting the low roof of the cottage, but standing in a semicircle, with nothing above them but the star-spangled arch of night. They were of Saxon proportions — almost as thick as they were high; and they bore not the outline of mere stumps, for they were of nearly even size throughout. Black-looking and ominous things were they, and in the dying light they gave

the scene an air of Druid gloom. As we drew up at the bars the house-dogs barked, and with some aid from Leo, made abundance of noise, but no sign of humanity greeted our approach. One does not wait for invitation however in such cases, and we opened the door upon a sad scene.

The master of the family, a stout farmer of forty, whom we had met only a day or two before, lay extended on the bed, evidently beyond the help of man. His eyes had begun already to wear the cold glaze of death, and his countenance expressed an intensity of anxiety and distress which was fully reflected in the faces gathered around his bed. An awful silence, which we of course were most careful not to disturb, reigned in the room, broken only at long intervals by a faint moan from the dying man, echoed with heart-breaking emphasis by his poor wife, who wiped his forehead frequently, with a trembling hand. A large family of children, and two or three neighbors, made up the company, and one of the latter, stepping out of the door, beckoned my husband, and explained the dreadful casualty which had thus brought sorrow like a whirlwind.

The poor man had been crushed by a falling tree. He had been an adventurous and successful bee-hunter, and the pillars which had attracted our attention were the trophies of his triumphs in this line. He had by his very success been excited to still further effort, intending to surpass all his

neighbors in his collection of bees, and in the quantity of honey which he should prepare for market. The thirteen monuments near his house had every one been procured at the risk of life or limb. They were the shafts of bee-trees, found in the forest at much expense of time and trouble, and cut down with so much skill as not to disturb the inhabitants, although this implies not only felling, but also cutting off all that part of the tree which grows above the hive.

The mode in which this is accomplished is this: another tree, or perhaps more than one, is first felled in such a direction as to form an elastic bed for the reception of the bee-tree, which thus falls without shattering itself to pieces, as from its hollowness it is sure to do when it falls on the ground. The upper portion is then to be removed, and when this is very heavy, as is generally the case, since the hives are almost always found in very large old trees, the greatest care and accuracy are requisite to prevent a tremendous and dangerous rebound of one or both the parts.

After all his experience and all his triumphs, poor Mallory, perhaps grown less careful as he became more self-confident, had received the whole force of a huge limb across his neck and shoulders, and though no fracture could be discovered, it was evident from the first, that death was in the blow.

There was not only no medical aid in the neighborhood, but his son, who was his assistant on the

occasion, was obliged to walk two miles before he could procure a yoke of oxen and a sled on which to bear him home. One scarcely dares to imagine what his wife must have suffered as she pursued her weary way over a thousand obstacles to the depth of the dense wood where she was to find him dying — perhaps dead. But it may be that our imaginations would not picture such scenes faithfully. He who "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," does not, we may hope, give to those of his children, whose lot it is to dare the perils and trials of the unhewn wilderness, that cultivated sensitiveness which places new and keen weapons in the hand of sorrow. Their lives are occupied with stern realities — some of them sad and heavy ones; and the necessity for constant effort and for habitual fortitude, is a protection against the exaggerations of fancy.

The woodsman is continually subject to accidents of the most appalling kind. Added to the incredible toil of clearing heavily timbered land, the hardy settler goes to his work every morning with the consciousness that only the same Providence that could preserve him unharmed on the field of battle, can shield him from the perils of his daily labor. The ordinary operation of cutting down large trees, if performed where the timber is scattered, involves considerable risk; since a splinter, a limb heavier than was allowed for, or a heart more decayed than appeared outwardly, may thwart

his nice calculations, and wound if not kill him. But it is in the dark and heavy wood, where the fathers of the forest stand in ranks almost as serried as those of the columns of Staffa, that peculiar dangers are found. If a tree, when felled, happen to lodge against another, it is almost a miracle if it is dislodged without an accident. This the best and most experienced woodsmen acknowledge, yet there are few of them who can resist the temptation to try. In cutting down the supporting tree, the one first felled is almost certain either to slide or to rebound in a way which baffles all calculation, and accidents from this cause are frightfully frequent. The only safe course is to girdle the second tree, and let both stand until they decay, or until some heavy storm sweeps down the incumbrance. But this involves too great a vexation to the axeman, since his ambition is to see the piece of land he has undertaken to clear, bereft of every thing but the unsightly stumps which attest his skill and bravery.

Here the fatal consequences of too adventurous daring had brought woe unutterable, and we could read volumes of anguished thought in the darkening countenance of the sufferer, as he rolled his dim eye slowly round the circle of youthful countenances, and fixed it at last on the face of his wife.

"If you and they were provided for" — he said in a faint, husky voice, — and he tried to add — "God's will be done!"

The words were not fully audible, but the feeling was there, for the calm expression which belonged to it took gradual possession of the sunken features.

To stay to witness so heart-rending a scene would have been worse than useless, for what could we do or say? If a stranger "intermeddleth not with our joy," how much less with our sorrow!

A lad had been sent fifteen miles for the nearest physician, and at this moment a slight bustle at the door announced their arrival. As the medical man entered, we withdrew, and, setting out once more, drove on with overburdened hearts to the next house, which was perhaps three miles off. There we explained our circumstances and asked for lodging, which was very hospitably accorded by the sole inmates, an old man and his wife. They had but one room, and much of one of its sides was occupied by a carpenter's bench and tools; but the space was still large, and they had plenty of bedding, so that it was not difficult to arrange resting-places for weary people.

After the children were in bed, I looked out for a while at a low meadow which lay at no great distance from the house, now covered with a splendid show of fire-flies. The moon had not yet risen, and the evening being somewhat cloudy, the effect of this ever-changing expanse of green light was most brilliant. Yet all was saddened for the

time by the impression of the scene we had just quitted. The busy flitting, the appearing and disappearing of these shining creatures, seemed to image only the efforts, the successes and the disappointments of human life; and I was glad at length to forget in sleep fatigue and heavy thoughts.

## CHAPTER XXI.

The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we thought to say.
SHAKSPERE.

So soon and so soundly did we rest after a weary day, that when we were awakened by a loud hammering, we supposed the night was gone, and the old carpenter arisen to his daily labor. He had a candle however, and I lay idly watching his movements, and noting the various operations of planing and shaping, till I became aware that his business was none other than the framing of a last receptacle for one of the tenants of the narrow house. I now remembered, too, that it was Sunday morning.

"Are you really making a coffin?" I said, as if such a work could be strange any where.

"Surely I am," said the old man, "and for a good neighbor too."

"For whom, pray?"

"Seth Mallory, you know, — you saw him in the evening, — he was the man that got hurt yesterday."

"Mallory! he is dead then! and so soon ——"

"No! I believe he wa'n't quite gone when they came and brought me the measure. You know they'll want to bury him pretty soon 'cause the weather's so warm."

The idea nearly curdled my blood. A coffin for the still living husband and father! My thoughts recurred to that agonized countenance, and its look of manly care and love for the dear one she was leaving.

"Is it possible his body was measured for the grave while he was yet alive?"

"Oh, he was past knowing any thing, poor fellow, and they got his woman out of the room for a few minutes. You know, ma'am, such things must be done, and the sooner the better," said the old man as he stooped over his work.

He himself had nearly reached the limit of human life, and the few scattered hairs which still remained on his temples shone like silver in the light of the one dim candle; yet he wrought away cheerily at the strong man's coffin, whistling occasionally to himself as the ghastly object assumed the proper shape. He might have personified Death as he fashioned this emblem of mortality, but it would have been Death in a mild and kind form. And is not this Death's usual form? and why do we ever picture him otherwise?

As much of the night was still to come, I tried to turn away and forget the scene and its associations, but it would not be. My eyes were fascinated to the spot, and I lost not a step of the process. A white lining was tacked to the sides, the cover was shaped, and smoothed, and fitted and screwed home; and to my excited mind, the body, still

warm with scarce departed life, was pressed within these dark and narrow bounds. Why are we trained from infancy to such gloomy and terrifying views of all that belongs to this universal and inevitable change?

Day dawned before the work was finished, and the old man, carefully extinguishing his candle and setting open the door, put the last touches to it by the cold gray light of morning. He stained the whitewood with some reddish composition, and then, after turning it in every direction and surveying it with a look of professional complacency, set it up against the outside of the house to dry in the beams of the rising sun.

We were at breakfast when two young men came for the coffin.

"What time did he die?" asked the old man.

"He breathed till about midnight, but he never spoke after dark."

"Ay!" said the old lady, "I thought he would die about the turn of the tide. When do they bury him?"

"This afternoon, after meeting."

This strange custom obtains here, almost universally. A dead body is seldom kept in the house more than one night, and sometimes not even one. More especially if an opportunity occurs to bury the dead on Sunday is the last rite hastened; since the presence of a minister of religion, and a day of leisure and of best clothes, are all convenient.

Such haste seems more excusable under such circumstances, when we consider the condition and habits of the country, but there are cases where it looks like an indecent or a superstitious haste to get rid of a painful object. The superstitious feeling is not, perhaps, very common; but there are some who are, as they say, "afraid" of the bodies of their nearest friends. This is generally found, if at all, in young people; and it arises probably from their having been bred in neighborhoods so far scattered that deaths were very infrequent, and so came seldom under their notice. I have seen a young woman who did not dare approach the corpse of her husband unless somebody went with her and remained close at her side.

The meeting of that day was held in a large barn at some miles' distance. It was a quarterly meeting of one of the sects most numerous in this country, and great numbers attended from every direction. The central part or "bay" of the barn was filled with seats of rough boards, and a long seat for the preachers was enclosed after the same style. The place was crowded to such a degree, that even after many men and boys had perched themselves on beams and other out of the way places, there were still numbers who remained in their wagons, drawn up as near as might be, so as to be able to hear all that was said. And this was not difficult, for in most cases the speakers, who were seven

in number, exerted their lungs to a degree that I had seldom heard equalled.

In spite of many unpleasant circumstances naturally inseparable from a gathering of this kind, the scene was a very impressive one. The greatest attention prevailed, and there was an air of reverence and devotion which is not always the attendant on the long-drawn aisle and the solemn organ. The speakers adverted more than once to the circumstances of our Savior's birth; and indeed nothing could be more natural than the connection which brought that humble yet glorious scene to mind. It was needless then to warn us against despising our place of meeting. The idea had already consecrated it to purposes of worship.

The preachers all spoke in turn, but of course each briefly. Prayer and singing came between these short sermons, the singing seeming spontaneous, as no hymns were given out. One of the ministers would begin singing without any previous notice, and as if taking it for granted that every body would be able to join, as indeed many did, forming a choral swell of wild and solemn melody. The sacrament followed, and it was administered and received with much appearance of earnest devotion. Ere yet the holy rite was finished, the body of the unfortunate Mallory, and with it his weeping wife and her bereaved children, were all in the midst before we were aware. The

coffin was placed on trestles before the preacher's desk, and after the communion, one of the ministers, one who had been long a neighbor of the deceased, pronounced a funeral sermon, — unpremeditated of course, — but who could lack most touching topics of instruction on such an occasion as this?

Funeral hymns were now sung, and prayers offered for the afflicted family; and then the whole multitude followed the corpse in solemn procession to the burial-place. This was a sweet, lonely spot, enclosed, even in the heart of the wilderness, with pious care. There were many tall trees left standing, and beneath them a few graves marked only by a piece of wood at the head and feet. In silence was the dust committed to its kindred dust, — in silence, if we except many a sob, — and when all was done, a venerable old man, in the name of the family, thanked friends and neighbors for their aid and sympathy, and with a bow of his silvery head, dismissed the assembly.

