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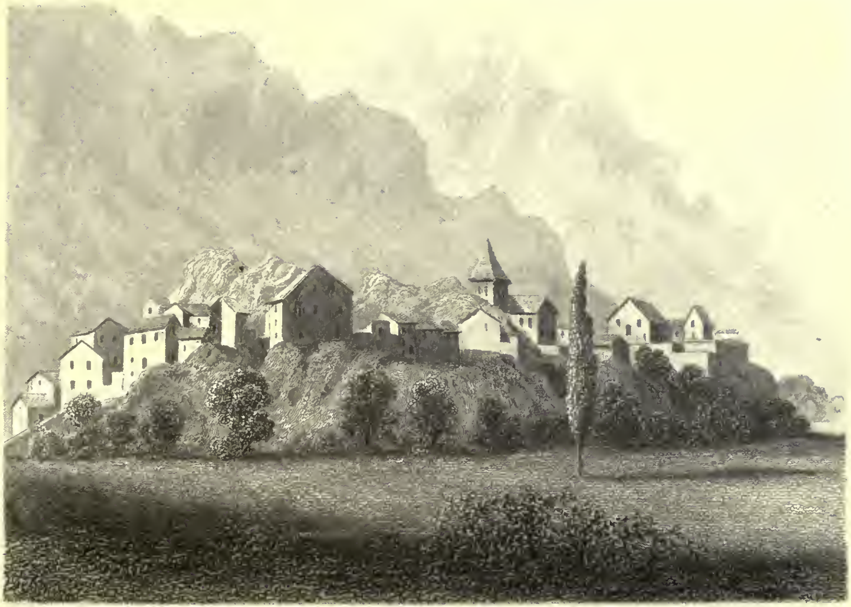

ANDORRA IN THE PYRENEES

BY-WAYS OF EUROPE

BAYARD TAYLOR

Eldorado Edition

THE WORKS

OF

BAYARD TAYLOR

VOLUME V

BY-WAYS OF EUROPE

HANNAH THURSTON

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK LONDON
27 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET 24 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND
The Knickerbocker Press

BY-WAYS OF EUROPE

BY

BAYARD TAYLOR

AUTHOR'S REVISED EDITION

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DEDICATED

TO MY FRIEND OF MANY YEARS

HORACE GREELEY

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A FAMILIAR LETTER TO THE READER.

Whoever you may be, my friendly reader, — whether I may assume the footing of familiar acquaintance which comes of your having read my former books of travel, or whether we stand for the first time face to face, self-introduced to each other, and uncertain, as yet, how we shall get on together, — will you let me take you by the buttonhole and tell you some things which must be said now, if at all?

This is probably the last volume of travels which I shall ever publish. It closes a series of personal and literary experiences which cannot be renewed, and which I have no belief will be extended. Now, therefore, all that I have done as a traveller detaches itself from my other labors, lies clear behind me as a life by itself, and may be considered with a degree of self-criticism which was scarcely possible while it lay nearer. The brief review which I desire to make, must necessarily be autobiographical in its character, and I am aware that this is questionable ground. But as I have been specially styled, for so many years and little to my own satisfaction, "a traveller" or "a tourist," and in either character have received praise and blame, equally founded on a misconception of the facts and hopes of my life, I claim the privilege, this once, to set the truth before those who may care to hear it.

Only one of two courses is open to an author: either to assume a dignified reserve, as who should say to his reader, "There is my book — it is all that concerns you —

how or why it was written is my own secret;" or, to take the reader frankly into his confidence, and brave the ready charge of vanity or over-estimation of self, by the free communication of his message. Generally, the latter course is only to anticipate the approval which is sure to come in the end, if there is any vitality in an author's work. To most critics the personal gossip of an acknowledged name is delightful: posthumous confidences also somehow lose the air of assertion which one finds in the living man. Death, or that fixed renown which rarely comes during life, sets aside the conventionalities of literature; and the very modesty and reticence which are supposed to be a part of them then become matters of regret. So there are transitions in life which seem posthumous to its preceding phases, and the present self looks upon the past as akin, indeed, but not identical.

During the past twenty-two years I have written and published ten volumes of travel, which have been extensively read, and are still read by newer classes of readers. Whatever may be the quality or value of those works, I may certainly assume that they possess an interest of some kind, and that the reader whom I so often meet, who has followed me from first to last (a fidelity which, I must confess, is always grateful and always surprising), will not object if, now, in offering him this eleventh and final volume, I suspend my rôle of observer long enough to relate how the series came to be written.

The cause of my having travelled so extensively has been due to a succession of circumstances, of a character more or less accidental. My prolonged wanderings formed no part of my youthful programme of life. I cannot disconnect my early longings for a knowledge of the Old World from a still earlier passion for Art and Literature. To the latter was added a propensity, which I have never unlearned, of acquiring as much knowledge as possible through the medium of my own experience rather than to accept it, unquestioned, from anybody else. When I first set out for Europe I was still a boy, and less acquainted with life than most boys of my age. I was driven to the venture by the strong necessity of providing for myself sources of education which, situated as I was, could not be reached at home. In other words, the journey offered me a chance of working my way.

At that time, Europe was not the familiar neighbor-continent which it has since become. The merest superficial letters, describing cities, scenery, and the details of travel, were welcome to a very large class of readers, and the narrative of a youth of nineteen, plodding a-foot over the Old World, met with an acceptance which would have been impossible ten years later. I am fully aware how little literary merit that narrative possesses. It is the work of a boy who was trying to learn something, but with a very faint idea of the proper method or discipline; who had an immense capacity for wonder and enjoyment, but not much power, as yet, to discriminate between the important and the trivial, the true and the false. Perhaps the want of development which the book betrays makes it attractive to those passing through the same phase of mental growth. I cannot otherwise account for its continued vitality.

Having been led, after returning home, into the profession of journalism, the prospect of further travel seemed very remote. I felt, it is true, that a visit to Greece, Egypt, and Syria was desirable in order to complete my acquaintance with the lands richest in the history of civilization; and I would have been quite willing to relinquish all chance of seeing more of the world, had that much been assured to me. I looked forward to years of steady labor as a servant of the Press; but, being a servant, and by necessity an obedient one, I was presently sent forth, in the line of my duty, to fresh wanderings. The "New York Tribune" required a special correspondent in California, in 1849 and the choice of its editor fell upon me. After performing the stipulated service. I returned by way of Mexico, in order to make the best practicable use of my time. Thus, and not from any roving propensity, originated my second journey.

When, two years later, a change of scene and of occupation became imperative, from the action of causes quite external to my own plans and hopes, my first thought naturally, was to complete my imperfect scheme of travel by a journey to Egypt and the Orient. I was, moreover, threatened with an affection of the throat, for which the climate of Africa offered a sure remedy. The journey was simply a change of position, from assistant-editor to correspondent, enabling me to obtain the strength which I sought, without giving up the service on which I relied for support. How it came to be extended to Central Africa is partly explained by the obvious advantage of writing from a new and but partially explored field; but there were other influences acting upon me which I did not fully comprehend at the time, and cannot now describe without going too deeply into matters of private history. I obeyed an instinct, rather than followed a conscious plan.

After having completed my African journeys, I traversed Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, and finally reached Constantinople, intending to return homewards through Europe. There, however, I found letters from my associates of "The Tribune," insisting that I should proceed speedily to China, for the purpose of attaching myself to the American Expedition to Japan, under Commodore Perry. I cannot say that the offer was welcome, yet its conditions were such that I could not well refuse, and, besides, I had then no plan of my own of sufficient importance to oppose to it. The circumstances of my life made me indifferent, so long as the service required was not exactly distasteful, and in this mood I accepted the proposition. Eight months still intervened before the squadron could reach China, and I determined to turn the time to good advantage, by including Spain and India in the outward journey. Thus the travel of one year was extended to two and a half, and instead of the one volume which I had premeditated, I brought home the material for three.

It would be strange if an experience so prolonged should not sensibly change the bent of an author's mind. It was not the sphere of activity which I should have chosen, had I been free to choose, but it was a grateful release from the drudgery of the editorial room. After three years of clipping and pasting, and the daily arrangement of a chaos of ephemeral shreds, in an atmosphere which soon exhausts the vigor of the blood, the change to the freedom of Oriental life, to the wonders of the oldest art and to the easy record of impressions so bright and keen that they put themselves into words, was like that from night to day. With restored health, the life of the body became a delight in itself; a kindly fortune seemed to attend my steps; I learned something of the patience and fatalistic content of the races among whom I was thrown, and troubled myself no longer with an anxious concern for the future.

I confess, too, that while floating upon the waters of the White Nile, while roaming through the pine forests of Phrygia or over the hills of Loo-Choo, I learned to feel the passion of the Explorer. Almost had I eaten of that fruit which gives its restless poison to the blood. It is very likely that, had I *then* been able to have marked out my future path, I might have given it the character which was afterwards ascribed to me.

I will further confess that the unusual favor with which those three volumes of travel were received, — perhaps, also, the ever-repeated attachment of "traveller" to my name, and that demand for oral report of what I had seen and learned, which threw me suddenly into the profession of lecturing, with much the sensation of the priest whom Henri Quatre made general by mistake, — I will confess, I say, that these things did for a time mislead me as to the kind of work which I was best fitted to do. I did not see then, that my books were still a continuation of the process of development, and that, tried by a higher literary standard, they stopped short of real achievement. My plan, in writing them, had been very simple. Within the limits which I shall presently indicate, my faculty of observation had been matured by exercise; my capacity to receive impressions was quick and sensitive, and the satisfaction I took in descriptive writing was much the same as that of an artist who should paint the same scenes. I endeavored, in fact, to make words a substitute for pencil and palette. Having learned, at last, to analyze and compare, and finding that the impression produced upon my readers was proportionate to its degree of strength upon my own mind, I fancied that I might acquire the power of bringing home to thousands of firesides clear pictures of the remotest regions of the earth, and that this would be a service worth undertaking.

With a view of properly qualifying myself for the work, I made a collection of the narratives of the noted travellers of all ages, from Herodotus to Humboldt. It was a rich and most instructive field of study; but the first result was to open my eyes to the many requirements of a successful traveller — a list which increases with each generation. I was forced to compare myself with those wanderers of the Middle Ages, whose chief characteristic was a boundless capacity for wonder and delight, but, alas! this age would not allow me their naïve frankness of speech. Moreover, I had now discovered that Man is vastly more important than Nature, and the more I dipped into anthropological and ethnological works, the more I became convinced that I could not hope to be of service unless I should drop all other purposes and plans, and give my life wholly to the studies upon which those sciences are based. But the latter lay so far away from my intentions — so far from that intellectual activity which is joyous because it is spontaneous — that I was forced to pause and consider the matter seriously.

A writer whose mind has been systematically trained from the start will hardly comprehend by what gradual processes I attained unto a little self-knowledge. The faculties called into exercise by travel so repeated and prolonged, continued to act from the habit of action, and subsided very slowly into their normal relation to other qualities of the mind. They still continued to affect my plans, when I left home, in 1856, for another visit to Europe. It will, therefore, be easily understood how I came to combine a winter and summer trip to the Arctic Zone with my design of studying the Scandinavian races and languages: the former was meant as a counterpart to my previous experiences in tropical lands. This journey, and that to Greece and Russia, which immediately followed, were the receding waves of the tide. While I was engaged with them I found that my former enjoyment of new scenes, and the zest of getting knowledge at first-hand, were sensibly diminished by regret for the lack of those severe preparatory studies which would have enabled me to see and learn so much more.

I never thought it worth while to contradict a story which, for eight or nine years past has appeared from time to time in the newspapers — that Humboldt had said of me: "He has travelled more and seen less than any man living." The simple publication of a letter from Humboldt to myself would have silenced this invention; but I desisted, because I knew its originator, and did not care to take that much notice of him. The same newspapers afterwards informed me that he had confessed the slander, shortly before his death. I mention the circumstance now, in order to say that the sentence attributed to Humboldt was no doubt kept alive by the grain of truth at the bottom of it. Had Humboldt actually said: "No man who has published so many volumes of travel has contributed so little to positive science" — he would have spoken the truth and I should have agreed with him. But when, during my last interview with that great student of Nature, I remarked that he would find in my volumes nothing of the special knowledge which he needed, it was very grateful to me when he replied: "But you paint the world as we, explorers of science, cannot. Do not undervalue what you have done. It is a real service; and the unscientific traveller, who knows the use of his eyes, observes for us always, without being aware of it." Dr. Petermann, the distinguished geographer, made almost the same remark to me, four or five years afterwards.

I should have been satisfied with such approval and with certain kindly messages which I received from Dr. Barth and other explorers, and have gone forward in the path into which I was accidentally led, had I not felt that it was diverging more and more from the work wherein I should find my true content. I may here be met by the threadbare platitude that an author is no judge of his own performance. Very well: let me, then, be the judge of my own tastes! On the one hand there was still the temptation of completing an unfulfilled scheme. Two additional journeys — one to the Caucasus, Persia, and the more accessible portions of Central Asia, and the other to South America — would have rounded into tolerable completeness my personal knowledge of Man and Nature. Were these once accomplished, I might attempt the construction of a work, the idea of which hovered before my mind for a long time — a *human* cosmos, which should represent the race in its grand divisions, its relation to soil and climate, its varieties of mental and moral development, and its social, political, and spiritual phenomena, with the complex causes from which they spring. The field thus opened was grander than that which a mere "tourist" could claim: it had a genuine charm for the imagination, and even failure therein was more attractive than success in a superficial branch of literature.

On the other hand, I began to feel very keenly the demoralizing influence (if one may apply such a term to intellectual effort) of travel. The mind flags under the strain of a constant receptivity: it must have time to assimilate and arrange its stores of new impressions. Moreover, without that ripe knowledge which belongs to the later rather than the earlier life of a man, the traveller misses the full value of his opportunities. His observations, in many respects, must be incomplete, and tantalize rather than satisfy. While he grows weary of describing the external forms of Nature and the more obvious peculiarities of races, he has little chance of following the clews to deeper and graver knowledge which are continually offered to his hands. Where, as in my case, other visions, of very different features, obscured for a time but never suppressed, beckon him onward, he must needs pause before the desultory habit of mind, engendered by travel, becomes confirmed.

It was easy for me, at this "parting of the ways," to decide which was my better road. While I was grateful for the fortune which had led me so far, and through such manifold experience, I saw that I should only reach the best results of what I had already gained, by giving up all further plans of travel. The favor with which my narratives had been received was, in great measure, due to a reflection in them of the lively interest which I had taken in my own wanderings, — to an appetite for external impressions which was now somewhat cloyed, and a delight in mere description which I could no longer feel. My activity in this direction appeared to me as a field which had been traversed in order to reach my proper pastures. It had been broad and pleasant to the feet, and many good friends cried to me: "Stay where you are — it is the path which you should tread!" yet I preferred to press onward towards the rugged steeps beyond. It seemed to me that the pleasure of reading a book must be commensurate with the author's pleasure in writing it, and that those books which do not grow from the natural productive force of the mind will never possess any real vitality.

The poet Tennyson once said to me: "A book of travels may be so written that it shall be as immortal as a great poem." Perhaps so: but in that case its immortality will be dependent upon intellectual qualities which the traveller, as a traveller, does not absolutely require. The most interesting narrative of exploration is that which is most simply told. A poetic apprehension of Nature, a sparkling humor, graces of style — all these are doubtful merits. We want the naked truth, without even a fig-leaf of fancy. We may not appreciate all the facts of science which the explorer has collected, but to omit them would be to weaken his authority. Narratives of travel serve either to measure our knowledge of other lands, in which case they stand only until superseded by more thorough research. or to exhibit the coloring which those lands take when painted for us by individual minds, in which case their value must be fixed by the common standards of literature. For the former class, the widest scientific culture is demanded: for the latter, something of the grace and freedom and keen mental insight which we require in a work of fiction. The only traveller in whom the two characters were thoroughly combined, was Goethe.

Should I hesitate to confess that to be styled "a great American traveller," has always touched me with a sense of humiliation? It is as if one should say "a great American pupil;" for the books of travel which I have published appear to me as so many studies, so many processes of education, with the one advantage that, however immature they may be, nothing in them is forced or affected. The journeys they describe came, as I have shown, through a natural series of circumstances, one leading on the other: no particular daring or energy, and no privation from which a healthy man need shrink, was necessary. Danger is oftener a creation of one's own mind than an absolute fact, and I presume that my share of personal adventure was no more than would fall to the lot of any man, in the same period of travel. To be praised for virtues which one does not feel to be such, is quite as unwelcome as to be censured for faults which are not made evident to one's self.

If I wish that these volumes of mine were worthier of the opportunities granted to me, at least I do not regret that they were written. Hardly a week passes, but I receive letters from young men, who have been stimulated by them to achieve the education of travel; and, believing as I do that the more broad and cosmopolitan in his views a man becomes through his knowledge of other lands, the purer and more intelligent shall be his patriotic sentiment — the more easily he shall lift himself out of the narrow sphere of local interests and prejudices — I rejoice that I have been able to assist in giving this direction to the minds of the American youth. It is hardly necessary to say that I had no such special intention in the beginning, for I never counted beforehand on the favor of the public: but the fact, as it has been made manifest to me, is something for which I am exceedingly grateful.

In this volume I have purposely dropped the form of continuous narrative, which, indeed, was precluded by the nature of my material. The papers it contains, each devoted to a separate By-way of Europe, were written at various times, during two journeys abroad, within the past five or six years. I employed the intervals of other occupation, from time to time, in making excursions to outlying corners of the Old World, few of which are touched by the ordinary round of travel. Nearly all of them, nevertheless, attracted me by some picturesque interest, either of history, or scenery, or popular institutions and customs. Such points, for instance, as Lake Ladoga, Appenzell, Andorra and the Teutoburger Forest, although lying near the frequented highways and not difficult of access, are very rarely visited, and an account of them is not an unnecessary contribution to the literature of travel. A few of the places I have included — St. Petersburg in winter, Capri and Ischia — cannot properly be classed as "By-ways," yet they form so small a proportion of the contents of the volume that I may be allowed to retain its title. Being the result of brief intervals of leisure, and the desire to turn my season of recreation to some good account, the various papers were produced without regard to any plan, and each is meant to be independent of the others. If I had designed to present a tolerably complete description of *all* the interesting By-ways of Europe, I must have included Auvergne, Brittany, the Basque provinces of Spain, Friesland, the Carpathians, Apulia, Croatia, and Transylvania.

In laying down the mantle of a traveller, which has been thrown upon my shoulders rather than voluntarily assumed, I do not wish to be understood as renouncing all the chances of the future. I cannot foresee what compulsory influences, what inevitable events, may come to shape the course of my life: the work of the day is all with which a man need concern himself. One thing, only, is certain; I shall never, from the mere desire of travel, go forth to the distant parts of the earth. Some minds are so constituted that their freest and cheerfulest activity will not accompany the body from place to place, but is dependent on the air of home, on certain familiar surroundings, and an equable habit of life. Each writer has his own peculiar laws of production, which the reader cannot always deduce from his works. It amuses me, who have set my household gods upon the soil which my ancestors have tilled for near two hundred years, to hear my love of home questioned by men who have changed theirs a dozen times.

I therefore entreat of you, my kindly reader, that you will not ascribe my many wanderings to an inborn propen sity to wander, — that you will believe me when I say that culture, in its most comprehensive sense, is more to me than the chance of seeing the world, — and, finally, that you will consider whether I have any legitimate right to assume the calling of an author, unless I choose the work that seems fittest, without regard to that acceptance of it which is termed popularity. If you have found enough in my former volumes of travel to persuade you to accompany me into other walks of literature, I shall do my best to convince you that I am right in the conclusions at which I have arrived. If, believing me mistaken, you decide to turn away, let us at least shake hands, and, while I thank you for your company thus far on my way, still part as friends!

BAYARD TAYLOR.

CEDARCROFT, *September.* 1868.

A CRUISE ON LAKE LADOGA.

"Dear T., — The steamboat Valamo is advertised to leave on Tuesday, the 26th (July 8th, New Style), for Serdopol, at the very head of Lake Ladoga, stopping on the way at Schlüsselburg, Konewitz Island, Kexholm, and the island and monastery of Valaam. The anniversary of Saints Sergius and Herrmann, miracle-workers, will be celebrated at the last named place on Thursday, and the festival of the Apostles Peter and Paul on Friday. If the weather is fine, the boat will take passengers to the Holy Island. The fare is nine rubles for the trip. You can be back again in St. Petersburg by six o'clock on Saturday evening. Provisions can be had on board, but (probably) not beds; so, if you are luxurious in this particular, take along your own sheets, pillow-cases, and blankets. I intend going, and depend upon your company. Make up your mind by ten o'clock, when I will call for your decision. Yours,

"P."

I laid down the note, looked at my watch, and found that I had an hour for deliberation before P.'s arrival. "Lake Ladoga?" said I to myself; "it is the largest lake in Europe — I learned that at school. It is full of fish; it is stormy; and the Neva is its outlet. What else?" I took down a geographical dictionary, and obtained the following additional particulars: The name *Lad'oga* (not *Lado'ga*, as it is pronounced in America) is Finnish, and means "new." The lake lies between 60° and 61° 45′ north latitude, is 175 versts — about 117 miles — in length, from north to south, and 100 versts in breadth; receives the great river Volkhoff on the south, the Svir, which pours into it the waters of Lake Onega, on the east, and the overflow of nearly half the lakes of Finland, on the west; and is, in some parts, fourteen hundred feet deep.

Vainly, however, did I ransack my memory for the narrative of any traveller who had beheld and described this lake. The red hand-book, beloved of tourists, did not even deign to notice its existence. The more I meditated on the subject, the more I became convinced that here was an untrodden corner of the world, lying within easy reach of a great capital, yet unknown to the eyes of conventional sight-seers. The name of Valaam suggested that of Barlaam, in Thessaly, likewise a Greek monastery; and though I knew nothing about Sergius and Herrmann, the fact of their choosing such a spot was the beginning of a curious interest in their history. The very act of poring over a map excites the imagination: I fell into conjectures about the scenery, vegetation, and inhabitants, and thus, by the time P. arrived, was conscious of a violent desire to make the cruise with him. To our care was confided an American youth whom I shall call R., — we three being, as we afterwards discovered, the first of our countrymen to visit the northern portion of the lake.

The next morning, although it was cloudy and raw, R. and I rose betimes, and were jolted on a *droshky* through the long streets to the Valamo's landing-place. We found a handsome English-built steamer, with tonnage and power enough for the heaviest squalls, and an after-cabin so comfortable that all our anticipations of the primitive modes of travel were banished at once. As men not ashamed of our health, we had decided to omit the sheets and pillow-cases, and let the tooth-brush answer as an evidence of our high civilization; but the broad divans and velvet cushions of the cabin brought us back to luxury in spite of ourselves. The captain, smoothly shaven and robust, as befitted his station, — English in all but his eyes, which were thoroughly Russian, — gave us a cordial welcome in passable French. P. drove up presently, and the crowd on the floating pier rapidly increased, as the moment of departure approached. Our fellow-pilgrims were mostly peasants and deck-passengers: two or three officers, and a score of the bourgeois, were divided, according to their means, between the first and second cabins. There were symptoms of crowding, and we hastened to put in preëmption-claims for the bench on the port side, distributing our travelling sacks and pouches along it, as a guard against squatters. The magic promise of *na chaï* (something to buy tea with) further inspired the waiters with a peculiar regard for our interest, so that leaving our important possessions in their care, we went on deck to witness the departure.

By this time the Finnish sailors were hauling in the slack hawsers, and the bearded stevedores on the floating quay tugged at the gangway. Many of our presumed passengers had only come to say good-bye, which they were now waving and shouting from the shore. The rain fell dismally, and a black, hopeless sky settled down upon the Neva. But the Northern summer, we knew, is as fickle as the Southern April, and we trusted that Sergius and Herrmann, the saints of Valaam, would smooth for us the rugged waters of Ladoga. At last the barking little bell ceased to snarl at the tardy pilgrims. The swift current swung our bow into the stream, and, as we moved away, the crowd on deck uncovered their heads, not to the bowing friends on the quay, but to the spire of a church which rose to view behind the houses fronting the Neva. Devoutly crossing themselves with the joined three fingers, symbolical of the Trinity, they doubtless murmured a prayer for the propitious completion of the pilgrimage, to which, I am sure, we could have readily echoed the amen.

The Valamo was particularly distinguished, on this occasion, by a flag at the fore, carrying the white Greek cross on a red field. This proclaimed her mission as she passed along, and the bells of many a little church pealed God-speed to her and her passengers. The latter, in spite of the rain, thronged the deck, and continually repeated their devotions to the shrines on either bank. On the right, the starry domes of the Smolnoi, rising from the lap of a linden-grove, flashed upon us; then, beyond the long front of the college of *demoiselles nobles* and the military store-houses, we hailed the silver hemispheres which canopy the tomb and shrine of St. Alexander of the Neva. On the left, huge brick factories pushed back the gleaming groves of birch, which flowed around and between them, to dip their hanging boughs in the river; but here and there peeped out the bright green cupolas of some little church, none of which, I was glad to see, slipped out of the panorama without its share of reverence.

For some miles we sailed between a double row of contiguous villages — a long suburb of the capital, which stretched on and on, until the slight undulations of the shore showed that we had left behind us the dead level of the Ingrian marshes. It is surprising what an interest one takes in the slightest mole-hill, after living for a short time on a plain. You are charmed with an elevation which enables you to look over your neighbor's hedge. I once heard a clergyman, in his sermon, assert that "the world was perfectly smooth before the fall of Adam, and the present inequalities in its surface were the evidences of human sin." I was a boy at the time, and I thought to myself, "How fortunate it is that we are sinners!" Peter the Great, however, had no choice left him. The piles he drove in these marshes were the surest foundation of his empire.

The Neva, in its sudden and continual windings, in its clear, cold, sweet water, and its fringing groves of birch, maple, and alder, compensates, in a great measure, for the flatness of its shores. It has not the slow magnificence of the Hudson or the rush of the Rhine, but carries with it a sense of power, of steady, straightforward force, like that of the ancient warriors who disdained all clothing except their swords. Its river-god is not even crowned with reeds, but the full flow of his urn rolls forth undiminished by summer and unchecked beneath its wintry lid. Outlets of large lakes frequently exhibit this characteristic, and the impression they make upon the mind does not depend on the scenery through which they flow. Nevertheless, we discovered many points, the beauty of which was not blotted out by rain and cloud, and would have shone freshly and winningly under the touch of the sun. On the north bank there is a palace of Potemkin (or Potchómkin, as his name is pronounced in Russian), charmingly placed at a bend, whence it looks both up and down the river. The gay color of the building, as of most of the *datchas*, or country-villas, in Russia, makes a curious impression upon the stranger. Until he has learned to accept it as a portion of the landscape, the effect is that of a scenic design on the part of the builder. These dwellings, these villages and churches, he thinks, are scarcely intended to be permanent: they were erected as part of some great dramatic spectacle, which has been, or is to be, enacted under the open sky. Contrasted with the sober, matter-of-fact aspect of dwellings in other countries, they have the effect of temporary decorations. But when one has entered within those walls of green and blue and red arabesques, inspected their thickness, viewed the ponderous porcelain stoves, tasted, perhaps, the bountiful cheer of the owner, he realizes their palpable comforts, and begins to suspect that all the external adornment is merely an attempt to restore to Nature that coloring of which she is stripped by the cold sky of the North.

A little further on, there is a summer villa of the Empress Catharine — a small, modest building, crowning a slope of green turf. Beyond this, the banks are draped with foliage, and the thinly clad birches, with their silver stems, shiver above the rush of the waters. We, also, began to shiver under the steadily falling rain, and retreated to the cabin on the steward's first hint of dinner. A *table d'hôte* of four courses was promised us, including the preliminary *zakouski* and the supplementary coffee — all for sixty *copéks*, which is about forty-five cents. The *zakouski* is an arrangement peculiar to Northern countries, and readily adopted by foreigners. In Sweden it is called the *smörgås*, or "butter-goose," but the American term (if we had the custom) would be "the whetter." On a side-table there are various plates of anchovies, cheese, chopped onions, raw salt herring, and bread, all in diminutive slices, while glasses of corresponding size surround a bottle of *kümmel*, or cordial of caraway-seed. This, at least, was the *zakouski* on board the Valamo, and to which our valiant captain addressed himself, after first bowing and crossing himself towards the Byzantine Christ and Virgin in either corner of the cabin. We, of course, followed his example, finding our appetites, if not improved, certainly not at all injured thereby. The dinner which followed far surpassed our expectations. The national *shchee*, or cabbage-soup, is better than the sound of its name; the fish, fresh from the cold Neva, is sure to be well cooked where it forms an important article of diet; and the partridges were accompanied by those plump little Russian cucumbers, which are so tender and flavorous that they deserve to be called fruit rather than vegetables.

When we went on deck to light our Riga cigars, the boat was approaching Schlüsselburg, at the outlet of the lake. Here the Neva, just born, sweeps in two broad arms around the island which bears the Key-fortress — the key by which Peter opened this river-door to the Gulf of Finland. The pretty town of the same name is on the south bank, and in the centre of its front yawn the granite gates of the canal which, for a hundred versts, skirts the southern shore of the lake, forming, with the Volkhoff River and another canal beyond, a summer communication with the vast regions watered by the Volga and its affluents. The

Ladoga Canal, by which the heavy barges laden with hemp from Mid-Russia, and wool from the Ural, and wood from the Valdaï Hills, avoid the sudden storms of the lake, was also the work of Peter the Great. I should have gone on shore to inspect the locks, but for the discouraging persistence of the rain. Huddled against the smoke-stack, we could do nothing but look on the draggled soldiers and *mujiks* splashing through the mud, the low yellow fortress, which has long outlived its importance, and the dark-gray waste of lake which loomed in front, suggestive of rough water and kindred abominations.

There it was, at last, — Lake Ladoga, — and now our prow turns to unknown regions. We steamed past the fort, past a fleet of brigs, schooners, and brigantines, with huge, rounded stems and sterns, laden with wood from the Wolkonskoi forests, and boldly entered the gray void of fog and rain. The surface of the lake was but slightly agitated, as the wind gradually fell and a thick mist settled on the water. Hour after hour passed away, as we rushed onward through the blank, and we naturally turned to our fellow-passengers in search of some interest or diversion to beguile the time. The heavy-bearded peasants and their weather-beaten wives were scattered around the deck in various attitudes, some of the former asleep on their backs, with open mouths, beside the smoke-stack. There were many picturesque figures among them, and, if I possessed the quick pencil of Kaulbach, I might have filled a dozen leaves of my sketch-book. The *bourgeoisie* were huddled on the quarter-deck benches, silent, and fearful of sea-sickness. But a very bright, intelligent young officer turned up, who had crossed the Ural, and was able to entertain us with an account of the splendid sword-blades of Zlatáoust. He was now on his way to the copper mines of Pitkaranda, on the northeastern shore of the lake.