## CHAPTER XXII.

All the plain
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze.

MILTON.

HALF a day's easy driving transported us from this scene of primitive simplicity and rudeness to a beautiful and populous town, whose hotel, spacious and elegant, and exceedingly well managed, offered some temptation to an extended stay, after our homely lodging at the old carpenter's, and sundry others not much more desirable. These contrasts are very striking in a new country. The settlement has been sudden, and very unequal, and you emerge from the untouched forest, through which you have been threading your way long enough almost to forget that there are such things as dwellings and enclosures, upon highly-cultivated farms and busy villages. These contrasts we may find in travelling in any country, but they are more striking in these newly-settled regions because of the wild freshness of the aspect of Nature in the intervening tracts. Immense trees give an air of solitary grandeur to the landscape, and the absence of every thing like fence or dividing line of any sort, inspires ideas of immensity, — of solitude, —

which make the sudden apparition of man and the traces of his busy hands produce a feeling akin to surprise.

After we left the woods we came out upon what had been, a few years since, a small prairie, now covered with loads of nodding grain, swayed by every passing breeze into the semblance of golden-brown billows. There are few more beautiful sights than a wheat-field full half a mile square, perfectly level, and unbroken by any thing save perhaps here and there a fine old tree, promising a noontide shelter to the reapers. One does not wonder that such views suggested to the poets of old the images of laughter and singing.

The prairie-land passed, our road was log-causeway; a long straight track through a dead swamp, — and in this all horrors are expressed, all mud-holes, all thumps, all impossibility of turning out. This was a pretty place in which to meet a political convention! a new kind of locomotive of immeasurable power, not very easily managed except by adepts.

It was a formidable apparition certainly; and we were fain to shrink into infinitesimal nothingness, and to find a place for our outer wheels on the sloping ends of the corduroy, even at the risk of a souse into a sea of black mud; for there was a deep ditch on either side. The chance that even our sober steeds would endure the clatter of drums and fifes, cymbals and triangles, — noisy orators

and still noisier singers, — was a small one; but there was no retreat, and we remained perched on our "bad eminence," until the whole procession had passed.

There were perhaps thirty vehicles, of which the smallest were large wagons, with four horses each. There were gayly painted barges — "canoes," I ought to say, in the spirit of the day, — mounted on wheels, and drawn by unnumbered if not innumerable steeds, and containing crowds of people; every man and every horse bearing a banner, inscribed either with high-sounding patriotism on a large scale, or with electioneering squibs on a very small one. There were rectangular countenances, drawn evidently with the aid of compass and square, and haloed round with snow-white fleece — accredited representatives of the much-disfigured father of our country; then again, faces wherein a very long drooping nose was surmounted by a pair of eyes that seemed running into one — awful travesties of the popular candidate. There were golden eagles spreading their gorgeous wings amid the stars, on fields of silk blue as their own heaven, and raccoons enough (in effigy) to have fed the whole national eyry, if golden eagles could eat.

A huge ball was rolled along, with great appearance of effort, by several men, and these actors, by their shouted watchwords and their various significant decorations, gave us to understand that the said ball typified the interests of their favorite. A

miniature log-cabin, the very ditto of those by the road side, mounted on a platform spacious enough to carry much of the out-door arrangements of a settler's primitive establishment, was drawn by a long string of oxen, the tips of whose horns streamed with flags and knots of gay ribbon. The emblems which met the eye every moment embraced all degrees of ingenuity and absurdity, and the costume of those who exhibited them was almost equally various.

There was an Indian, in blue and red paint and a feather-petticoat, bearing a banner with the inscription, "Our best brave;" here an impersonation of Liberty, strait-laced and anxious, in pink ribbons and black prunello boots. Now a car from which an orator was setting forth in no inelegant terms the pretensions of the idol; and anon another bearing his image, in the act of presenting a horse to a minister. Under the influence of omnipotent corduroy, the minister, first tottering like Mr. Stiggins, abominably knocked down his benefactor, and the horse sympathetically tumbled on them both and completed the pyramid.

Such trifling disasters passed unfelt and almost unnoticed in the enthusiasm of the hour. Beneath all the little oddities which are almost inseparable from the getting up of a popular show on so large a scale with rather incongruous materials, there was evidently an under current of warm feeling and genuine interest which makes every thing re-

spectable; and however one might feel disposed to laugh at some particulars of the exhibition, there was an impressiveness about the whole which made one sensible of "the majesty of the people." For my own part I confess that this immense moving mass of life, with its alternations of warlike music, animated declamation, and sweet chorus of female voices, caused the blood to tingle in my veins and my heart to overflow at my eyes. Sympathy has wondrous power, and, after waiting till the whole grotesque train had passed, we drove to the end of the corduroy, and then turned about, and, with a host of other gazers, followed the multitude.

The place of destination was a grove whose sylvan beauty never could be surpassed, even in Michigan, which is all groves. It was at no great distance from the road, but it was in all the wildness of nature, and looked as if the axe had never yet profaned its hallowed aisles. Here, in the midst of primeval solitude and silence, a great stage had been hastily erected, and, facing it, a wide amphitheatre of rough benches, — the whole roofed in by noble oaks and maples, with "unpierced shade."

Rapidly, and with a silence and regularity which bespoke thorough drilling, did the immense assemblage dispose itself appropriately over the broad area, — the orators and officials taking their places upon the platform, where the banners were planted and arranged in very effective drapery, — the la-

dies on the front seats next the music, and the common world on the remaining benches.

The Marseillois was now performed — with verses by a native poet of course, — and the entire company joined in the chorus with an enthusiasm which imparted a stentorian energy to their "most sweet voices." A marshal now announced that a clergyman present would "make a prayer," and the multitude stood, with heads uncovered, and in a throbbing silence, till it was finished. Then the band played and the ladies sang "Hail, Columbia," and again the leafy canopy quivered to the excitement of the hour. Then came the speeches, blazing with patriotism, and touching, in their wide scope, on every disputed and disputable point in politics. And here I was much amused with the discreet timing of the cheers, which was performed by a young gentleman furnished with a flag which he waved most graciously, bowing at every shout, as if to thank the "good friends, kind friends, sweet friends," who took his hints in such good part.

The "sentiments" were drank at intervals, in very innocent liquids; so that if there was truth in the rapture of the hour, it was not wine that brought it out. Every body *seemed* to feel, to the heart's core, all the privileges, advantages, rights, grievances, and hopes, on which the chosen orators harangued so warmly, and I doubt not that

vows were made that day which told afterwards for good or evil, in opinion and action.

All this time the sun had been trying his best to look in upon the animated scene, and although his vertical rays scarce succeeded in checkering here and there a portion of the well-trodden green sward, yet the atmosphere confessed his power so unreservedly, that some of the ladies began to be very restless, and some even threatened an interlude of fainting-fits. One who sat near the stage with a child in her lap, insisted upon having the glass of water which had been placed on a table for the speaker handed down for the use of her baby, returning the remnant very coolly, — a mixed crystal, to say the least.

So it was judged best to adjourn for refreshment; and on the announcement, all was renewed animation in a moment. The band played, the marshals shouted, the banners waved, the ladies fluttered, — and the result of all was a very long procession on foot, in which "woman," as the toasts have it, bore a conspicuous part; — each fair hand carrying a bough, which our imaginations were bound to convert into palm or laurel, (I spare thee "Birnam wood," O reader!) and every swan-like throat trilling with most patriotic sentiments, married to popular airs, and stirring every heart as with the sound of a trumpet.

The long array passed over an open glade where

the sun's rays were of the strongest, but this served only to enhance the delicious coolness of the shade which soon enveloped us — a shade, to form which, even the dense woods had been aided by great awnings, and bowers within bowers formed of immense branches and thick-leaved vines.

These varied and far-reaching canopies, adorned with wreaths of wild flowers and gay flags with emblematic devices, formed a splendid dining-hall, within whose circuit all the rural luxuries that the most laborious search could procure had been displayed with a taste which, though it might not shine in more cultivated regions, certainly did honor to the Western wilderness. Huge venison pasties, such as (if we may believe veracious chroniclers) kings have ere now revelled in; wild turkeys prodigious as any tame ones to be found at the Sublime Porte; roast pigs delicate and crisp as those which run about the land of Cokaigne, crying, "Who'll eat me?" chickens in all attitudes, and pork under all disguises;—these were among the more solid and noticeable items of good cheer. But to give even a passing glance at the feminine contributions belonging to the department of the dessert, and in the preparation of which all the female skill of the county had been, as it were, brought to a focus,— this were a hopeless task, and especially to one who could not even guess at the names of half the recondite compositions that adorned the "lily lawn."

Here and there might be observed something in

contrast to the general good taste; such as an unfortunate stag, roasted (or half roasted) whole, and standing, antlers and all, as if alive; only, alas! "upon another footing now!" propped in his erect posture by flower-wreathed sticks, and, in this position, sliced and eaten, after a fashion which ought to have sickened any but Abyssinians.

The immortal johnny-cake figured under every conceivable form,— round and square, rhomboid and parallelopipedon — stuck with roses, or basted with gravy,— johnny-cake was every where — "she was the universe." Hard cider there was none, — an inevitable omission; for either it had been all consumed at previous conventions, or the apple-trees of the neighborhood belonged to the opposite party, and there was none to be had. The song of "Drink to me only with thine eyes" might have been appropriate as suggesting some consolation in this emergency, but I believe the devotees pledged each other in the pure element — indeed I should judge it must have been so, from the exceeding order and good-humor of the day.

The zest with which the people, individually and collectively, attacked the goodly array, would have silenced the veriest croaker on the subject of Western agues.

Talk of city feasts! Your true alderman never earns an all-sanctifying appetite by rising three hours before day, and walking ten or twenty miles without tasting food beyond a crust of bread. He

can never know the true gusto of roast pig, far less of johnny-cake. When he sits down at six to his turtle he may indeed have eaten "nothing to signify," since lunch; but that very lunch and its unconsidered sequence have stolen away all the piquancy from his dinner, and he might rationally, in his character of *gourmet*, envy the hardy backwoodsman his simplest cheer, with the accompaniment of his ordinary and sometimes rather importunate appetite. On this especial occasion, there was not only the well-earned relish, but the choicest opportunity for its gratification, and the result must be left to the imagination of the reader.

* * * * * *

What changes may be wrought in one little hour! Where be now the shining roast — the delicate boiled — the *patés* — the pyramids — the temples — the universal johnny-cake?

The "banquet hall deserted," — the theatre with its latest lamp expiring - the once trim deck after a sharply contested action, — these are sad images; but such a table after all are satisfied save a few voracious stragglers!

* * * * * *

We waited not to hear the concluding address. It may have been a good one, — I dare say it was, — but I fear it fell upon dull ears. We hastened onward, passed the log-causeway again, and reached

the fine hotel at ——, two hours before the procession reëntered the town. We retired early after the fatigues of the day, forgetting that there might be such a thing as a ball-room at —— House. Fatal error! Those who had marched, and shouted, and sung, and eaten, in honor of their far-distant favorite, thought not the rites complete until they had expended the remainder of their energies in dancing. Violins squeaked without stint or mercy, and till gray dawn did the house quiver in unison with the superhuman efforts of patriotic heels and elbows.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Round scenes like these doth warm remembrance glide,
Where emigration rolls its ceaseless tide.
MRS. SIGOURNEY.

WE have all heard of a man who went through the ceremony of combing only once a year, and who always, when the dread moment came, pitied those poor creatures who endured the operation every day. Even so, after one day of dissipation, did we, dwellers in the voiceless woods, where it is a task to remember the days of the week — one being so much like another, — pity those unfortunates whose lot it is to "go a pleasuring" all the time. The fatigue of eye and ear, — the heat, the dust, the din of yesterday, and after all, the sleepless night, — made repose really necessary; and we lounged away the morning, visiting several friends, and surveying, under their guidance, what was best worth notice in the village and its neighborhood. The place stands on rising ground, and commands a fine view of the surrounding country, then smiling in soft summer loveliness, and diversified every where with wood and water, though destitute of any striking features, if we except the one deep dell, whose full and rapid stream forms the wealth of the village.

"Hard times" had made no impression on the sweet face of Nature. Not a frown reproved the ungrateful grumbler, man; who, if he cannot find the superfluity which is required by an insatiable thirst for distinction, overlooks and contemns the kind care that richly provides for all his real wants. All was peace, industry and abundance, and the heart could not but dilate with pleasure at the sight of a multitude of objects all typical of the overflowing goodness of God, and calling upon his rational creatures for "the honor due unto his name."

We were most hospitably treated — for the spirit of hospitality is not confined to the cottages of the West — and our kind entertainers proposed several plans for a pleasant evening; but the one which proved most attractive was a visit at the house of a clergyman with whom we had some acquaintance, and who was to receive all the world within five miles of ——, in the form of that relic of primitive Puritanism known among us as a "donation party." We had heard of this custom — a general visit to the clergyman, each guest bringing something by way of offering, — and we were delighted with the opportunity of assisting at one — assisting *à la Francaise*, I mean. We presented ourselves, by special request, at an early hour; but, early as it was, dozens of good plain folks from the country had preceded us. Some indeed, we were told, had been on the ground since breakfast-time. We al-

ways do things in earnest here. When we say, "Come and spend the day,"—we should stare to see the invited guest come at two o'clock, just as we had put away the dinner dishes, and taken out our knitting-work or our patchwork for the afternoon. *Avis au lecteur*, in case he ventures to invite a Western friend without specifying the hour.

But, as we were saying, some good ladies had taken time by the forelock, and here they were, beginning already to yawn, (covertly,) and to long for their tea. Two great baskets in the hall were already pretty well filled with bundles of yarn, woollen stockings of all sizes, (sure to fit, in a clergyman's family,) rolls of home-made flannel, mysterious parcels enveloped in paper, and bags which looked as if they might contain a great many precious things. Flocks of company were arriving, and no one empty handed, so that the "removal of the deposits" became a measure of necessity, and the contents of the two baskets were transferred to some reservoir above stairs. Before the baskets had been restored to their places, there was some embarrassment among the new comers as to the proper bestowment of their contributions, etiquette requiring that an air of mysterious reserve should be observed. But the difficulty was obviated by the arrival of a handsome tea-table, borne by two young men as the representatives of a little knot who had hit upon this pretty thought of a present for the minister's lady. Upon this the

tasteful class of offerings were displayed to good advantage, and I observed among the rest a study-lamp, a richly-bound Shakspere, and a bronze inkstand with proper appurtenances. Among the more magnificent were a standing fire screen elegantly wrought, and a pair of foot-stools on which the skill of the cabinet-maker had done its utmost in displaying to advantage very delicate embroidery. The variety as well as the beauty of the gifts was very ingenious, and nobody could find fault with a handsome purse, filled with gold, bearing, in minute letters wrought into its bead-work, the inscription, "To the Reverend Mr. ——, from the young men of his church."

Where so many people, young and old, were collected with a kind purpose, and under circumstances which levelled, for a time, all distinctions, conversation was not likely to flag. In truth, the general complacency evinced itself in a ceaseless stream of talk, — with only a moderate infusion of scandal, for every body was present. The old ladies chatted soberly among themselves, and their husbands talked politics in corners. The young ladies fluttered about busily, as in duty bound; for on them devolves, by inviolable usage, all the ministering necessary on the occasion — all the reception of the company and bestowing of their offerings — all care of tea affairs and distribution of refreshments in order due. Such a dodging of pretty heads — such dancing of ringlets, — such

gleaming of white teeth as there was among them! I scarcely wondered that the young men became a little bewildered, and forgot where they ought to stand, and had to be ordered about or turned out into the hall to make room for the more dignified or bulky part of the assembly, only to slip back again upon the first opportunity. So much youthful beauty is not collected every day, and especially beauty endowed with such a pretty little coquettish station of command. I cannot doubt that much execution was done, and, in truth, there were some very obvious symptoms — but I shall not betray.

The clergyman's lady occupies rather an equivocal station on these occasions. She is not exactly in the position of hostess, for every article set before the company is furnished by themselves; and all the ordinary attentions are rendered by the young stewardesses of the hour; so the domine's lady has only to smile and look happy, and to show by her manner that she is gratified by the interest evinced, and if to this she superadd good talking powers, and can entertain those of her guests who are not particularly easy to entertain, she has accomplished all that is expected of her. And all this the fair and lady-like heroine of the present occasion did very sweetly.

The tea hour drew on, and now the *mêlée* began to assume a business-like air. The scampering reminded me of "Puss in the Corner," such was the sudden chase for seats. The old ladies put

away their knitting, and their spouses began to spread their handkerchiefs on their knees, at the first rattle of the tea-spoons. Those who were not so fortunate as to secure seats, insinuated themselves as near as possible to tables and mantel-pieces, which might serve to hold the anticipated good cheer.

The younger gentlemen officiated as footmen, and they had an arduous task. Over and above the bearing of great trays of tea and coffee, and bounteous salvers of cake, biscuits, sandwiches, cheese, tongue, and all that belongs to the city and country tea-table, they had, in addition, to attend to the contradictory directions of a host of capricious mistresses of the ceremonies, who delighted in perplexing them, and who gave orders and counter-orders for the very purpose of seeing them go on bootless errands and get laughed at for their pains. But they bore all very good-humoredly, and managed to render something like a return to their fair tyrants by persuading the old ladies to drink as much tea as possible, and commending and urging the excellence of the coffee to the gentlemen in such sort that an extra supply was required, and the damsels' elbows were fain to sue for quarter. After all were served, the attendants were at liberty to provide for themselves, and, whatever may have been left for them to eat and drink, I can testify that they had abundance of talking and laughing.

I ought sooner to have mentioned that the pastor

in whose behalf such general interest was shown, was a person accustomed to society, and an adept in the best power of hospitality — that of making every one feel welcome and at ease. Mr. —— was every where, and in every body's thoughts. Grave with the old, gay with the young, and cheerful with all, he was in every respect the life and soul of the occasion, and each felt the time spent in conversation with him to have been "the sweet of the night." An enviable power! and one possessed in its perfection only by those whose hearts are full of kindly sympathies, — who *are* what others only try to appear.

After the bustle attendant upon serving the tea had subsided, the conversation gradually, and as if spontaneously, took a more serious turn, and, before we were aware, the sweet and solemn notes of a hymn, well supported in all its parts, stole upon the ear, and hushed all lighter sounds. When several stanzas had been sung, the clergyman, after a short address, invited all present to unite in prayer and thanksgiving to the bounteous Giver of all good. And thus seriously closed a very cheerful evening, without any violent transition or unpleasant contrast.

This custom of donation parties certainly seems to belong to a very primitive and simple state of society, yet its observance is by no means limited to these newly-settled regions. Wherever New Englanders have given a tone, these little gatherings

have been introduced, and though there are various opinions as to the general question whether this is the best or a good way of contributing to the support of a clergyman, people generally unite in them very heartily, which affords at least a presumption in their favor. This very union is something. As far as I have been able to observe, they certainly have the one good effect of creating a nearer personal interest in the pastor and his family; and whatever tends to draw closer and nearer the ties which bind minister and people, may not be lightly discouraged; for in this calculating and utilitarian age the dangers lie on the opposite side — the side of proud indifference and chilling neglect, the most discouraging and impracticable of all atmospheres for a minister of religion.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Impelled, with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies!

GOLDSMITH.

HOMEWARD once more. Skies and bowers of fairy-land, but most earthly corduroy; and some few mud-holes that would have suited well with a still grosser sphere. Endless wheat-fields — Indian corn glittering in the sunbeams as the morning wind dashed the dew from its broad leaves; rich pastures, where a few maples, kindly left alive, formed shady lounges for the cattle; quiet streams, in which the cows were very sensibly standing half-leg deep, browsing occasionally upon the overhanging boughs; — such were the commonplace objects that served to give an interest to our journey homewards. The road by which we were returning was a closely-settled one, crossed however here and there by a tract of deep shade, in which the solitude of creation seemed never to have been disturbed, and in one part passing through a strip of unbroken prairie, scarcely tenanted except by wild-fowl and other pensioners of nature.

Jogging along slowly under a blistering sun

across this shelterless tract, we saw far in the prairie a moving object, which we took at first for some wild animal, whose outline the dazzling nature of the light prevented our tracing distinctly. But presently, when the strange figure moved toward us, which it did rapidly enough when we came within its range, it proved to be no prairie wolf, but a human being, oddly accoutred and exhibiting considerable perplexity. He would walk a few steps forward, and then, shading his eyes with his hand, gaze earnestly around him. Then turning his eyes to our side, he would seem resolved to reach the road, yet after a few moments turn and gaze wistfully as before. At length we came within speaking distance, and our wild beast turned out an English gentleman who seemed to have been gunning on the prairie. The capacious pockets of a very curious-looking jacket were stuffed with prairie-hens, and instead of a hat a silk pocket-handkerchief was tied about the dissolving head of the sportsman.

We could do no less than stop and inquire the cause of his evident perplexity.

"Pray — I beg your pardon — but can you observe any thing on the prairie?" he said, pulling the kerchief from his head, and wiping his brow with a half-distracted air.

We tried faithfully, standing on tiptoe in the wagon, but there was nothing visible but the tall, waving grass, and the long straight road. Not an

object broke the line of the horizon except some far distant trees.

"Well now," said our new acquaintance, "d'ye know, this is so very awkward! these prairies of yours — one might as well be on the ocean in a cock-boat. I have been shooting on this very ground for four successive days, and bagged so many birds every day — grouse too — that I couldn't make up my mind to quit. But this morning I had determined should be the last, you know; and I was enticed further and further; and after I was so loaded that I could scarcely walk, I still saw so much sport that I made a pile of game on a convenient spot, and put my cap upon the heap by way of landmark, so that I should be quite sure, you know, to find it again. But upon my word, I had not brought down three birds after this, before I came to the end of my powder, and then I set out to find my cap and my game. And here I am, wandering about these two hours, you know, and can see nothing but grass every where. It is really excessively awkward" — and again he wiped his forehead, as well he might.

He was a gentleman by no means well fitted for searching the prairies under the fervors of a summer noon, for he was short and very fat, and his head was pink and shining as if it had never known the "excrescence of a moist brain." But he tried to laugh off his vexation like a wise man, saying that

he supposed a wolf he had shot at early in the morning had devoured cap and game too, by way of revenge for his evil intentions.