About nine o'clock in the evening, although still before sunset, the fog began to darken, and I was apprehensive that we should have some difficulty in finding the island of Konewitz, which was to be our stopping-place for the night. The captain ordered the engine to be slowed, and brought forward a brass half-pounder, about a foot long, which was charged and fired. In less than a minute after the report, the sound of a deep solemn bell boomed in the mist, dead ahead. Instantly every head was uncovered, and the rustle of whispered prayers fluttered over the deck, as the pilgrims bowed and crossed themselves. Nothing was to be seen; but, stroke after stroke, the hollow sounds, muffled and blurred in the opaque atmosphere, were pealed out by the guiding bell. Presently a chime of smaller bells joined in a rapid accompaniment, growing louder and clearer as we advanced. The effect was startling. After voyaging for hours over the blank water, this sudden and solemn welcome, sounded from some invisible tower, assumed a mystic and marvelous character. Was it not rather the bells of a city, ages ago submerged, and now sending its ghostly summons up to the pilgrims passing over its crystal grave?

Finally a tall mast, its height immensely magnified by the fog, could be distinguished; then the dark hulk of a steamer, a white gleam of sand through the fog, indistinct outlines of trees, a fisherman's hut, and a landing-place. The bells still rang out from some high station near at hand, but unseen. We landed as soon as the steamer had made fast, and followed the direction of the sound. A few paces from the beach stood a little chapel, open, and with a lamp burning before its brown Virgin and Child. Here our passengers stopped, and made a brief prayer before going on. Two or three beggars, whose tattered dresses of tow suggested the idea of their having clothed themselves with the sails of shipwrecked vessels, bowed before us so profoundly and reverently that we at first feared they had mistaken us for the shrines. Following an avenue of trees, up a gentle eminence, the tall white towers and green domes of a stately church gradually detached themselves from the mist, and we found ourselves at the portal of the monastery. A group of monks, in the usual black robes, and high, cylindrical caps of crape, the covering of which overlapped and fell upon their shoulders, were waiting, apparently to receive visitors. Recognizing us as foreigners, they greeted us with great cordiality, and invited us to take up our quarters for the night in the house appropriated to guests. We desired, however, to see the church before the combined fog and twilight should make it too dark; so a benevolent old monk led the way, hand in hand with P., across the court-yard.

The churches of the Greek faith present a general resemblance in their internal decorations. There is a glitter of gold, silver, and flaring colors in the poorest. Statues are not permitted, but the pictures of dark Saviours and saints are generally covered with a drapery of silver, with openings for the head and hands. Konewitz, however, boasts of a special sanctity, in possessing the body of Saint Arsenius, the founder of the monastery. His remains are inclosed in a large coffin of silver, elaborately chased. It was surrounded, as we entered, by a crowd of kneeling pilgrims; the tapers burned beside it, and at the various altars; the air was thick with incense, and the great bell still boomed from the misty tower. Behind us came a throng of our own deck-passengers, who seemed to recognize the proper shrines by a sort of devotional instinct, and were soon wholly absorbed in their prayers and prostrations. It is very evident to me that the Russian race still requires the formulas of the Eastern Church; a fondness for symbolic ceremonies and observances is far more natural to its character than to the nations of Latin or Saxon blood. In Southern Europe the peasant will exchange merry salutations while dipping his fingers in the holy water, or turn in the midst of his devotions to inspect a stranger; but the Russian, at such times, appears lost to the world. With his serious eyes fixed on the shrine or picture, or, maybe, the spire of a distant church, his face suddenly becomes rapt and solemn, and no lurking interest in neighboring things interferes with its expression.

One of the monks, who spoke a little French, took us into his cell. He was a tall, frail man of thirty-five, with a wasted face, and brown hair flowing over his shoulders, like most of his brethren of the same age. In those sharp, earnest features, one could see that the battle was not yet over. The tendency to corpulence does not appear until after the rebellious passions have been either subdued, or pacified by compromise. The cell was small, but neat and cheerful, on the ground-floor, with a window opening on the court, and a hard, narrow pallet against the wall. There was also a little table, with books, sacred pictures, and a bunch of lilacs in water. The walls were whitewashed, and the floor cleanly swept. The chamber was austere, certainly, but in no wise repulsive.

It was now growing late, and only the faint edges of the twilight glimmered overhead, through the fog. It was not night, but a sort of eclipsed day, hardly darker than our winter days under an overcast sky. We returned to the tower, where an old monk took us in charge. Beside the monastery is a special building for guests, a room in which was offered to us. It was so clean and pleasant, and the three broad sofa-couches with leather cushions looked so inviting, that we decided to sleep there, in preference to the crowded cabin. Our supply of shawls, moreover, enabled us to enjoy the luxury of undressing. Before saying good-night, the old monk placed his hand upon R.'s head. "We have matins at three o'clock," said he; "when you hear the bell, get up, and come to the church: it will bring blessing to you." We were soon buried in a slumber which lacked darkness to make it profound. At two o'clock the sky was so bright that I thought it six, and fell asleep again, determined to make three hours before I stopped. But presently the big bell began to swing stroke after stroke, it first aroused, but was fast lulling me, when the chimes struck in and sang all manner of incoherent and undevout lines. The brain at last grew weary of this, when, close to our door, a little, petulant, impatient bell commenced barking for dear life. R. muttered and twisted in his sleep, and brushed away the sound several times from his upper ear, while I covered mine — but to no purpose. The sharp, fretful jangle went through shawls and cushions, and the fear of hearing it more distinctly prevented me from rising for matins. Our youth, also, missed his promised blessing, and so we slept until the sun was near five hours high — that is, seven o'clock.

The captain promised to leave for Kexholm at eight, which allowed us only an hour for a visit to the *Konkamen*, or Horse Rock, distant a mile, in the woods. P. engaged as guide a long-haired acolyte, who informed us that he had formerly been a lithographer in St. Petersburg. We did not ascertain the cause of his retirement from the world: his features were too commonplace to suggest a romance. Through the mist, which still hung heavy on the lake, we plunged into the fir-wood, and hurried on over its uneven carpet of moss and dwarf whortleberries. Small gray boulders then began to crop out, and gradually became so thick that the trees thrust them aside as they grew. All at once the wood opened on a rye-field belonging to the monks, and a short turn to the right brought us to a huge rock, of irregular shape, about forty feet in diameter by twenty in height. The crest overhung the base on all sides except one, up which a wooden staircase led to a small square chapel perched upon the summit.

The legends attached to this rock are various, but the most authentic seems to be, that in the ages when the Carelians were still heathen, they were accustomed to place their cattle upon this island in summer, as a protection against the wolves, first sacrificing a horse upon the rock. Whether their deity was the Perun of the ancient Russians or the Jumala of the Finns is not stated; the inhabitants at the present day say, of course, the Devil. The name of the rock may also be translated "Petrified Horse," and some have endeavored to make out a resemblance to that animal, in its form. Our acolyte, for instance, insisted thereupon, and argued very logically — "Why, if you omit the head and legs, you must see that it is exactly like a horse." The peasants say that the devil had his residence in the stone, and point to a hole which he made, on being forced by the exorcisms of Saint Arsenius to take his departure. A reference to the legend is also indicated in the name of the island, Konewitz, which our friend, the officer, gave to me in French as *Chevalisé*, or, in literal English, *The Horsefied.*

The stones and bushes were dripping from the visitation of the mist, and the mosquitoes were busy with my face and hands while I made a rapid drawing of the place. The quick chimes of the monastery, through which we fancied we could hear the warning boat-bell, suddenly pierced through the forest, recalling us. The Valamo had her steam up, when we arrived, and was only waiting for her rival, the Letuchie (Flyer), to get out of our way. As we moved from the shore, a puff of wind blew away the fog, and the stately white monastery, crowned with its bunch of green domes, stood for a moment clear and bright in the morning sun. Our pilgrims bent, bareheaded, in devotional farewell; the golden crosses sparkled an answer, and the fog rushed down again like a falling curtain.

We steered nearly due north, making for Kexholm formerly a frontier Swedish town, at the mouth of the River Wuoxen. For four hours it was a tantalizing struggle between mist and sunshine — a fair blue sky overhead, and a dense cloud sticking to the surface of the lake. The western shore, though near at hand, was not visible; but our captain, with his usual skill, came within a quarter of a mile of the channel leading to the landing-place. The fog seemed to consolidate into the outline of trees; hard land was gradually formed, as we approached; and as the two river-shores finally inclosed us, the air cleared, and long, wooded hills arose in the distance. Before us lay a single wharf, with three wooden buildings leaning against a hill of sand.

" But where is Kexholm ? "

" A verst inland," says the captain ; " and I will give you just half an hour to see it."

There were a score of peasants, with clumsy two-wheeled carts and shaggy ponies at the landing. Into one of these we clambered, gave the word of command, and were whirled off at a gallop. There may have been some elasticity in the horse, but there certainly was none in the cart. It was a perfect conductor, and the shock with which it passed over stones and leaped ruts was instantly communicated to the *os sacrum*, passing thence along the vertebræ, to discharge itself in the teeth. Our driver was a sunburnt Finn, who was bent upon performing his share of the contract, in order that he might afterwards, with a better face, demand a ruble. On receiving just the half, however, he put it into his pocket, without a word of remonstrance.

" *Suomi ?* " I asked, calling up a Finnish word with an effort.

" *Suomi-laïnen*," he answered, proudly enough, though the exact meaning is, " I am a Swamplander."

Kexholm, which was founded in 1295, has attained since then a population of several hundreds. Grass grows between the cobble-stones of its broad streets, but the houses are altogether so bright, so clean, so substantially comfortable, and the geraniums and roses peeping out between snowy curtains in almost every window suggested such cozy interiors, that I found myself quite attracted towards the plain little town. " Here," said I to P., " is a nook which is really out of the world. No need of a monastery, where you have such perfect seclusion, and the indispensable solace of natural society to make it endurable." Pleasant faces occasionally looked out, curiously, at the impetuous strangers: had they known our nationality, I fancy the whole population would have run together. Reaching the last house, nestled among twinkling birch-trees on a bend of the river beyond, we turned about and made for the fortress — another conquest of the Great Peter. Its low ramparts had a shabby, neglected look; an old draw-bridge spanned the moat, and there was no sentinel to challenge us as we galloped across. In and out again, and down the long, quiet street, and over the jolting level to the top of the sand hill — we had seen Kexholm in half an hour.

At the mouth of the river still lay the fog, waiting for us, now and then stretching a ghostly arm over the woods and then withdrawing it, like a spirit of the lake, longing and yet timid to embrace the land. With the Wuoxen came down the waters of the Saima, that great, irregular lake, which, with its innumerable arms, extends for a hundred and fifty miles into the heart of Finland, clasping the forests and mountains of Savolax, where the altar-stones of Jumala still stand in the shade of sacred oaks, and the song of the Kalewala is sung by the descendants of Waïnamöinen. I registered a vow to visit those Finnish solitudes, as we shot out upon the muffled lake, heading for the holy isles of Valaam. This was the great point of interest in our cruise, the shrine of our pilgrim-passengers We had heard so little of these islands before leaving St. Petersburg, and so much since, that our curiosity was keenly excited; and thus, though too well seasoned by experience to worry unnecessarily, the continuance of the fog began to disgust us. We shall creep along as yesterday, said we, and have nothing of Valaam but the sound of its bells. The air was intensely raw; the sun had disappeared, and the bearded peasants again slept, with open mouths, on the deck.

Saints Sergius and Herrmann, however, were not indifferent either to them or to us. About the middle of the afternoon we suddenly and unexpectedly sailed out of the fog, passing, in the distance of a ship's length, into a clear atmosphere, with a far, sharp horizon! The nuisance of the lake lay behind us, a steep, opaque, white wall. Before us, rising in bold cliffs from the water and dark with pines, were the islands of Valaam. Off went hats and caps, and the crowd on deck bent reverently towards the consecrated shores. As we drew near, the granite fronts of the separate isles detached themselves from the plane in which they were blended, and thrust boldly out between the dividing inlets of blue water; the lighter green of birches and maples mingled with the sombre woods of coniferæ; but the picture, with all its varied features, was silent and lonely. No sail shone over the lake, no boat was hauled up between the tumbled masses of rock, no fisher's hut sat in the sheltered coves — only, at the highest point of the cliff, a huge wooden cross gleamed white against the trees.

As we drew around to the northern shore, point came out behind point, all equally bold with rock, dark with pines, and destitute of any sign of habitation. We were looking forward, over the nearest headland, when, all at once, a sharp glitter through the tops of the pines struck our eyes. A few more turns of the paddles, and a bulging dome of gold flashed splendidly in the sun! Our voyage, thus far, had been one of surprises, and this was not the least. Crowning a slender, pointed roof, its connection with the latter was not immediately visible: it seemed to spring into the air and hang there, like a marvelous meteor shot from the sun. Presently, however, the whole building appeared, — an hexagonal church, of pale-red brick, the architecture of which was an admirable reproduction of the older Byzantine forms. It stood upon a rocky islet, on either side of which a narrow channel communicated with a deep cove, cleft between walls of rock.

Turning in towards the first of these channels, we presently saw the inlet of darkest-blue water, pushing its way into the heart of the island. Crowning its eastern bank, and about half a mile distant, stood an immense mass of buildings, from the centre of which tall white towers and green cupolas shot up against the sky. This was the monastery of Valaam. Here, in the midst of this lonely lake, on the borders of the Arctic Zone, in the solitude of unhewn forests, was one of those palaces which religion is so fond of rearing, to show her humility. In the warm afternoon sunshine, and with the singular luxuriance of vegetation which clothed the terraces of rock on either hand, we forgot the high latitude, and, but for the pines in the rear, could have fancied ourselves approaching some cove of Athos or Eubœa. The steamer ran so near the rocky walls that the trailing branches of the birch almost swept her deck; every ledge traversing their gray, even masonry, was crowded with wild red pinks, geranium, saxifrage, and golden-flowered purslane; and the air, wonderfully pure and sweet in itself, was flavored with delicate woodland odors. On the other side, under the monastery, was an orchard of large apple-trees in full bloom, on a shelf near the water; above them grew huge oaks and maples, heavy with their wealth of foliage; and over the tops of these the level coping of the precipice, with a balustrade upon which hundreds of pilgrims, who had arrived before us, were leaning and looking down.

Beyond this point, the inlet widened into a basin where the steamer had room to turn around. Here we found some forty or fifty boats moored to the bank, while the passengers they had brought (principally from the eastern shore of the lake, and the district lying between it and Onega) were scattered over the heights. The captain pointed out to us a stately, two-story brick edifice, some three hundred feet long, flanking the monastery, as the house for guests. Another of less dimensions, on the hill in front of the landing-place, appeared to be appropriated especially to the use of the peasants. A rich succession of musical chimes pealed down to us from the belfry, as if in welcome, and our deck-load of pilgrims crossed themselves in reverent congratulation as they stepped upon the sacred soil.

We had determined to go on with our boat to Serdopol, at the head of the lake, returning the next morning in season for the solemnities of the anniversary. Postponing therefore, a visit to the church and monastery, we climbed to the summit of the bluff, and beheld the inlet in all its length and depth, from the open, sunny expanse of the lake to the dark strait below us, where the overhanging trees of the opposite cliffs almost touched above the water. The honeyed bitter of lilac and apple blossoms in the garden below steeped the air; and as I inhaled the scent, and beheld the rich green crowns of the oaks which grew at the base of the rocks, I appreciated the wisdom of Sergius and Herrmann that led them to pick out this bit of privileged summer, which seems to have wandered into the North from a region ten degrees nearer the sun. It is not strange if the people attribute miraculous powers to them, naturally mistaking the cause of their settlement on Valaam for its effect.

The deck was comparatively deserted, as we once more entered the lake. There were two or three new passengers, however, one of whom inspired me with a mild interest. He was a St. Petersburger, who according to his own account, had devoted himself to Art, and, probably for that reason, felt constrained to speak in the language of sentiment. "I enjoy above all things," said he to me, "communion with Nature. My soul is uplifted, when I find myself removed from the haunts of men. I live an *ideal* life, and the world grows more beautiful to me every year." Now there was nothing objectionable in this, except the manner of his saying it. Those are only shallow emotions which one imparts to every stranger at the slightest provocation. Your true lover of Nature is as careful of betraying his passion as the young man who carries a first love in his heart. But my companion evidently delighted in talking of his feelings on this point. His voice was soft and silvery, his eyes gentle, and his air languishing; so that, in spite of a heavy beard, the impression he made was remarkably smooth and unmasculine. I involuntarily turned to one of the young Finnish sailors, with his handsome, tanned face, quick, decided movements, and clean, elastic limbs, and felt, instinctively, that what we most value in every man, above even culture or genius, is the stamp of sex — the asserting, self-reliant, conquering air which marks the male animal.

After some fifteen or twenty miles from the island, we approached the rocky archipelago in which the lake terminates at its northern end — a gradual transition from water to land. Masses of gray granite, wooded wherever the hardy northern firs could strike root, rose on all sides, divided by deep and narrow channels. "This is the *scheer*," said our captain, using a word which recalled to my mind, at once, the Swedish *skär*, and the English *skerry*, used alike to denote a coast-group of rocky islets. The rock encroached more and more as we advanced; and finally, as if sure of its victory over the lake, gave place, here and there, to levels of turf, gardens, and cottages. Then followed a calm, land-locked basin, surrounded with harvest-fields, and the spire of Serdopol arose before us.

Of this town I may report that it is called, in Finnish, *Sordovala*, and was founded about the year 1640. Its history has no doubt been very important to its inhabitants, but I do not presume that it would be interesting to the world, and therefore spare myself a great deal of laborious research. Small as it is, and so secluded that Ladoga seems a world's highway in comparison with its quiet harbor, it nevertheless holds three races and three languages in its modest bounds. The government and its tongue are Russian; the people are mostly Finnish, with a very thin upper-crust of Swedish tradition, whence the latter language is cultivated as a sign of aristocracy.

We landed on a broad wooden pier, and entered the town through a crowd which was composed of all these elements. There was to be a fair on the morrow, and from the northern shore of the lake, as well as the wild inland region towards the Saïma, the people had collected for trade, gossip, and festivity. Children in ragged garments of hemp, bleached upon their bodies, impudently begged for pocket-money; women in scarlet kerchiefs curiously scrutinized us; peasants carried bundles of freshly mown grass to the horses which were exposed for sale; ladies with Hungarian hats, crushed their crinolines into queer old cabriolets; gentlemen with business faces and an aspect of wealth smoked paper cigars; and numbers of hucksters offered baskets of biscuit and cakes, of a disagreeable yellow color and great apparent toughness. It was a repetition, with slight variations, of a village fair anywhere else, or an election day in America.

Passing through the roughly paved and somewhat dirty streets, past shops full of primitive hardware, groceries which emitted powerful whiffs of salt fish or new leather, bakeries with crisp padlocks of bread in the windows, drinking-houses plentifully supplied with *qvass* and *vodki*, and, finally, the one watch-maker, and the vender of paper, pens, and Finnish almanacs, we reached a broad suburban street, whose substantial houses, with their courts and gardens, hinted at the aristocracy of Serdopol. The inn, with its Swedish sign, was large and comfortable, and a peep into the open windows disclosed as pleasant quarters as a traveller could wish. A little farther the town ceased, and we found ourselves upon a rough, sloping common, at the top of which stood the church with its neighboring belfry. It was unmistakably Lutheran in appearance, — very plain and massive and sober in color, with a steep roof for shedding snow. The only attempt at ornament was a fanciful shingle-mosaic, but in pattern only, not in color. Across the common ran a double row of small booths, which had just been erected for the coming fair; and sturdy young fellows from the country, with their rough carts and shaggy ponies, were gathering along the highway, to skirmish a little in advance of their bargains.

The road enticed us onwards into the country. On our left, a long slope descended to an upper arm of the harbor, the head of which we saw to be near at hand. The opposite shore was fairly laid out in grain-fields, through which cropped out, here and there, long walls of granite, rising higher and higher towards the west, until they culminated in the round, hard forehead of a lofty hill. There was no other point within easy reach which promised much of a view; so, rounding the head of the bay, we addressed ourselves to climbing the rocks, somewhat to the surprise of the herd-boys, as they drove their cows into the town to be milked.

Once off the cultivated land, we found the hill a very garden of wild blooms. Every step and shelf of the rocks was cushioned with tricolored violets, white anemones, and a succulent, moss-like plant with a golden flower. Higher up there were sheets of fire-red pinks, and on the summit an unbroken carpet of the dwarf whortleberry, with its waxen bells. Light exhalations seemed to rise from the damp hollows, and drift towards us; but they resolved themselves into swarms of mosquitoes, and would have made the hill-top untenable, had they not been dispersed by a sudden breeze. We sat down upon a rock and contemplated the wide-spread panorama. It was nine o'clock, and the sun, near his setting, cast long gleams of pale light through the clouds, softening the green of the fields and forests where they fell, and turning the moist evening haze into lustrous pearl. Inlets of the lake here and there crept in between the rocky hills; broad stretches of gently undulating grain-land were dotted with the houses, barns, and clustered stables of the Finnish farmers; in the distance arose the smokes of two villages; and beyond all, as we looked inland, ran the sombre ridges of the fir-clad hills. Below us, on the right, the yellow houses of the town shone in the subdued light, — the only bright spot in the landscape, which elsewhere seemed to be overlaid with a tint of dark, transparent gray. It was wonderfully silent. Not a bird twittered; no bleat of sheep or low of cattle was heard from the grassy fields; no shout of children, or evening hail from the returning boats of the fishers. Over all the land brooded an atmosphere of sleep, of serene, perpetual peace. To sit and look upon it was in itself a refreshment like that of healthy slumber. The restless devil which lurks in the human brain was quieted for the time, and we dreamed — knowing all the while the vanity of the dream — of a pastoral life in some such spot, among as ignorant and simple-hearted a people, ourselves as untroubled by the agitations of the world.

We had scarce inhaled — or, rather, *insuded*, to coin a word for a sensation which seems to enter at every pore — the profound quiet and its suggestive fancies for the space of half an hour, when the wind fell at the going down of the sun, and the humming mist of mosquitoes arose again. Returning to the town, we halted at the top of the common to watch the farmers of the neighborhood at their horse-dealing. Very hard, keen, weather-browned faces had they, eyes tight-set for the main chance, mouths worn thin by biting farthings, and hands whose hard fingers crooked with holding fast what they had earned. Faces almost of the Yankee type, many of them, and relieved by the twinkling of a humorous faculty or the wild gleam of imagination. The shaggy little horses, of a dun or dull tan-color seemed to understand that their best performance was required, and rushed up and down the road with an amazing exhibition of mettle. I could understand nothing of the Finnish tongue except its music; but it was easy to perceive that the remarks of the crowd were shrewd, intelligent, and racy. One young fellow, less observant, accosted us in the hope that we might be purchasers. The boys, suspecting that we were as green as we were evidently foreign, held out their hands for alms, with a very unsuccessful air of distress, but readily succumbed to the Russian interjection "*proch!*" (be off!) the repetition of which, they understood, was a reproach.

That night we slept on the velvet couches of the cabin, having the spacious apartment to ourselves. The bright young officer had left for the copper mines, the pilgrims were at Valaam, and our stout, benignant captain looked upon us as his only faithful passengers. The stewards, indeed, carried their kindness beyond reasonable anticipations. They brought us real pillows and other conveniences, bolted the doors against nightly intruders, and in the morning conducted us into the pantry, to wash our faces in the basin sacred to dishes. After I had completed my ablutions, I turned dumbly, with dripping face and extended hands, for a towel. My steward understood the silent appeal, and, taking a napkin from a plate of bread, presented it with alacrity. I made use of it, I confess, but hastened out of the pantry, lest I should happen to see it restored to its former place. *How not to observe* is a faculty as necessary to the traveller as its reverse. I was reminded of this truth at dinner, when I saw the same steward take a napkin (probably my towel!) from under his arm, to wipe both his face and a plate which he carried. To speak mildly, these people on Lake Ladoga are not sensitive in regard to the contact of individualities. But the main point is to avoid seeing what you don't like.

We got off at an early hour, and hastened back to Valaam over glassy water and under a superb sky. This time the lake was not so deserted, for the white wings of pilgrim-boats drew in towards the dark island, making for the golden sparkle of the chapel dome, which shone afar like a light-house of the day-time. As we rounded to in the land-locked inlet, we saw that the crowds on the hills had doubled since yesterday, and, although the chimes were pealing for some religious service, it seemed prudent first to make sure of our quarters for the night. Accordingly we set out for the imposing house of guests beside the monastery, arriving in company with the visitors we had brought with us from Serdopol. The entrance-hall led into a long, stone-paved corridor, in which a monk, bewildered by many applications, appeared to be seeking relief by promises of speedy hospitality. We put in our plea, and also received a promise. On either side of the corridor were numbered rooms, already occupied, the fortunate guests passing in and out with a provoking air of comfort and unconcern. We ascended to the second story, which was similarly arranged, and caught hold of another benevolent monk, willing, but evidently powerless to help us. Dinner was just about to be served; the brother in authority was not there; we must be good enough to wait a little while; — would we not visit the shrines, in the mean time?

The advice was sensible, as well as friendly, and we followed it. Entering the great quadrangle of the monastery, we found it divided, gridiron-fashion, into long, narrow court-yards by inner lines of buildings. The central court, however, was broad and spacious, the church occupying a rise of ground on the eastern side. Hundreds of men and women — Carelian peasants — thronged around the entrance, crossing themselves in unison with the congregation. The church, we found, was packed, and the most zealous wedging among the blue *caftans* and shining flaxen heads brought us no farther than the inner door.

Thence we looked over a tufted level of heads that seemed to touch — intermingled tints of gold, tawny, *silver*-blond, and the various shades of brown, touched with dim glosses through the incense-smoke, and occasionally bending in concert, with an undulating movement, like grain before the wind. Over these heads rose the vaulted nave, dazzling with gold and colors, and blocked up, beyond the intersection of the transept, by the *ikonostast*, or screen before the Holy of Holies, gorgeous with pictures of saints overlaid with silver. In front of the screen the tapers burned, the incense rose thick and strong, and the chant of the monks gave a peculiar solemnity to their old Sclavonic litany. The only portion of it which I could understand was the recurring response, as in the English Church, of "Lord, have mercy upon us!"

Extricating ourselves with some difficulty, we entered a chapel-crypt, which contains the bodies of Sergius and Herrmann. They lie together, in a huge coffin of silver, covered with cloth of gold. Tapers of immense size burned at the head and foot, and the pilgrims knelt around, bending their foreheads to the pavement at the close of their prayers. Among others, a man had brought his insane daughter, and it was touching to see the tender care with which he led her to the coffin and directed her devotions. So much of habit still remained, that it seemed, for the time being, to restore her reason. The quietness and regularity with which she went through the forms of prayer, brought a light of hope to the father's face. The other peasants looked on with an expression of pity and sympathy. The girl, we learned, had but recently lost her reason, and without any apparent cause. She was betrothed to a young man who was sincerely attached to her, and the pilgrimage was undertaken in the hope that a miracle might be wrought in her favor. The presence of the shrine, indeed, struck its accustomed awe through her wandering senses, but the effect was only momentary.

I approached the coffin, and deposited a piece of money on the offering-plate, for the purpose of getting a glimpse of the pictured faces of the saints, in their silver setting. Their features were hard and regular, flatly painted, as if by some forerunner of Cimabue, but sufficiently modern to make the likeness doubtful. I have not been able to obtain the exact date of their settlement on the island, but I believe it is referred to the early part of the fifteenth century. The common people believe that the island was first visited by Andrew, the Apostle of Christ, who, according to the Russian patriarch Nestor, made his way to Kiev and Novgorod. The latter place is known to have been an important commercial city as early as the fourth century, and had a regular intercourse with Asia. The name of Valaam does not come from Balaam, as one might suppose, but seems to be derived from the Finnish *varamo*, which signifies "herring-ground." The more I attempted to unravel the history of the island, the more it became involved in obscurity, and this fact, I must confess, only heightened my interest in it. I found myself ready to accept the tradition of Andrew's visit, and I accepted without a doubt the grave of King Magnus of Sweden.

On issuing from the crypt, we encountered a young monk who had evidently been sent in search of us. The mass was over, and the court-yard was nearly emptied of its crowd. In the farther court, however, we found the people more dense than ever, pressing forward towards a small door. The monk made way for us with some difficulty — for, though the poor fellows did their best to fall back, the pressure from the outside was tremendous Having at last run the gauntlet, we found ourselves in the refectory of the monastery, inhaling a thick steam of fish and cabbage. Three long tables were filled with monks and pilgrims, while the attendants brought in the fish on large wooden trenchers. The plates were of common white ware, but the spoons were of wood. Officers in gay uniforms were scattered among the dark anchorites, who occupied one end of the table, while the *bourgeoisie*, with here and there a blue-caftaned peasant wedged among them, filled the other end. They were eating with great zeal, while an old priest, standing, read from a Sclavonic Bible. All eyes were turned upon us as we entered, and there was not a vacant chair in which we could hide our intrusion. It was rather embarrassing, especially as the young monk insisted that we should remain, and the curious eyes of the eaters as constantly asked, "Who are these, and what do they want?" We preferred returning through the hungry crowd, and made our way to the guests' house.

Here a similar process was going on. The corridors were thronged with peasants of all ages and both sexes, and the good fathers, more than ever distracted, were incapable of helping us. Seeing a great crowd piled up against a rear basement-door, we descended the stairs, and groped our way through manifold steams and noises to a huge succession of kitchens, where cauldrons of cabbage were bubbling, and shoals of fish went in raw and came out cooked. In another room some hundreds of peasants were eating with all the energy of a primitive appetite. Soup leaked out of the bowls as if they had been sieves; fishes gave a whisk of the tail and vanished; great round boulders of bread went off, layer after layer, and still the empty plates were held up for more. It was *grand* eating, — pure appetite, craving only food in a general sense: no picking out of tidbits, no spying here and there for a favorite dish, but, like a huge fire, devouring everything that came in its way. The stomach was here a patient, unquestioning serf, not a master full of whims, requiring to be petted and conciliated. So, I thought, people must have eaten in the Golden Age: so Adam and Eve must have dined, before the fall made them epicurean and dyspeptic.

We — degenerate through culture — found the steams of the strong, coarse dishes rather unpleasant, and retreated by a back way, which brought us to a spiral staircase. We ascended for a long time, and finally emerged into the garret of the building, hot, close, and strawy as a barn-loft. It was divided into rooms, in which, on the floors covered deep with straw, the happy pilgrims who had finished their dinner were lying on their bellies, lazily talking themselves to sleep. The grassy slope in front of the house, and all the neighboring heights, were soon covered in like manner. Men, women, and children threw themselves down, drawing off their heavy boots, and dipping their legs, knee-deep, into the sun and air. An atmosphere of utter peace and satisfaction settled over them.

Being the only foreign and heterodox persons present, we began to feel ourselves deserted, when the favor of Sergius and Herrmann was again manifested. P. was suddenly greeted by an acquaintance, an officer connected with the Imperial Court, who had come to Valaam for a week of devotion. He immediately interested himself in our behalf, procured us a room with a lovely prospect, transferred his bouquet of lilacs and peonies to our table, and produced his bottle of lemon-syrup to flavor our tea. The rules of the monastery are very strict, and no visitor is exempt from their observance. Not a fish can be caught, not a bird or beast shot, no wine or liquor of any kind, nor tobacco in any form, used on the island. Rigid as the organization seems, it bears equally on every member of the brotherhood: the equality upon which such associations were originally based is here preserved. The monks are only in an ecclesiastical sense subordinate to the abbot. Otherwise, the fraternity seems to be about as complete as in the early days of Christianity.