We were so fortunate as to have a spare straw hat — no unusual provision for a summer journey hereabouts, — and this the stranger gladly adopted, his crimsoned countenance looming out from beneath its wide brim like the rising harvest moon encountering a stray bank of clouds. He accepted also a seat in our rough vehicle as far as the next village, and before we had reached the place o destination, we had set him down as a very pleasant Englishman indeed. He was full of animation, interested in every thing connected with this new world, and much more desirous of gaining information than of impressing the "Yenkees" with an overwhelming idea of his own born and bred superiority. Such an Englishman being almost a wonder in America, we cultivated Mr. Sibthorpe accordingly, and an acquaintance of some duration, since that chance encounter on the prairie, has given us no reason to regret having yielded to first impressions.

We reached Mr. Sibthorpe's lodging-place — the little village of Temperance — a knot of log-houses clustering about a blacksmith's shop, and a "Variety-Store," (I quote the sign,) — just as the world was going to dinner; and Mr. Sibthorpe had so many good things to say of his landlady that we

were induced to apply to her for our dinner, instead of making a pic-nic meal in the woods, as we had intended.

The good woman was the picture of neatness, and she was most appropriately framed, for a trimmer cottage sun never shone upon. Every thing shone with cleanliness, and the gown and shawl of the poor soul herself had been washed and starched until they were of a gauzy thinness. Poverty was every where, but it was cheerful, industrious, and most tidy poverty, and the manners of the hostess and her children were such as would have appeared well in far better circumstances. Her husband was at his work, she said, and had taken his noon-meal with him, but she had prepared dinner for Mr. Sibthorpe, and could soon add to it for our accommodation.

There were not plates and knives enough to allow the children to eat at the same time with us, so that it took a good while to despatch the dinner. Meanwhile our newly-found acquaintance was getting his "traps" together, (an expression picked up on this side the water, I *guess*,) and by the time the little folks were repacked and ready, he too had mounted his shaggy pony, and with well-stuffed saddle-bags, and blanket and boot-hose, stood prepared to ride on with us.

The road grew bad enough as we plunged into the "timbered land," so bad that fast driving was

out of the question. The late heavy rains, falling upon land that was never shone upon except at noonday, had soaked the clayey soil so completely that in many places we made our way with difficulty; and in this drawling way we travelled several miles. And here our prairie-hunter's cheerful and intelligent conversation served as a most agreeable relief to the tedious dulness naturally attendant upon ruts and mud-holes. Mr. Sibthorpe had travelled a good deal, and always with his eyes open, and he had beside a fund of enthusiasm, and a genuine love for fresh, free and unpolished nature, which was absolutely romantic. His information was extensive, and his manner of communicating it natural and easy, excluding every idea of ostentation or arrogance.

After all, the charm of his conversation (to me at least) was the tinge of romance which pervaded his views, and which unconsciously to himself, probably, gave a poetical cast to every sentiment and opinion. It is the fashion of the day to laugh at romance, yet who is not fascinated by it when it is evidently genuine? People who dare to be romantic are becoming every day more rare. The spirit of the age, analytical and disenchanting as it is, is fast eradicating the few romantic notions that have survived till this time; and if any country bids fair to be preëminent in the tearing away of all illusion from the dull realities of life — in the

systematic exaltation of the material above the ideal, I fear it is our own.

We sometimes encounter a foreigner who has brought with him the fruit of the seed sown by the lore of his infancy, and who will charm us, in spite of ourselves, into something like sympathy with his passionate estimate of the light which imagination can shed on the trials and vexations of the world; but where is the American who would not blush to be suspected of such childish, such unfashionable views?

M. De Tocqueville, who has of all others written of us in the kindliest as well as most profound and discriminating spirit, has not failed to perceive and to warn us of this tendency to materialism. He should perfect the good work by pointing out some great practical remedy — some counteracting power or principle by the aid of which we may apply ourselves to the cultivation of the poetical rather than the prosaic estimate of things; learn to crave the intellectual before the physical, — the beautiful *with* the true, — and, above all, the "believing spirit," — lately so eloquently commended by a countryman of our own, — in preference to the skeptical, into which so many of our thinkers seem to be relapsing.

But what has all this digression to do with Mr. Sibthorpe? More than appears, perhaps; for the reminiscence of that pleasant afternoon in the mud-

dy " timbered land " brought with it a floating idea of some of the many themes upon which our discursive talk touched ; lightly enough, but so amusingly, that we could scarce believe the sun had set, when the woody way became suddenly embrowned, and the cold dew began to fall perceptibly, while we were still at some distance from our purposed resting-place.

## CHAPTER XXV.

But show me one that has it in his power
To act consistent with himself an hour.
POPE.

WE hastened onward at the expense of some terrible thumps, and half an hour or so brought us within hearing, at least, if not within sight, of the village where we had agreed to pass the night. We were made aware of our approach to the abodes of men, by a clatter and howling, a clash of tin pans and a beating of drums, which made together a din sufficiently startling after the long dark drive through the forest, where nothing was heard beyond the screech of the owl or the occasional bark of a fox. So loud and so angry were these warlike sounds, that Mr. Sibthorpe concluded at once that they must be occasioned by some great popular commotion.

"What do you suppose it can be?" he inquired; "d'ye know I've the greatest curiosity to see an American mob! Do you think it can be any thing of that sort?"

Our replies damped his hopes. We thought any thing else more likely. And very soon we reached the inn, where all was quiet as one could wish, although the crowd from which the noise proceeded

was visible by the light of its own restless lanterns, at the further end of the street.

"It's only a parcel of fellers gone to serenade an old widower that's been a marrying of a young girl, and didn't ask the neighbors to the wedding — that's all!" said the landlord. "If he'd come out and treat 'em, they'd go off peaceable; but he's so spunky he won't do that, and I'll warrant ye they'll keep up that hullabaloo all night."

"A *charivari* in the woods!" exclaimed our companion; "an old French custom transplanted into these Western wilds! You certainly have borrowed something from all nations. You observe the New-year with the Dutch, and 'Thanksgiving' with the Yankees; and I have noticed that you fail not to eat mince-pies religiously with the English at Christmas, and cod-fish and potatoes with Paddy on his saint's day."

We responded by a wish that the naturalization of holidays had been carried still further, as we have so few of our own; and we might have been inclined to enlarge a little upon this point, (it being a favorite one,) but our host had no idea of awaiting the conclusion of an untimely discussion.

"Well!" said he, somewhat testily, "if you're a comin' in, come along! if not, it a'n't of no use for me to be a standin' here. I've got sacks of things to do."

Mr. Sibthorpe laughed, as an Englishman well might, and very good-humoredly responded to this

crusty speech of our landlord by asking whether he did not consider it a part of his business to wait upon his customers?

"Why, if a man wants a meal's victuals for himself, or his folks, or his dumb critters," responded Mr. Hotchkins, "I am willing to furnish it; but I don't calc'late to wait upon nobody. D'ye want your horses put up? Here, Zack! take these men's horses and put 'em in the stable." Then to the guests — "You can tell him how many oats you want 'em to have."

And with this the innkeeper went into the house, to consult the "women-folks," I suppose.

Zack was kind enough to take off our luggage, which he placed in the entry; and we seated ourselves in a forlorn parlor, with a funereal row of chairs, and one table, on which stood a sepulchral lamp that looked as if it had been intended to burn on for ages, making darkness visible, so minute was the quantity of flame that glimmered on its little wick.

The evening was very chilly, as is often the case after a day of intense heat, and we felt the need of fire to dry our dewy garments, as well as to cheer the dark dismal parlor. The landlord, who was forthcoming upon a call, said there was a fire in the bar-room, and that the "men-folks" could go there, and the woman and the children could sit in the kitchen.

"But couldn't we have a fire here?"

"Why — the fact is — no, not very well. You see my woman has slicked up her stove, and got her posy-pot in't and all — and she wouldn't like to have it nastied up jist for one night. I guess you'd better fix it t'other fashion."

And to the kitchen we went, and a very nice kitchen it was, with a somewhat prim but kindly dame at the head of affairs, who made the rosy-cheeked damsels under her sway fly about so nimbly that our tea was soon ready. How they managed to do any thing was marvellous, for the kitchen was full of newly-ironed sheets, spread on clothes-frames and the backs of chairs, and steaming in the hot air.

The eating-room felt like a cellar, but there was a fire just kindled in a close stove, which, by the time we had finished, began to make it quite tolerably warm — a not unusual arrangement in taverns. Whether the incipient stages of freezing are induced with a view of benumbing the appetite with the other powers, or whether the air is kept cool for the convenience of the waiters, who might find much exercise uncomfortable in a well-warmed atmosphere, I never was able to guess.

When the children were prepared for bed, one must have been very good-natured indeed not to observe that the sheets were not of the number of those which had just passed beneath the smoothing-iron.

"How is this!" I exclaimed to the maiden in attendance; "these sheets have been used?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am," simpered the girl. "We ha'n't no new sheets."

"But I must have *clean* sheets," I said, in plain English, — "sheets that have not been slept in since they were washed."

"Oh!" exclaimed the young lady, as if light had suddenly broken in upon her understanding; — "yes — I dare say! — but, you see, ma'am, we've had sich lots of company — there was the Dimocratic Wig convention — they slept here two nights — and then there was this here Log-Cabin celebration — and so all of our sheets but these is a drying in the kitchen — not aired enough yet to put upon the beds, — and we thought you'd like these better, 'cause they're so much healthier! you know damp sheets is dreadful unwholesome — and there ha'n't nobody slept in these but some *very* nice gentlemen!"

But all this eloquence was wasted upon my prejudices, and the chamber-maid, with a toss of her head, went to hasten the airing of the sheets, while we returned to wait by the dining-room stove.

Here we found our gentlemen in conversation with the landlord, who was, with all his odd roughness, a very civil sort of man, and very fond of hearing himself talk, although he had shown so little patience with our prolixity.

He seemed to be warmly engaged in arguing with Mr. Sibthorpe some point connected with the vexed question of distinctions in society.

"Respect!" he exclaimed; "why should I show more respect to any man than he does to me? Because he wears a finer coat? His coat don't do me any good. Does he pay his taxes any better than I do? Is he any kinder to his family? Does he act more honestly by his neighbors? Will he have a higher place in heaven than I shall? Show me the man that's a *better* man than I am, and you'll see if I don't treat him with respect! But to fawn and cringe before a fellow-critter because he's got more money than I have, is agin my principles. I sha'n't help to blow up nobody's pride."

"But," persisted Mr. Sibthorpe, waiving, however, the main question, *as one must always do in similar cases*, "are you sure that it is not your own pride that makes the difficulty? otherwise, what could be easier than to recognize those different grades in society which have always been marked since the beginning of time, and in all probability will continue to be so as long as earth endures, in spite of the resistance of those who are unwilling to foster any body's pride but their own?"

"Ah! stop a little!" rejoined the landlord; "there's where you go too far! You think these ranks and distinctions will go on always, because you wish they should go on. *I* believe they are

coming to an end as fast as the earth rolls round. In my opinion this etarnal Yankee nation has set the example to all the rest of the world, and before many years is gone by, there won't be a man in England that'll take off his hat to the queen unless she makes her manners first. All men — and women too — was born not only free but equal; and equal they've got to be, on earth as well as in heaven."