The Valamo, and her rival, the Letuchie, had advertised a trip to the Holy Island, the easternmost of the Valaam group, some six miles from the monastery, and the weather was so fair that both boats were crowded, many of the monks accompanying us. Our new-found friend was also of the party, and I made the acquaintance of a Finnish student from the Lyceum at Kuopio, who gave me descriptions of the Saïma Lake and the wilds of Savolax. Running eastward along the headlands, we passed Chernoi Noss (Black-Nose), the name of which again recalled a term common in the Orkneys and Shetlands — *noss*, there, signifying a headland. The Holy Island rose before us, a circular pile of rock, crowned with wood, like a huge, unfinished tower of Cyclopean masonry, built up out of the deep water. Far beyond it, over the rim of the lake, glimmered the blue eastern shore. As we drew near, we found that the tumbled fragments of rock had been arranged, with great labor, to form a capacious foot-path around the base of the island. The steamers drew up against this narrow quay, upon which we landed, under a granite wall which rose perpendicularly to the height of seventy or eighty feet. The firs on the summit grew out to the very edge and stretched their dark arms over us. Every cranny of the rock was filled with tufts of white and pink flowers, and the moisture, trickling from above, betrayed itself in long lines of moss and fern.

I followed the pilgrims around to the sunny side of the island, and found a wooden staircase at a point where the wall was somewhat broken away. Reaching the top of the first ascent, the sweet breath of a spring woodland breathed around me. I looked under the broken roofage of the boughs upon a blossoming jungle of shrubs and plants which seemed to have been called into life by a more potent sun. The lily of the valley, in thick beds, poured out the delicious sweetness of its little cups; spikes of a pale-green orchis emitted a rich cinnamon odor; anemones, geraniums, sigillarias, and a feathery flower, white, freckled with purple, grew in profusion. The top of the island, five or six acres in extent, was a slanting plane, looking to the south, whence it received the direct rays of the sun. It was an enchanting picture of woodland bloom, lighted with sprinkled sunshine, in the cold blue setting of the lake, which was visible on all sides, between the boles of the trees. I hailed it as an idyl of the North — a poetic secret, which the earth, even where she is most cruelly material and cold, still tenderly hides and cherishes.

A peasant, whose scarlet shirt flashed through the bushes like a sudden fire, seeing me looking at the flowers, gathered a handful of lilies, which he offered to me, saying, "*Prekrasnie*" (beautiful). Without waiting for thanks, he climbed a second flight of steps and suddenly disappeared from view. I followed, and found myself in front of a narrow aperture in a rude wall, which had been built up under an overhanging mass of rocks. A lamp was twinkling within, and presently several persons crawled out, crossing themselves and muttering prayers.

"What is this?" asked a person who had just arrived.

"The cave of Alexander Svirski," was the answer.

Alexander of the Svir — a river flowing from the Onega Lake into Ladoga — was a hermit who lived for twenty years on the Holy Island, inhabiting the hole before us through the long, dark, terrible winters, in a solitude broken only when the monks of Valaam came over the ice to replenish his stock of provisions. Verily, the hermits of the Thebaïd were Sybarites, compared to this man! There are still two or three hermits who have charge of outlying chapels on the islands, and live wholly secluded from their brethren. They wear dresses covered with crosses and other symbols, and are considered as dead to the world. The ceremony which consecrates them for this service is that for the burial of the dead.

I managed, with some difficulty, to creep into Alexander Svirski's den. I saw nothing, however, but the old, smoky, and sacred picture before which the lamp burned. The rocky roof was so low that I could not stand upright, and all the walls I could find were the bodies of pilgrims who had squeezed in before me. A confused whisper surrounded me in the darkness, and the air was intolerably close. I therefore made my escape and mounted to the chapel, on the highest part of the island. A little below it, an open pavilion, with seats, has been built over the sacred spring from which the hermit drank, and thither the pilgrims thronged. The water was served in a large wooden bowl, and each one made the sign of the cross before drinking. By waiting for my turn I ascertained that the spring was icy-cold, and very pure and sweet.

I found myself lured to the highest cliff, whence I could look out, through the trees, on the far, smooth disk of the lake. Smooth and fair as the Ægean it lay before me, and the trees were silent as olives at noonday on the shores of Cos. But how different in color, in sentiment! Here, perfect sunshine can never dust the water with the purple bloom of the South, can never mellow its hard, cold tint of greenish-blue. The distant hills, whether dark or light, are equally cold, and are seen too nakedly through the crystal air to admit of any illusion. Bracing as is this atmosphere, the gods could never breathe it. It would revenge on the ivory limbs of Apollo his treatment of Marsyas. No foam-born Aphrodite could rise warm from yonder wave; not even the cold, sleek Nereids could breast its keen edge. We could only imagine it disturbed, temporarily, by the bath-plunge of hardy Vikings, who must have come out from it red and tingling from head to heel.

"Come!" cried P., "the steamer is about to leave!"

We all wandered down the steps, I with my lilies in my hand. Even the rough peasants seemed reluctant to leave the spot, and not wholly for the sake of Alexander Svirski. We were all safely embarked and carried back to Valaam, leaving the island to its solitude. Alexis (as I shall call our Russian friend) put us in charge of a native artist who knew every hidden beauty of Valaam, and suggested an exploration of the inlet, while he went back to his devotions. We borrowed a boat from the monks, and impressed a hardy fisherman into our service. I supposed we had already seen the extent of the inlet, but on reaching its head a narrow side-channel disclosed itself, passing away under a quaint bridge and opening upon an inner lake of astonishing beauty. The rocks were disposed in every variety of grouping — sometimes rising in even terraces, step above step, sometimes thrusting out a sheer wall from the summit, or lying slantwise in masses split off by the wedges of the ice. The fairy birches, in their thin foliage, stood on the edge of the water like Dryads undressing for a bath, while the shaggy male firs elbowed each other on the heights for a look at them. Other channels opened in the distance, with glimpses of other and as beautiful harbors in the heart of the islands. "You may sail for seventy-five versts," said the painter, "without seeing them all."

The fearlessness of all wild creatures showed that the rules of the good monks had been carefully obeyed. The wild ducks swam around our boat, or brooded, in conscious security, on their nests along the shore. Three great herons, fishing in a shallow, rose slowly into the air and flew across the water, breaking the silence with their hoarse trumpet note. Further in the woods there are herds of wild reindeer, which are said to have become gradually tame. This familiarity of the animals took away from the islands all that was repellent in their solitude. It half restored the broken link between man and the subject forms of life.

The sunset light was on the trees when we started, but here in the North it is no fleeting glow. It lingers for hours even, fading so imperceptibly that you scarcely know when it has ceased. Thus, when we returned after a long pull, craving the Lenten fare of the monastery, the same soft gold tinted its clustering domes. We were not called upon to visit the refectory, but a table was prepared in our room. The first dish had the appearance of a salad, with the accompaniment of black bread. On carefully tasting, I discovered the ingredients to be raw salt fish chopped fine, cucumbers, and — beer. The taste of the first spoonful was peculiar, of the second tolerable, of the third decidedly palatable. Beyond this I did not go, for we had fresh fish, boiled in enough water to make a soup. Then the same, fried in its own fat, and, as salt and pepper were allowed, we did not scorn our supper.

The next day was the festival of Peter and Paul, and Alexis had advised us to make an excursion to a place called Jelesniki. In the morning, however, we learned that the monastery and its grounds were to be consecrated in solemn procession. The chimes pealed out quick and joyously, and soon a burst of banners and a cloud of incense issued from the great gate. All the pilgrims — nearly two thousand in number — thronged around the double line of chanting monks, and it was found necessary to inclose the latter in a hollow square, formed by a linked chain of hands. As the morning sun shone on the bareheaded multitude, the beauty of their unshorn hair struck me like a new revelation. Some of the heads, of lustrous, flossy gold, actually shone by their own light. It was marvelous that skin so hard and coarse in texture should produce such beautiful hair. The beards of the men, also, were strikingly soft and rich. They never shave, and thus avoid bristles, the down of adolescence thickening into a natural beard.

As the procession approached, Alexis, who was walking behind the monks, inside the protecting guard, beckoned to us to join him. The peasants respectfully made way, two hands unlinked to admit us, and we became, unexpectedly, participants in the ceremonies. From the south side the procession moved around to the east, where a litany was again chanted. The fine voices of the monks lost but little of their volume in the open air; there was no wind, and the tapers burned and the incense diffused itself, as in the church. A sacred picture, which two monks carried on a sort of litter, was regarded with particular reverence by the pilgrims, numbers of whom crept under the line of guards to snatch a moment's devotion before it. At every pause in the proceedings there was a rush from all sides, and the poor fellows who formed the lines held each other's hands with all their strength. Yet, flushed, sweating, and exhausted as they were, the responsibility of their position made them perfectly proud and happy. They were the guardians of cross and shrine, of the holy books, the monks, and the abbot himself.

From the east side we proceeded to the north, where the dead monks sleep in their cemetery, high over the watery gorge. In one corner of this inclosure, under a group of giant maples, is the grave of King Magnus of Sweden, who is said to have perished by shipwreck on the island. Here, in the deep shade, a solemn mass for the dead was chanted. Nothing could have added to the impressiveness of the scene. The tapers burning under the thick-leaved boughs, the light smoke curling up in the shade, the grave voices of the monks, the bending heads of the beautiful-haired crowd, and the dashes of white, pink, scarlet, blue, and gold in their dresses, made a picture the solemnity of which was only heightened by its pomp of color. I can do no more than give the features; the reader must recombine them in his own mind.

The painter accompanied us to the place called Jelesniki, which, after a walk of four miles through the forests, we found to be a deserted village, with a chapel on a rocky headland. There was a fine bridge across the dividing strait, and the place may have been as picturesque as it was represented. On that side of the islands, however, there was a dense fog, and we could get no view beyond a hundred yards. We had hoped to see reindeer in the woods, and an eagle's nest, and various other curiosities; but where there was no fog there were mosquitoes, and the search became discouraging.

On returning to the monastery, a register was brought to us, in which, on looking back for several years, we could find but one foreign visitor — a Frenchman. We judged, therefore, that the abbot would possibly expect us to call upon him, and, indeed, the hospitality we had received exacted it. We found him receiving visitors in a plain but comfortable room, in a distant part of the building. He was a man of fifty-five, frank and self-possessed in his manners, and of an evident force and individuality of character. His reception of the visitors, among whom was a lady, was at once courteous and kindly. A younger monk brought us glasses of tea. Incidentally learning that I had visited the Holy Places in Syria, the abbot sent for some pictures of the monastery and its chosen saints, which he asked me to keep as a souvenir of Valaam. He also presented each of us with a cake of unleavened bread, stamped with the cross, and with a triangular piece cut out of the top, to indicate the Trinity. On parting, he gave his hand, which the orthodox visitors devoutly kissed. Before the steamer sailed, we received fresh evidence of his kindness, in the present of three large loaves of consecrated bread, and a bunch of lilacs from the garden of the monastery.

Through some misunderstanding, we failed to dine in the refectory, as the monks desired, and their hospitable regret on this account was the only shade on our enjoyment of the visit. Alexis remained, in order to complete his devotions by partaking of the Communion on the following Sabbath; but as the anniversary solemnities closed at noon, the crowd of pilgrims prepared to return home. The Valamo, too, sounded her warning bell, so we left the monastery as friends where we had arrived as strangers, and went on board. Boat after boat, gunwale-deep with the gay Carelians, rowed down the inlet, and in the space of half an hour but a few stragglers were left of all the multitude. Some of the monks came down to say another good-bye, and the under-abbot, blessing R., made the sign of the cross upon his brow and breast.

When we reached the golden dome of St. Nicholas, at the outlet of the harbor, the boats had set their sails, and the lake was no longer lonely. Scores of white wings gleamed in the sun, as they scattered away in radii from the central and sacred point, some north, some east, and some veering south around Holy Island. Sergius and Herrmann gave them smooth seas, and light, favorable airs; for the least roughness would have carried them, overladen as they were, to the bottom. Once more the bells of Valaam chimed farewell, and we turned the point to the westward, steering back to Kexholm.

Late that night we reached our old moorage at Konewitz, and on Saturday, at the appointed hour, landed in St. Petersburg. We carried the white cross at the fore as we descended the Neva, and the bells of the churches along the banks welcomed our return. And now, as I recall those five days among the islands of the Northern Lake, I see that it is good to go on a pilgrimage, even if one is not a pilgrim

BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA.

"Pushed off from one shore, and not yet landed on the other."
Russian Proverb.

The railroad from Moscow to Nijni-Novgorod had been opened but a fortnight before. It was scarcely finished, indeed; for, in order to facilitate travel during the continuance of the Great Fair at the latter place, the gaps in the line, left by unbuilt bridges, were filled up with temporary trestle-work. The one daily express-train was so thronged that it required much exertion, and the freest use of the Envoy's prestige, to secure a private carriage for our party. The sun was sinking over the low, hazy ridge of the Sparrow Hills as we left Moscow: and we enjoyed one more glimpse of the inexhaustible splendor of the city's thousand golden domes and pinnacles, softened by luminous smoke and transfigured dust, before the dark woods of fir intervened, and the twilight sank down on cold and lonely landscapes.

Thence, until darkness, there was nothing more to claim attention. Whoever has seen one landscape of Central Russia is familiar with three fourths of the whole region. Nowhere else — not even on the levels of Illinois — are the same features so constantly reproduced. One long, low swell of earth succeeds to another; it is rare that any other woods than birch and fir are seen; the cleared land presents a continuous succession of pasture, rye, wheat, potatoes, and cabbages; and the villages are as like as peas, in their huts of unpainted logs, clustering around a white church with five green domes. It is a monotony which nothing but the richest culture can prevent from becoming tiresome. Culture is to Nature what good manners are to man, rendering poverty of character endurable.

Stationing a servant at the door to prevent intrusion at the way-stations, we let down the curtains before our windows, and secured a comfortable privacy for the night, whence we issued only once, during a halt for supper. I entered the refreshment-room with very slender expectations, but was immediately served with plump partridges, tender cutlets, and green peas. The Russians made a rush for the great *samovar* (tea-urn) of brass, which shone from one end of the long table; and presently each had his tumbler of scalding tea, with a slice of lemon floating on the top. These people drink beverages of a temperature which would take the skin off Anglo-Saxon mouths. My tongue was more than once blistered, on beginning to drink after they had emptied their glasses. There is no station without its steaming samovar; and some persons, I verily believe, take their thirty-three hot teas between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

There is not much choice of dishes in the interior of Russia; but what one does get is sure to be tolerably good. Even on the Beresina and the Dnieper I have always fared better than at most of the places in our country where "Ten minutes for refreshments!" is announced day by day and year by year. Better a single beef-steak, where tenderness is, than a stalled ox, all gristle and grease. But then our cooking (for the public at least) is notoriously the worst in the civilized world; and I can safely pronounce the Russian better, without commending it very highly.

Some time in the night we passed the large town of Vladimir, and with the rising sun were well on our way to the Volga. I pushed aside the curtains, and looked out, to see what changes a night's travel had wrought in the scenery. It was a pleasant surprise. On the right stood a large, stately residence, embowered in gardens and orchards; while beyond it, stretching away to the southeast, opened a broad, shallow valley. The sweeping hills on either side were dotted with shocks of rye; and their thousands of acres of stubble shone like gold in the level rays. Herds of cattle were pasturing in the meadows, and the peasants (serfs no longer) were straggling out of the villages to their labor in the fields. The crosses and polished domes of churches sparkled on the horizon. Here the patches of primitive forest were of larger growth, the trunks cleaner and straighter, than we had yet seen Nature was half conquered, in spite of the climate, and, for the first time since leaving St. Petersburg, wore a habitable aspect. I recognized some of the features of Russian country-life which Puschkin describes so charmingly in his poem of "Eugene Onägin."

The agricultural development of Russia has been greatly retarded by the indifference of the nobility, whose vast estates comprise the best land of the empire, in those provinces where improvements might be most easily introduced. Although a large portion of the noble families pass their summers in the country, they use the season as a period of physical and pecuniary recuperation from the dissipations of the past, and preparation for those of the coming winter. Their possessions are so large (those of Count Scheremetieff, for instance, contain one hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants) that they push each other too far apart for social intercourse; and they consequently live *en déshabille*, careless of the great national interests in their hands. There is a class of our Southern planters which seems to have adopted a very similar mode of life — families which shabbily starve for ten months, in order to make a lordly show at "the Springs" for the other two. A most accomplished Russian lady, the Princess D——, said to me, — "The want of an active, intelligent country society is our greatest misfortune. Our estates thus become a sort of exile. The few, here and there, who try to improve the condition of the people, through the improvement of the soil, are not supported by their neighbors, and lose heart. The more we gain in the life of the capital, the more we are oppressed by the solitude and stagnation of the life of the country."

This open, cheerful region continued through the morning. The railroad was still a novelty; and the peasants everywhere dropped their scythes and shovels to see the train pass. Some bowed with the profoundest gravity. They were a fine, healthy, strapping race of men, only of medium height, but admirably developed in chest and limbs, and with shrewd, intelligent faces. Content, not stupidity, is the cause of their stationary condition. They are not yet a people, but the germ of one, and, as such, present a grand field for anthropological studies.

Towards noon the road began to descend, by easy grades, from the fair, rolling uplands into a lower and wilder region. When the train stopped, women and children whose swarthy skin and black eyes betrayed a mixture of Tartar blood, made their appearance, with wooden bowls of cherries and huckleberries for sale. These bowls were neatly carved and painted. They were evidently held in high value; for I had great difficulty in purchasing one. We moved slowly, on account of the many skeleton bridges; but presently a long, blue ridge, which for an hour past had followed us in the southeast, began to curve around to our front. I now knew that it must mark the course of the Oka River, and that we were approaching Nijni-Novgorod.

We soon saw the river itself; then houses and gardens scattered along the slope of the hill; then clusters of sparkling domes on the summit; then a stately, white-walled citadel; and the end of the blue ridge slanted down in an even line to the Volga. We were three hundred miles from Moscow, on the direct road to Siberia.

The city being on the farther side of the Oka, the railroad terminates at the Fair, which is a separate city, occupying the triangular level between the two rivers. Our approach to it was first announced by heaps of cotton-bales, bound in striped camel's-hair cloth, which had found their way hither from the distant valleys of Turkestan and the warm plains of Bukharia. Nearly fifty thousand camels are employed in the transportation of this staple across the deserts of the Aral to Orenburg, a distance of a thousand miles. The increase of price had doubled the production since the previous year, and the amount which now reaches the factories of Russia through this channel cannot be less than seventy-five thousand bales. The advance of modern civilization has so intertwined the interests of all zones and races, that a civil war in the United States affects the industry of Central Asia!

Next to these cotton-bales which, to us, silently proclaimed the downfall of that arrogant monopoly which has caused all our present woe, came the representatives of those who produced them. Groups of picturesque Asians — Bashkirs, Persians, Bukharians, and Uzbeks — appeared on either side, staring impassively at the wonderful apparition. Though there was sand under their feet, they seemed out of place in the sharp north-wind and among the hills of fir and pine.

The train stopped: we had reached the station. As I stepped upon the platform, I saw, over the level lines of copper roofs, the dragon-like pinnacles of Chinese buildings, and the white minaret of a mosque. Here was the certainty of a picturesque interest to balance the uncertainty of our situation. We had been unable to engage quarters in advance: there were two hundred thousand strangers before us, in a city the normal population of which is barely forty thousand; and four of our party were ladies. The Envoy, indeed, might claim the Governor's hospitality; but our visit was to be so brief that we had no time to expend on ceremonies, and preferred rambling at will through the teeming bazaars to being led about under the charge of an official escort.

A friend at Moscow, however, had considerately telegraphed in our behalf to a French resident of Nijni, and the latter gentleman met us at the station. He could give but slight hope of quarters for the night, but generously offered us his services. Droshkies were engaged to convey us to the old city, on the hill beyond the Oka; and, crowded two by two into the shabby little vehicles, we set forth. The sand was knee-deep, and the first thing that happened was the stoppage of our procession by the tumbling down of the several horses. They were righted with the help of some obliging spectators; and with infinite labor we worked through this strip of desert into a region of mud, with a hard, stony bottom somewhere between us and the earth's centre. The street we entered, though on the outskirts of the Fair, resembled Broadway on a sensation-day. It was choked with a crowd, composed of the sweepings of Europe and Asia. Our horses thrust their heads between the shoulders of Christians, Jews, Moslems, and Pagans, slowly shoving their way towards the floating bridge, which was a jam of vehicles from end to end. At the corners of the streets, the wiry Don Cossacks, in their dashing blue uniforms and caps of black lamb's-wool, regulated, as best they could, the movements of the multitude. It was curious to notice how they, and their small, well-knit horses, — the equine counterparts of themselves, — controlled the fierce, fiery life which flashed from every limb and feature, and did their duty with wonderful patience and gentleness. They seemed so many spirits of Disorder tamed to the service of Order.

It was nearly half an hour before we reached the other end of the bridge. and struck the superb inclined highway which leads to the top of the hill. We were unwashed and hungry; and neither the tumult of the lower town, nor the view of the Volga, crowded with vessels of all descriptions, had power to detain us. Our brave little horses bent themselves to the task; for task it really was, — the road rising between three and four hundred feet in less than half a mile. Advantage has been taken of a slight natural ravine, formed by a short. curving spur of the hill, which encloses a *pocket* of the greenest and richest foliage — a bit of unsuspected beauty, quite invisible from the other side of the river. Then, in order to reach the level of the Kremlin, the road is led through an artificial gap, a hundred feet in depth, to the open square in the centre of the city.

Here, all was silent and deserted. There were broad, well-paved streets, substantial houses, the square towers and crenelated walls of the Old Kremlin, and the glittering cupolas of twenty-six churches before us, and a lack of population which contrasted amazingly with the whirlpool of life below. Monsieur D., our new, but most faithful friend, took us to the hotel, every corner and cranny of which was occupied. There was a possibility of breakfast only, and water was obtained with great exertion. While we were lazily enjoying a tolerable meal, Monsieur D. was bestirring himself in all quarters, and came back to us radiant with luck. He had found four rooms in a neighboring street; and truly, if one were to believe De Custine or Dumas, such rooms are impossible in Russia. Charmingly clean, elegantly furnished, with sofas of green leather and beds of purest linen, they would have satisfied the severe eye of an English housekeeper. We thanked both our good friend and St. Macarius (who presides over the Fair) for this fortune, took possession, and then hired fresh droshkies to descend the hill.

On emerging from the ravine, we obtained a bird's-eye view of the whole scene. The waters of both rivers, near at hand, were scarcely visible through the shipping which covered them. Vessels from the Neva, the Caspian, and the rivers of the Ural, were here congregated; and they alone represented a floating population of between thirty and forty thousand souls. The Fair, from this point, resembled an immense flat city, — the streets of booths being of a uniform height, — out of which rose the great Greek church, the Tartar mosque, and the curious Chinese roofs. It was a vast, dark, humming plain, vanishing towards the west and northwest in clouds of sand. By this time there was a lull in the business, and we made our way to the central bazaar with less trouble than we had anticipated. It is useless to attempt an enumeration of the wares exposed for sale: they embraced everything grown, trapped, dug, or manufactured between Ireland and Japan. We sought, of course, the Asiatic elements, which first met us in the shape of melons from Astrakhan, and grapes from the southern slopes of the Caucasus. Then came wondrous stuffs from the looms of Turkestan and Cashmere, turquoises from the Upper Oxus, and glittering strings of Siberian topaz and amethyst, side by side with Nuremberg toys, Lyons silks, and Sheffield cutlery. About one third of the population of the Fair was of Asiatic blood, embracing representatives from almost every tribe north and west of the Himalayas.

This temporary city, which exists during only two months of the year, contained two hundred thousand inhabitants at the time of our visit. During the remaining ten months it is utterly depopulated, the bazaars are closed, and chains are drawn across the streets to prevent the passage of vehicles. A single statement will give an idea of its extent: the combined length of the streets is twenty-five miles. The Great Bazaar is substantially built of stone, after the manner of those in Constantinople, except that it incloses an open court, where a Government band performs every afternoon. Here the finer wares are displayed, and the shadowed air under the vaulted roofs is a very kaleidoscope for shifting color and sparkle. Tea, cotton, leather, wool, and the other heavier and coarser commodities, have their separate streets and quarters. The several nationalities are similarly divided, to some extent; but the stranger, of course, prefers to see them jostling together in the streets, — a Babel not only of tongues, but of feature, character, and costume.

Our ladies were eager to inspect the stock of jewelry especially those heaps of exquisite color with which the Mohammedans very logically load the trees of Paradise; for they resemble fruit in a glorified state of existence. One can imagine virtuous grapes promoted to amethysts, blueberries to turquoises, cherries to rubies, and greengages to aqua-marine. These, the secondary jewels (with the exception of the ruby), are brought in great quantities from Siberia, but most of them are marred by slight flaws or other imperfections, so that their cheapness is more apparent than real. An amethyst an inch long, throwing the most delicious purple light from its hundreds of facets, quite takes you captive, and you put your hand in your pocket for the fifteen dollars which shall make you its possessor; but a closer inspection is sure to show you either a broad transverse flaw, or a spot where the color fades into transparency. The white topaz, known as the "Siberian diamond," is generally flawless, and the purest specimens are scarcely to be distinguished from the genuine brilliant. A necklace of these, varying from a half to a quarter of an inch in diameter, may be had for about twenty-five dollars. There were also golden and smoky topaz and beryl, in great profusion.

A princely Bashkir drew us to his booth, first by his beauty and then by his noble manners. He was the very incarnation of Boker's "Prince Adeb."

"The girls of Damar paused to see me pass.
I walking in my rags, yet beautiful.
One maiden said, 'He has a prince's air!'
I am a prince; the air was all my own."

This Bashkir, however, was not in rags, he was elegantly attired. His silken vest was bound with a girdle of gold thread studded with jewels, and over it he wore a caftan, with wide sleeves, of the finest dark-blue cloth. The round cap of black lamb's-wool became his handsome head. His complexion was pale olive, through which the red of his cheeks shone, in the words of some oriental poem, "like a rose-leaf through oil;" and his eyes, in their dark fire were more lustrous than smoky topaz. His voice was mellow and musical, and his every movement and gesture a new exhibition of human grace. Among thousands, yea, tens of thousands, of handsome men, he stood preëminent.

As our acquaintance ripened, he drew a pocket-book from his bosom, and showed us his choicest treasures: turquoises, bits of wonderful blue heavenly forget-me-nots; a jacinth, burning like a live coal, in scarlet light; and lastly, a perfect ruby, which no sum less than twenty-five hundred dollars could purchase. From him we learned the curious fluctuations of fashion in regard to jewels. Turquoises were just then in the ascendant; and one of the proper tint, the size of a parsnip-seed, could not be had for a hundred dollars, the full value of a diamond of equal size. Amethysts of a deep plum-color, though less beautiful than the next paler shade, command very high prices; while jacinth, beryl, and aqua-marine — stones of exquisite hue and lustre — are cheap. But then, in this department, as in all others, Fashion and Beauty are not convertible terms.

In the next booth there were two Persians, who unfolded before our eyes some of their marvelous shawls, where you forget the barbaric pattern in the exquisite fineness of the material and the triumphant harmony of the colors. Scarlet with palm-leaf border, — blue clasped by golden bronze, picked out with red, — browns, greens, and crimsons struggling for the mastery in a war of tints, — how should we choose between them? Alas! we were not able to choose; they were a thousand dollars apiece! But the Persians still went on unfolding, taking our admiration in pay for their trouble, and seeming even, by their pleasant smiles, to consider themselves well paid. When we came to the booths of European merchants, we were swiftly impressed with the fact that civilization, in following the sun westward, loses its grace in proportion as it advances. The gentle dignity, the serene patience, the soft, fraternal, affectionate demeanor of our Asiatic brethren vanished utterly when we encountered French and German salesmen; and yet these latter would have seemed gracious and courteous, had there been a few Yankee dealers beyond them. The fourth or fifth century, which still exists in Central Asia, was undoubtedly, in this particular, superior to the nineteenth. No gentleman, since his time, I suspect, has equaled Adam.

Among these Asiatics Mr. Buckle would have some difficulty in maintaining his favorite postulate, that tolerance is the result of progressive intelligence. It is also the result of courtesy, as we may occasionally see in well-bred persons of limited intellect. Such, undoubtedly, is the basis of that tolerance which no one who has had much personal intercourse with the Semitic races can have failed to experience. The days of the sword and fagot are past; but it was reserved for Christians to employ them in the name of religion alone. Local or political jealousies are at the bottom of those troubles which still occur from time to time in Turkey; the traveller hears no insulting epithet, and the green-turbaned Imâm will receive him as kindly and courteously as the skeptical Bey educated in Paris. I have never been so aggressively assailed, on religious grounds, as at home, — never so coarsely and insultingly treated, on account of a presumed difference of opinion, as by those who claim descent from the Cavaliers. The bitter fierceness of some of our leading reformers is overlooked by their followers, because it springs from "earnest conviction"; but in the Orient intensest faith coexists with the most gracious and gentle manners.

Be not impatient, beloved reader; for this digression brings me naturally to the next thing we saw at Novgorod. As we issued from the bazaar, the sunlit minaret greeted us through whirling dust and rising vapor, and I fancied I could hear the muezzin's musical cry. It was about time for the *asser* prayer. Droshkies were found, and we rode slowly through the long, low warehouses of "caravan tea" and Mongolian wool to the mound near the Tartar encampment. The mosque was a plain, white, octagonal building, conspicuous only through its position. The turbaned faithful were already gathering; and we entered, and walked up the steps among them, without encountering an unfriendly glance. At the door stood two Cossack soldiers, specially placed there to prevent the worshippers from being insulted by curious Christians. (Those who have witnessed the wanton profanation of mosques in India by the English officers will please notice this fact.) If we had not put off our shoes before entering the hall of worship, the Cossacks would have performed that operation for us.

I am happy to say that none of our party lacked a proper reverence for devotion, though it was offered through the channels of an alien creed. The ladies left their gaiters beside our boots, and we all stood in our stockings on the matting, a little in the rear of the kneeling crowd. The priest occupied a low daïs in front, but he simply led the prayer, which was uttered by all. The windows were open, and the sun poured a golden flood into the room. Yonder gleamed the Kremlin of Novgorod, yonder rolled the Volga, all around were the dark forests of the North,—yet their faces were turned, and their thoughts went southward, to where Mecca sits among the burning hills, in the feathery shade of her palm-trees. And the tongue of Mecca came from their lips, "*Allah!*" "*Allah akhbar!*" as the knee bent and the forehead touched the floor.

At the second repetition of the prayers we quietly withdrew; and good Monsieur D., forgetful of nothing, suggested that preparations had been made for a dinner in the great cosmopolitan restaurant. So we drove back again through the Chinese street, with its red horned houses, the roofs terminating in gilded dragons' tails, and, after pressing through an immense multitude enveloped in tobacco-smoke and the steam of tea-urns, found ourselves at last in a low room with a shaky floor and muslin ceiling. It was an exact copy of the dining-room of a California hotel. If we looked blank a moment, Monsieur D.'s smile reassured us. He had given all the necessary orders, he said, and would step out and secure a box in the theatre before the *zakouski* was served. During his absence, we looked out of the window on either side upon surging, whirling, humming pictures of the Great Fair, all vanishing in perspectives of dust and mist.