"Well!" said Mr. Sibthorpe, with his usual good humor, "I am glad to have met at last with *one* consistent American. You believe in the equal rights of all human beings. You are not for exalting one class of men at the expense of another, or depressing any class that another may live in pride and luxury at their expense ——"

"No indeed!" said our host, with a virtuous severity depicted on his countenance. "Give every man a fair chance, that's what I say; and then we can see what stuff he's made of. Outside a'n't nothing."

"You are not one of those," continued Mr. Sibthorpe, "who would shut a man out from all the privileges of society because God has given him a black skin. You would look only at his worth, his abilities, or his piety; you would be willing to associate with him, and assist him in maintaining his just natural rights in spite of a cruel prejudice. You would ——"

"What upon airth *are* you talking about?"

exclaimed our host, quite aghast at this sweeping conclusion. "I should ra'ally be glad to know if you mean to insult me! Are you a talking of niggers? Do you suppose I look upon a nigger as I do upon a white man? Do you think I am sich a fool as not to know who the Africans is? Should I put myself upon an equality with the seed of Cain, that was done over black to show that they was to be sarvants and the sarvants of sarvants? I'm no abolitionist, thank God! and if you're one, the sooner you get back to your own country the better."

"I have not been long enough in your *land of liberty*," said Mr. Sibthorpe, with a quiet smile, "to have enrolled myself under any of your party banners; I only wished to ascertain how far you carried your creed of equality; and I find you draw the line, like most of your countrymen, just where your interest or your inclination indicates. I can now see very plainly why you think there ought to be no distinction of ranks in the world." And without waiting for the angry reply which seemed laboring in the mind of the landlord, Mr. Sibthorpe bade good night, and desired to be shown to his room.

"What prejudiced critters these English is!" said our host as he left the room.

We thought the observation true enough in the main, but not particularly applicable to our friend of the prairie, who had evidently seen the world with

too philosophic an eye to be a *mere* Englishman. To those who have been so happy as to meet with an English gentleman of this character, one for whom nature, education and travel have all done much, I need hardly say how very delightful is such companionship. Agreeable Englishmen are much more like each other than agreeable Americans. Whether their nationality of feeling is so strong as to give always a predominating tone to the character, whatever be its distinctive points, or whether they derive a more obvious national resemblance from the possession of fixed standards of taste, education and manners, I have not had an opportunity of judging. The fact has struck me frequently.

Mr. Sibthorpe continued to be our companion for the rest of our homeward journey, and we were much pleased to learn from him that he had actually purchased a farm about twenty miles from our cottage, and intended proving to his own satisfaction the delights of American forest life.

"Why do you smile?" said he.

"*Did* I smile?" was the reply, *faute de mieux.*

"Yes indeed, but you have not seen Mrs. Sibthorpe. She is more romantic, if so you call it, more indifferent to outward appliances, even than I. To rove in the summer woods and read or gather wild flowers makes a paradise for her."

"But we have long — very long winters ——"

"More charming still, if possible! fine bracing

air for exercise during the day, and long quiet evenings for your favorite pursuits — no wheels thundering on the pavement to break in upon the dreams of fancy — no well-dressed bore coming in to rob you of your time and patience."

There was nothing in this view of country pleasures to be disputed, and it was not necessary to draw a *counter* picture. This was better left for a *photogenic* impression. So we parted with Mr. Sibthorpe with the willing promise of an early visit, twenty miles being but dining distance when the roads are good.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

In what Arcadian, what Utopian ground,
Are warmer hearts and manlier feelings found,
More hospitable welcome or more zeal
To make the curious "tarrying" stranger feel
That, next to home, here best he may abide,
To rest and cheer him by the chimney side?

BRAINARD.

THE encounter with Mr. Sibthorpe seems to have been the last incident worthy of record in this our summer tour; at least I find nothing further in my note-book or my memory. Showers and sunshine there were, I dare say, but we cannot chronicle all the smiles and tears of this changeful life.

The impression left by the journey was, on the whole, a pleasant one, and I returned, as I always have returned from similar travels in the West, with an increased liking for the people. There is after all so much kindness, simplicity and trustfulness — one catches so many glimpses of the lovelier aspect of our common nature — that much that is uncouth is forgotten, and much that is offensive is pardoned. One sees the rougher sort of people in their best light, and learns to own the "tie of brotherhood." The perception of faults and deficiencies, narrow prejudices and vulgar pride, in those

who have had but little opportunity for mental improvement, awakens, under the circumstances, something that *approaches* at least the right tone of feeling — a desire for the improvement of these co-heirs of life and its trials and its hopes. They are a most interesting people, and although they were originally composed of very incongruous gleanings from the older states and from foreign lands, they are fast acquiring, under the pressure of circumstances and by their own native energy, a distinct and commanding character.

The backwoodsman, though much has been said and written about him, is perhaps, after all, but imperfectly understood. His character, his habits, his faults, his virtues, his points of peculiarity, of superiority, of inferiority, are very striking, but it is not easy to describe them concisely. He is a being at once calculating and impetuous — penurious and prodigal — indolent and laborious — rough and kindly — passionate and forgiving; vowing revenge to-day, and to-morrow doing a kindness to his declared enemy. He will make his wife a drudge without compunction; but his old mother must have a warm corner, and the privilege of knitting or doing nothing, as she chooses. He will, likely enough, give his father a short answer if he attempts to interfere with the ordering of business, but the old man will never lack any of his accustomed comforts while his son is able to earn them. His temper is hasty, and his sentiments are not

very refined, but his sense of duty is strong, his sympathies awake unbidden, and his intuitive knowledge of "the humanities" is above all college learning.

He left his birthplace discouraged by untoward fortune, disgusted by the treachery of a friend, or perhaps "smit with the rage canine of dying rich." He came to the West with a dream of boundless liberty and universal good faith; a vision of affluence to be acquired with rapidity by the sole aid of his strong arm and the axe which seems like a part of it. He did not stop to investigate each step of the process. The glorious result filled the mind's eye, and cast into the shades such dull, old-fashioned drawbacks as computation, reason, experience.

We are all apt to forget at times that though the laws which govern the course of human events may seem occasionally to relax or to be eluded, they are in fact immutable and impartial. The same conditions that have ever stood obstinately in the path of the aspirant, are now attached to the acquisition of wealth. To rub a lamp — to turn a ring on one's finger — or to follow the course of the setting sun — these are all easy; but they can win only such riches as serve to gild the turrets of air-built castles.

Our backwoodsman is disappointed in many things. He discovers that whoever will not shut himself out from all intercourse with human kind, must endure much restraint and practise much for-

bearance. He finds that wherever man is associated in any degree with his fellow-man, there is selfishness, but he fails to recognize this fault in himself. A short trial convinces him that wealth must here, as elsewhere, be purchased by patient toil, and that long-protracted illness will empty the purse even in the golden West.

At first these things depress him excessively, and he is apt to conclude that all is naught. He forgets the disagreeables which drove him from his old abode at the East, and magnifying the evils around him, his disordered imagination figures the wide West as a mere trap. He is ready to give up all and flee, choosing rather to encounter those ills of which habit has softened the asperity, than those whose sharpness is rendered more acute by contrast with the soft flatteries of fancy.

After a while the horizon begins to clear. It is not easy to get away, and necessity is often a kind friend. Our emigrant is becoming better acquainted with his neighbors, and, in his turn, acquiring their confidence and their good-will. He gets rid of the ague, or at least learns how he may avoid it.

His wife has found a little circle within whose round the social cup of tea may be enjoyed, with the aid of its best sweetener — *commérage*. He has a good crop, and it brings him a good price. He is elected constable, or path-master, or perhaps even town-clerk if he be fortunately of the scribes.

Now he begins to acknowledge the advantages

of an unworn soil, and of the universal freshness and newness of the world around him. He finds it pleasant to be among the magnates, even of a township of twenty families. He feels a degree of pride in the reflection that he is at least an atom of the great rolling mass which is destined to spread the benefits of civilization and Christianity over this immense expanse of bountiful soil. He forgets after a time his ancient prejudices, and almost his attachments homeward, and imbibes that Western feeling so striking to the new comer.

He now feels disposed to look around him and inquire what is the best mode of supplying some of the deficiencies of his new condition, and the first requisite that presents itself is union, concert with his neighbors, whose interests are in this matter identical with his own. When this becomes an object, a phantom starts up which is but too apt to thwart all efforts for the general good — Politics.

I may be almost alone in my view of this subject. The habit of taking a personal share in the government has so many charms as well as so many advantages, that it is difficult to make our countrymen believe it may encroach upon the attention due to other and perhaps more imperious duties. Yet this is the conclusion to which I have come after some opportunity for observation.

If it be true — as who can doubt! — that "*Two* elements seem to be comprised in the great fact which we call civilization — two circumstances

necessary to its existence — the progress of society and the progress of individuals, — the amelioration of the social system and the expansion of the mind and faculties of man" * — it appears to me that we are as yet occupied only on the incipient steps toward civilization. We are busying ourselves exclusively on one of the paths to national greatness and happiness, and neglecting another which claims our best efforts. To borrow an appropriate figure from the soil, we are "laying out work" upon a road which needs but little mending, while we have not even "opened" another which is equally necessary and far more pleasant. The entire attention of the public mind — beyond that desire for acquisition which is at least excusable in people who began with very little of this world's goods — is occupied with petty politics; a struggle of partisanship — a scramble for small offices which the frequency of elections is continually throwing open for competition, thus engrossing the attention which ought to be occupied with nobler objects, as the paras scattered among the crowd in Constantinople serve to withdraw all interest from the sultan himself, the grand centre of wealth and honor.

The part which every one feels it alike his duty and his privilege to take in public affairs has undeniably a very favorable influence in awakening the intelligence and enlarging the perceptions of our people, as to matters of practical and immediate

* Guizot.

utility. This has been often observed, and must indeed be obvious, as the natural effect of constant practice. But the good effect ends here. To place a particular candidate in office is the single aim, not to ascertain his real fitness for the place. If the man of our choice will vote as we wish, and act as we think he ought, upon certain points of local interest, we inquire no further. He can write his name, and what more do we need? With us knowledge is not power, but the contrary. There is even a strong prejudice against educated people, perhaps because they are comparatively so few that they cannot exert collective influence, but rather stand in the position of exclusives. They incur the suspicion of not being willing to yield to the impulse of the crowd. Education will not make a man honest, say we; it is more likely to make him proud. It will make him none the better road-commissioner, or supervisor, or even school-inspector; for, as said our friend Mr. ——, touching the question of a candidate for this latter office, "We don't want great scholars; we want plain farmers, like ourselves." It is on this plan that most of our teachers are examined and pronounced fit for the business, as witness our district schools, in many of which the teacher is not even required to spell tolerably. "This gear must be amended," but the time does not seem yet to have arrived.

Some efforts are undoubtedly making towards intellectual advancement, but they are few and

feeble. They have as yet taken no hold on the affections of the people. They shine however like faint lights in a dark place, showing the gloom which surrounds them, yet affording encouragement to those who are anxiously watching their increase, and hoping to see their puny rays grow brighter and brighter till the coming of the perfect day. Among the young there are many who have caught glimpses of the pure light, and who long for more. We may at least hope that manhood will not find them ingulfed like their sires in the vortex of petty politics.