In half an hour our friend returned, and with him entered the zakouski. I cannot remember half the appetizing ingredients of which it was composed: anchovies, sardines, herrings, capers, cheese, caviare, *paté de foie*, pickles, cherries, oranges, and olives, were among them. Instead of being a prelude to dinner, it was almost a dinner in itself. Then, after a Russian soup, which always contains as much solid nutriment as meat-biscuit or Arctic pemmican, came the glory of the repast, a mighty *sterlet*, which was swimming in Volga water when we took our seats at the table. This fish, the exclusive property of Russia, is, in times of scarcity, worth its weight in silver. Its unapproachable flavor is supposed to be as evanescent as the hues of a dying dolphin. Frequently, at grand dinner-parties, it is carried around the table in a little tank, and exhibited, *alive*, to the guests, when their soup is served, that its freshness, ten minutes afterwards, may be put beyond suspicion. The fish has the appearance of a small, lean sturgeon; but its flesh resembles the melting pulp of a fruit rather than the fibre of its watery brethren. It sinks into juice upon the tongue, like a perfectly ripe peach. In this quality no other fish in the world can approach it; yet I do not think the flavor quite so fine as that of a brook-trout. Our sterlet was nearly two feet long, and may have cost twenty or thirty dollars.

With it appeared an astonishing salad, composed of watermelons, cantaloupes, pickled cherries, cucumbers, and certain spicy herbs. Its color and odor were enticing, and we had all applied the test of taste most satisfactorily before we detected the curious mixture of ingredients. After the second course, — a ragout of beef, accompanied with a rich, elaborate sauce, — three heavy tankards of chased silver, holding two quarts apiece, were placed upon the table. The first of these contained *kvass*, the second *kislischi*, and the third hydromel. Each one of these national drinks, when properly brewed, is very palatable and refreshing. I found the kislischi nearly identical with the ancient Scandinavian mead: no doubt it dates from the Varangian rule in Russia. The old custom of passing the tankards around the table, from mouth to mouth, is still observed, and will not be found objectionable, even in these days of excessive delicacy, when ladies and gentlemen are seated alternately at the banquet.

The Russian element of the dinner here terminated. Cutlets and roast fowls made their appearance, with bottles of Rüdesheimer and Lafitte, followed by a dessert of superb Persian melons, from the southern shore of the Caspian Sea.

By this time night had fallen, and Monsieur D. suggested an immediate adjournment to the theatre. What should be the entertainment? Dances of *almehs*, songs of gypsies, or Chinese jugglers? One of the Ivans brought a programme. It was not difficult to decipher the word "MAKБETЪ" and to recognize, further, in the name of "Ira Aldridge" a distinguished mulatto tragedian, to whom Maryland has given birth (if I am rightly informed) and Europe fame. We had often heard of him, yea, seen his portrait in Germany, decorated with the orders conferred by half a dozen sovereigns; and his presence here, between Europe and Asia, was not the least characteristic feature of the Fair. A mulatto Macbeth, in a Russian theatre, with a Persian and Tartar audience!

On arriving, we were ushered into two whitewashed boxes, which had been reserved for our party. The manager, having been informed of the Envoy's presence in Nijni-Novgorod, had delayed the performance half an hour, but the audience bore this infliction patiently. The building was deep and narrow, with space for about eight hundred persons, and was filled from top to bottom. The first act was drawing to a close as we entered. King Duncan, with two or three shabby attendants, stood in the court-yard of the castle, — the latter represented by a handsome French door on the left, with a bit of Tartar wall beyond, — and made his observations on the "pleasant seat" of Macbeth's mansion. He spoke Russian, of course. Lady Macbeth now appeared, in a silk dress of the latest fashion, expanded by the amplest of crinolines. She was passably handsome, and nothing could be gentler than her face and voice. She received the royal party like a well-bred lady, and they all entered the French door together.

There was no change of scene. With slow step and folded arms, Ira Macbeth entered and commenced the soliloquy, "If it were done," etc., to our astonishment, in English! He was a dark, strongly built mulatto, of about fifty, in a fancy tunic, and light stockings over Forrestian calves. His voice was deep and powerful; and it was very evident that Edmund Kean, once his master, was also the model which he carefully followed in the part. There were the same deliberate, over-distinct enunciation, the same prolonged pauses and gradually performed gestures, as I remember in imitations of Kean's manner. Except that the copy was a little too apparent, Mr. Aldridge's acting was really very fine. The Russians were enthusiastic in their applause, though very few of them, probably, understood the language of the part. The Oriental auditors were perfectly impassive, and it was impossible to guess how they regarded the performance.

The second act was in some respects the most amusing thing I ever saw upon the stage. In the dagger-scene Ira was, to my mind, quite equal to Forrest; it was impossible to deny him unusual dramatic talent; but his complexion, continually suggesting Othello, quite confounded me. The amiable Russian Lady Macbeth was much better adapted to the part of Desdemona: all softness and gentleness, she smiled as she lifted her languishing eyes, and murmured in the tenderest accents, "Infirm of purpose! give me the dagger!" At least, I took for granted that these were her words, for Macbeth had just said, "Look on't again I dare not." Afterwards, six Russian soldiers, in tan-colored shirts, loose trousers, and high boots, filed in, followed by Macduff and Malcolm, in the costume of Wallenstein's troopers. The dialogue — one voice English, and all the others Russian — proceeded smoothly enough, but the effect was like nothing which our stage can produce. Nevertheless, the audience was delighted, and when the curtain fell there were vociferous cries of "*Aïra! Aïra! Aldreetch! Aldreetch!*" until the swarthy hero made his appearance before the foot-lights.

Monsieur D. conducted our friend P. into the green-room, where he was received by Macbeth in costume. He found the latter to be a dignified, imposing personage, who carried his tragic chest-tones into ordinary conversation. On being informed by P. that the American minister was present, he asked, —

"Of what persuasion?"

P. hastened to set him right, and Ira then remarked, in his gravest tone, — "I shall have the honor of waiting upon him to-morrow morning;" which, however, he failed to do.

This son of the South, no doubt, came legitimately (or at least, naturally) by his dignity. His career, for a man of his blood and antecedents, has been wonderfully successful, and is justly due, I am convinced, since I have seen him, to his histrionic talents. Both black and yellow skins are sufficiently rare in Europe to excite a particular interest in those who wear them; and I had surmised, up to this time, that much of his popularity might be owing to his color. But he certainly deserves an honorable place among tragedians of the second rank.

We left the theatre at the close of the third act, and crossed the river to our quarters on the hill. A chill mist hung over the Fair, but the lamps still burned, the streets were thronged, and the Don Cossacks kept patient guard at every corner. The night went by like one unconscious minute, in beds unmolested by bug or flea; and when I arose, thoroughly refreshed, I involuntarily called to mind a frightful chapter in De Custine's "Russia," describing the prevalence of an insect which he calls the *persica*, on the banks of the Volga. He was obliged to sleep on a table, the legs whereof were placed in basins of water, to escape their attacks. I made many inquiries about these terrible *persicas*, and finally discovered that they were neither more nor less than — cockroaches! — called *Prossaki* (Prussians) by the Russians, as they are sometimes called *Schwaben* (Suabians) by the Germans. Possibly they may be found in the huts of the serfs, but they are rare in decent houses.

We devoted the first sunny hours of the morning to a visit to the citadel and a walk around the crest of the hill. On the highest point, just over the junction of the two rivers, there is a commemorative column to Minim, the patriotic butcher of Novgorod, but for whose eloquence, in the year 1610, the Russian might possibly now be the Polish Empire. Vladislas, son of Sigismund of Poland, had been called to the throne by the boyards, and already reigned in Moscow, when Minim appealed to the national spirit, persuaded General Pojarski to head an anti-Polish movement, which was successful, and thus cleared the way for the election of Michael Romanoff, the first sovereign of the present dynasty. Minim is therefore one of the historic names of Russia.

When I stood beside his monument, and the finest landscape of European Russia was suddenly unrolled before my eyes, I could believe the tradition of his eloquence, for here was its inspiration. Thirty or forty miles away stretched the rolling swells of forest and grain-land, fading into dimmest blue to the westward and northward, dotted with villages and sparkling domes, and divided by shining reaches of the Volga. It was truly a superb and imposing view, changing with each spur of the hill as we made the circuit of the citadel. Eastward, the country rose into dark, wooded hills, between which the river forced its way in a narrower and swifter channel, until it disappeared behind a purple headland, hastening southward to find a warmer home in the unfrozen Caspian. By embarking on the steamers anchored below us, we might have reached Perm, among the Ural Mountains, or Astrakhan, in less than a week; while a trip of ten days would have taken us past the Caucasus, even to the base of Ararat or Demavend. Such are the splendid possibilities of travel in these days.

The Envoy, who visited Europe for the first time, declared that this panorama from the hill of Novgorod was one of the finest things he had seen. There could, truly, be no better preparation to enjoy it than fifteen hundred miles of nearly unbroken level, after leaving the Russian frontier; but I think it would be a noted landscape anywhere. Why it is not more widely celebrated I cannot guess. The only person in Russia whom I heard speak of it with genuine enthusiasm was Alexander II.

Two hours upon the breezy parapet, beside the old Tartar walls, were all too little; but the droshkies waited in the river-street a quarter of a mile below us; our return to Moscow was ordered for the afternoon; there were amethysts and Persian silks yet to be bought, and so we sighed farewell to an enjoyment rare in Russia, and descended the steep foot-path.

P. and I left the rest of the party at the booth of the handsome Bashkir, and set out upon a special mission to the Tartar camp. I had ascertained that the national beverage of Central Asia might be found there, — the genuine *koumiss* or fermented milk of the mares of the Uralian steppes. Having drunk palm-wine in India, *samshoo* in China, *saki* in Japan, *pulque* in Mexico, *bouza* in Egypt, mead in Scandinavia, ale in England, *bock-bier* in Germany, *mastic* in Greece, *calabogus* in Newfoundland, and — soda-water in the United States, I desired to complete the bibulous cosmos, in which *koumiss* was still lacking. My friend did not share my curiosity, but was ready for an adventure, which our search for mare's milk seemed to promise.

Beyond the mosques we found the Uzbeks and Kirghiz, — some in tents, some in rough shanties of boards. But they were without koumiss: they had had it, and showed us some empty kegs, in evidence of the fact. I fancied a gleam of diversion stole over their grave, swarthy faces, as they listened to our eager inquiries in broken Russian. Finally we came into an extemporized village, where some women, unveiled and ugly, advised us to apply to the traders in the khan, or caravanserai. This was a great barn-like building, two stories high, with broken staircases and creaking floors. A corridor ran the whole length of the second floor, with some twenty or thirty doors opening into it from the separate rooms of the traders. We accosted the first Tartar whom we met, and he promised, with great readiness, to procure us what we wanted. He ushered us into his room, cleared away a pile of bags, saddles, camel-trappings, and other tokens of a nomadic life, and revealed a low divan covered with a ragged carpet. On a sack of barley sat his father, a blind graybeard, nearly eighty years old. On our way through the camp I had noticed that the Tartars saluted each other with the Arabic, "*Salaam aleikoom!*" and I therefore greeted the old man with the familiar words. He lifted his head: his face brightened, and he immediately answered, "***Aleikoom salaam***, my son!"

"Do you speak Arabic?" I asked.

"A little; I have forgotten it," said he. "But thine is a new voice. Of what tribe art thou?"

"A tribe far away, beyond Bagdad and Syria," I answered.

"It is the tribe of Damascus. I know it now, my son. I have heard the voice, many, many years ago."

The withered old face looked so bright, as some pleasant memory shone through it, that I did not undeceive the man. His son came in with a glass, pulled a keg from under a pile of coarse caftans, and drew out the wooden peg. A gray liquid, with an odor at once sour and pungent, spirted into the glass, which he presently handed to me, filled to the brim. In such cases no hesitation is permitted. I thought of home and family, set the glass to my lips, and emptied it before the flavor made itself clearly manifest to my palate.

"Well, what is it like?" asked my friend, who curiously awaited the result of the experiment.

"Peculiar," I answered, with preternatural calmness, — "peculiar, but not unpleasant."

The glass was filled a second time; and P., not to be behindhand, emptied it at a draught. Then he turned to me with tears (not of delight) in his eyes, swallowed very hard two or three times, suppressed a convulsive shudder, and finally remarked, with the air of a martyr, "Very curious, indeed!"

"Will your Excellencies have some more?" said the friendly Tartar.

"Not before breakfast, if you please," I answered; "your koumiss is excellent, however, and we will take a bottle with us," — which we did, in order to satisfy the possible curiosity of the ladies. I may here declare that the bottle was never emptied.

The taste was that of aged buttermilk mixed with ammonia. We could detect no flavor of alcohol, yet were conscious of a light exhilaration from the small quantity we drank. The beverage is said, indeed, to be very intoxicating. Some German physician has established a "koumiss-cure" at Piatigorsk, at the northern base of the Caucasus, and invites invalids of certain kinds to come and be healed by its agency. I do not expect to be one of the number.

There still remained a peculiar feature of the Fair, which I had not yet seen. This is the subterranean network of sewerage, which reproduces, in massive masonry, the streets on the surface. Without it, the annual city of two months would become uninhabitable. The peninsula between the two rivers being low and marshy, — frequently overflowed during the spring freshets, — pestilence would soon be bred from the immense concourse of people: hence a system of *cloacæ*, almost rivaling those of ancient Rome. At each street-corner there are wells containing spiral staircases, by which one can descend to the spacious subterranean passages, and there walk for miles under arches of hewn stone, lighted and aired by shafts at regular intervals. In St. Petersburg you are told that more than half the cost of the city is under the surface of the earth; at Nijni-Novgorod the statement is certainly true. Peter the Great at one time designed establishing his capital here. Could he have foreseen the existence of railroads, he would certainly have done so. Nijni-Novgorod is now nearer to Berlin than the Russian frontier was fifty years ago. St. Petersburg is an accidental city; Nature and the destiny of the empire are both opposed to its existence; and a time will come when its long lines of palaces shall be deserted for some new capital, in a locality at once more southern and more central.

Another walk through the streets of the Fair enabled me to analyze the first confused impression, and separate the motley throng of life into its several elements. I shall not attempt, however, to catch and paint its ever-changing, fluctuating character. Our limited visit allowed us to see only the more central and crowded streets. Outside of these, for miles, extend suburbs of iron, of furs, wool, and other coarser products, brought together from the Ural, from the forests towards the Polar Ocean, and from the vast extent of Siberia. Here, from morning till night, the beloved *kvass* flows in rivers, the strong stream of *shchee* (cabbage-soup) sends up its perpetual incense, and the samovar of cheap tea is never empty. Here, although important interests are represented, the intercourse between buyers and sellers is less grave and methodical than in the bazaar. There are jokes, laughter, songs, and a constant play of that repartee in which even the serfs are masters. Here, too, jugglers and mountebanks of all sorts ply their trade; gypsies sing, dance, and tell fortunes; and other vocations, less respectable than these, flourish vigorously. For, whether the visitor be an Ostiak from the Polar Circle, an Uzbek from the Upper Oxus, a Crim-Tartar or Nogaï, a Georgian from Tiflis, a Mongolian from the Land of Grass, a Persian from Ispahan, a Jew from Hamburg, a Frenchman from Lyons, a Tyrolese, Swiss, Bohemian, or an Anglo-Saxon from either side of the Atlantic, he meets his fellow-visitors to the Great Fair on the common ground, not of human brotherhood, but of human appetite; and all the manifold nationalities succumb to the same allurements. If the various forms of indulgence could be so used as to propagate ideas, the world would speedily be regenerated; but as things go, "cakes and ale" have more force than the loftiest ideas, the noblest theories of improvement; and the impartial observer will make this discovery as readily at Nijni-Novgorod as anywhere else.

Before taking leave of the Fair, let me give a word to the important subject of tea. It is a much-disputed question with the connoisseurs of that beverage which neither cheers nor inebriates (though, I confess, it is more agreeable than koumiss), whether the Russian "caravan tea" is really superior to that which is imported by sea. After much patient observation, combined with serious reflection I incline to the opinion that the flavor of tea depends, not upon the method of transportation, but upon the price paid for the article. I have tasted bad caravan tea in Russia, and delicious tea in New York. In St. Petersburg you cannot procure a good article for less than three roubles ($2.25, *gold*) per pound; while the finer kinds bring twelve and even sixteen roubles. Whoever is willing to import at that price can no doubt procure tea of equal excellence. The fact is, that this land-transportation is slow, laborious, and expensive; hence the finer kinds of tea are always selected, a pound thereof costing no more for carriage than a pound of inferior quality; whence the superior flavor of caravan tea. There is, however, one variety to be obtained in Russia which I have found nowhere else, not even in the Chinese sea-ports. It is called "imperial tea," and comes in elegant boxes of yellow silk emblazoned with the dragon of the Hang dynasty, at the rate of from six to twenty dollars a pound. It is yellow, and the decoction from it is almost colorless. A small pinch of it, added to ordinary black tea, gives an indescribably delicious flavor — the very aroma of the tea-blossom; but one cup of it, unmixed, is said to deprive the drinker of sleep for three nights.

Monsieur D. brought our last delightful stroll through the glittering streets to an untimely end. The train for Moscow was to leave at three o'clock; and he had ordered an early dinner at the restaurant. By the time this was concluded, it was necessary to drive at once to the station, in order to secure places. We were almost too late; the train, long as it was, was crammed to overflowing; and although both station-master and conductor assisted us, the eager passengers disregarded their authority. With great difficulty, one compartment was cleared for the ladies; in the adjoining one four merchants, in long caftans, with sacks of watermelons as provision for the journey, took their places, and would not be ejected. A scene of confusion ensued, in which station-master, conductor, Monsieur D., my friend P., and the Russian merchants were curiously mixed; but when we saw the sacks of watermelons rolling out of the door, we knew the day was ours. In two minutes more we were in full possession; the doors were locked, and the struggling throngs beat against them in vain.

With a grateful farewell to our kind guide, whose rather severe duties for our sake were now over, we moved away from the station, past heaps of cotton-bales, past hills of drifting sand, and impassive groups of Persians, Tartars, and Bukharians, and slowly mounted the long grade to the level of the upland, leaving the Fair to hum and whirl in the hollow between the rivers, and the white walls and golden domes of Novgorod to grow dim on the crest of the receding hill.

The next morning at sunrise, we were again in Moscow.

WINTER-LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG.

As September drew to an end, with only here and there a suggestion of autumn in chrome-colored leaves on the ends of birch-branches, we were told that any day might suddenly bring forth winter. I remembered that five years before, in precisely the same season, I had travelled from Upsala to Stockholm in a violent snow-storm, and therefore accepted the announcement as a part of the regular programme of the year. But the days came and went; fashionable equipages forsook their summer ground of the Islands, and crowded the Nevskoi Prospekt; the nights were cold and raw; the sun's lessening declination was visible from day to day, and still Winter delayed to make his appearance.

The Island drive was our favorite resort of an afternoon; and we continued to haunt it long after every summer guest had disappeared, and when the *datchas* and palaces showed plank and matting in place of balcony and window. In the very heart of St. Petersburg the one full stream of the Neva splits into three main arms, which afterwards subdivide, each seeking the Gulf of Finland at its own swift, wild will. The nearest of these islands, Vassili Ostrow, is a part of the solid city: on Kammenoi and Aptekarskoi you reach the commencement of gardens and groves; and beyond these the rapid waters mirror only palace, park, and summer theatre. The widening streams continually disclose the horizon-line of the Gulf; and at the farthest point of the drive, where the road turns sharply back again from the freedom of the shore into mixed woods of birch and pine, the shipping at Cronstadt — and sometimes the phantoms of fortresses — detach themselves from the watery haze, and the hill of Pargola, in Finland, rises to break the dreary level of the Ingrian marshes.

During the sunny evenings and the never-ending twilights of midsummer, all St. Petersburg pours itself upon these islands. A league-long wall of dust rises from the carriages and droshkies in the main highway; and the branching Neva-arms are crowded with skiffs and diminutive steamers bound for pleasure-gardens where gypsies sing and Tyrolese *yodel* and jugglers toss their knives and balls, and private rooms may be had for gambling and other cryptic diversions. Although with shortened days and cool evenings the tide suddenly took a reflux and the Nevskoi became a suggestion of Broadway (which, of all individual streets, it most nearly resembles), we found an indescribable charm in the solitude of the fading groves and the waves whose lamenting murmur foretold their speedy imprisonment. We had the whole superb drive to ourselves. It is true that Ivan, upon the box, lifted his brows in amazement, and sighed that his jaunty cap of green velvet should be wasted upon the desert air, whenever I said, "*Na Ostrowa*," but he was too genuine a Russian to utter a word of remonstrance.

Thus, day by day, unfashionable, but highly satisfied, we repeated the lonely drive, until the last day came, as it always will. I don't think I shall ever forget it. It was the first day of November. For a fortnight the temperature had been a little below the freezing-point, and the leaves of the alder-thickets, frozen suddenly and preserved as in a great out-door refrigerator, maintained their green. A pale blue mist rose from the Gulf and hung over the islands, the low sun showing an orange disk, which touched the shores with the loveliest color, but gave no warmth to the windless air. The parks and gardens were wholly deserted, and came and went, on either side, phantom-like in their soft, gray, faded tints. Under every bridge flashed and foamed the clear, beryl-green waters. And nobody in St. Petersburg, except ourselves, saw this last and sunniest flicker of the dying season!

The very next day was cold and dark, and so the weather remained, with brief interruptions, for months. On the evening of the 6th, as we drove over the Nikolai Bridge to dine with a friend on Vassili Ostrow, we noticed fragments of ice floating down the Neva. Looking up the stream, we were struck by the fact that the remaining bridges had been detached from the St. Petersburg side, floated over, and anchored along the opposite shore. This seemed a needless precaution, for the pieces of drift-ice were hardly large enough to have crushed a skiff. How surprised were we, then, on returning home, four hours later, to find the noble river gone, not a green wave to be seen, and, as far as the eye could reach, a solid floor of ice, over which people were already crossing to and fro!

Winter, having thus suddenly taken possession of the world, lost no time in setting up the signs of his rule. The leaves, whether green or brown, disappeared at one swoop; snow-gusts obscured the little remaining sunshine; the inhabitants came forth in furs and bulky wrappings; oysters and French pears became unreasonably dear; and sledges of frozen fish and game crowded down from the northern forests. In a few days the physiognomy of the capital was completely changed. All its life and stir withdrew from the extremities and gathered into a few central thoroughfares, as if huddling together for mutual warmth and encouragement in the cold air and under the gloomy sky.

For darkness, rather than cold, is the characteristic of the St. Petersburg winter. The temperature, which at Montreal or St. Paul would not be thought remarkably low, seems to be more severely felt here, owing to the absence of pure daylight. Although both Lake Ladoga and the Gulf of Finland are frozen, the air always retains a damp, raw, penetrating quality, and the snow is more frequently sticky and clammy than dry and crystalline. Few, indeed, are the days which are not cheerless and depressing. In December, when the sky is overcast for weeks together, the sun, rising after nine o'clock, and sliding along just above the horizon, enables you to dispense with lamplight somewhere between ten and eleven; but by two in the afternoon you must call for lights again. Even when a clear day comes, the yellow, level sunshine is a combination of sunrise and sunset, and neither tempers the air nor mitigates the general expression of gloom, almost of despair, upon the face of Nature.

The preparations for the season, of course, have been made long before. In most houses the double windows are allowed to remain through the summer, but they must be carefully examined, the layer of cotton between them, at the bottom, replenished, a small vessel of salt added to absorb the moisture and prevent it from freezing on the panes, and strips of paper pasted over every possible crack. The outer doors are covered with wadded leather, overlapping the frames on all sides. The habitations being thus almost hermetically sealed, they are easily warmed by the huge porcelain stoves, which retain warmth so tenaciously that one fire per day is sufficient for the most sensitive constitutions. In my own room, I found that one armful of birch-wood, reduced to coal, every alternate morning, created a steady temperature of 64°. Although the rooms are always spacious, and arranged in suites of from three to a dozen, according to the extent and splendor of the residence, the atmosphere soon becomes close and characterized by an unpleasant odor, suggesting its diminished vitality; for which reason pastilles are burned, or *eau de Cologne* reduced to vapor in a heated censer, whenever visits are anticipated. It was a question with me, whether or not the advantage of a thoroughly equable temperature was counterbalanced by the lack of circulation. The physical depression we all felt seemed to result chiefly from the absence of daylight.

One winter picture remains clearly outlined upon my memory. In the beginning of December we happened once to drive across the Admiralty Square in the early evening twilight, — three o'clock in the afternoon. The temperature was about 10° below zero, the sky a low roof of moveless clouds, which seemed to be frozen in their places. The pillars of St. Isaac's Cathedral — splendid monoliths of granite, sixty feet high — had precipitated the moisture of the air, and stood silvered with rime from base to capital. The Column of Alexander, the bronze statue of Peter, with his horse poised in air on the edge of the rock, and the trees on the long esplanade in front of the Admiralty, were all similarly coated, every twig rising as rigid as iron in the dark air. Only the huge golden hemisphere of the Cathedral dome, and the tall, pointed golden spire of the Admiralty, rose above the gloom, and half shone with a muffled, sullen glare. A few people, swaddled from head to foot, passed rapidly to and fro, or a droshky, drawn by a frosted horse, sped away to the entrance of the Nevskoi Prospekt. Even these appeared rather like wintry phantoms than creatures filled with warm blood and breathing the breath of life. The vast spaces of the capital, the magnitude of its principal edifices, and the display of gold and colors, strengthened the general aspect of unreality, by introducing so many inharmonious elements into the picture. A bleak moor, with the light of a single cottage-window shining across it, would have been less cold, dead, and desolate.

The temperature, I may here mention, was never very severe. There were three days when the mercury fluctuated between 15° and 20° below zero, five days when it reached 10° below, and perhaps twenty when it fell to zero, or a degree or two on either side. The mean of the five winter months was certainly not lower than + 12°. Quite as much rain fell as snow. After two or three days of sharp cold, there was almost invariably a day of rain or fog, and for many weeks walking was so difficult that we were obliged to give up all out-door exercise except skating or sliding. The streets were either coated with glassy ice or they were a foot deep in slush. There is more and better sleighing in the vicinity of Boston almost any winter than in St. Petersburg during the winter of 1862-3. In our trips to the Observatory of Pulkova, twelve miles distant, we were frequently obliged to leave the highway and put our sled-runners upon the frosted grass of the meadows. The rapid and continual changes of temperature were more trying than any amount of steady cold. *Grippe* became prevalent, and therefore fashionable, and all the endemic diseases of St. Petersburg showed themselves in force. The city, it is well known, is built upon piles, and most of the inhabitants suffer from them. Children look pale and wilted, in the absence of the sun, and special care must be taken of those under five years of age. Some little relatives of mine, living in the country, had their daily tumble in the snow, and thus kept ruddy; but in the city this is not possible, and we had many anxious days before the long darkness was over.

As soon as snow had fallen and freezing weather set in, the rough, broken ice of the Neva was flooded in various places for skating-ponds, and the work of erecting ice-hills commenced. There were speedily a number of the latter in full play, in the various suburbs, — a space of level ground, at least a furlong in length, being necessary. They are supported by subscription, and I had paid ten rubles for permission to use a very fine one on the farther island, when an obliging card of admission came for the gardens of the Taurida Palace, where the younger members of the Imperial family skate and slide. My initiation, however, took place at the first-named locality, whither we were conducted by an old American resident of St. Petersburg.

The construction of these ice-hills is very simple. They are rude towers of timber, twenty to thirty feet in height, the summit of which is reached by a staircase at the back, while in front descends a steep concave of planking upon which water is poured until it is covered with a six-inch coating of solid ice. Raised planks at the side keep the sled in its place until it reaches the foot, where it enters upon an icy plain two to four hundred yards in length (in proportion to the height of the hill), at the extremity of which rises a similar hill, facing towards the first, but a little on one side, so that the sleds from the opposite ends may pass without collision.

The first experience of this diversion is fearful to a person of delicate nerves. The pitch of the descent is so sheer, the height so great (apparently), the motion of the sled so swift, and its course so easily changed, — even the lifting of a hand is sufficient, — that the novice is almost sure to make immediate shipwreck. The sleds are small and low, with smooth iron runners, and a plush cushion, upon which the navigator sits bolt upright with his legs close together, projecting over the front. The runners must be exactly parallel to the lines of the course at starting, and the least tendency to sway to either side must be instantly corrected by the slightest motion of the hand.

I engaged one of the *mujiks* in attendance to pilot me on my first voyage. The man having taken his position well forward on the little sled, I knelt upon the rear end, where there was barely space enough for my knees, placed my hands upon his shoulders, and awaited the result. He shoved the sled with his hands, very gently and carefully, to the brink of the icy steep: then there was a moment's adjustment: then a poise: then — sinking of the heart, cessation of breath, giddy roaring and whistling of the air, and I found myself scudding along the level with the speed of an express train. I never happened to fall out of a fourth-story window, but I immediately understood the sensations of the unfortunate persons who do. It was so frightful that I shuddered when we reached the end of the course and the man coolly began ascending the steps of the opposite hill, with the sled under his arm. But my companions were waiting to see me return, so I mounted after him, knelt again, and held my breath. This time, knowing what was coming, I caught a glimpse of our descent, and found that only the first plunge from the brink was threatening. The lower part of the curve, which is nearly a parabolic line, is more gradual, and the seeming headlong fall does not last more than the tenth part of a second. The sensation, nevertheless, is very powerful, having all the attraction, without the reality, of danger.

The ice-hills in the Taurida Gardens were not so high, and the descent was less abrupt: the course was the smooth floor of an intervening lake, which was kept clear for skating. Here I borrowed a sled, and was so elated at performing the feat successfully, on the first attempt, that I offered my services as charioteer to a lady rash enough to accept them. The increased weight gave so much additional impetus to the sled, and thus rendered its guidance a more delicate matter. Finding that it began to turn even before reaching the bottom, I put down my hand suddenly upon the ice. The effect was like an explosion; we struck the edge of a snow-bank, and were thrown entirely over it and deeply buried on the opposite side. The attendants picked us up without relaxing a muscle of their grave, respectful faces, and quietly swept the ice for another trial. But after that I preferred descending alone.

Good skaters will go up and down these ice-hills on their skates. The feat has a hazardous look, but I have seen it performed by boys of twelve. The young Grand Dukes who visited the Gardens generally contented themselves with skating around the lake at not too violent a speed. Some ladies of the court circle also timidly ventured to try the amusement, but its introduction was too recent for them to show much proficiency. On the Neva, in fact, the English were the best skaters. During the winter, one of them crossed the Gulf to Cronstadt, a distance of twenty-two miles, in about two hours.

Before Christmas, the Lapps came down from the North with their reindeer, and pitched their tents on the river, in front of the Winter Palace. Instead of the canoe-shaped *pulk*, drawn by a single deer, they hitched four abreast to an ordinary sled, and took half a dozen passengers at a time, on a course of a mile, for a small fee. I tried it once, for a child's sake, but found that the romance of reindeer travel was lost without the pulk. The Russian sleighs are very similar to our own for driving about the city: in very cold weather, or for trips into the country, the *kibitka*, a heavy closed carriage on runners, is used. To my eye, the most dashing team in the world is the *troika*, or three-span, the thill-horse being trained to trot rapidly, while the other two, very lightly and loosely harnessed, canter on either side of him. From the ends of the thills springs a wooden arch, called the *duga*, rising eighteen inches above the horse's shoulder, and usually emblazoned with gilding and brilliant colors. There was one magnificent troika on the Nevskoi Prospekt, the horses of which were full-blooded, jet-black matches, and their harness formed of overlapping silver scales. The Russians being the best coachmen in the world, these teams dash past each other at furious speed, often escaping collision by the breadth of a hair, but never coming in violent contact.

With the approach of winter the nobility returned from their estates, the diplomatists from their long summer vacation, the Imperial Court from Moscow, and the previous social desolation of the capital came speedily to an end There were dinners and routs in abundance, but the season of balls was not fairly inaugurated until invitations had been issued for the first at the Winter Palace. This is usually a grand affair, the guests numbering from fifteen hundred to two thousand. We were agreeably surprised at finding half-past nine fixed as the hour of arrival, and took pains to be punctual; but there were already a hundred yards of carriages in advance. The toilet, of course, must be fully completed at home, and the huge pelisses of fur so adjusted as not to disarrange head-dresses, lace, crinoline, or uniform: the footmen must be prompt, on reaching the covered portal, to promote speedy alighting and unwrapping, which being accomplished, each sits guard for the night over his own special pile of pelisses and furred boots.

When the dresses are shaken out and the gloves smoothed, at the foot of the grand staircase, an usher, in a short, bedizened red tunic and white knee-breeches, with a cap surmounted by three colossal white plumes, steps before you and leads the way onward through the spacious halls, ablaze with light from thousands of wax candles. I always admired the silent gravity of these ushers, and their slow, majestic, almost mysterious march — until one morning at home, when I was visited by four common-looking Russians, in blue caftans, who bowed nearly to the floor and muttered congratulations. It was a deputation of the Imperial ushers, making their rounds for New Year's gifts!

Although the streets of St. Petersburg are lighted with gas, the palaces and private residences are still illuminated only with wax candles. Gas is considered plebeian, but it has probably also been found to be disagreeable in the close air of the hermetically sealed apartments. Candles are used in such profusion that I am told thirty thousand are required to light up an Imperial ball. The quadruple rows of columns which support the Hall of St. George are spirally entwined with garlands of wax-lights, and immense chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling. The wicks of each column are connected with threads dipped in some inflammable mixture, and each thread, being kindled at the bottom at the same instant, the light is carried in a few seconds to every candle in the hall. This instantaneous kindling of so many thousand wicks has a magical effect

At the door of the great hall the usher steps aside, bows gravely, and returns, and one of the deputy masters of ceremonies receives you. These gentlemen are chosen from among the most distinguished families of Russia, and are, without exception, so remarkable for tact, kindness, and discretion, that the multitude falls, almost unconsciously, into the necessary observances; and the perfection of ceremony, which hides its own external indications, is attained. Violations of etiquette are most rare, yet no court in the world appears more simple and unconstrained in its forms.

In less than fifteen minutes after the appointed time the hall is filled. and a blast from the orchestra announces the entrance of the Imperial family. The ministers and chief personages of the court are already in their proper places, and the representatives of foreign nations stand on one side of the door-way in their established order of precedence (determined by length of residence near the court), with the ladies of their body on the opposite side.

Alexander II. was much brighter and more cheerful than during the preceding summer. His care-worn, preoccupied air was gone; the dangers which then encompassed him had subsided; the nobility, although still chafing fiercely against the decree of emancipation, were slowly coming to the conclusion that its consummation is inevitable; and the Emperor began to feel that his great work will be safely accomplished. His dark-green uniform well becomes his stately figure and clearly chiseled, symmetrical head. He is Nicholas recast in a softer mould, wherein tenacity of purpose is substituted for rigid, inflexible will, and the development of the nation at home supplants the ambition for predominant political influence abroad. This difference is expressed, despite the strong personal resemblance to his father, in the more frank and gentle eye, the fuller and more sensitive mouth, and the rounder lines of jaw and forehead. A free, natural directness of manner and speech is his principal characteristic. He wears easily, almost playfully, the yoke of court ceremonial, temporarily casting it aside when troublesome. In two respects he differs from most of the other European rulers whom I have seen: he looks the sovereign, and he unbends as gracefully and unostentatiously as a man risen from the ranks of the people. There is evidently better stuff than kings are generally made of in the Románoff line.

Grace and refinement, rather than beauty, distinguish the Empress, though her eyes and hair deserve the latter epithet. She is an invalid, and appears pale and somewhat worn; but there is no finer group of children in Europe than those to whom she has given birth. Six sons and one daughter are her jewels; and of these, the third son, Vladimir, is almost ideally handsome. Her dress was at once simple and superb — a cloud of snowy *tulle*, with a scarf of pale-blue velvet, twisted with a chain of the largest diamonds and tied with a knot and tassel of pearls, resting half-way down the skirt, as if it had slipped from her waist. On another occasion, I remember her wearing a crown of five stars, the centres of which were single enormous rubies and the rays of diamonds, so set on invisible wires that they burned in the air over her head. The splendor which was a part of her *rôle* was always made subordinate to rigid taste, and herein prominently distinguished her from many of the Russian ladies, who carried great fortunes upon their heads, necks, and bosoms. I had several opportunities of conversing with her, generally upon Art and Literature, and was glad to find that she had both read and thought, as well as seen. The honored author of "Evangeline" numbers her among his appreciative readers.

After their Majesties have made the circle of the diplomatic corps, the *Polonaise*, which always opens a Court ball, commences. The Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael (brothers of the Emperor), and the younger members of the Imperial family, take part in it, the latter evidently impatient for the succeeding quadrilles and waltzes. When this is finished, all palpable, obtrusive ceremony is at an end. Dancing, conversation, cards, strolls through the sumptuous halls, fill the hours. The Emperor wanders freely through the crowd, saluting here and there a friend, exchanging badinage with the wittiest ladies (which they all seem at liberty to give back, without the least embarrassment), or seeking out the scarred and gray-haired officers who have come hither from all parts of the vast empire. He does not scrutinize whether or not your back is turned towards him as he passes. Once, on entering a door rather hastily, I came within an ace of a personal collision; whereupon he laughed good-humoredly, caught me by the hands, and saying, "It would have been a shock, *n'est-ce pas?*" hurried on.

To me the most delightful part of the Winter Palace was the garden. It forms one of the suite of thirty halls, some of them three hundred feet long, on the second story. In this garden, which is perhaps a hundred feet square by forty in height, rise clumps of Italian cypress and laurel from beds of emerald turf and blooming hyacinths. In the centre, a fountain showers over fern-covered rocks, and the gravel-walks around the border are shaded by tall camellia-trees in white and crimson bloom. Lamps of frosted glass hang among the foliage, and diffuse a mellow golden moonlight over the enchanted ground. The corridor adjoining the garden resembles a bosky alley, so completely are the walls hidden by flowering shrubbery.

Leaving the Imperial family, and the kindred houses of Leuchtenberg, Oldenburg, and Mecklenburg, all of which are represented, let us devote a little attention to the ladies, and the crowd of distinguished, though unroyal personages. The former are all *décolletées*, of course, — even the Countess ——, who, I am positively assured, is ninety-five years old; but I do not notice much uniformity of taste, except in the matter of head-dresses. *Chignons* have not yet made their appearance, but there are huge coils and sweeps of hair — a mane-like munificence, so disposed as to reveal the art and conceal the artifice. The ornaments are chiefly flowers, though here and there I see jewels, coral, mossy sticks, dead leaves, birds, and birds'-nests. From the blonde locks of yonder princess hang bunches of green brook-grass, and a fringe of the same trails from her bosom and skirt: she resembles a fished-up and restored Ophelia. Here passes a maiden with a picket-fence of rose coral as a *berthe*, and she seems to have another around the bottom of her dress; but, as the mist of tulle is brushed aside in passing, we can detect that the latter is a clever *chenille* imitation. There is another with small moss-covered twigs arranged in the same way; and yet another with fifty black-lace butterflies, of all sizes, clinging to her yellow satin skirt. All this swimming and intermingling mass of color is dotted over with sparkles of jewel-light; and even the grand hall, with its gilded columns and thousands of tapers, seems but a sober frame for so gorgeous a picture.

I can only pick out a few of the notable men present, because there is no space to give biographies as well as portraits. That man of sixty, in rich civil uniform, who entered with the Emperor, and who at once reminds an American of Edward Everett both in face and in the polished grace and suavity of his manner, is one of the first statesmen of Europe — Prince Alexander Gortchakoff. Of medium height and robust frame, with a keen, alert eye, a broad, thoughtful forehead, and a wonderfully sagacious mouth, the upper lip slightly covering the under one at the corners, he immediately arrests your attention, and your eye unconsciously follows him as he makes his way through the crowd, with a friendly word for this man and an elegant rapier-thrust for that. His predominant mood, however, is a cheerful good nature; his wit and irony belong rather to the diplomatist than to the man. There is no sounder or more prudent head in Russia.

But who is this son of Anak, approaching from the corridor? Towering a full head above the throng, a figure of superb strength and perfect symmetry, we give him that hearty admiration which is due to a man who illustrates and embellishes manhood. In this case we can give it freely; for that finely balanced head holds a clear, vigorous brain; those large blue eyes look from the depths of a frank, noble nature; and in that broad breast beats a heart warm with love for his country, and good-will for his fellow-men, whether high or low. It is Prince Suvóroff, the Military Governor of St. Petersburg. If I were to spell his name "Suwarrow," you would know who his grandfather was, and what place in Russian history he fills. In a double sense the present Prince is cast in an heroic mould. It speaks well for Russia that his qualities are so truly appreciated. He is beloved by the people, and trusted by the Imperial Government: for, while firm in his administration of affairs, he is humane, — while cautious, energetic, — and while shrewd and skillful, frank and honest. A noble man, whose like I wish were oftener to be found in the world.

Here are two officers, engaged in earnest conversation The little old man, with white hair, and thin, weather-beaten, wrinkled face, is Admiral Baron Wrangel, whose Arctic explorations on the northern coast of Siberia are known to all geographers. Having read of them as a boy, and then as things of the past, I was greatly delighted at finding the brave old Admiral still alive, and at the privilege of taking his hand and hearing him talk in English as fluent as my own. The young officer, with rosy face, brown moustache, and profile strikingly like that of General McClellan, has already made his mark. He is General Ignatieff, the most prominent young man of the empire. Although scarcely thirty-five, he has already filled special missions to Bukharia and Peking, and took a leading part in the Treaty of Tien-tsin. At the time of which I write, he was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chief of the Asiatic Department.

I might mention Count Bludoff, the venerable President of the Academy of Sciences; General Todleben; Admiral Lüttke; and the distinguished members of the Galitzin, Narischkin, Apraxin, Dolgorouky, and Scheremetieff families, who are present, — but by this time the interminable mazourka is drawing to a close, and a master of ceremonies suggests that we shall step into an adjoining hall to await the signal for supper. The refreshments previously furnished consisted simply of tea, orgeat, and cooling drinks made of cranberries, Arctic raspberries, and other fruits; it is two hours past midnight, and we may frankly confess hunger.

While certain other guests are being gathered together, I will mention another decoration of the halls, peculiar to St. Petersburg. On either side of all the doors of communication in the long range of halls, stands a negro in rich oriental costume, reminding one of the mute palace-guards in the Arabian tales. Happening to meet one of these men in the Summer Garden, I addressed him in Arabic; but he knew only enough of the language to inform me that he was born in Dar-Fur. I presume, therefore, they were obtained in Constantinople. In the large halls, which are illustrated with paintings of battles, in all the Russian campaigns from Pultowa to Sebastopol, are posted companies of soldiers at the farther end — a different regiment to each hall. For six hours these men and their officers stand motionless as statues. Not a movement, except now and then of the eyelid, can be detected even their respiration seems to be suspended. There is something weird and uncanny in such a preternatural silence and apparent death-in-life. I became impressed with the idea that some form of catalepsy had seized and bound them in strong trance. The eyeballs were fixed: they stared at me and saw me not: their hands were glued to the weapons, and their feet to the floor. I suspect there must have been some stolen relief when no guest happened to be present, yet, come when I might, I found them unchanged. When I reflected that the men were undoubtedly very proud of the distinction they enjoyed, and that their case demanded no sympathy, I could inspect and admire them with an easy mind.

The Grand Chamberlain now advances, followed by the Imperial family, behind which, in a certain order of precedence, the guests fall into place, and we presently reach a supper-hall, gleaming with silver and crystal. There are five others, I am told, and each of the two thousand guests has his chair and plate. In the centre stands the Imperial table, on a low platform: between wonderful *épergnes* of gold spreads a bed of hyacinths and crocuses. Hundreds of other *épergnes*, of massive silver, flash from the tables around. The forks and spoons are gold, the decanters of frosted crystal, covered with silver vine-leaves; even the salt-cellars are works of art. It is quite proper that the supper should be substantial; and as one such entertainment is a pattern for all that succeed, I may be allowed to mention the principal dishes: *crème de l'orge, paté de foie gras*, cutlets of fowl, game, asparagus, and salad, followed by fruits, ices, and bon-bons, and moistened with claret, Sauterne, and Champagne. I confess, however, that the superb silver chasing, and the balmy hyacinths which almost leaved over my plate, feasted my senses quite as much as the delicate viands.

After supper the company returns to the Hall of St George, a quadrille or two is danced to promote digestion, and the members of the Imperial family, bowing first to the diplomatic corps, and then to the other guests, retire to the private apartments of the palace. Now we are at liberty to leave, — not sooner, — and rapidly, yet not with undignified haste, seek the main staircase. Cloaking and booting (Ivan being on hand, with eyes like a lynx) are performed without regard to head-dress or uniform, and we wait while the carriages are being called, until the proper *pozlannik* turns up. If we envied those who got off sooner, we are now envied by those who still must wait, bulky in black satin or cloth, in sable or raccoon skin. It is half past three when we reach home, and there are still six hours until sunrise.

The succeeding balls, whether given by the Grand Dukes, the principal members of the Russian nobility, or the heads of foreign legations, were conducted on the same plan, except that, in the latter instances, the guests were not so punctual in arriving. The pleasantest of the season was one given by the Emperor in the Hermitage Palace. The guests, only two hundred in number, were bidden to come in ordinary evening-dress, and their Imperial Majesties moved about among them as simply and unostentatiously as any well-bred American host and hostess. On a staircase at one side of the Moorish Hall sat a distinguished Hungarian artist, sketching the scene, with its principal figures, for a picture.

I was surprised to find how much true social culture exists in St. Petersburg. Aristocratic manners, in their perfection, are simply democratic; but this is a truth which is scarcely recognized by the nobility of Germany, and only partially by that of England. The habits of refined society are very much the same everywhere. The man or woman of real culture recognizes certain forms as necessary, that social intercourse may be *ordered* instead of being arbitrary and chaotic; but these forms must not be allowed to limit the free, expansive contact of mind with mind and character with character which is the charm and blessing of society. Those who meet within the same walls meet upon an equal footing, and all accidental distinctions cease for the time. I found these principles acted upon to quite as full an extent as (perhaps even more so than) they are at home. One of the members of the Imperial family, even, expressed to me the intense weariness occasioned by the observance of the necessary forms of court life, and the wish that they might be made as simple as possible.

I was interested in extending my acquaintance among the Russian nobility, as they, to a certain extent, represent the national culture. So far as my observations reached, I found that the women were better read, and had more general knowledge of art, literature, and even politics, than the men. My most instructive intercourse was with the former. It seemed that most men (here I am not speaking of the members of the Imperial Government) had each his specialty, beyond which he showed but a limited interest. There was one distinguished circle, however, where the intellectual level of the conversation was as high as I have ever found it anywhere, and where the only title to admission prescribed by the noble host was the capacity to take part in it. In that circle I heard not only the Polish Question discussed, but the Unity or Diversity of Races, Modern and Classic Art, Strauss, Emerson, and Victor Hugo, the ladies contributing their share. At a *soirée* given by the Princess Lvoff, I met Richard Wagner, the composer, Rubinstein, the pianist, and a number of artists and literary men.

A society, the head of which is a court, and where externals, of necessity, must be first considered, is not the place to seek for true and lasting intimacies; but one may find what is next best, in a social sense — cheerful and cordial intercourse. The circle of agreeable and friendly acquaintance continually enlarged; and I learned to know *one* friend (and perhaps one should hardly expect more than that in any year) whom I shall not forget, nor he me, though we never meet again. The Russians have been unjustly accused of a lack of that steady, tender, faithful depth of character upon which friendship must rest. Let us not forget that one of Washington Irving's dearest friends was Prince Dolgorouki.

Nevertheless, the constant succession of entertainments, agreeable as they were, became in the end fatiguing to quiet persons like ourselves. The routs and *soirées*, it is true, were more informal and unceremonious: one was not obliged to spend more than an hour at each, but then one was not expected to arrive before eleven o'clock. We fell, perforce, into the habits of the place, — of sleeping two or three hours after dinner, then rising, and after a cup of strong tea, dressing for the evening. After Carnival, the balls ceased; but there were still frequent routs, until Easter week closed the season.

I was indebted to Admiral Lüttke, President of the Imperial Geographical Society, for an invitation to attend its sessions, some of which were of the most interesting character. My great regret was, that a very imperfect knowledge of the language prevented me from understanding much of the proceedings. On one occasion, while a paper on the survey of the Caspian Sea was being read, a tall, stately gentleman, sitting at the table beside me, obligingly translated all the principal facts into French, as they were stated. I afterwards found that he was Count Panin, Minister of Justice. In the transactions of the various literary and scientific societies, the Russian language has now entirely supplanted the French, although the latter keeps its place in the *salons*, chiefly on account of the foreign element. The Empress has weekly *conversazioni*, at which only Russian is spoken, and to which no foreigners are admitted. It is becoming fashionable to have visiting-cards in both languages.

Of all the ceremonies which occurred during the winter, that of New Year's Day (January 13th, N. S.) was most interesting. After the members of the different legations had called in a body to pay their respects to the Emperor and Empress, the latter received the ladies of the Court who, on this occasion, wore the national costume, in the grand hall. We were permitted to witness the spectacle, which is unique of its kind and wonderfully beautiful. The Empress, having taken her place alone near one end of the hall, with the Emperor and his family at a little distance on her right, the doors at the other end — three hundred feet distant — were thrown open, and a gorgeous procession approached, sweeping past the gilded columns, and growing with every step in color and splendor. The ladies walked in single file, about eight feet apart, each holding the train of the one preceding her. The costume consists of a high, crescent-shaped head-dress of velvet covered with jewels; a short, embroidered corsage of silk or velvet, with open sleeves; a full skirt and sweeping train of velvet or satin or *moiré*, with a deep border of point-lace. As the first lady approached the Empress, her successor dropped the train, spreading it, by a dexterous movement, to its full breadth on the polished floor. The lady, thus released, bent her knee, and took the Empress's hand to kiss it, which the latter prevented by gracefully lifting her and saluting her on the forehead. After a few words of congratulation, she passed across the hall, making a profound obeisance to the Emperor on the way.

This was the most trying part of the ceremony. She was alone and unsupported, with all eyes upon her, and it required no slight amount of skill and self-possession to cross the hall, bow, and carry her superb train to the opposite side, without turning her back on the Imperial presence. At the end of an hour the dazzling group gathered on the right equaled in numbers the long line marching up on the left — and still they came. It was a luxury of color, scarcely to be described, — all flowery and dewy tints, in a setting of white and gold. There were crimson, maroon, blue, lilac, salmon, peach-blossom, mauve, magenta, silver-gray, pearl-rose, daffodil, pale orange, purple, pea-green, sea-green, scarlet, violet, drab, and pink — and, whether by accident or design, the succession of colors never shocked by too violent contrast. This was the perfection of scenic effect; and we lingered, enjoying it exquisitely, until the last of several hundred ladies closed the radiant spectacle.

The festival of Epiphany is celebrated by the blessing of the waters of the Neva, followed by a grand military review on the Admiralty Square. We were invited to witness both ceremonies from the windows of the Winter Palace, where, through the kindness of Prince Dolgorouki, we obtained favorable points of view. As the ceremonies last two or three hours, an elegant breakfast was served to the guests in the Moorish Hall. The blessing of the Neva is a religious festival, with the accompaniment of tapers, incense, and chanting choirs, and we could only see that the Emperor performed his part uncloaked and bareheaded in the freezing air, finishing by descending the steps of an improvised chapel and well (the building answered both purposes), and drinking the water from a hole in the ice. Far and wide over the frozen surface similar holes were cut, where, during the remainder of the day, priests officiated, and thousands of the common people were baptized by immersion. As they generally came out covered with ice, warm booths were provided for them on the banks, where they thawed themselves out, rejoicing that they would now escape sickness or misfortune for a year to come.

The review requires a practiced military pen to do it justice, and I fear I must give up the attempt. It was a "small review," only about twenty-five thousand troops being under arms. In the uniformity of size and build of the men, exactness of equipment, and precision of movement, it would be difficult to imagine anything more perfect. All sense of the individual soldier was lost in the grand sweep and wheel and march of the columns. The Circassian chiefs, in their steel skull-caps and shirts of chain mail seemed to have ridden into their places direct from the Crusades. The Cossacks of the Don, the Ukraine, and the Ural, managed their little brown or black horses (each regiment having its own color) so wonderfully, that, as we looked down upon them, each line resembled a giant caterpillar, moving sidewise with its thousand legs creeping as one. These novel and picturesque elements constituted the principal charm of the spectacle.

The passing away of winter was signalized by an increase of daylight rather than a decrease of cold. The rivers were still locked, the ice-hills frequented, the landscape dull and dead; but by the beginning of February we could detect signs of the returning sun. When the sky was clear (a thing of rarest occurrence), there was *white* light at noonday, instead of the mournful yellow or orange gloom of the previous two months. After the change had fairly set in, it proceeded more and more rapidly, until our sunshine was increased at the rate of seven or eight minutes per day. When the vernal equinox came, and we could sit down to dinner at sunset, the spell of death seemed to be at last broken. The fashionable drive, of an afternoon, changed from the Nevskoi Prospekt to the Palace Quay on the Neva; the Summer Garden was cleared of snow, and its statues one by one unboxed; in fine days we could walk there, and there coax back the faded color to a child's face. There, too, walked Alexander II., one of the crowd, leading his little daughter by the hand; and thither, in a plain little *calèche*, drove the Empress, with her youngest baby on her lap.

But when the first ten days of April had passed and there was still no sign of spring, we began to grow impatient. How often I watched the hedges around the Michaïloffsky Palace, knowing that the buds would there first swell! How we longed for a shimmer of green under the brown grass, an alder tassel, a flush of yellow on the willow wands, a sight of rushing green water! One day, a week or so later, we were engaged to dine on Vassili Ostrow. I had been busily occupied until late in the afternoon, and when we drove out upon the square, I glanced, as usual, towards Peter the Great. Lo! behind him flashed and glittered the free, the rejoicing Neva! Here and there floated a cake of sullen ice, but the great river had bared his breast to the sun, which welcomed him after six months of absence. The upper pontoon-bridges were already spanned and crowded with travel, but the lower one, carried away before it could be secured, had been borne down by the stream and jammed against and under the solid granite and iron of the Nikolaï Bridge. There was a terrible crowd and confusion at the latter place; all travel was stopped, and we could get neither forward nor backward. Presently, however, the Emperor appeared upon the scene; order was the instant result; the slow officials worked with a will; and we finally reached our host's residence half an hour behind the time. As we returned, at night, there was twilight along the northern sky, and the stars sparkled on the crystal bosom of the river.

This was the snapping of winter's toughest fetter, but it was not yet spring. Before I could detect any sign of returning life in Nature, May had come. Then, little by little, the twigs in the marshy thickets began to show yellow and purple and brown, the lilac-buds to swell, and some blades of fresh grass to peep forth in sheltered places. This, although we had sixteen hours of sunshine, with an evening twilight which shifted into dusky dawn under the North Star! I think it was on the 13th of May that I first realized that the season had changed, and for the last time saw the noble-hearted ruler who is the central figure of these memories. The People's Festival — a sort of Russian May-day — took place at Catharinenhof, a park and palace of the famous Empress, near the shore of the Finnish Gulf. The festival, that year, had an unusual significance. On the 3d of March the edict of Emancipation was finally consummated, and twenty-two millions of serfs became forever free: the Polish troubles and the menace of the Western powers had consolidated the restless nobles the patient people, and the plotting revolutionists, the orthodox and dissenting sects, into one great national party resolved to support the Emperor and maintain the integrity of the Russian territory: and thus the nation was marvelously strengthened by the very blow intended to cripple it.

At least a hundred thousand of the common people (possibly, twice that number) were gathered together in the park of Catharinenhof. There were booths, shows, flying-horses, refreshment saloons, jugglers, circuses, balloons, and exhibitions of all kinds: the sky was fair, the turf green and elastic, and the swelling birch-buds scented the air. I wandered about for hours, watching the lazy, contented people, as they leaped and ran, rolled on the grass, pulled off their big boots and aired their naked legs, or laughed and sang in jolly chorus. About three in the afternoon there was a movement in the main avenue of the park. Hundreds of young *mujiks* appeared, running at full speed, shouting out, tossing their caps high in the air, and giving their long, blonde locks to the wind. Instantly the crowd collected on each side, many springing like cats into the trees; booths and shows were deserted, and an immense multitude hedged the avenue. Behind the leaping, shouting, cap-tossing *avant-garde* came the Emperor, with three sons and a dozen generals, on horseback, cantering lightly. One cheer went up from scores of thousands; hats darkened the air; eyes blazing with filial veneration followed the stately figure of the monarch, as he passed by, gratefully smiling and greeting on either hand. I stood among the people and watched their faces. I saw the phlegmatic Slavonic features transformed with a sudden and powerful expression of love, of devotion, of gratitude, and then I knew that the throne of Alexander II. rested on a better basis than tradition or force. I saw therein another side of this shrewd, cunning, patient, and childlike race, whom no other European race yet understands and appreciates — a race yet in the germ, but with qualities out of which a people, in the best sense of the word, may be developed.

The month of May was dark, rainy, and cold; and when I left St. Petersburg, at its close, everybody said that a few days would bring the summer. The leaves were opening, almost visibly from hour to hour. Winter was really over, and summer was just at the door, but I found, upon reflection, that I had not had the slightest experience of spring.

THE LITTLE LAND OF APPENZELL

The traveller who first reaches the Lake of Constance at Lindau, or crosses that sheet of pale green water to one of the ports on the opposite Swiss shore, cannot fail to notice the bold heights to the southward which thrust themselves between the opening of the Rhine Valley and the long, undulating ridges of the Canton Thurgau. These heights, broken by many a dimly hinted valley and ravine, appear to be the front of an Alpine table-land. Houses and villages, scattered over the steep ascending plane, present themselves distinctly to the eye; the various green of forest and pasture land is rarely interrupted by the gray of rocky walls; and the afternoon sun touches the topmost edge of each successive elevation with a sharp outline of golden light, through the rich gloom of the shaded slopes. Behind and over this region rise the serrated peaks of the Sentis Alp, standing in advance of the farther ice-fields of Glarus, like an outer fortress, garrisoned in summer by the merest forlorn hope of snow.

The green fronts nearest the lake, and the lower lands falling away to the right and left, belong to the Canton of St. Gall; but all aloft, beyond that frontier marked by the sinking sun, lies the *Appenzeller Ländli*, as it is called in the endearing diminutive of the Swiss German tongue, — the Little Land of Appenzell.

If, leaving the Lake of Constance by the Rhine Valley, you ascend to Ragatz and the Baths of Pfeffers, thence turn westward to the Lake of Wallenstatt, cross into the valley of the Toggenburg, and so make your way northward and eastward around the base of the mountains back to the starting point, you will have passed only through the territory of St. Gall. Appenzell is an Alpine island, wholly surrounded by the former canton. From whatever side you approach, you must climb in order to get into it. It is a nearly circular tract, falling from the south towards the north, but lifted, at almost every point, over the adjoining lands. This altitude and isolation is an historical as well as a physical peculiarity. When the Abbots of St. Gall, after having reduced the entire population of what is now two cantons to serfdom, became more oppressive as their power increased, it was the mountain shepherds who, in the year 1403, struck the first blow for liberty. Once free, they kept their freedom, and established a rude democracy on the heights, similar in form and spirit to the league which the Forest Cantons had founded nearly a century before. An echo from the meadow of Grütli reached the wild valleys around the Sentis, and Appenzell, by the middle of the fifteenth century, became one of the original states out of which Switzerland has grown.

I find something very touching and admirable in this fragment of hardly noticed history. The people isolated themselves by their own act, held together, organized a simple yet sufficient government, and maintained their sturdy independence, while their brethren on every side, in the richer lands below them, were fast bound in the gyves of a priestly despotism. Individual liberty seems to be a condition inseparable from mountain life; that once attained, all other influences are conservative in their character. The cantons of Unterwalden, Schwytz, Glarus, and Appenzell retain to-day the simple, primitive forms of democracy which had their origin in the spirit of the people nearly six hundred years ago.

Twice had I looked up to the little mountain republic from the lower lands to the northward, with the desire and the determination to climb one day the green buttresses which support it on every side; so, when I left St. Gall on a misty morning, in a little open carriage, bound for Trogen, it was with the pleasant knowledge that a land almost unknown to tourists lay before me. The only summer visitors are invalids, mostly from Eastern Switzerland and Germany, who go up to drink the whey of goats' milk; and, although the fabrics woven by the people are known to the world of fashion in all countries, few indeed are the travellers who turn aside from the near highways. The landlord in St. Gall told me that his guests were almost wholly commercial travellers, and my subsequent experience among an unspoiled people convinced me that I was almost a pioneer in the paths I traversed.

It was the last Saturday in April, and at least a month too soon for the proper enjoyment of the journey; but on the following day the *Landsgemeinde*, or Assembly of the People, was to be held at Hundwyl, in the manner and with the ceremonies which have been annually observed for the last three or four hundred years. This circumstance determined the time of my visit. I wished to study the character of an Alpine democracy, so pure that it has not yet adopted even the representative principle, — to be with and among a portion of the Swiss people at a time when they are most truly themselves, rather than look at them through the medium of conventional guides, on lines of travel which have now lost everything of Switzerland except the scenery.

There was bad weather behind, and, I feared, bad weather before me. "The sun will soon drive away these mists," said the postilion, "and when we get up yonder, you will see what a prospect there will be." In the rich valley of St. Gall, out of which we mounted, the scattered houses and cloud-like belts of blossoming cherry-trees almost hid the green; but it sloped up and down, on either side of the rising road, glittering with flowers and dew, in the flying gleams of sunshine. Over us hung masses of gray cloud, which stretched across the valley, hooded the opposite hills, and sank into a dense mass over the Lake of Constance. As we passed through this belt, and rejoiced in the growing clearness of the upper sky, I saw that my only prospect would be in cloud-land. After many windings, along which the blossoms and buds of the fruit-trees indicated the altitude as exactly as any barometer, we finally reached the crest of the topmost height, the frontier of Appenzell and the battle-field of Vöglisegg, where the herdsman first measured his strength with the soldier and the monk, and was victorious.