It is difficult to obtain any hearing for this view of things. To set up our own puny acquisitions as the universal standard, — to decide that nothing beyond what we ourselves know can be worth learning, — to acknowledge nothing as good which we do not ourselves possess, — is but too natural to us all, and most of all natural to those who have almost every thing to learn. The forming stages of every infant society are found to be peculiarly prone to fanaticism of some kind, and ours just now is a utilitarian fanaticism of the narrowest and most short-sighted description. Whatever cannot evidently be turned to account *to-day*, is rejected as worthless and unprofitable. We leave the future to take care of itself. We certainly are fanatics in politics; perhaps I shall be told that I am equally so in the importance which I attach to the pursuit of literature.

I cannot but think that our apathy on this subject arises in part from the idea which seems to float in the moral atmosphere of life in this region, and to be imbibed instinctively by all, that if our political condition be but right, nothing else can be wrong; — if we have only *liberty* enough, nothing can be lacking in the essentials of happiness. Another cause may perhaps be sought in the migratory habits alluded to in another part of this work. Intellectual pleasures are the solace of the quiet fireside — the deep shade at noon — of the twilight hour. Repose is their element. They belong to a love of HOME, and this is yet a feeling almost unknown to the mass of Western settlers. They are in unison with a quiet and rational, not an exciting and feverish pursuit of happiness, and those who have cultivated them most successfully, have ever borne testimony to their power of alleviating the ills of life, as well as of adding grace and refinement to its pleasures.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

There studious let me sit
And hold high converse with the mighty dead;
Sages of ancient time, as gods revered,
As gods beneficent, who blessed mankind
With arts, with arms, and humanized a world.

THOMSON.

When any one can prove to me that it is puerile to make ourselves happy from sources always within our own control, then I will admit that ideal pleasures are unworthy of a reasonable being.

FLINT.

IT has been said that characters and professions rise or fall in public estimation according to the exigency of the times.* At the present day, be the cause what it may, authors, writers by profession, — "the unproductive class" — occupy no inconsiderable space on the wide arena. They have even been used as heroes of romantic story. They are no longer stigmatized and held up to the ridicule of the unlearned, as pedants in threadbare black coats, who wipe their pens on their fingers and forget to shave. Arrayed in the finest, and essenced with the best, they fill an honored place in the drawing-room, and are held indispensable at the Feasts of Lions now so much in vogue in the

* See "Essay on Literary Character."

rare upper air. A certain class of these communicative sages has ever received the honorable designation of the "silver-fork school," from their exquisite proficiency in the arcana of fashionable life, and their just appreciation of its inestimable privileges, from one of which is derived the distinctive honorary title just mentioned. I pretend not to draw inferences, but only to state facts, and whatever deep observers may assign as the reason, the fact must be admitted that ours is the Age of Ink. But this applies only to the *wide* arena.

Let not these fortunate persons — these heroes of the pen — plume themselves too highly. Let them not fancy their soft empire universal. Let them rather trace out the bright regions distinguished on certain philosophical maps as "enlightened" — wide spaces done in cerulean blue, or glowing rose, — and mark well the boundaries of their influence. Beyond that dotted line shining nonsense has no charms, fashionable inanity no readers. Nay, more, — beyond that line no poet, saving perhaps Isaac Watts, no writer of fiction, but it may be the ingenious compilers of those miniature novels which we are in the habit of teaching to our Sunday scholars — finds any favor, scarcely indeed any toleration, be his pretensions what they may. If a story cannot be sworn to as true, it is condemned as "a pack of lies."

O Shakspere! O Cervantes! O Walter Scott! beneficent manufacturers of tranquil enjoyment!

Nay, still more, — O Milton! O John Bunyan! awful and awe-stricken painters of heavenly imaginings! interpreters of things sacred and celestial! and you, ye hosts of kind softeners of this world's ruggedness — gentle consolers of time's trials — inspiring companions of deepest solitude! ye whose fancy-woven veils can throw a charm over realities which to see in their naked truth would drive us to despair! is it for this ye have toiled? for this wrung your blessed brains? — for this wasted the midnight oil? — to have those who of all others need your benign office, repel you with disdain? Was Shakspere in very deed "a king of France that killed two children and then ate 'em?" Shall the Waverley Novels be known as "Waverley's Novels?" *Are* the adventures of the knight of La Mancha "flat stuff"? Is it "a shame to write any thing that a'n't true"?

But to be serious, John Bunyan *is* an exception to the general rule, for we all read Pilgrim. You will find a well-thumbed copy in perhaps every fifth house in the woods. But the mass of our society, intelligent as they are in matters of every-day business, have as yet no consciousness of the lack of literary advantages — no conception of what they are losing by their neglect of this source of amusement and occupation. I say the *mass*, for the exceptions to this remark which I could myself adduce, serve only to prove the general rule. Books and the power of enjoying them, scarcely find a

place in our plans of happiness. If we are to place any confidence in the reputation of Scotland in this particular, the taste of our population must form a strong contrast to that of the Scotch, who are somewhat similarly situated. Our loneliness is uncheered by the shadowy companions whose presence we might always command. Our pastures will never produce a Robert Burns or an Ettrick Shepherd. And this, not through any lack of natural gifts, or any deficiency of materials, but simply and solely because the direction in which not only the public mind but the attention of individuals is habitually turned, is utterly adverse to every thing that requires imagination for its production or its enjoyment.

We are told that "art is unnecessary where there is nature and feeling" — and also "there is a strong sensation of delight felt by unpolished and simple minds at the first encounter of the true and the beautiful." * This must not be applied without much limitation in the case of literary productions.

There is a time when we are not only unable to originate works of taste and fancy, but unable to enjoy them. But we began our chapter with the saying of D'Israeli, that each character or profession rises or falls in public estimation according to the exigency of the times; and we were going to draw

* Sismondi.

the inference that every body in these Western wilds has, on that ground, a strong inducement to turn author, since a love of letters is our great need. This may be disputed, but the very attempt will prove the truth of the observation, since those who have experienced the consoling and humanizing effects of a rational pursuit of literature will never think its importance can be overrated.

One who ought to know has told us lately that he finds himself in a country where "the reputation of having written a book is equivalent to that of having picked a pocket," or something to that effect. Now, as this writer dates from Brussels, we hardly know what he can mean, unless it be that the people by whom he is surrounded are so absorbed in money-making or some other form of sordid self-indulgence, that they have no respect for books or their makers. This cannot quite be said of us, for if a writer will only tell very long stories about the "Revolution war," or very tough ones about the Indians, and if the said stories be very bloody and very marvellous, we will believe every word, and, believing, enjoy. But this enjoyment will be entirely independent of any literary merit in the works themselves.

Many complain very piteously of the long speechless days which they are obliged to pass, living in the woods, and perhaps far from any neighbor. Women especially find this a sore trial,

as it needs must be. But if you suggest a book as the best sweetener of solitude — the reply will perhaps be, "Oh, we have hardly any books, and I never was no great reader!" And the resource adopted instead, is to wander off to some accessible neighbor, and there spend the long afternoon, or perhaps the entire summer day, in unimproving talk, or, still worse, in discussing the characters and conduct of friends and acquaintance. Yet these very people will pass a sweeping condemnation on reading for amusement, and especially works of fiction. They "could not spend time so!" Yet the time which is squandered in eternal visiting would give a good course of reading, both useful and cheering, to those who had a taste for it. I verily believe that the establishment of a library in every town would prevent nine tenths of all the bitter animosities which often divide whole neighborhoods, and which usually spring from no other source than the vapid or malicious tattle of loungers and gossips. And, I must insist, if it were only to keep people out of mischief, a taste for reading would be invaluable.

But it cannot be doubted that every accession of intellectual light carries with it an increase of happiness — happiness which depends not in any great degree upon the course of public events, and not, beyond a certain limited extent, upon the smiles of fortune. Those debasing and imbittering prejudices which

must ever wait upon ignorance, melt away in the rays of mental illumination, and every departed prejudice leaves open a new inlet for happiness. I may be considered an enthusiast, but it is my deliberate conviction that next to Religion — heartfelt operative Religion — a true love of reading is the best softener of the asperities of life — the best consoler under its inevitable ills.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Scorn not this lowly race, ye sons of pride,
Their joys disparage, nor their hopes deride;
From germs like these have mighty statesmen sprung,
Of prudent counsel and persuasive tongue.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

WHO are the characters most highly esteemed by the Western settler? Politicians certainly. And why? Because improvements in social condition alone occupy the attention of the people. Individual improvement has not yet assumed its real importance in our eyes. We entertain a deep reverence for the sacred office, but we are apt to be somewhat critical on the individual who fills it. Critical, not after the manner of city congregations, — for we care little for modes of speech, or graces of action, or the opinions of a *clique*, — but on the severer points of zeal, spirituality, sincerity, and above all, freedom from pride, and from a desire for exclusiveness. On these points we are strict and merciless judges, and such is our dread of priestcraft, that we do not always remember that Christian charity, humility and diffidence are graces which become equally priest and people. We are fond of lawyers, but we have ever a lurking fear that they know too much. We are incessantly seeking their assistance, but we always congratulate

ourselves on having come off unharmed, in our dealings with them, which shows a certain degree of distrust. The merchant is a necessary and often a powerful member of the community; and he would be a popular one if it were not for the occasional compulsory collection of debts, which casts at least a temporary shadow upon his good name. As to the physician, it is natural enough that a man who works all day for half a dollar should think hard of paying as much or more for a ten minutes' "visit," and where land can be bought for ten shillings the acre, it is not to be wondered at that the farmer should grudge to give twice as much for being cupped, since he has not the remotest idea of the expense incurred in acquiring the skill which looks to him like mere intuition. But let any of these superadd to his professional claims the character of a warm, unflinching politician, or let him acquire this last without an attempt at any thing further, and all distrust vanishes at once, and he passes as "a fellow with a whole soul," who has discovered the true end of man, and the direct path to honor and usefulness.

If I were called on to state the quality which more than any other formed the especial characteristic of the Western settler, I should name Self-dependence — a direct manifestation of that which has been given as a national bias — Individualism. The very effort required to break away from the ties of kindred, and from all cherished memories,

implies no inconsiderable share of that self-reliance which prefers equality, among the poor, to any of the advantages to be gained by living among the rich in an inferior position. The man who has done this feels that he can do more, and the thought that in the wilderness he starts fair at least, is a potent encouragement. If the lower classes of mechanics in our great cities could be induced to look fate in the face, and, borrowing a little of this same self-reliance from the emigrant, venture to follow where he has boldly led the way, instances of discouragement, temptation, evil courses, despair and crime would be less numerous, in the by-ways of those great Babels; while our smiling villages, supplied by this means with what they most need, would afford, in return, both business and bread, enough and to spare. With us it is emphatically true that "a man's a man"—and if he "wear hodden gray," he is none the worse, but the better.