"Whereabouts was the battle fought?" I asked the postilion.

"Up and down, and all around here," said he, stopping the carriage at the summit.

I stood up and looked to the north. Seen from above, the mist had gathered into dense, rounded clouds, touched with silver on their upper edges. They hung over the lake, rolling into every bay and spreading from shore to shore, so that not a gleam of water was visible; but over their heaving and tossing silence rose, far away, the mountains of the four German states beyond the lake. An Alp in Vorarlberg made a shining island in the sky. The postilion was loud in his regrets, yet I thought the picture best as it was. On the right lay the land of Appenzell — not a table-land, but a region of mountain ridge and summit, of valley and deep, dark gorge, green as emerald up to the line of snow, and so thickly studded with dwellings, grouped or isolated, that there seemed to be one scattered village as far as the eye could reach. To the south, over forests of fir, the Sentis lifted his huge towers of rock, crowned with white, wintry pyramids.

"Here, where we are," said the postilion, "was the first battle; but there was another, two years afterwards, over there, the other side of Trogen, where the road goes down to the Rhine. Stoss is the place, and there's a chapel built on the very spot. Duke Frederick of Austria came to help the Abbot Kuno, and the Appenzellers were only one to ten against them. It was a great fight, they say, and the women helped — not with pikes and guns, but in this way: they put on white shirts, and came out of the woods, above where the fighting was going on. Now, when the Austrians and the Abbot's people saw them, they thought there were spirits helping the Appenzellers (the women were all white, you see, and too far off to show plainly), and so they gave up the fight after losing nine hundred knights and troopers. After that, it was ordered that the women should go first to the sacrament, so that no man might forget the help they gave in that battle. And the people go every year to the chapel, on the same day when it took place."

I looked, involuntarily, to find some difference in the population after passing the frontier. But I had not counted upon the leveling influence which the same kind of labor exercises, whether upon mountain or in valley. So long as Appenzell was a land of herdsmen, many peculiarities of costume, features, and manners must have remained. For a long time, however, Outer-Rhoden, as this part of the Canton is called, has shared with that part of St. Gall which lies below it the manufacture of fine muslins and embroideries. There are looms in almost every house, and this fact explains the density of population and the signs of wealth on every hand, which would otherwise puzzle the stranger. The houses are not only so near together that almost every man can call to his neighbors and be heard, but they are large, stately, and even luxurious, in contrast to the dwellings of other country people in Europe. The average population of Outer-Rhoden amounts to four hundred and seventy-five persons to the square mile, being nearly double that of the most thickly settled portions of Holland.

If one could only transport a few of these houses to the United States! Our country architecture is not only hideous, but frequently unpractical, being at worst shanties, and at best city residences set in the fields. An Appenzell farmer lives in a house from forty to sixty feet square, and rarely less than four stories in height. The two upper stories, however, are narrowed by the high, steep roof, so that the true front of the house is one of the gables. The roof projects at least four feet on all sides, giving shelter to balconies of carved wood, which cross the front under each row of windows. The outer walls are covered with upright, overlapping shingles, not more than two or three inches broad, and rounded at the ends, suggesting the scale armor of ancient times. This covering secures the greatest warmth; and when the shingles have aquired from age that rich burnt-sienna tint which no paint could exactly imitate, the effect is exceedingly beautiful. The lowest story is generally of stone, plastered and whitewashed. The stories are low (seven to eight feet), but the windows are placed side by side, and each room is thoroughly lighted. Such a house is very warm, very durable, and, without any apparent expenditure of ornament, is externally so picturesque that no ornament could improve it.

Many of the dwellings, I was told, could not be built with the present means of the population, at the present prices of labor and material. They date from the palmy days of Appenzell industry, before machinery had reduced the cost of the finer fabrics. Then, one successful manufacturer competed with another in the erection of showy houses, and fifty thousand francs (a large sum for the times) were frequently expended on a single dwelling. The view of a broad Alpine landscape, dotted all over with such beautiful homes, from the little shelf of green hanging on the sides of a rocky gorge and the strips of sunny pasture between the ascending forests, to the very summits of the lower heights and the saddles between them, was something quite new in my experience.

Turning around the point of Vöglisegg, we made for Trogen, one of the two capitals of Outer-Rhoden, which lay before us, across the head of the deep and wild St

Martin's Tobel. (*Tobel* is an Appenzell word, corresponding precisely to the *gulch* of California.) My postilion mounted, and the breathed horse trotted merrily along the winding level. One stately house after another, with a clump of fruit-trees on the sheltered side, and a row of blooming hyacinths and wall-flowers on the balcony, passed by on either side. The people we met were sunburnt and ugly, but there was a rough air of self-reliance about them, and they gave me a hearty "God greet you!" one and all. Just before reaching Trogen, the postilion pointed to an old, black, tottering platform of masonry, rising out of a green slope of turf on the right. The grass around it seemed ranker than elsewhere.

This was the place of execution, where capital criminals are still beheaded with the sword, in the sight of the people. The postilion gave me an account, with all the horrible details, of the last execution, only three years ago, — how the murderer would not confess until he was brought out of prison to hear the bells tolling for his victim's funeral, — how thereupon he was sentenced, and — but I will not relate further. I have always considered the death penalty a matter of policy rather than principle; but the sight of that blood-stained platform, the blood-fed weeds around it, and the vision of the headsman, in his red mantle, looking down upon the bared neck stretched upon the block, gave me more horror of the custom than all the books and speeches which have been said and written against it.

At Trogen I stopped at the principal inn, two centuries old, the quaint front painted in fresco, the interior neat and fresh as a new toy — a very gem of a house! The floor upon which I entered from the street was paved with flat stones. A solid wooden staircase, dark with age, led to the guests' room in the second story. One side of this room was given up to the windows, and there was a charming hexagonal oriel in the corner. The low ceiling was of wood, in panels, the stove a massive tower, faced with porcelain tiles, the floor polished nearly into whiteness, and all the doors, cup-boards, and tables, made of brown nut-wood, gave an air of warmth and elegance to the apartment. All other parts of the house were equally neat and orderly. The hostess greeted me with, "Be you welcome!" and set about preparing dinner, as it was now nearly noon. In the pauses of her work she came into the room to talk, and was very ready to give information concerning the country and people.

There were already a little table and three plates in the oriel, and while I was occupied with my own dinner I did not particularly notice the three persons who sat down to theirs. The coarseness and harshness of their dialect, however, presently struck my ear. It was pure Appenzell, a German made up of singular and puzzling elisions, and with a very strong guttural *k* and *g*, in addition to the *ch*. Some knowledge of the Alemannic dialect of the Black Forest enabled me to understand the subject of conversation, which, to my surprise, was — the study of the classics! It was like hearing an Irishman talk of Shelley's "Witch of Atlas" in the broadest Tipperary brogue. I turned and looked at the persons. They were well dressed young men, evidently the best class of Appenzellers — possibly tutors in the schools of Trogen. Their speech in no wise differed from that of the common herdsmen, except that they were now and then obliged to use words which, being unknown to the people, had escaped mutilation. I entered into conversation, to ascertain whether true German was not possible to them, since they must needs read and write the language; but, although they understood me, they could only partly, and with evident difficulty, lay aside their own patois. I found this to be the case everywhere throughout the Canton. It is a circumstance so unusual, that, in spite of myself, associating a rude dialect with ignorance, I was always astonished when those who spoke it showed culture and knowledge of the world.

The hostess provided me with a guide and pack-bearer, and I set out on foot across the country towards Hundwyl This guide, Jakob by name, made me imagine that I had come among a singular people. He was so short that he could easily walk under my arm; his gait was something between a roll and a limp, although he stoutly disclaimed lameness; he laughed whenever I spoke to him, and answered in a voice which seemed the cuneiform character put into sound. First, there was an explosion of gutturals, and then came a loud trumpet-tone, something like the *Honk! honk!* of wild geese. Yet, when he placed his squat figure behind a tavern table, and looked at me quietly with his mouth shut, he was both handsome and distinguished in appearance. We walked two miles together before I guessed how to unravel his speech. It is almost as difficult to learn a dialect as a new language, and but for the key which the Alemannic gave me, I should have been utterly at sea. Who, for instance, could ever guess that *a'Ma' g'si*, pronounced "ama*x*i" (the *x* representing a desperate guttural), really stands for *einen Mann gewesen?*

The road was lively with country people, many of whom were travelling in our own direction. Those we met invariably addressed us with "God greet you!" or "*Guät ti!*" which it was easy to translate into "Good-day!" Some of the men were brilliant in scarlet jackets, with double rows of square silver buttons, and carried swords under their arms; they were bound for the *Landsgemeinde*, whither the law of the Middle Ages still obliges them to go armed. When I asked Jakob if he would accompany me as far as Hundwyl, he answered, "I can't; I daren't go there without a black dress, and my sword, and a cylinder hat."

The wild *Tobels*, opening downward to the Lake of Constance, which now shimmered afar through the gaps, were left behind us, and we passed westward along a broken, irregular valley. The vivid turf was sown with all the flowers of spring, — primrose, violet, buttercup, anemone, and veronica, — faint, but sweetest-odored, and the heralds of spring in all lands. So I gave little heed to the weird lines of cloud, twisting through and between the severed pyramids of the Sentis, as if weaving the woof of storms. The scenery was entirely lovely, and so novel in its population and the labor which, in the long course of time, had effaced its own hard traces, turning the mountains into lifted lawns and parks of human delight, that my own slow feet carried me through it too rapidly. We must have passed a slight water-shed somewhere, though I observed none; for the road gradually fell towards another region of deeply cloven *Tobels*, with snowy mountains beyond. The green of the landscape was so brilliant and uniform, under the cold gray sky, that it almost destroyed the perspective, which rather depended on the houses and the scattered woods of fir.

On a ridge, overlooking all this region, was the large village of Teufen, nearly as grand as Trogen in its architecture. Here Jakob, whose service went no further, conducted me to the "Pike" inn, and begged the landlady to furnish me with "*a' Ma'*" in his place. We had refreshments together, and took leave with many shakings of the hand and mutual wishes of good luck. The successor was an old fellow of seventy, who had been a soldier in Holland, and who with proper exertion could make his speech intelligible. The people nowhere inquired after my business or nationality. When the guide made the latter known, they almost invariably said, "But, of course, you were born in Appenzell?" The idea of a traveller coming among them, at least during this season of the year, did not enter their heads. In Teufen, the large and handsome houses, the church and schools, led me, foolishly, to hope for a less barbarous dialect; but no, it was the same thing everywhere.

The men in black, with swords under their arms, increased in number as we left the village. They were probably from the furthest parts of the Canton, and were thus abridging the morrow's journey. The most of them, however turned aside from the road, and made their way to one farm-house or another. I was tempted to follow their example, as I feared that the little village of Hundwyl would be crowded. But there was still time to claim private hospitality, even if this should be the case, so we marched steadily down the valley. The Sitter, a stream fed by the Sentis, now roared below us, between high, rocky walls, which are spanned by an iron bridge, two hundred feet above the water. The roads of Outer-Rhoden, built and kept in order by the people, are most admirable. This little population of forty-eight thousand souls has within the last fifteen years expended seven hundred thousand dollars on means of communication. Since the people govern themselves, and regulate their expenses, and consequently their taxation, their willingness to bear such a burden is a lesson to other lands.

After crossing the airy bridge, our road climbed along the opposite side of the *Tobel*, to a village on a ridge thrust out from the foot of the Hundwyl Alp, beyond which we lost sight of Teufen and the beautiful valley of the Sitter. We were now in the valley of the Urnäsch, and a walk of two miles more brought us to the village of Hundwyl. I was encouraged, on approaching the little place, by seeing none except the usual signs of occupation. There was a great new tank before the fountain, and two or three fellows in scarlet vests were filling their portable tubs for the evening's supply; a few children came to the doors to stare at me, but there was no sign that any other stranger had arrived.

"I'll take you to the Crown," said the guide; "all the Landamänner will be there in the morning, and the music; and you'll see what our Appenzell government is." The landlady gave me a welcome, and the promise of a lodging whereupon I sat down in peace, received the greetings of all the members of the family, as they came and went, and made myself familiar with their habits. There was only one other guest in the house, — a man of dignified face and intellectual head, who carried a sword tied up with an umbrella, and must be, I supposed, one of the chief officials. He had so much the air of a reformer or a philosopher that the members of a certain small faction at home might have taken him for their beloved W. P.; others might have detected in him a resemblance to that true philanthropist and gentleman W. L. G.; and the believers in the divinity of slavery would have accepted him as Bishop ———. As no introductions are required in Appenzell, I addressed myself to him, hoping to open a profitable acquaintance; but it was worse than Coleridge's experience with the lover of dumplings. His sentiments may have been elevated and refined, for aught I knew, but what were they? My trumpeter Jakob was more intelligible than he; his upper teeth were gone, and the mutilated words were mashed out of all remaining shape against his gums. Then he had the singular habit of ejaculating the word *Ja!* (Yes!) in three different ways, after answering each of my questions. First, a decided, confirmatory *Ja!* then a pause, followed by a slow, interrogative *Ja?* as if it were the echo of some mental doubt; and finally, after a much longer pause, a profoundly melancholy, desponding, conclusive *Ja-a-a!* sighed forth from the very bottom of his lungs. Even when I only said, "Good-morning!" the next day, these ejaculations followed, in the same order of succession.

One may find a counterpart to this habit in the *Wa'al* of the Yankee, except that the latter never is, nor could it well be, so depressing to hear as the *Ja* of Appenzell.

In the evening a dozen persons gathered around one of the long tables, and drank a pale, weak cider, made of apples and pears, and called "Most." I gave to one, with whom I found I could converse most easily, a glass of red wine, whereupon he said, "It is very impudent in me to take it."

Upon asking the same person how it was that I could understand him so much more readily than the others, he answered, "O, I can talk the written language when I try, but these others can't."

"Here," said I, pointing to the philosopher, "is one who is quite incomprehensible."

"So he is to me."

They were all anxious to know whether our American troubles were nearly over; whether the President had the power to do further harm (he had too much power, they all thought); and whether our Congress could carry out its plan of reconstruction. Lincoln they said, was the best man we ever had; when the play of "Lincoln's Death" was performed in the theatre at St. Gall, a great many Appenzellers hired omnibuses and went down from the mountains to see it.

I was aroused at daybreak by the chiming of bells, and soon afterwards muskets began to crack, near and far. Then there were noises all over the house, and presently what seemed to be a procession of horses or elephants began to thunder up and down the wooden stairs. In vain I tried to snatch the last and best morning nap; there was no end to the racket. So I arose, dressed, and went forth to observe. The inn was already transformed, from top to bottom, into a vast booth for meat and drink. Bedding and all other furniture had disappeared; every room, and even the open hall on each story, was filled with tables, benches, and chairs. My friend of the previous evening, who was going about with a white apron on and sleeves rolled up, said to me: "I am to be one of the waiters today. We have already made places for six hundred."

There were at least a dozen other amateur waiters on hand and busy. The landlord wore a leathern apron, and went from room to room, blowing into the hole of a wooden tap which he carried in his hand, as if thereby to collect his ideas. A barrel of red and a barrel of white wine stood on trestles in the guests' room, and they were already filling the schoppins by hundreds and ranging them on shelves, — honestly filling, not as lager-bier is filled in New York, one third foam, but waiting until the froth subsided, and then pouring to the very brim. In the kitchen there were three fires blazing, stacks of *Bratwurst* on the tables, great kettles for the sour-krout and potatoes; and eggs, lettuce, and other finer viands, for the dignitaries, on the shelves. "Good morning," said the landlady, as I looked into this sanctuary, "you see we are ready for them."

While I was taking my coffee, the landlord called the waiters together, gave each a bag of small money for change, and then delivered a short, practical address concerning their duties for the day, — who were to be trusted and who not, how to keep order and prevent impatience, and, above all, how to preserve a proper circulation, in order that the greatest possible number of persons might be entertained. He closed with: "Once again, take notice and don't forget, every one of you, — *Most* 10 rappen (2 cents), bread 10, *Wurst* 15, tongue 10, wine 25 and 40," etc.

In the village there were signs of preparation, but not a dozen strangers had arrived. Wooden booths had been built against some of the houses, and the owners thereof were arranging their stores of gingerbread and coarse confectionery; on the open, grassy square, in front of the parsonage, stood a large platform, with a handsome railing around it, but the green slope of the hill in front was as deserted as an Alpine pasture. Looking westward over the valley, however, I could already see dark figures moving along the distant paths. The morning was overcast, but the Hundwyl Alp, streaked with snow, stood clear, and there was a prospect of good weather for the important day. As I loitered about the village, talking with the people, who, busy as they were, always found time for a friendly word, the movement in the landscape increased. Out of firwoods, and over the ridges and out of the foldings of the hills, came the Appenzellers, growing into groups, and then into lines, until steady processions began to enter Hundwyl by every road. Every man was dressed in black, with a rusty stove-pipe hat on his head, and a sword and umbrella in his hand or under his arm.

From time to time the church bells chimed; a brass band played the old melodies of the Canton; on each side of the governing Landamman's place on the platform stood a huge two-handed sword, centuries old, and the temper of the gathering crowd became earnest and solemn. Six old men, armed with pikes, walked about with an air of importance: their duty was to preserve order, but they had nothing to do. Policeman other than these, or soldier, was not to be seen; each man was a part of the government, and felt his responsibility. Carriages, light carts, and hay wagons, the latter filled with patriotic singers, now began to arrive, and I took my way to the "Crown," in order to witness the arrival of the members of the Council.

In order to make the proceedings of the day more intelligible, I must first briefly sketch certain features of this little democracy, which it possesses in common with three other mountain cantons — the primitive forms which the republican principle assumed in Switzerland. In the first place the government is only representative so far as is required for its permanent, practical operation. The highest power in the land is the *Landsgemeinde*, or General Assembly of the People, by whom the members of the Executive Council are elected, and who alone can change, adopt, or abolish any law. All citizens above the age of eighteen, and all other Swiss citizens after a year's residence in the Canton, are not only allowed, but required, to attend the *Landsgemeinde*. There is a penalty for non-attendance. Outer-Rhoden contains forty-eight thousand inhabitants, of whom eleven thousand are under obligations to be present and vote, from beginning to end of the deliberations.

In Glarus and Unterwalden, where the population is smaller, the right of discussion is still retained by these assemblies, but in Appenzell it has been found expedien to abolish it. Any change in the law, however, is first discussed in public meetings in the several communities, then put into form by the Council, published, read from all the pulpits for a month previous to the coming together of the *Landsgemeinde*, and then voted upon. But if the Council refuses to act upon the suggestion of any citizen whomsoever, and he honestly considers the matter one of importance, he is allowed to propose it directly to the people, provided he do so briefly and in an orderly manner. The Council, which may be called the executive power, consists of the governing Landamman and six associates, one of whom has the functions of treasurer, another of military commander, — in fact, a ministry on a small scale. The service of the persons elected to the Council is obligatory, and they receive no salaries. There is, it is true, a secondary Council, composed of the first, and representatives of the communities, one for every thousand inhabitants, in order to administer more intelligently the various departments of education, religion, justice, roads, the militia system, the poor, etc.; but the Assembly of the People can at any time reject or reverse its action. All citizens are not only equal before the law, but are assured liberty of conscience, of speech, and of labor. The right of support only belongs to those who are born citizens of the Canton. The old restriction of the *Heimathsrecht*, — the claim to be supported at the expense of the community in case of need, — narrow and illiberal as it seems to us, prevails all over Switzerland. In Appenzell a stranger can only acquire the right, which is really the right of citizenship, by paying twelve hundred francs into the cantonal treasury.

The governing Landamman is elected for two years, but the other members of the Council may be reëlected from year to year, as often as the people see fit. The obligation to serve, therefore, may sometimes seriously incommode the person chosen; he cannot resign, and his only chance of escape lies in leaving the Canton temporarily, and publishing his intention of quitting it altogether in case the people refuse to release him from office! This year, it happened that two members of the Council had already taken this step, while three others had appealed to the people not to reëlect them. The *Landsgemeinde* at Hundwyl was to decide upon all these applications, and therefore promised to be of more than usual interest. The people had had time to consider the matter, and it was supposed had generally made up their minds; yet I found no one willing to give me a hint of their action in advance.

The two remaining members presently made their appearance, accompanied by the Chancellor, to whom I was recommended. The latter kindly offered to accompany me to the parsonage, the windows of which, directly in the rear of the platform, would enable me to hear, as well as see the proceedings. The clergyman, who was preparing for the service which precedes the opening of the *Landsgemeinde*, showed me the nail upon which hung the key of the study, and gave me liberty to take possession at any time. The clock now struck nine, and a solemn peal of bells announced the time of service. A little procession formed in front of the inn; first the music, then the clergyman and the few members of the government, bareheaded, and followed by the two *Weibels* (apparitors), who wore long mantles, the right half white and the left half black. The old pikemen walked on either side. The people uncovered as the dignitaries took their way around the church to the chancel door; then as many as could be accommodated entered at the front.

I entered with them, taking my place on the men's side

— the sexes being divided, as is usual in Germany. After the hymn, in which boy's voices were charmingly heard and the prayer, the clergyman took a text from Corinthians, and proceeded to preach a good, sound political sermon, which, nevertheless, did not in the least shock the honest piety of his hearers. I noticed with surprise that most of the men put on their hats at the close of the prayer. Only once did they remove them afterwards, — when the clergyman, after describing the duties before them, and the evils and difficulties which beset every good work, suddenly said, "Let us pray to God to help and direct us!" and interpolated a short prayer in the midst of his sermon. The effect was all the more impressive, because, though so unexpected, it was entirely simple and natural. These democrats of Appenzell have not yet made the American discovery that pulpits are profaned by any utterance of national sentiment, or any application of Christian doctrine to politics. They even hold their municipal elections in the churches, and consider that the act of voting is thereby solemnized, not that the holy building is desecrated! But then, you will say, this is the democracy of the Middle Ages.

When the service was over, I could scarcely make my way through the throng which had meanwhile collected. The sun had come out hot above the Hundwyl Alp, and turned the sides of the valley into slopes of dazzling sheen. Already every table in the inns was filled, every window crowded with heads, the square a dark mass of voters of all ages and classes, lawyers and clergymen being packed together with grooms and brown Alpine herdsmen; and, after the government had been solemnly escorted to its private chamber, four musicians in antique costume announced, with drum and fife, the speedy opening of the Assembly. But first came the singing societies of Herisau, and forced their way into the centre of the throng where they sang, simply yet grandly, the songs of Appen zell. The people listened with silent satisfaction; not a man seemed to think of applauding.

I took my place in the pastor's study, and inspected the crowd. On the steep slope of the village square and the rising field beyond, more than ten thousand men were gathered, packed as closely as they could stand. The law requires them to appear armed and "respectably dressed." The short swords, very much like our marine cutlasses, which they carried, were intended for show rather than service. Very few wore them: sometimes they were tied up with umbrellas, but generally carried loose in the hand or under the arm. The rich manufacturers of Trogen and Herisau and Teufen had belts and silver-mounted dress-swords. With scarce an exception, every man was habited in black, and wore a stove-pipe hat, but the latter was in most cases brown and battered. Both circumstances were thus explained to me: as the people vote with the uplifted hand, the hat must be of a dark color, as a background, to bring out the hands more distinctly; then, since rain would spoil a good hat (and it rains much at this season), they generally take an old one. I could now understand the advertisements of "second hand cylinder hats for sale," which I had noticed, the day before, in the newspapers of the Canton. The slope of the hill was such that the hats of the lower ranks concealed the faces of those immediately behind, and the assembly was the darkest and densest I ever beheld. Here and there the top of a scarlet waistcoat flashed out of the cloud with astonishing brilliancy.

With solemn music, and attended by the apparitors, in their two colored mantles, and the ancient pikemen, the few officials ascended the platform. The chief of the two Landammänner present took his station in front, between the two-handed swords, and began to address the assembly. Suddenly a dark cloud seemed to roll away from the faces of the people; commencing in front of the platform, and spreading rapidly to the edges of the compact throng, the hats disappeared, and the ten thousand faces, in the full light of the sun, blended into a ruddy mass. But no; each head retained its separate character, and the most surprising circumstance of the scene was the distinctness with which each human being held fast to his individuality in the multitude. Nature has drawn no object with so firm a hand, nor painted it with such tenacious clearness of color, as the face of man. The inverted crescent of sharp light had a different curve on each individual brow before me; the little illuminated dot on the end of the nose under it hinted at the form of the nostrils in shadow. As the hats had before concealed the faces, so now each face was relieved against the breast of the man beyond, and in front of me were thousands of heads to be seen, touching each other like so many ovals drawn on a dark plane.

The address was neither so brief nor so practical as it might have been. Earnest, well meant, and apparently well received, there was nevertheless much in it which the plain, semi-educated weavers and Alpadores in the assembly could not possibly have comprehended; as, for instance, "May a garland of confidence be twined around your deliberations!" At the close, the speaker said, "Let us pray!" and for a few moments there were bowed heads and utter silence. The first business was the financial report for the year, which had been printed and distributed among the people weeks before. They were now asked whether they would appoint a commission to test its accuracy, but they unanimously declined to do so. The question was put by one of the apparitors, who first removed his cocked hat, and cried, in a tremendous voice, "Faithful and beloved fellow-citizens, and brethren of the Union!"

Now came the question of releasing the tired Landammänner of the previous year from office. The first application in order was that of the governing Landamman, Dr. Zürcher. The people voted directly thereupon; there-was a strong division of sentiment, but the majority allowed him to resign. His place was therefore to be filled at once. The names of candidates were called out by the crowd. There were six in all; and as both the members of the Council were among them, the latter summoned six well-known citizens upon the platform, to decide the election. The first vote reduced the number of candidates to two, and the voting was then repeated until one of these received an undoubted majority. Dr. Roth, of Teufen, was the fortunate man. As soon as the decision was announced, several swords were held up in the crowd to indicate where the new governor was to be found. The musicians and pikemen made a lane to him through the multitude, and he was conducted to the platform with the sound of fife and drum. He at once took his place between the swords, and made a brief address, which the people heard with uncovered heads. He did not yet, however, assume the black silk mantle which belongs to his office. He was a man of good presence, prompt, and self-possessed in manner, and conducted the business of the day very successfully.

The election of the remaining members occupied much more time. All the five applicants were released from service, and with scarcely a dissenting hand: wherein, I thought, the people showed very good sense. The case of one of these officials, Herr Euler, was rather hard. He was the *Landessäckelmeister* (Treasurer), and the law makes him personally responsible for every farthing which passes through his hands. Having, with the consent of the Council, invested thirty thousand francs in a banking-house at Rheineck, the failure of the house obliged him to pay this sum out of his own pocket. He did so, and then made preparations to leave the Canton in case his resignation was not accepted.

For most of the places from ten to fourteen candidates were named, and when these were reduced to two, nearly equally balanced in popular favor, the voting became very spirited. The apparitor, who was chosen on account of his strength of voice (the candidates for the office must be tested in this respect), had hard work that day. The same formula must be repeated before every vote, in this wise: "Herr Landamman, gentlemen, faithful and beloved fellow-citizens and brethren of the Union, if it seems good to you to choose so-and-so, as your treasurer for the coming year, so lift up your hands!" Then, all over the dark mass, thousands of hands flew into the sunshine, rested a moment, and gradually sank with a fluttering motion, which made me think of leaves flying from a hill-side forest in the autumn winds. As each election was decided, and the choice was announced, swords were lifted to show the location of the new official in the crowd, and he was then brought upon the platform with fife and drum. Nearly two hours elapsed before the gaps were filled, and the government was again complete.

Then followed the election of judges for the judicial districts, who, in most cases, were almost unanimously re elected. These are repeated from year to year, so long as the people are satisfied. Nearly all the citizens of Outer-Rhoden were before me; I could distinctly see three fourths of their faces, and I detected no expression except that of a grave, conscientious interest in the proceedings. Their patience was remarkable. Closely packed, man against man, in the hot, still sunshine, they stood quietly for nearly three hours, and voted upwards of two hundred and seven times before the business of the day was completed. A few old men on the edges of the crowd slipped away for a quarter of an hour, in order, as one of them told me, "to keep their stomachs from giving way entirely," and some of the younger fellows took a schoppin of *Most* for the same purpose; but they generally returned and resumed their places as soon as refreshed.

The close of the *Landsgemeinde* was one of the most impressive spectacles I ever witnessed. When the elections were over and no further duty remained, the Pastor Etter of Hundwyl ascended the platform. The governing Landamman assumed his black mantle of office, and, after a brief prayer, took the oath of inauguration from the clergyman. He swore to further the prosperity and honor of the land, to ward off misfortune from it, to uphold the Constitution and laws, to protect the widows and orphans, and to secure the equal rights of all, not through favor, hostility, gifts, or promises to be turned aside from doing the same. The clergyman repeated the oath sentence by sentence, both holding up the oath-fingers of the right hand, the people looking on silent and uncovered.

The governing Landamman now turned to the assembly, and read them their oath, that they likewise should further the honor and prosperity of the land, preserve its freedom and its equal rights, obey the laws, protect the Council and the judges, take no gift or favor from any prince or potentate, and that each one should accept and perform, to the best of his ability, any service to which he might be chosen. After this had been read, the Landamman lifted his right hand, with the oath-fingers extended; his colleagues on the platform, and every men of the ten or eleven thousand present did the same. The silence was so profound that the chirp of a bird on the hillside took entire possession of the air. Then the Landamman slowly and solemnly spoke these words: "I have well understood that — which has been read to me; — I will always and exactly observe it, — faithfully and without reservation, — so truly as I wish and pray — that God help me!" At each pause, the same words were repeated by every man, in a low, subdued tone The hush was else so complete, the words were spoken with such measured firmness, that I caught each as it came, not as from the lips of men, but from a vast supernatural murmur in the air. The effect was indescribable. Far off on the horizon was the white vision of an Alp, but all the hidden majesty of those supreme mountains was nothing to the scene before me. When the last words had been spoken, the hands sank slowly, and the crowd stood a moment locked together, with grave faces and gleaming eyes, until the spirit that had descended upon them passed. Then they dissolved; the *Landsgemeinde* was over.

In my inn, I should think more than the expected six hundred had found place. From garret to cellar, every corner was occupied; bread, wine, and steamy dishes passed in a steady whirl from kitchen and tap-room into all the roaring chambers. In the other inns it was the same, and many took their drink and provender in the open air. I met my philosopher of the previous evening, who said, "Now, what do you think of our *Landsgemeinde?*" and followed my answer with his three *Ja's*, the last a more desponding sigh than ever. Since the business was over, I judged that the people would be less reserved — which, indeed, was the case. Nearly all with whom I spoke expressed their satisfaction with the day's work. I walked through the crowds in all directions, vainly seeking for personal beauty. There were few women present, but a handsome man is only less beautiful than a beautiful woman, and I like to look at the former when the latter is absent. I was surprised at the great proportion of undersized men; only weaving, in close rooms, for several generations, could have produced so many squat bodies and short legs. The Appenzellers are neither a handsome nor a picturesque race, and their language harmonizes with their features; but I learned, during that day at Hundwyl, to like and to respect them.