Nothing contributes more to increase this spirit of self-dependence than the electioneering contests, and the share which all, directly or indirectly, take in the management of public affairs. This even I must acknowledge, although I deprecate the evils which grow out of the frequency of elections and the blind pursuit of one form of good to the neglect of all others. The good is a great good, without doubt, and it is shared by all without exclusion. In a town containing one hundred voters, about one

half are annually candidates for office, and of course about one fourth are elected. The principle of rotation in office is carried out, and there are few of the citizens who in the course of three or four years do not have a share in this species of sovereignty. Small is the remuneration attached to these town offices, smaller still, in the world's view, the honor belonging to them; yet their exercise performs a most important part in the training of our people, and exerts a powerful influence over their characters. This is in fact the real education of the community. The portion derived from our common schools is by comparison a mere nullity. Every office has some portion of responsibility attached to it, requires some acquaintance with the laws of the land and the exercise of some degree of discretion; and, moreover, invests the possessor for the time being with a little consequence in the eyes of others, and not a little in his own. Each town is of itself a little republic, and the town affairs, taken collectively, are vastly more important in their bearing on the welfare of the people than the action of our general and state governments. This subject does not always attract the attention it deserves. We speak of our people governing themselves, meaning thereby that through their representatives they do ultimately and remotely control the action of the bodies to which those representatives belong. This is truly an important part of the sovereignty of the people, but it is not

the most important part. The power which they exercise in the primary assemblies has a far greater influence on the character and welfare of the nation. In these assemblies is determined the amount to be raised for town purposes, the sums to be expended on highways, and many other items directly connected with the general prosperity. To the school districts is left in great measure the regulation of their own schools, and no one can resist a tax levied for the building or repairing of one of these important edifices. Much the greater portion of taxes is expended within the town, and over this the citizens exercise absolute control.

It is in these various gatherings of the people for the transaction of public business, that the democracy of the country really exhibits itself, and where it is seen entirely paramount. In the greater assemblies, a thousand other influences are brought to bear, besides the mere will and wishes, or what may be termed the choice, of the people. Not so in town-meeting. Every man there speaks for himself, acts for himself, votes for himself; and, in so doing, is a more correct image of the republics of antiquity, than the grand representative assemblies of our country. We must not therefore expect in them touches of Demosthenian eloquence, though as to *fire* we may be allowed to doubt whether even the great Athenian excelled the backwoodsman. Fortunately neither life nor liberty, nor the glory nor the existence of the nation is at stake,

but nowhere is a keener interest excited nor a warmer debate heard than in these halls of true democratic simplicity. He who should omit reckoning these influences in his estimation of national and especially Western character, would resemble the botanist, who, in his description of a plant, should forget to mention its root or its blossom. The very organization of a school-district, and the various steps that are required to be taken by the parents with regard to it, have probably more influence on them in enlarging their comprehension, and giving them an item of practical knowledge in the transaction of public business, than the school itself will exercise in improving the minds of the children.

So it is with regard to roads. The consultation about them, the choice of commissioner and of path-masters, the determination of sites, the appraisal of damages consequent on encroachments upon farms, the ordering of methods of improvements, with the directing of the labor to be bestowed, certainly tend to improve the faculties of those concerned, whether it benefits the roads or not. That is another consideration.

Whoever supposes that this system is one which necessarily leads to good roads, good schools, a good and cheap provision for the poor, and the best administration of the laws, — is greatly mistaken. The ever-recurring change of officers prevents any important gain from experience, and is an absolute bar to any regularly-pursued system. The re-

sponsibility lasts but for one year, and temporary expedients are of course resorted to, having little or no prospective bearing. It is a little too much to suppose every man born with such a capacity for public business as to enable him to dispense with all preparatory training, and the slovenly mode in which affairs are conducted shows the necessity for the lessons of experience.

Are we then to abandon our system of town government, and look to state officers to regulate our town affairs? By no means. These duties form too valuable a part of the education of our citizens, and although we pay dearly enough for it, it must be considered worth all it costs. In some countries they educate the children; in our new countries this point is poorly enough attended to, but the deficiency is in part supplied by the education of the men. But it is folly to suppose we get the benefit without cost. Perhaps it is all the better that we are not sensible what it does cost. A direct tax to the same amount would be intolerable.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Light, whether it be material or moral, is the best reformer; for it prevents those disorders which other remedies sometimes cure, but sometimes confirm.

LACON.

THE subject of our common schools is one of too much interest to be passed in silence, though there is little that is pleasant to be said about them. Munificent provision has been made for the public instruction of our state. The general features of the plan have been conceived in the noblest spirit; the people have had all reasonable encouragement to stimulate their own exertions; yet the real, practical result has been, thus far, lamentably small. Several causes may perhaps be suggested in attempting to account for this failure, and these causes, acting and reacting upon themselves, becoming alternately cause and effect, make research difficult, even if it were certain that discovery would be productive of good.

To maintain any sort of school for a part only of the year is sufficient to secure a share of the public money, and the benefit which might be derived from even this, is diminished by an absurd custom of charging the parent only for the time which the scholar actually passes in the school,

deducting every day, or even half day, of absence. This operates as a premium upon irregular attendance, and the effect is to keep the classes continually fluctuating, and to nullify any effort which the teacher might be disposed to make for the improvement of the school. To get as much work out of the child as possible, and at the same time to comfort ourselves with the idea that we are sending him to school, is very pleasant, and the case of the boy who was "kepatomtogoatatering," is no uncommon one. We keep them at home with less apology sometimes.

The purchase of books, where there is nothing to control the whim of the teacher, and where every three months' teacher is sure to have a new fancy, becomes quite an inconvenience among people of very small means; and the effect of this is an utter impossibility of classifying the scholars and enabling the instructor to make the most of his time. Some parents insist on having the school books which served former teachers used as long as they last, and as we all do as we like, this makes fine confusion, and helps along the master's temper by thwarting his plans at every turn.

"As is the master, so is the school" — so says that wisest and kindest of despotic parents, the Prussian government. This is true, beyond question, and some of our common schools confirm it lamentably. If the master cannot speak good English, how can he be expected to "mend the

cacophony" of the scholars? If he be ignorant of the first rules of good manners, can we complain of the grossness of his pupils? If the teacher's handwriting be but a vulgar scrawl, shall he set copies? Can one inculcate neatness and good order who is himself the most odious of slovens?

And on the other hand, what man in his senses who is capable of earning a decent livelihood — "who has arms to pare and burn a moss" — will undertake a most vexatious and thankless task, for wages inferior to those of a common laborer? Who but the lame or the lazy can afford to work every day and all day, and "board round" besides, all for eight or nine dollars a month?

And what inducement can there be for study or any effort at improvement on the part of such young persons as may wish to become teachers, when they know that it will probably be their fate to be "examined" by persons totally incompetent, and that these posts are usually let out, like railway contracts, to the lowest bidder?

But, say some parents, why should we feel much solicitude or be at extra costs in engaging a competent teacher; since he will probably remain with us only for a single term, while we shall be expected afterwards to pay at the same rate for the poorest kind of services?

I must not allow myself to dwell on these points, since it can do but little service to point out faults unless we are prepared to suggest improvements.

I would not have said even thus much if it had not been a subject very near my heart, and one on which I cannot but think our Western public are but too apathetic. I may at least claim the merit of "speaking the truth in love."

Perhaps if the public money were bestowed in sums *proportioned to the time* that a school has been maintained in the year; the instruction of the children of the very poor — those who are willing to acknowledge themselves unable to support even the small expense required — paid for by the state; and payment claimed of all others, according to the number of their children within certain ages, thus cutting off all question as to deductions in case of absence; and, withal, a list of books *prescribed* by the superintendent of public instruction to all the schools which are benefited by the public funds, some of the minor difficulties might be obviated.

But our schools will never be materially improved until parents learn to set some value on education for its own sake; to recognize it as the most efficacious means of extracting the greatest possible amount of comfort out of narrow circumstances and an isolated position. And since this enlargement of views is only to be looked for as the gradual result of contact with the enlightened, it must evidently be of slow growth. No desire for improvement will arise spontaneously until some degree of knowledge has been acquired. The very wish implies that the first steps have been taken.

When we have had only a taste of the sweetness of "book-learning," we shall no longer content ourselves with "the three Rs, readin', ritin' and 'rethmetic," but view them as only the stepping-stones to things far more delightful.

I believe I ought to make some apology to the reader for this heavy patch upon a flimsy web. I know it does not belong here, and that it will form one of those skipping-places which teach young people bad reading-habits. If I can cheat some of my Western friends into a moment's attention to a subject so important to us, I shall rejoice, as did Paddy when he succeeded in passing his light guinea by hiding it between two coppers.

But I have bespoken thee, O reader! and thou hast promised me unlimited indulgence; and now, as I have had my turn, I shall, in acknowledgment of thy patient attention, treat thee to a story; which, if not "furiously to the present purpose," may yet serve to give thee a new glimpse of the simple and homely life which we of the woods lead every day. It is a peep at the condition of an old settler;—a peep with living eyes too, but "no offence, Hal! no offence!"

## CHAPTER XXX.

The friendly shade
Shuts out the world's bright glare.

Our friend Mr. Hay has a noble farm. His cleared and cultivated acres may be counted by hundreds, and his "stock" of all kinds will far outnumber them. A wide tract of forest land hems in his clearing, and this too calls him master. He is wont to boast that he has more land enclosed within a ring-fence than any man in the county, and he boasts still louder that it is all the fruit of his own industry, and loudest of all, that it has never made him proud.

He maintains and insists upon his family's maintaining the simplicity of habits and manners that is usual in the neighborhood, and watches with jealous eye every tendency towards an imitation of those who attempt fashion and style among us. He goes daily into the field with his men, and his wife and daughters spin and wear wool and flax of home production. No imported luxury graces their daily table. Mrs. Hay, to be sure, has her tea, but she has it in the afternoon, before the family supper; and the sugar (for the few who like sweetnin' in their tea) comes from no further

off than the farm "sugar-bush." Notwithstanding these strict sumptuary laws however, no family lives in greater comfort and abundance.

Mr. Hay's house is large enough to make a figure any where, though it lacks as yet the beautifying aid of the paint-brush. His barn would make a hotel of tolerable dimensions, and the various outhouses, and sheds, and coops, and pens, that cluster around it, make passing travellers fancy they are coming upon a rising village in the deep woods. A fine young orchard adorns the sloping bank behind the house; whole rows of peach and cherry-trees border the ample door-yard; hedges of currant and gooseberry bushes intersect the garden; thick screens of wild grape and honeysuckle overshadow the porch and drapery the "square-room" windows.

When you enter, you find bare but well-scrubbed floors; the only exception being found in the aforesaid "square-room," which is decorated with a home-made carpet of resplendent colors, large enough to reach almost the border of chairs, and shaken every morning on the grass to avoid the ravages of the wasteful broom. A great eight-day clock with a moon on its face is the most conspicuous ornament of the common or "keepin'-room;" but there is, besides this, in a favored corner near the window, a small mirror, round which hang black profiles of all the family, including aunts and uncles; pin-cushions of every size and hue; strings of little birds' eggs; vials of camphor, peppermint

and essence of lemon, and perhaps a dozen other small articles much prized by different members of the family; while over the glass wave a few peacocks' feathers, and a whole plume of asparagus.

Pass into the kitchen and you will find Mrs. Hay kneading bread or rolling pie-crust to give her stout handmaid time for some less delicate service; her daughter Marthy-Ann preparing dinner; her daughter Sophia-Jane shelling peas; her daughter Harriet-'Lizzy rocking the cradle in which lies yet another daughter, whose name is Apollonia,—not quite Apollyon, but so like it that I almost wonder that people who read John Bunyan should be fond of the appellation. The truth is, we do love high-sounding names, and the more syllables or adjuncts the better.

The kitchen has a great fireplace, with a crane stout enough to swing a five pail kettle of soap, and a great oven too, that will hold at least a dozen country loaves. About the walls are disposed all the conveniences necessary for the full use of fireplace and oven, on the same plenteous scale. A rifle and a shot-gun hang on wooden hooks driven into the rafters overhead; two or three gleaming butcher-knives ornament a leather strap fixed against the chimney. A meal-room near at hand contains several varieties of flour, and a buttery and milk-house supply other rustic dainties in profusion. Is it not to be supposed that Mr. and

Mrs. Hay and their five daughters, and their help and their hired men, live well?