Pastor Etter insisted on my dining with him; two younger clergymen were also guests, and my friend the Chancellor Engwiller came to make further kind offers of service. The people of each parish, I learned, elect their own pastor, and pay him his salary. In municipal matters the same democratic system prevails as in the cantonal government. Education is well provided for, and the morals of the community are watched and guarded by a committee consisting of the pastor and two officials elected by the people. Outer-Rhoden is almost exclusively Protestant, while Inner-Rhoden — the mountain region around the Sentis — is Catholic. Although thus geographically and politically connected, there was formerly little intercourse between the inhabitants of the two parts of the Canton, owing to their religious differences; but now they come together in a friendly way, and are beginning to intermarry.

After dinner, the officials departed in carriages, to the sound of trumpets, and thousands of the people followed Again the roads and paths leading away over the green hills were dark with lines of pedestrians; but a number of those whose homes lay nearest to Hundwyl lingered to drink and gossip out the day. A group of herdsmen, over whose brown faces the high stove-pipe hat looked doubly absurd, gathered in a ring, and while one of them *yodelled* the *Ranz des Vaches* of Appenzell, the others made an accompaniment with their voices, imitating the sound of cowbells. They were lusty, jolly fellows, and their songs hardly came to an end. I saw one man who might be considered as positively drunk, but no other who was more than affectionately and socially excited. Towards sunset they all dropped off, and when the twilight settled down heavy, and threatening rain, there was no stranger but myself in the little village. "I have done tolerably well," said the landlord, "but I can't count my gains until day after to-morrow, when the scores run up to-day must be paid off." Considering that in my own bill lodging was set down at six, and breakfast at twelve cents, even the fifteen hundred guests whom he entertained during the day could not have given him a very splendid profit.

Taking a weaver of the place as guide, I set off early the next morning for the village of Appenzell, the capital of Inner-Rhoden. The way led me back into the valley of the Sitter, thence up towards the Sentis Alp, winding around and over a multitude of hills. The same smooth, even, velvety carpet of grass was spread upon the landscape, covering every undulation of the surface, except where the rocks had frayed themselves through. There is no greener land upon the earth. The grass, from centuries of cultivation, has become so rich and nutritious, that the inhabitants can no longer spare even a little patch of ground for a vegetable garden, for the reason that the same space produces more profit in hay. The green comes up to their very doors, and they grudge even the foot-paths which connect them with their neighbors. Their vegetables are brought up from the lower valleys of Thurgau. The first mowing had commenced at the time of my visit, and the farmers were employing irrigation and manure to bring on the second crop. By this means they are enabled to mow the same fields every five or six weeks. The process gives the whole region a smoothness, a mellow splendor of color, such as I never saw elsewhere, not even in England.

A walk of two hours through such scenery brought me out of the Sitter Tobel, and in sight of the little Alpine basin in which lies Appenzell. It was raining slowly and dismally, and the broken, snow-crowned peaks of the Kamor and the Hohe Kasten stood like livid spectres of mountains against the stormy sky. I made haste to reach the compact, picturesque little town, and shelter myself in an inn, where a landlady with rippled golden hair and features like one of Dante Rossetti's women, offered me trout for dinner. Out of the back window I looked for the shattered summits of the Sentis, which rise five thousand feet above the valley, but they were invisible. The vertical walls of the Ebenalp, in which are the grotto and chapel of Wildkirchli, towered over the nearer hills, and I saw with regret that they were still above the snow line. It was impossible to penetrate much further without better weather; but I decided, while enjoying my trout, to make another trial — to take the road to Urnäsch, and thence pass westward into the renowned valley of the Toggenburg.

The people of Inner-Rhoden are the most picturesque of the Appenzellers. The men wear a round skull-cap of leather, sometimes brilliantly embroidered, a jacket of coarse drilling, drawn on over the head, and occasionally knee-breeches. Early in May the herdsmen leave their winter homes in the valleys and go with their cattle to the *Matten*, or lofty mountain pastures. The most intelligent cows, selected as leaders for the herd, march, in advance, with enormous bells, sometimes a foot in diameter, suspended to their necks by bands of embroidered leather; then follow the others, and the bull, who, singularly enough carries the milking-pail garlanded with flowers, between his horns, brings up the rear. The Alpadores are in their finest Sunday costume, and the sound of yodel-songs — the very voice of Alpine landscapes — echoes from every hill. Such a picture as this, under the cloudless blue of a fortunate May day, makes the heart of the Appenzeller light. He goes joyously up to his summer labor, and makes his herb-cheese on the heights, while his wife weaves and embroiders muslin in the valley until his return.

In the afternoon I set out for Urnäsch, with a bright boy as guide. Hot gleams of sunshine now and then struck like fire across the green mountains, and the Sentis partly unveiled his stubborn forehead of rock. Behind him, however, lowered inky thunder-clouds, and long before the afternoon's journey was made it was raining below and snowing aloft. The scenery grew more broken and abrupt the further I penetrated into the country, but it was everywhere as thickly peopled and as wonderfully cultivated. At Gonten, there is a large building for the whey-cure of overfed people of the world. A great many such, I was told, come to Appenzell for the summer. Many of the persons we met not only said, "God greet you!" but immediately added, "Adieu!" — like the *Salve et vale!* of classical times.

Beyond Gonten the road dropped into a wild ravine, the continual windings of which rendered it very attractive. I found enough to admire in every farm-house by the wayside, with its warm wood-color, its quaint projecting balconies, and coat of shingle mail. When the ravine opened, and the deep valley of Urnäsch, before me, appeared between cloven heights of snow, disclosing six or eight square miles of perfect emerald, over which the village is scattered, I was fully repaid for having pressed farther into the heart of the land. There were still two hours until night, and I might have gone on to the Rossfall, — a cascade three or four miles higher up the valley, — but the clouds were threatening, and the distant mountain-sides already dim under the rain.

At the village inn I found several herdsmen and mechanics, each with a bottle of Rheinthaler wine before him. They were ready and willing to give me all the information I needed. In order to reach the Toggenburg, they said, I must go over the Krätzernwald. It was sometimes a dangerous journey; the snow was many cubits deep, and at this time of the year it was frequently so soft, that a man would sink to his hips. To-day, however, there had been thunder, and after thunder the snow is always hard-packed, so that you can walk on it; but to cross the Krätzernwald without a guide, — never! For two hours you were in a wild forest, not a house, nor even a *Sennhütt'* (herdsman's cabin) to be seen, and no proper path, but a clambering hither and thither, in snow and mud; with this weather, — yes, one *could* get into Toggenburg that way, they said, but not alone, and only because there had been thunder on the mountains.

But all night the rain beat against my chamber window, and in the morning the lower slopes on the mountains were gray with new snow, which no thunder had packed. Indigo-colored clouds lay heavily on all the Alpine peaks, the air was raw and chilly, and the roads slippery. In such weather the scenery is not only shrouded, but the people are shut up in their homes, — wherefore further travel would not have been repaid. I had already seen the greater part of the little land, and so gave up my thwarted plans the more cheerfully. When the post-omnibus for Herisau came to the inn door, I took my seat therein, saying, like Schiller's "Sennbub'," "*Ihr Matten, lebt wohl! ihr sonnige Weiden!*"

The country became softer and lovelier as the road gradually fell towards Herisau, which is the richest and stateliest town of the Canton. I saw little of it except the hospitable home of my friend the Chancellor, for we had brought the Alpine weather with us. The architecture of the place, nevertheless, is charming, the town being composed of country-houses, balconied and shingled, and set down together in the most irregular way, every street shooting off at a different angle. A mile beyond, I reached the edge of the mountain region, and again looked down upon the prosperous valley of St. Gall. Below me was the railway, and as I sped towards Zurich that afternoon, the top of the Sentis, piercing through a mass of dark rain-clouds, was my last glimpse of the Little Land of Appenzell.

FROM PERPIGNAN TO MONTSERRAT.

"OUT of France and into Spain," says the old nursery rhyme; but at the eastern base of the Pyrenees one seems to have entered Spain before leaving France. The rich vine-plains of Roussillon once belonged to the former country; they retain quite as distinct traces of the earlier Moorish occupancy, and their people speak a dialect almost identical with that of Catalonia. I do not remember the old boundaries of the province, but I noticed the change immediately after leaving Narbonne. Vine-green, with the grays of olive and rock, were the only colors of the landscape. The towns, massive and perched upon elevations, spoke of assault and defense; the laborers in the fields were brown, dark-haired, and grave, and the semi-African silence of Spain seemed already to brood over the land.

I entered Perpignan under a heavy Moorish gateway, and made my way to a hostel through narrow, tortuous streets, between houses with projecting balconies, and windows few and small, as in the Orient. The hostel, though ambitiously calling itself a hotel, was filled with that Mediterranean atmosphere and odor which you breathe everywhere in Italy and the Levant, — a single characteristic flavor, in which, nevertheless, you fancy you detect the exhalations of garlic, oranges, horses, cheese, and oil. A mild whiff of it stimulates the imagination, and is no detriment to physical comfort. When, at breakfast, red mullet came upon the table, and oranges fresh from the tree, I straightway took off my Northern nature as a garment, folded it and packed it neatly away in my knapsack, and took, out in its stead, the light, beribboned, and bespangled Southern nature, which I had not worn for some eight or nine years. It was like a dressing-gown after a dress-coat, and I went about with a delightfully free play of the mental and moral joints.

There were four hours before the departure of the diligence for Spain, and I presume I might have seen various historical or architectural sights of Perpignan; but I was really too comfortable for anything else than a lazy meandering about the city, feeding my eyes on quaint houses groups of people full of noise and gesture, the scarlet blossoms of the pomegranate, and the glitter of citron-leaves in the gardens. A one-legged fellow, seven feet high, who called himself a *commissionaire*, insisted on accompanying me, and I finally accepted him, for two reasons; — first, he knew nothing whatever about the city; and secondly, tourists are so rare that he must have been very poor. His wooden leg, moreover, easily kept pace with my loitering steps, and though, as a matter of conscience, he sometimes volunteered a little information, he took my silence meekly and without offense. In this wise, I gained some pleasant pictures of the place; and the pictures which come with least effort are those which remain freshest in memory.

There was one point, however, where my limping giant made a stand, and set his will against expostulation or entreaty. I *must* see the avenue of sycamores, he said; there was plenty of time; France, the world, had no such avenue; it was near at hand; every stranger went to see it and was amazed; — and therewith he set off, without waiting for my answer. I followed, for I saw that otherwise he would not have considered his fee earned. The avenue of sycamores was indeed all that he had promised. I had seen larger trees in Syria and Negropont, but here was a triple avenue, nearly half a mile in length, so trained and sculptured that they rivaled the regularity of masonry. Each trunk, at the height of ten or twelve feet, divided into two arms, which then leaned outwards at the same angle, and mingled their smaller boughs, fifty feet overhead The aisles between them thus took the form of very slender pyramids, truncated near the top. If the elm gives the Gothic, this was assuredly the Cyclopean arch. In the beginning, the effect must have been artificially produced, but the trees were now so old, and had so accustomed themselves to the forms imposed, that no impression of force or restraint remained. Through the roof of this superb green minster not a beam of sunshine found its way. On the hard gravel floor groups of peasants, soldiers, nurses, and children strolled up and down, all with the careless and leisurely air of a region where time has no particular value.

We passed a dark-haired and rather handsome gentleman and lady. "They are opera-singers, Italians," said my companion, "and they are going with you in the diligence." I looked at my watch and found that the hour of departure had nearly arrived, and I should have barely time to procure a little Spanish money. When I reached the office, the gentleman and lady were already installed in the two corners of the *coupé*. My place, apparently, was between them. The agent was politely handing me up the steps, when the gentleman began to remonstrate; but in France the regulations are rigid, and he presently saw that the intrusion could not be prevented. With a sigh and a groan he gave up his comfortable corner to me, and took the middle seat, for which I was booked! "Will you have your place?" whispered the agent. I shook my head. "You get the best seat, don't you see?" he resumed, "because" — But the rest of the sentence was a wink and a laugh. I am sure there is the least possible of a Don Juan in my appearance; yet this agent never lost an opportunity to wink at me whenever he came near the diligence, and I fancied I heard him humming to himself, as we drove away, —

"Ma — nella Spagna — mille e tre!"

I endeavored to be reasonably courteous, without familiarity, towards the opera-singers, but the effect of the malicious winks and smiles made the lady appear to me timid and oppressed, and the gentleman an unexploded mine of jealousy. My remarks were civilly if briefly answered, and then they turned towards each other and began conversing in a language which was not Italian, although melodious, nor French, although nasal. I pricked up my ears and listened more sharply than good manners allowed — but only until I had recognized the Portuguese tongue. Whomsoever I may meet in wandering over the world, it rarely happens that I cannot discover some common or "mutual" friend, and in this instance I determined to try the experiment. After preliminaries, which gently led the conversation to Portugal, I asked, —

"Do you happen to know Count M———?"

"Only by name."

"Or Senhor O———, a young man and an astronomer?"

"Very well!" was the reply. "He is one of the most distinguished young men of science in Portugal."

The ice was thereupon broken, and the gentleman became communicative and agreeable. I saw, very soon, that the pair were no more opera-singers than they were Italians; that the lady was not timid, nor her husband jealous; but he had simply preferred, as any respectable husband would, to give up his comfortable seat rather than have a stranger thrust between himself and his wife.

Once out of Perpignan, the Pyrenees lay clear before us. Over bare red hills, near at hand, rose a gray mountain rampart, neither lofty nor formidable; but westward, between the valleys of the Tech and the Tet, towered the solitary pyramid of the Canigou, streaked with snow-filled ravines. The landscapes would have appeared bleak and melancholy, but for the riotous growth of vines which cover the plain and climb the hillsides wherever there is room for a terrace of earth. These vines produce the dark, rich wine of Roussillon, the best vintage of Southern France. Hedges of aloes, clumps of Southern cypress, poplars by the dry beds of winter streams, with brown tints in the houses and red in the soil, increased the resemblance to Spain. Rough fellows, in rusty velvet, who now and then dug their dangling heels into the sides of the mules or asses they rode, were enough like *arrieros* or *contrabandistas* to be the real article. Our stout and friendly coachman, even, was hailed by the name of Moreno, and spoke French with a foreign accent.

At the post-station of Le Boulou, we left the plain of Roussillon behind us. At this end of the Pyrenean chain there are no such trumpet-names as Roncesvalles, Fontarabia, and Bidassoa. Hannibal, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and the Saracens have marched through these defiles, and left no grand historic footprint, but they will always keep the interest which belongs to those natural barriers and division walls whereby races and histories were once separated. It was enough for me that here were the Pyrenees, and I looked forward, perhaps, with a keener curiosity, to the character and forms of their scenery, than to the sentiment which any historic association could produce. A broad and perfect highway led us through shallow valleys, whose rocky sides were hung with rows of olive-trees, into wilder and more abrupt dells, where vegetation engaged in a struggle with stone, and without man's help would have been driven from the field. Over us the mountains lifted themselves in bold bastions and parapets, disforested now, if those gray upper plateaus ever bore forests, and of a uniform slaty gray in tone except where reddish patches of oxidation showed like the rust of age.

But, like "all waste and solitary places," the scenery had its own peculiar charm. Poussin and Salvator Rosa would have seated themselves afresh at every twist of the glen, and sketched the new picture which it unfolded. The huge rocks, fallen from above, or shattered in the original upheaval of the chain, presented a thousand sharp, forcible outlines and ragged facets of shadow, and the two native growths of the Pyrenees — box and cork-oak — fringed them as thickets or overhung them as trees, in the wildest and most picturesque combinations. Indeed, during this portion of the journey, I saw scores of sketches waiting for the selected artist who has not yet come for them, — sketches full of strength and beauty, and with a harmony of color as simple as the chord of triple tones in music. When to their dark grays and greens came the scarlet Phrygian cap of the Catalonian, it was brighter than sunshine.

The French fortress of Bellegarde, crowning a drum-shaped mass of rock, which blocked up the narrow valley in front, announced our approach to the Spanish frontier. The road wound back and forth as it climbed through a stony wilderness to the mouth of a gorge under the fortress, and I saw, before we entered this last gateway into Spain, the peak of the Canigou touched with sunset, and the sweep of plain beyond it black under the shadow of storm-clouds. On either side were some heaps of stone, left from forts and chapels of the Middle Ages, indicating that we had already reached the summit of the pass, which is less than a thousand feet above the sea-level. In ten minutes the gorge opened, and we found ourselves suddenly rattling along the one street of the gay French village of Perthus. Officers from Bellegarde sat at the table in front of the smart *café*, and drank absinthe; soldiers in red trousers chatted with the lively women who sold tobacco and groceries; there were trees, little gardens, arbors of vine, and the valley opened southwards, descending and broadening towards a cloudless evening sky.

At the end of the village I saw a granite pyramid, with the single word "Gallia" engraved upon it; a few paces farther, two marble posts bore the half-obliterated arms of Spain. Here the diligence paused a moment, and an officer of customs took his seat beside the coachman. The telegraph pole behind us was of barked pine, the next one in front was painted gray; the *vente de tabac* became *estanco nacional*, and the only overlapping of the two nationalities which I observed — all things else being suddenly and sharply divided — was that some awkward and dusty Spanish soldiers were walking up the street of Perthus, and some trim, jaunty French soldiers were walking down the road, towards the first Spanish wine-shop. We also went down, and swiftly, in the falling twilight, through which, erelong, gardens and fields began to glimmer. and in half an hour drew up in the little Spanish town of La Junquera, the ancient "place of rushes." Here there was a rapid and courteous examination of baggage, a call for passports, which were opened and then handed back to us without *visé* or fee being demanded, and we were declared free to journey in Spain. Verily the world is becoming civilized, when Spain, the moral satrapy of Rome, begins to pull down her barriers and let the stranger in!

I inspected our "insides," as they issued forth, and found, in addition to a priest and three or four commercial individuals with a contraband air, a young French naval officer, and an old German who was too practical for a professor and too stubborn in his views to be anything else. He had made fifteen journeys to Switzerland, he informed me, knew Scotland from the Cheviots to John o' Groat's, and now proposed the conquest of Spain. Here Moreno summoned us to our places, and the diligence rolled onward. Past groups of Catalans, in sandals and scarlet bonnets, returning from the harvest fields; past stacks of dusky grain and shadowy olive-orchards; past open houses, where a single lamp sometimes flashed upon a woman's head; past a bonfire, turning the cork-trees into transparent bronze, and past the sound of water, plunging under the idle mill-wheel, in the cool, delicious summer air, — we journeyed on. The stars were beginning to gather in the sky, when square towers and masses of cubic houses rose against them. and the steady roll of our wheels on the smooth highway became a dreadful clatter on the rough cobble-stones of Figueras.

The Pyrenees were already behind us; the town overlooks a wide, marshy plain. But the mountains make their vicinity felt in a peculiar manner. The north-wind, gathered into the low pass of Bellegarde and drawn to a focus of strength, blows down the opening valley with a force which sometimes lays an embargo on travel. Diligences are overturned, postilions blown out of their saddles, and pedestrians carried off their feet. The people then pray to their saints that the *tramontana* may cease; but, on the other hand, as it is a very healthy wind, sweeping away the feverish exhalations from the marshy soil, they get up a grand annual procession to some mountain-shrine of the Virgin, and pray that it may blow. So, when the Virgin takes them at their word, the saints are invoked on the other side, and the wonder is that both parties don't get out of patience with the people of Figueras.

The diligence drew up at the door of a *fonda*, and Moreno announced that we were to take supper and wait until midnight. This was welcome news to all; but the old German drew me aside as we entered the house, and whispered, "Now our stomachs are going to be tried." "Not at all," I answered, "we shall find very good provender." "But the guide-book says it is very bad," he persisted. And he looked despondent, even with a clean table-cloth and a crisp roll of bread before him, until the soup steamed under his nose. His face brightened at the odor, grew radiant at the flavor, and long before we reached the roast pullet and salad, he expressed his satisfaction with Spanish cookery. With the dessert came a *vino rancio*, full of summer fire, and the tongues of the company were loosened. From the weather and the Paris Exposition we leaped boldly into politics, and, being on Spanish soil, discussed France and the Mexican business. The French officer was silent and annoyed; he was a pleasant fellow, and I, for one, had a little sympathy with his annoyance, but I could not help saying that all Americans (except the

Rev. ——) considered the action of France as an outrage and an impertinence, and were satisfied with her miserable failure. The Spanish passengers nodded and smiled.

I should not have spoken, had I foreseen one consequence of my words. The German snatched the reins of conversation out of our hands, and dashed off at full speed, trampling France and her ruler under his feet. At the first pause, I said to him, in German: "Pray don't be so violent in your expressions, — the gentleman beside me is a naval officer." But he answered: "I don't care, I must speak my mind, which I could not do in Paris. France has been the curse of Spain, as well as of all Europe, and there will be no peace until we put a stop to her pretensions!" Thereupon he said the same thing to the company; but the Spaniards were too politic to acquiesce openly. The officer replied, "France has not injured Spain, but, on the contrary, has protected her!" and he evidently had not the slightest suspicion that there was anything offensive in his words. The Spaniards still remained silent, but another expression came into their eyes. It was time to change the subject; so the principle of non-intervention, in its fullest, most literal sense, was proposed and accepted. A grave Majorcan gentleman distributed cigars; his daughter, with her soft, melodious voice, was oil to the troubled waters, and before midnight we were all equally courteous and cosmopolitan.

Of the four ensuing hours I can give no account. Neither asleep nor awake, hearing with closed eyes or see-with half-closed senses, one can never afterwards distinguish between what is seen and what is dreamed. This is a state in which the body may possibly obtain some rest, but the mind becomes inexpressibly fatigued. One's memory of it is a blurred sketch, a faded daguerreotype. I welcomed that hour when —

"The wind blows cold
While the morning doth unfold."

for it blew away this film, which usurped the place of the blessed mantle of sleep. Chill, even here in African Spain, where the pale pearl of the dawn foretold a burning noon, and where in May, the harvests were already reaped, the morning brightened; but we were near the end of the journey. At sunrise, the towers of Girona stood fast and firm over the misty level of the shimmering olive-groves; then the huge dull mass of the cathedral, the walls and bastions of the hill-forts, which resisted a siege of seven months during the Peninsular War, and finally the monotonous streets of the lower town, through which we drove.

The industrious Catalans were already awake and stirring. Smokes from domestic hearths warmed the cool morning air; cheerful noises of men, animals, and fowls broke the silence; doors were open as we entered the town, and the women were combing and twisting their black hair in the shadows within. At the post some brown grooms lounged about the door. A priest passed, — a genuine Don Basilio, in inky gown and shovel hat; and these graceless grooms looked after him, thrust their tongues into their cheeks, and made an irreverent grimace. The agent at Perpignan came into my mind; I winked at the fellows, without any clear idea wherefore, but it must have expressed something, for they burst into a laugh and repeated the grimace.

The lower town seemed to be of immense length. Once out of it, a superb avenue of plane trees received us, at the end of which was the railway station. In another hour the train would leave for Barcelona. Our trunks must be again examined. When I asked the reason why this annoying regulation, obsolete elsewhere in Europe, is here retained, the Spaniards gravely informed me that, if it were abolished, a great many people would be thrown out of employment. Not that they get much pay for the examination, — but they are constantly bribed not to examine! There was a *café* attached to the station, and I advised my fellow-passengers to take a cup of the delicious ropy chocolate of Spain, after which one accepts the inevitable more patiently.

I found the landscapes from Girona to Barcelona very bright and beautiful. Our locomotive had fallen into the national habit: it was stately and deliberate, it could not be hurried, its very whistle was subdued and dignified. We went forward at an easy pace, making about fifteen miles an hour, which enabled me to notice the patient industry of the people, as manifested on every plain and hillside. The Catalans are called rough and ungraceful; beside the sprightly Andalusians they seem cold and repellent; they have less of that blue blood which makes the beggar as proud as the grandee, but they possess the virtue of labor, which, however our artistic tastes may undervalue it, is the basis from which all good must spring. When I saw how the red and rocky hills were turned into garden-terraces, how the olive-trees were pruned into health and productiveness, how the wheat stood so thick that it rolled but stiffly under the breeze, I forgot the jaunty *majos* of Seville, and gave my hearty admiration to the strong-backed reapers in the fields of Catalonia.

The passengers we took up on the way, though belonging to the better class, and speaking Spanish whenever it was necessary, all seemed to prefer the popular dialect. Proprietors of estates and elegant young ladies conversed together in the rough patois of the peasants, which to me was especially tantalizing, because it sounded so familiar. and yet was so unintelligible. It is in reality the old *langue limousine* of France, kindred to the Provençal, and differs very slightly from the dialect spoken on the other side of the Pyrenees. It is terse, forcible, and expressive, and I must confess that the lisping Spanish, beside it, seems to gain in melody at the expense of strength.

We approached Barcelona across the wide plain of the Llobregat, where orange gardens and factory chimneys, fountains "i' the midst of roses," and machine-shops full of grimy workmen, succeed each other in a curious tangle of poetry and greasy fact. The Mediterranean gleams in a blue line on the left, the citadel of Monjuich crowns a bluff in front; but the level city hides itself behind the foliage of the plain, and is not seen. At the station you wait half an hour, until the baggage is again deposited on the dissecting-tables of the custom officers; and here, if, instead of joining the crowd of unhappy murmurers in the ante-room, you take your station in the doorway, looking down upon porters, peddlers, idlers, and policemen, you are sure to be diverted by a little comedy acted in pantomime. An outside porter has in some way interfered with the rights of a station-porter; a policeman steps between the two, the latter of whom, lifting both hands to heaven in a wild appeal, brings them down swiftly and thrusts them out before him, as if descending to earthly justice. The outsider goes through the same gestures, and then both, with flashing eyes and open mouths, teeth glittering under the drawn lips, await the decision. The policeman first makes a sabre-cut with his right arm, then with his left; then also lifts his hands to heaven, shakes them there a moment, and, turning as he brings them down, faces the outside porter. The latter utters a passionate cry, and his arms begin to rise; but he is seized by the shoulder and turned aside; the crowd closes in, and the comedy is over.

We have a faint interest in Barcelona for the sake of Columbus; but, apart from this one association, we set it down beside Manchester, Lowell, and other manufacturing cities. It was so crowded within its former walls, that little space was left for architectural display. In many of the streets I doubt whether four persons could walk abreast. Only in the Rambla, a broad central boulevard, is there any chance for air and sunshine, and all the leisure and pleasure of the city is poured into this one avenue. Since the useless walls have been removed, an ambitious modern suburb is springing up on the west, and there will, in time, be a new city better than the old.

This region appears to be the head-quarters of political discontent in Spain, — probably because the people get to be more sensible of the misrule under which they languish, in proportion as they become more active and industrious. Nothing could have been more peaceable upon the surface than the aspect of things; the local newspapers never reported any disturbance, yet intelligence of trouble in Catalonia was circulating through the rest of Europe, and *something* — I could not ascertain precisely what it was — took place during my brief visit. The telegraph-wires were cut, and some hundreds of soldiers were sent into the country; but the matter was never mentioned, unless two persons whom I saw whispering together in the darkest corner of a *café* were discussing it. I believe, if a battle had been fought within hearing of the cannon, the Barcelonese would have gone about the streets with the same placid, unconcerned faces. Whether this was cunning, phlegm, or the ascendency of solid material interests over the fiery, impulsive nature of the Spaniard, was not clear to a passing observer. In either case it was a prudent course.

If, in the darkened streets — or rather lanes — of Barcelona, I saw some suggestive pictures; if the court-yard of the cathedral, with its fountains and orange-trees, seemed a thousand miles removed from the trade and manufacture of the city; if the issuing into sunshine on the mole was like a blow in the eyes, to which the sapphire bloom of the Mediterranean became a healing balm; and if the Rambla, towards evening, changed into a shifting diorama of color and cheerful life, — none of these things inclined me to remain longer than the preparation for my further journey required. Before reaching the city, I had caught a glimpse, far up the valley of the Llobregat, of a high, curiously serrated mountain, and that old book of the "Wonders of the World" (now, alas! driven from the library of childhood) opened its pages and showed its rough woodcuts, in memory, to tell me what the mountain was. How many times has that wonderful book been the chief charm of my travels, causing me to forget Sulpicius on the Ægean Sea, Byron in Italy, and Humboldt in Mexico!

To those who live in Barcelona, Montserrat has become a common-place, the resort of Sunday excursions and picnics, one fourth devotional, and three fourths epicurean. Wild, mysterious, almost inaccessible as it stands in one's fancy, it sinks at this distance into the very material atmosphere of railroad and omnibus; but, for all that, we are not going to give it up, though another "Wonder of the World" should go by the board. Take the Tarragona train then with me, on a cloudless afternoon. In a few minutes the scattered suburban blocks are left behind, and we enter the belt of villas, with their fountained terraces and tropical gardens. More and more the dark red earth shows through the thin foliage of the olives, as the hills draw nearer, and it finally gives color to the landscapes. The vines covering the levels and lower slopes are wonderfully luxuriant; but we can see how carefully they are cultivated. Hedges of aloe and cactus divide them; here and there some underground cavern has tumbled in, letting down irregular tracts of soil, and the vines still flourish at the bottom of the pits thus made. As the plain shrinks to a valley, the hills on either side ascend into rounded summits, which begin to be dark with pine forests; villages with square, brown church-towers perch on the lower heights; cotton-mills draw into their service the scanty waters of the river, and the appearance of cheerful, thrifty labor increases as the country becomes rougher.

All this time the serrated mountain is drawing nearer, and breaking into a wilder confusion of pinnacles. It stands alone, planted across the base of a triangular tract of open country, — a strange, solitary, exiled peak, drifted away in the beginning of things from its brethren of the Pyrenees, and stranded in a different geological period. This circumstance must have long ago impressed the inhabitants of the region — even in the ante-historic ages. When Christianity rendered a new set of traditions necessary, the story arose that the mountain was thus split and shattered at the moment when Christ breathed his last on the cross of Calvary. This is still the popular belief; but the singular formation of Montserrat, independent of it, was sufficient to fix the anchoretic tastes of the early Christians. It is set apart by Nature, not only towering above all the surrounding heights, but drawing itself haughtily away from contact with them, as if conscious of its earlier origin.

At the station of Martorel I left the train, and took a coach which was in waiting for the village of Collbató, at the southern base of the mountain. My companion in the *coupé* was a young cotton-manufacturer, who assured me that in Spain the sky and soil were good, but the *entresol* (namely, the human race) was bad. The interior was crowded with country-women, each of whom seemed to have four large baskets. I watched the driver for half an hour attempting to light a broken cigar, and then rewarded his astonishing patience with a fresh one, whereby we became good friends. Such a peaceful light lay upon the landscape, the people were so cheerful, the laborers worked so quietly in the vineyards, that the thought of a political disturbance the day before seemed very absurd. The olive-trees, which clothed the hills wherever their bony roots could find the least lodgment of soil, were of remarkably healthy and vigorous growth, and the regular cubic form into which they were pruned marked the climbing terraces with long lines of gray light, as the sun slanted across them.

"You see," said the Spaniard, as I noticed this peculiarity, "the *entresol* is a little better in this neighborhood than elsewhere in Spain. The people cut the trees into this shape in order that they may become more compact and produce better; besides which, the fruit is more easily gathered. In all those orchards you will not find a decayed or an unhealthy tree; such are dug up and burned, and young ones planted in their place."