One daughter we have not introduced into the kitchen, because she was seldom found there. Caroline Hay was delicate from her infancy, so much so that even her father was willing to see her excused from the more arduous part of domestic duty, and sent to school more constantly than were her sisters. But it was not without many misgivings that Mr. Hay observed the distinction which this circumstance occasioned between his daughters. He dreaded, and with reason, that Caroline should become that useless and uncomfortable being, a pretty girl, with just enough of education to fill her with conceit and pretension, while her exemption from the household cares that occupied her mother and sisters would be likely to create in time an impression that she was of right entitled to superior respect and a higher destiny. And, in truth, the young lady herself had already begun to verify in part her father's sagacity, by showing off, on proper occasions, a very sufficient share of those airs which young ladies sometimes mistake for graces. In an especial degree did she scorn the beaux of the neighborhood, who, being accustomed to find themselves very favorably received elsewhere, and who could not perceive why Car'line Hay should "stick up," disliked her in proportion. We forgive any thing but "sticking up."

The three hired men are curiosities in their way, and as I wish to present a sketch of a Western settler's home of some dozen years' standing, I will say a few words about them, although two of them have no very direct interest in my story.

The elder, John Kendall, is a huge Titan, who looks able to play at quoits with almost any of our Michigan hills; a man of might, whose very voice as he shouts "Haw, Star!" or "Gee, Brin'!" is enough to make the earth quake, and so supersede the necessity for using the immense plough which he guides with one hand. This is of course the head man where hard work is to be done.

Then comes — I take them as they sit at table — a rosy-cheeked, handsome, quizzical Tim Rice, one of those resolutely agreeable persons, who are always diving desperately after jokes, undeterred by the frequent mortification of coming up empty-handed. This youth is better dressed than great John Kendall, and he is Mr. Hay's right hand man in all matters requiring rather address than strength. He refreshes the memory of distant debtors; he buys and sells horses, (he is a born horse-jockey,) and superintends the training of the colts; he feels the pulse of the county as elections come round, and even addresses his fellow-citizens occasionally when the town requires to be "redeemed, regenerated, disinthralled," from the sway of some unpopular assessor or recreant constable. Mr. Hay is a politician of course, or he never would have stood where

he does in the estimation of his neighbors. He is now somewhat tired of justiceships, and commissionerships, and memberships for himself, but he has always a favorite candidate, in whose behalf he and Tim Rice ride, and run, and talk, and scold, till the grand end is accomplished; and in all such matters the handsome-faced Timothy is Mercury.

The young gentleman in the blue jeans, who sits next Mr. Rice, being particularly interested in my story, must have a paragraph to himself.

Seymour Bullitt was, at the time when I first saw him, one of the most awkward and clumsy boys I remember to have met; thick-set, red-faced, and withal much given to that kind of desperate and unreasonable yawning which threatens permanent dislocation of the maxillary processes. This habit had but one advantage, — it disclosed, ten times a day, a double row of the most regular and beautiful teeth that ever wasted their energies upon salt pork. These and a pair of dark eyes were all that poor Seymour had to recommend him, and his extreme rusticity was the continual whetstone of Tim Rice's would-be wit, especially at table, when the ladies of the family were present. On these occasions Seymour's face became redder than ever, and Tim declared that he looked every where but at Caroline, whose languid blue eyes seemed scarcely to note his presence.

This young man was the son of a "forehanded" farmer who had half a dozen such, and

who, being a prudent man, and a widower, had sent Seymour (by the by, a favorite name with us, and usually pronounced "Simmer") to learn Mr. Hay's way of managing a farm; and the regular mode of doing this was to hire out as an ordinary "hahd" to perform Mr. Hay's bidding. And Seymour would have liked his place passing well if it had not been for Tim Rice's wit. This was sair to abide, surely; but then Mr. Hay was such a nice man, and Mrs. Hay was such a nice woman, and the girls were such nice girls, and Caroline —— here was always a misty place in his mind, so we will leave a blank.

We are not to suppose that Seymour ever spoke to any one within doors when he could help it. He came in with the men from the field, — he washed in the kitchen, and then went out of doors to comb his shaggy head, just as the rest did. But when all were seated at the table, and John Kendall gave grave opinions or put forth sage truisms as to the crops and things in general, and Tim Rice practised the profitable art of word-catching, at the risk of biting his tongue with his dinner, Seymour sat in an unbroken silence which seemed stupid enough. He was always bashful in the extreme, and under present circumstances, the fear that Tim Rice might find in his most trifling observation something that would bear twisting, kept him absolutely mute. Of course the young ladies did not like him.

That Tim Rice was a torment, to be sure! and to see the ease with which he laughed and talked with Caroline Hay, and the smiles that she gave him! Seymour tried to think what it could be that gave Tim such advantages, but he could not make it out.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

What dismal cries are those?
—— Nothing; a trifling sum of misery,
New added to the foot of thy account.
DRYDEN.

IT so happened that on a far distant part of the farm, where the process of clearing had but just commenced, John Kendall and Seymour, who went thither as choppers on a fine day in autumn, found each a prize. Kendall's was a huge snapping-turtle that was sunning himself on the borders of a small lake which lay near the scene of the day's operations, when John's unerring aim put an end to his musings and his life together, with the aid of no weapon but a stone such as few arms could have hurled so far. Seymour's treasure was a load of purple wild-grapes, which he had espied at no great distance in the wood, and which he determined to carry home as an offering to Caroline Hay. His thoughts were occupied during the remainder of the day in deciding in what manner best to approach the shrine which had so many terrors for his bashful soul; in planning speeches of six words each; and in wondering how Miss Hay would reply to such unwonted familiarity.

The declining sun saw our two heroes, loaded each with his prize, making the best of their way homeward; but their pace had been so much mod-

erated by the weight of their acquisitions, — the old difficulty *embarras des richesses*, — that they did not reach the farm-house until the supper-bell had rung and the family were assembled. Seymour hurried to bestow his load of grapes in a hollow tree which stood near the well, and Kendall laid his hideous turtle by the kitchen-door, its head drawn far out, its eyes protruding, and the stick by which the captor had carried it, still fast in its mouth.

"Hilloa!" shouted Tim Rice, as he jumped over the back fence in his haste to meet the well-known punctuality of the supper-bell; "are you late too?"

"Oh! *we* work," said Seymour; "we can't afford to peel the hills and jump fences as you do, Tim."

"Work!" replied Tim, with a knowing laugh, as he plunged his glowing face in the wash-basin, "I do head-work, my boy!"

"Precious light work that must be," said Seymour.

"Never mind, my son! don't be cross," said Mr. Rice with a mock-patronizing air; "it'll be your turn by and by, if you're a good boy." Then turning to go into the house for a towel, he fairly jumped at sight of the turtle. "What black d—l is this!" said he; "oh! a snappin'-turkle, eh! famous good soup Mrs. Hay'll make of that, *I* know! Who caught it?"

"I did," said John, "but Simmer's got some-

thing too;" and he indicated the grapes in the hollow tree, and added a conjecture as to their destination. And then he and Seymour went in to supper, tired of waiting for Tim.

The very moment Seymour beheld Caroline seated at table, looking more animated and of course more beautiful than usual, his courage failed him, and he felt sure that he should never be able to make the contemplated offer of the grapes with his own lips. So, as soon as supper was ended, he called one of the little girls aside, and gave her an awkward message to her sister, telling her she would find something in the hollow tree by the well. His purpose was then to be off as soon as possible, but the little sister hurried Caroline to the spot so quickly that he could not avoid witnessing, himself unseen, their approach to the tree, the hole in which was on the side furthest from the house.

What was his horror when Caroline, scarcely casting her eyes towards the place, uttered a loud shriek, and, bursting into a passion of tears, ran away as fast as she was able! The whole family crowded round her with wondering questions, but the petted beauty would only exclaim, "'Tis that hateful Seymour Bullitt! nobody else *could* do so!"

Poor Seymour waited in his hiding-place until all had retreated into the house, and then ran to discover the cause of such terrible anger. What was his vexation to find the vile snapping-turtle so placed within the hollow of the tree as to show

to the greatest advantage all its hideousness, while the grapes had entirely disappeared! It was now his turn to exclaim, in the inmost recesses of his boiling soul, "That's Tim Rice!"

And to make matters worse, he saw Caroline at the window, and felt that she must suppose he was exulting over the success of his trick.

Tim Rice took care to be invisible, and the only person who met Seymour's eye was Mr. Hay himself, who came out, apparently in musing mood, thinking, beyond a doubt, of the trick that had been played upon his daughter.

Seymour approached Mr. Hay, and said, in his most awkward manner, "It wa'n't me, indeed, sir!"

"What is it, Seymour?" said Mr. Hay, so mildly that one might know his mind was not upon snapping-turtles.

"Why — I didn't know but you might think it was me that ——"

"Oh! that frightened the girls, eh! no,—I dare say it was some of Tim Rice's nonsense;" and Mr. Hay passed on in wonderful unconcern. This was the extent of Seymour's explanation, and Mr. Hay never thought of it again, so that the truth did not reach Miss Hay's ears, as the unfortunate Cymon hoped it might.

The faithful and impartial historian regrets to acknowledge that Seymour's thoughts, as he tossed on his sleepless pillow that night, ran almost exclu-

sively on the subject of "pounding" Tim Rice thoroughly, as soon as he could catch him in the morning. Nay, so entirely had this idea taken possession of him, that when, after several restless hours, he had at length fallen asleep, he knocked the skin completely off his knuckles in an encounter with the bed-post, which senseless piece of furniture received a blow intended for the handsome nose of the unfortunate joker.

There are some people who habitually consume in planning the time which would be most suitable for the execution of their intentions. We shall not allow that was a common fault of our friend Seymour, but it is certain that when he awoke in the morning, two hours later than usual, and found that the object of last night's denunciations had set off at peep of dawn on a long tour of business for Mr. Hay, he wished he had not indulged his angry feelings quite so vehemently, when he ought to have been asleep.

This incident, trifling as it was, produced upon the yet unopened mind of this young man no unimportant effects. We are all conscious, at times, of sudden light breaking in upon us from sources which are apparently so trivial that we are at a loss to account for the magnitude of their influence. Now, Seymour had felt at intervals and transiently a dim and vague sense of power to be something more than he had yet been. He had so nearly discovered the truth, that the merest trifle was suf-

ficient to give the rousing touch he needed. So from the chaos of that one wakeful night's thoughts, — a jumble of hard work, and John Kendall, and snapping-turtles, and bunches of grapes, and Tim Rice's *head*-work, and easy life, and enviable impudence, and his own violent but unavailing anger, and the pretty damsel's scornful looks — from a jumble of all these things and many more beside, an idea dawned upon him, — darkly and blunderingly at first, but gradually clearer and more inspiring, — of the advantages of mental power over mere strength — of education over mere labor; and so absorbing and so laborious was the process of thinking out for himself what he might have found clearly laid down in dozens of volumes, had he known of their existence, that he forgot his vexation and its saucy cause, and almost the fair enemy herself, while he argued himself into a resolution to change at once his plans for the future, and to arm himself for the battle of life with other weapons than the plough and scythe.

The short remainder of his stay at Mr. Hay's saw him eat his meals like a Trappist.

END OF VOL. I.