At the village of Esparaguerra the other passengers left, and I went on towards Collbató alone. But I had Montserrat for company, towering more grandly, more brokenly, from minute to minute. Every change in the foreground gave me a new picture. Now it was a clump of olives with twisted trunks; now an aloe, lifting its giant candelabrum of blossoms from the edge of a rock; now a bank of dull vermilion earth, upon which goats were hanging. The upper spires of the mountain disappeared behind its basal buttresses of gray rock, a thousand feet in perpendicular height, and the sinking sun, as it crept westward, edged these with sharp lines of light. Up, under the tremendous cliffs, and already in shadow, lay Collbató, and I was presently set down at the gate of the *posada.*

Don Pedro, the host, came forward to meet and welcome me, and his pretty daughter, sitting on the steps, rose up and dropped a salute. In the entrance hall I read, painted in large letters on the wall, the words of St. Augustine: "*In necessariis unitas; in dubiis libertas; in omnibus, caritas.*" Verily, thought I, Don Pedro must be a character. I had no sooner comfortably seated myself in the doorway to contemplate the exquisite evening landscape, which the Mediterranean bounded in the distance, and await my supper, than Don Pedro ordered his daughter to bring the guests' book, and then betook himself to the task of running down a lean chicken. In the record of ten years I found that Germans were the most frequent visitors; Americans appeared but thrice. One party of the latter registered themselves as "gentlemen," and stated that they had seen the "prom*a*nent points," — which gave occasion to a later Englishman to comment upon the intelligence of American gentlemen. The host's daughter, Pepita, was the theme of praise in prose and raptures in poetry.

"Are you Pepita?" I asked, turning to the girl, who sat on the steps before me, gazing into the evening sky with an expression of the most indolent happiness. I noticed for the first time, and admired, her firm, regular, almost Roman profile and the dark masses of *real* hair on her head. Her attitude, also, was very graceful, and she would have been, to impressible eyes, a phantom of delight, but for the ungraceful fact that she inveterately scratched herself whenever and wherever a flea happened to bite.

"No, señor," she answered; "I am Carmen. Pepita was married first, and then Mariquita. Angelita and myself are the only ones at home."

"I see there is also a poem to Angelita," I remarked, turning over the last leaves.

"O, that was a poet!" said she, — "a funny man! Everybody knows him: he writes for the theatre, and all that is about some eggs which Angelita fried for him. We can't understand it all, but we think it's good-natured."

Here the mother came, not as duenna, but as companion, with her distaff and spindle, and talked and span until I could no longer distinguish the thread against her gray dress. When the lean chicken was set before me, Don Pedro announced that a mule and guide would be in readiness at sunrise, and I could, if I chose, mount to the topmost peak of San Geronimo. In the base of the mountain, near Collbató, there are spacious caverns, which most travellers feel bound to visit; but I think that six or seven caves, one coal mine, and one gold mine are enough for a life-time, and have renounced any further subterranean researches. Why delve into those dark, moist, oppressive crypts, when the blessed sunshine of years shows one so little of the earth and of human life? Let any one that chooses come and explore the caverns of Montserrat, and then tell me (as people have a passion for doing), "You missed the best!" The best is that with which one is satisfied.

Instead of five o'clock, when I should have been called, I awoke naturally at six, and found that Don Pedro had set out for San Geronimo four hours before, while neither guide nor mule was forthcoming. The old woman pointed to some specks far up in the shadow of the cliffs, which she assured me were travellers, and would arrive with mules in fifteen minutes. But I applied the words *in dubiis libertas*, and insisted on an immediate animal and guide, both of which, somewhat to my surprise, were produced. The black mule was strong, and the lank old Catalan shouldered my heavy valise and walked off without a murmur. The sun was already hot; but once risen above the last painfully constructed terrace of olives, and climbing the stony steep, we dipped into the cool shadow of the mountain. The path was difficult but not dangerous, winding upward through rocks fringed with dwarf ilex, box, and mastic, which made the air fragrant. Thyme, wild flax, and aconite blossomed in the crevices. The botany of the mountain is as exceptional as its geology; it includes five hundred different species.

The box-tree, which my Catalan guide called *bōsch* in his dialect, is a reminiscence, wherever one sees it, of Italy and Greece — of ancient culture and art. Its odor, as Holmes admirably says, suggests eternity. If it was not the first plant that sprang up on the cooling planet, it ought to have been. Its glossy mounds, and rude, statesque clumps, which often seem struggling to mould themselves into human shape, cover with beauty the terrible rocks of Montserrat. M. Delavigne had warned me of the dangers of the path I was pursuing, — walls on one side, and chasms a thousand feet deep on the other, — but the box everywhere shaped itself into protecting figures, and whispered as I went by, "Never fear; if you slip, I will hold you!"

The mountain is an irregular cone, about thirty-five hundred feet in height, and cleft down the middle by a torrent which breaks through its walls on the northeastern side. It presents a perpendicular face, which seems inaccessible, for the shelves between the successive elevations, when seen from below, appear as narrow fringes of vegetation, growing out of one unbroken wall. They furnish, indeed, but scanty room for the bridle-path, which at various points is both excavated and supported by arches of masonry. After nearly an hour, I found myself over Collbató, upon the roofs of which, it seemed, I might fling a stone. At the next angle of the mountain, the crest was attained, and I stood between the torn and scarred upper wilderness of Montserrat on the one hand, and the broad, airy sweep of landscape, bounded by the sea, on the other. To the northward a similar cape thrust out its sheer walls against the dim, dissolving distances, and it was necessary to climb along the sides of the intervening gulf, which sank under me into depths of shadow. Every step of the way was inspiring, for there was the constant threat, without the reality, of danger. My mule paced securely along the giddy brinks; and through the path seemed to terminate fifty paces ahead, I was always sure to find a loop-hole or coigne of vantage which the box and mastic had hidden from sight. So in another hour the opposite foreland was attained, and from its crest I saw, all along the northern horizon, the snowy wall of the Pyrenees.

Here a path branched off to the peak of San Geronimo, — a two hours' clamber through an absolute desert of rock. My guide, although panting and sweating with his load, proposed the ascent; but in the film of heat which overspread the land I should have only had a wider panorama in which all distinct forms were lost, — vast, no doubt, but as blurred and intangible as a metaphysical treatise. I judged it better to follow the example of a pious peasant and his wife whom we had overtaken, and who, setting their faces toward the renowned monastery, murmured an *Ave* from time to time. Erelong, on emerging from the thickets, we burst suddenly upon one of the wildest and most wonderful pictures I ever beheld. A tremendous wall of rock arose in front, crowned by colossal turrets, pyramids, clubs, pillars, and ten-pin shaped masses, which were drawn singly, or in groups of incredible distortion, against the deep blue of the sky. At the foot of the rock, the buildings of the monastery, huge and massive, the church, the houses for pilgrims, and the narrow gardens, completely filled and almost overhung a horizontal shelf of the mountain, under which it again fell sheer away, down, down into misty depths, the bottom of which was hidden from sight. I dropped from the mule, sat down upon the grass, and, under pretense of sketching, studied this picture for an hour. In all the galleries of memory I could find nothing resembling it.

The descriptions of Montserrat must have made a powerful impression upon Goethe's mind, since he deliberately appropriated the scenery for the fifth act of the Second Part of Faust. Goethe was in the steadfast habit of choosing a local and actual habitation for the creations of his imagination; his landscapes were always either painted from nature, or copied from the sketch-books of others. The marvelous choruses of the fifth act floated through my mind as I drew; the "Pater Ecstaticus" hovered in the sunny air, the anchorites chanted from their caves, and the mystic voices of the undeveloped child-spirits came between, like the breathing of an Æolian harp. I suspect that the sanctity of the mountain really depends as much upon its extraordinary forms, as upon the traditions which have been gradually attached to it. These latter, however, are so strange and grotesque, that they could only be accepted here.

The monastery owes its foundation to a miraculous statue of the Virgin, sculptured by St. Luke, and brought to Spain by no less a personage than St. Peter. In the year 880, some shepherds who had climbed the mountain in search of stray goats heard celestial harmonies among the rocks. This phenomenon coming to the ears of Bishop Gondemar, he climbed to the spot, and was led by the music to the mouth of a cave, which exhaled a delicious perfume. There, enshrined in light, lay the sacred statue. Gondemar and his priests, chanting as they went, set out for Manresa, the seat of the diocese, carrying it with them; but on reaching a certain spot, they found it impossible to move farther. The statue obstinately refused to accompany them — which was taken as a sign that there, and nowhere else, the shrine should be built. Just below the monastery there still stands a cross, with the inscription, "Here the Holy Image declared itself immovable, 880."

The chapel when built was intrusted to the pious care of Fray Juan Garin, whose hermitage is pointed out to you, on a peak which seems accessible only to the eagle. The Devil, however, interfered, as he always does in such cases. He first entered into Riquilda, the daughter of the Count of Barcelona, and then declared through her mouth that he would not quit her body except by the order of Juan Garin, the hermit of Montserrat. Riquilda was therefore sent to the mountain and given into the hermit's charge. A temptation similar to that of St. Anthony followed, but with exactly the opposite result. In order to conceal his sin, Juan Garin cut off Riquilda's head, buried her, and fled. Overtaken by remorse, he made his way to Rome, confessed himself to the Pope. and prayed for a punishment proportioned to his crime. He was ordered to become a beast, never lifting his face towards heaven, until the hour when God Himself should signify his pardon.

Juan Garin went forth from the Papal presence on his hands and knees. crawled back to Montserrat, and there lived seven years as a wild animal, eating grass and bark, and never lifting his face towards heaven. At the end of this time his body was entirely covered with hair, and it so happened that the hunters of the count snared him as a strange beast, put a chain around his neck, and took him to Barcelona. In the mansion of the Count there was an infant only five months old, in its nurse's arms. No sooner had the child beheld the supposed animal, than it gave a loud cry and exclaimed: "Rise up, Juan Garin; God has pardoned thee!" Then, to the astonishment of all, the beast arose and spoke in a human tongue. He told his story, and the Count set out at once with him to the spot where Riquilda was buried. They opened the grave and the maiden rose up alive, with only a rosy mark, like a thread, around her neck. In commemoration of so many miracles, the Count founded the monastery.

At present, the monks retain but a fragment of their former wealth and power. Their number is reduced to nineteen, which is barely enough to guard the shrine, perform their offices, and prepare and bless the rosaries and other articles of devotional traffic. I visited the church, courts, and corridors, but took no pains to get sight of the miraculous statue. I have already seen both the painting and the sculpture of St. Luke, and think him one of the worst artists that ever existed. Moreover, the place is fast assuming a secular, not to say profane air. There is a modern restaurant, with bill of fare and wine list, inside the gate, ticket-office for travellers, and a daily omnibus to the nearest railway station. Ladies in black mantillas lounge about the court-yards, gentlemen smoke on the balconies, and only the brown-faced peasant pilgrims, arriving with weary feet, enter the church with an expression of awe and of unquestioning faith. The enormous wealth which the monastery once possessed — the offering of kings — has disappeared in the vicissitudes of Spanish history, the French, in 1811, being the last pillagers. Since then, the treasures of gold and jewels have not returned; for the crowns offered to the Virgin by the city of Barcelona and by a rich American are of gilded silver, set with diamonds of paste!

I loitered for hours on the narrow terraces around the monastery, constantly finding some new and strange combination of forms in the architecture of the mountain. The bright silver-gray of the rock contrasted finely with the dark masses of eternal box, and there was an endless play of light and shade as the sun burst suddenly through some unsuspected gap, or hid himself behind one of the giant ten-pins of the summit. The world below swam in dim red undulations, for the color of the soil showed everywhere through its thin clothing of olive-trees. In hue as in form, Montserrat had no fellowship with the surrounding region.

The descent on the northern side is far less picturesque, inasmuch as you are perched upon the front seat of an omnibus, and have an excellent road — a work of great cost and labor — the whole way. But, on the other hand, you skirt the base of a number of the detached pillars and pyramids into which the mountain separates, and gain fresh pictures of its remarkable structure. There is one isolated shaft, visible at a great distance, which I should judge to be three hundred feet in height by forty or fifty in diameter. At the western end, the outline is less precipitous, and here the fields of vine and olive climb much higher than elsewhere. In an hour from the time of leaving the monastery, we were below the last rampart, rolling through dust in the hot valley of the Llobregat, and tracing the course of the invisible road across the walls of Montserrat, with a feeling of incredulity that we had really descended from such a point.

At the village of Montrisol, on the river, there is a large cotton factory. The doors opened as we approached, and the workmen came forth, their day's labor done. Men and women, boys and girls, in red caps and sandals, or bareheaded and barefooted, they streamed merrily along the road, teeth and eyes flashing as they chatted and sang. They were no pale, melancholy factory slaves, but joyous and light-hearted children of labor, and, it seemed to me, the proper successors of the useless idlers in the monastery of Montserrat. Up there, on the mountain, a system, all-powerful in the past, was swiftly dying; here, in the valley was the first life of the only system that can give a future to Spain.

BALEARIC DAYS.

I.

As the steamer Mallorca slowly moved out of the **harbor** of Barcelona, I made a rapid inspection of the passengers gathered on deck, and found that I was the only foreigner among them. Almost without exception they were native Majorcans, returning from trips of business or pleasure to the Continent. They spoke no language except Spanish and Catalan, and held fast to all the little habits and fashions of their insular life. If anything more had been needed to show me that I was entering upon untrodden territory, it was supplied by the joyous surprise of the steward when I gave him a fee. This fact reconciled me to my isolation on board, and its attendant awkwardness.

I knew not why I should have chosen to visit the Balearic Islands, unless for the simple reason that they lie so much aside from the highways of travel, and are not represented in the journals and sketch-books of tourists. If any one had asked me what I expected to see, I should have been obliged to confess my ignorance; for the few dry geographical details which I possessed were like the chemical analysis of a liquor wherefrom no one can reconstruct the taste. The *flavor* of a land is a thing quite apart from its statistics. There is no special guide-book for the islands, and the slight notices in the works on Spain only betray the haste of the authors to get over a field with which they are unacquainted. But this very circumstance, for me, had grown into a fascination. One gets tired of studying the bill of fare in advance of the repast. When the sun and the Spanish coast had set together behind the placid sea, I went to my berth with the delightful certainty that the sun of the morrow, and of many days thereafter, would rise upon scenes and adventures which could not be anticipated.

The distance from Barcelona to Palma is about a hundred and forty miles; so the morning found us skirting the southwestern extremity of Majorca — a barren coast, thrusting low headlands of gray rock into the sea, and hills covered with parched and stunted chaparral in the rear. The twelfth century, in the shape of a crumbling Moorish watch-tower, alone greeted us. As we advanced eastward into the Bay of Palma, however, the wild shrubbery melted into plantations of olive, solitary houses of fishermen nestled in the coves, and finally a village, of those soft ochre-tints which are a little brighter than the soil, appeared on the slope of a hill. In front, through the pale morning mist which still lay upon the sea, I saw the cathedral of Palma, looming grand and large beside the towers of other churches, and presently, gliding past a mile or two of country villas and gardens, we entered the crowded harbor.

Inside the mole there was a multitude of the light craft of the Mediterranean, — xebecs, feluccas, speronaras, or however they may be termed, — with here and there a brigantine which had come from beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Our steamer drew into her berth beside the quay, and after a very deliberate review by the port physician we were allowed to land. I found a porter, Arab in everything but costume, and followed him through the water-gate into the half-awake city. My destination was the Inn of the "Four Nations," where I was cordially received, and afterwards roundly swindled, by a French host. My first demand was for a native attendant, not so much from any need of guide as simply to become more familiar with the people through him; but I was told that no such serviceable spirit was to be had in the place. Strangers are so rare that a class of people who live upon them has not yet been created

"But how shall I find the Palace of the Government, or the monastery of San Domingo, or anything else?" I asked.

"O, we will give you directions, so that you cannot miss them," said the host; but he laid before me such a confusion of right turnings and left turnings, ups and downs, that I became speedily bewildered, and set forth, determined to let the spirit in my feet guide me. A labyrinthine place is Palma, and my first walks through the city were so many games of chance. The streets are very narrow. changing their direction, it seemed to me, at every tenth step; and whatever landmark one may select at the start is soon shut from view by the high, dark houses. At first, I was quite astray, but little by little I regained the lost points of the compass.

After having had the Phœnicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, and Saracens as masters, Majorca was first made Spanish by King Jaime of Aragon, the Conquistador, in the year 1235. For a century after the conquest it was an independent kingdom, and one of its kings was slain by the English bowmen at the battle of Crecy. The Spanish element has absorbed, but not yet entirely obliterated, the characteristics of the earlier races who inhabited the island. Were ethnology a more positively developed science, we might divide and classify this confused inheritance of character; as it is, we vaguely feel the presence of something quaint, antique, and unusual, in walking the streets of Palma, and mingling with the inhabitants. The traces of Moorish occupation are still noticeable everywhere. Although the Saracenic architecture no longer exists in its original forms, its details may be detected in portals, court-yards, and balconies, in almost every street. The conquerors endeavored to remodel the city, but in doing so they preserved the very spirit which they sought to destroy.

My wanderings, after all, were not wholly undirected

I found an intelligent guide, who was at the same time an old acquaintance. The whirligig of time brings about, not merely its revenges, but also its compensations and coincidences. Twenty-two years ago, when I was studying German as a boy in the old city of Frankfort, guests from the south of France came to visit the amiable family with whom I was residing. They were M. Laurens, a painter and a musical enthusiast, his wife, and Mademoiselle Rosalba, a daughter as fair as her name. Never shall I forget the curious letter which the artist wrote to the manager of the theatre, requesting that Beethoven's *Fidelio* might be given (and it was!) for his own especial benefit, nor the triumphant air with which he came to us one day, saying, "I have something of most precious," and brought forth, out of a dozen protecting envelopes, a single gray hair from Beethoven's head. Nor shall I forget how Madame Laurens taught us French plays, and how the fair Rosalba declaimed André Chénier to redeem her pawns; but I might have forgotten all these things, had it not been for an old volume [1] which turned up at need, and which gave me information, at once clear, precise, and attractive, concerning the streets and edifices of Palma. The round, solid head, earnest eyes, and abstracted air of the painter came forth distinct from the limbo of things overlaid but never lost, and went with me through the checkered blaze and gloom of the city.

The monastery of San Domingo, which was the head-quarters of the Inquisition, was spared by the progressive government of Mendizabal, but destroyed by the people. Its ruins must have been the most picturesque sight of Palma; but since the visit of M. Laurens they have been removed, and their broken vaults and revealed torture-chambers are no longer to be seen. There are, however, two or three buildings of more than ordinary interest. The *Casa Consistorial*, or City Hall, is a massive Palladian pile of the sixteenth century, resembling the old palaces of Pisa and Florence, except in the circumstance that its roof projects at least ten feet beyond the front, resting on a massive cornice of carved wood with curious horizontal caryatides in the place of brackets. The rich burnt-sienna tint of the carvings contrasts finely with the golden-brown of the massive marble walls — a combination which is shown in no other building of the Middle Ages. The sunken rosettes, surrounded by raised arabesque borders, between the caryatides, are sculptured with such a careful reference to the distance at which they must be seen, that they appear as firm and delicate as if near the spectator's eye.

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[1] *Souvenirs d'un Voyage d Art à l'Isle de Majorque.* Par J. B. Laurens.

The Cathedral, founded by the Conquistador, and built upon, at intervals, for more than three centuries, is not yet finished. It stands upon a natural platform of rock, overhanging the sea, where its grand dimensions produce the greatest possible effect. In every view of Palma, it towers solidly above the houses and bastioned walls, and insists upon having the sky as a background for the light Gothic pinnacles of its flying buttresses. The government has recently undertaken its restoration, and a new front of very admirable and harmonious design is about half completed. The soft amber-colored marble of Majorca is enriched in tint by exposure to the air, and even when built in large, unrelieved masses retains a bright and cheerful character. The new portion of the cathedral, like the old, has but little sculpture, except in the portals; but that little is so elegant that a greater profusion of ornament would seem out of place.

Passing from the clear, dazzling day into the interior, one finds himself, at first, in total darkness; and the dimensions of the nave — nearly three hundred feet in length by one hundred and forty in height — are amplified by the gloom. The wind, I was told, came through the windows on the sea side with such force as to overturn the chalices, and blow out the tapers on the altar, whereupon every opening was walled up, except a rose at the end of the chancel, and a few slits in the nave, above the side aisles. A sombre twilight, like that of a stormy day, fills the edifice. Here the rustling of stoles and the muttering of prayers suggest incantation rather than worship; the organ has a hollow, sepulchral sound of lamentation; and there is a spirit of mystery and terror in the stale, clammy air. The place resembles an ante-chamber of Purgatory much more than of Heaven. The mummy of Don Jaime II., son of the Conquistador and first king of Majorca, is preserved in a sarcophagus of black marble. This is the only historic monument in the Cathedral, unless the stranger chooses to study the heraldry of the island families from their shields suspended in the chapels.

When I returned to the "Four Nations" for breakfast, I found at the table a gentleman of Palma, who invited me to sit down and partake of his meal. For the first time this Spanish custom, which really seems picturesque and fraternal when coming from shepherds or muleteers in a mountain inn, struck me as the hollowest of forms. The gentleman knew that I would not accept his invitation, nor he mine; he knew, moreover, that I knew he did not wish me to accept it. The phrase, under such conditions, becomes a cheat which offends the sacred spirit of hospitality. How far the mere form may go was experienced by George Sand, who having accepted the use of a carriage most earnestly offered to her by a Majorcan count, found the equipage at her door, it is true, but with it a letter expressing so much vexation, that she was forced to withdraw her acceptance of the favor at once, and to apologize for it! I have always found much hospitality among the common people of Spain, and I doubt not that the spirit exists in all classes; but it requires some practice to distinguish between empty phrase and the courtesy which comes from the heart. A people who boast of some special virtue generally do not possess it.

My own slight intercourse with the Majorcans was very pleasant. On the day of my arrival, I endeavored to procure a map of the island, but none of the bookstores possessed the article. It could be found in one house in a remote street, and one of the shopmen finally sent a boy with me to the very door. When I offered money for the service, my guide smiled, shook his head, and ran away. The map was more than fifty years old, and drawn in the style of two centuries ago, with groups of houses for the villages, and long files of conical peaks for the mountains. The woman brought it down, yellow and dusty, from a dark garret over the shop, and seemed as delighted with the sale as if she had received money for useless stock. In the streets, the people inspected me curiously, as a stranger, but were always ready to go out of their way to guide me. The ground-floor being always open, all the features of domestic life and of mechanical labor are exposed to the public. The housewives, the masters and apprentices, busy as they seem, manage to keep one eye disengaged, and no one passes before them without notice. Cooking, washing, sewing, tailoring, shoemaking, coopering, rope and basket making, succeed each other, as one passes through the narrow streets. In the afternoon, the mechanics frequently come forth and set up their business in the open air, where they can now and then greet a country acquaintance, or a city friend, or sweetheart.

When I found that the ruins of San Domingo had been removed, and a statue of Isabella II. erected on the Alameda, I began to suspect that the reign of old things was over in Majorca. A little observation of the people made this fact more evident. The island costume is no longer worn by the young men, even in the country; they have passed into a very comica transition state. Old men mounted on lean asses or mules, still enter the gates of Palma, with handkerchiefs tied over their shaven crowns, and long gray locks falling on their shoulders, — with short, loose jackets, shawls around the waist, and wide Turkish trousers gathered at the knee. Their gaunt brown legs are bare, and their feet protected by rude sandals. Tall, large-boned, and stern of face, they hint both of Vandal and of Moslem blood. The younger men are of inferior stature, and nearly all bow-legged. They have turned the flowing trousers into modern pantaloons, the legs of which are cut like the old-fashioned *gigot* sleeve, very big and baggy at the top, and tied with a drawing-string around the waist. My first impression was, that the men had got up in a great hurry, and put on their trousers hinder end foremost. It would be difficult to invent a costume more awkward and ungraceful than this.

In the city the young girls wear a large triangular piece of white or black lace, which covers the hair, and tightly incloses the face, being fastened under the chin and the ends brought down to a point on the breast. Their almond-shaped eyes are large and fine, but there is very little positive beauty among them. Most of the old country women are veritable hags, and their appearance is not improved by the broad-brimmed stove-pipe hats which they wear. Seated astride on their donkeys, between panniers of produce, they come in daily from the plains and mountains, and you encounter them on all the roads leading out of Palma. Few of the people speak any other language than the *Mallorquin*, a variety of the Catalan, which, from the frequency of the terminations in *ch* and *tz*, constantly suggests the old Provençal literature. The word *vitch* (son) is both Celtic and Slavonic. Some Arabic terms are also retained, though fewer, I think, than in Andalusia.

In the afternoon I walked out into the country. The wall, on the land side, which is very high and massive, is pierced by five guarded gates. The dry moat, both wide and deep, is spanned by wooden bridges, after crossing which one has the choice of a dozen highways, all scantily shaded with rows of ragged mulberry-trees, glaring white in the sun and deep in impalpable dry dust. But the sea-breeze blows freshening across the parched land; shadows of light clouds cool the arid mountains in the distance; the olives roll into silvery undulations; a palm in full, rejoicing plumage rustles over your head; and the huge spatulate leaves of a banana in the nearest garden twist and split into fringes. There is no languor in the air, no sleep in the deluge of sunshine; the landscape is active with signs of work and travel. Wheat, wine, olives, almonds, and oranges are produced, not only side by side, but from the same fields, and the painfully thorough system of cultivation leaves not a rood of the soil unused.

I had chosen, at random, a road which led me west toward the nearest mountains, and in the course of an hour I found myself at the entrance of a valley. Solitary farmhouses, each as massive as the tower of a fortress and of the color of sunburnt gold, studded the heights, overlooking the long slopes of almond orchards. I looked about for water, in order to make a sketch of the scene; but the bed of the brook was as dry as the highway. The nearest house toward the plain had a splendid sentinel palm beside its door, — a dream of Egypt, which beckoned and drew me towards it with a glamour I could not resist. Over the wall of the garden the orange-trees lifted their mounds of impenetrable foliage; and the blossoms of the pomegranates, sprinkled against such a background, were like coals of fire. The fig-bearing cactus grew about the house in clumps twenty feet high, covered with pale-yellow flowers. The building was large and roomy, with a court-yard, around which ran a shaded gallery. The farmer who was issuing therefrom as I approached wore the shawl and Turkish trousers of the old generation, while his two sons, reaping in the adjoining wheat-fields, were hideous in the modern *gigots*. Although I was manifestly an intruder, the old man greeted me respectfully, and passed on to his work. Three boys tended a drove of black hogs in the stubble, and some women were so industriously weeding and hoeing in the field beyond, that they scarcely stopped to cast a glance upon the stranger. There was a grateful air of peace, order, and contentment about the place; no one seemed to be suspicious, or even surprised, when I seated myself upon a low wall, and watched the laborers.

The knoll upon which the farm-house stood sloped down gently into the broad, rich plain of Palma, extending many a league to the eastward. Its endless orchards made a dim horizon-line, over which rose the solitary double-headed mountain of Felaniche, and the tops of some peaks near Arta. The city wall was visible on my right, and beyond it a bright arc of the Mediterranean. The features of the landscape, in fact, were so simple, that I fear I cannot make its charm evident to the reader. Looking over the nearer fields, I observed two peculiarities of Majorca, upon which depends much of the prosperity of the island. The wheat is certainly, as it is claimed to be, the finest of any Mediterranean land. Its large, perfect grains furnish a flour of such fine quality that the whole produce of the island is sent to Spain for the pastry and confectionery of the cities, while the Majorcans import a cheap, inferior kind in its place. Their fortune depends on their abstinence from the good things which Providence has given them. Their pork is greatly superior to that of Spain, and it leaves them in like manner; their best wines are now bought up by speculators and exported for the fabrication of sherry; and their oil, which might be the finest in the world, is so injured by imperfect methods of preservation that it might pass for the worst. These things, however, give them no annoyance. Southern races are sometimes indolent, but rarely Epicurean in their habits; it is the Northern man who sighs for his flesh-pots.

I walked forward between the fields towards another road, and came upon a tract which had just been ploughed and planted for a new crop. The soil was ridged in a labyrinthine pattern, which appeared to have been drawn with square and rule. But more remarkable than this was the difference of level, so slight that the eye could not possibly detect it, by which the slender irrigating streams were conducted to every square foot of the field, without a drop being needlessly wasted. The system is an inheritance from the Moors, who were the best natural engineers the world has ever known. Water is scarce in Majorca, and thus every stream, spring, rainfall — even the dew of heaven — is utilized. Channels of masonry, often covered to prevent evaporation, descend from the mountains, branch into narrow veins, and visit every farm on the plain, whatever may be its level. Where these are not sufficient, the rains are added to the reservoir, or a string of buckets, turned by a mule, lifts the water from a well. But it is in the economy of distributing water to the fields that the most marvelous skill is exhibited. The grade of the surface must not only be preserved, but the subtle, tricksy spirit of water so delicately understood and humored that the streams shall traverse the greatest amount of soil with the least waste or wear. In this respect, the most skillful application of science could not surpass the achievements of the Majorcan farmers.

Working my way homeward through the tangled streets, I was struck with the universal sound of wailing which filled the city. All the tailors, shoemakers, and basketmakers, at work in the open air, were singing, rarely in measured strains, but with wild, irregular, lamentable cries, exactly in the manner of the Arabs. Sometimes the song was antiphonal, flung back and forth from the furthest visible corners of a street; and then it became a contest of lungs, kept up for an hour at a time. While breakfasting, I had heard, as I supposed, a *miserere* chanted by some procession of monks, and wondered when the doleful strains would cease. I now saw that they came from the mouths of some cheerful coopers, who were heading barrels a little further down the street. The Majorcans still have their troubadours, who are hired by languishing lovers to improvise strains of longing or reproach under the windows of the fair, and perhaps the latter may listen with delight; but I know of no place where the Enraged Musician would so soon become insane. The isle is full of noises, and a Caliban might say that they hurt not; for me they murdered sleep, both at midnight and at dawn.

I had decided to devote my second day to an excursion to the mountain paradise of Valldemosa, and sallied forth early, to seek the means of conveyance. Up to this time I had been worried — tortured, I may say, without exaggeration — by desperate efforts to recover the Spanish tongue, which I had not spoken for fourteen years. I still had the sense of possessing it, but in some old drawer of memory, the lock of which had rusted and would not obey the key. Like Mrs. Dombey with her pain, I felt as if there were Spanish words somewhere in the room, but I could not positively say that I had them — a sensation which, as everybody knows, is far worse than absolute ignorance. I had taken a carriage for Valldemosa, after a long talk with the proprietor, a most agreeable fellow, when I suddenly stopped, and exclaimed to myself, "You are talking Spanish, did you know it?" It was even so: as much of the language as I ever knew was suddenly and unaccountably restored to me. On my return to the "Four Nations," I was still further surprised to find myself repeating songs, without the failure of a line or word, which I had learned from a Mexican as a school-boy, and had not thought of for twenty years. The unused drawer had somehow been unlocked or broken open while I slept.

Valldemosa is about twelve miles north of Palma, in the heart of the only mountain-chain of the island, which forms its western, or rather northwestern coast The average altitude of these mountains will not exceed three thousand feet; but the broken, abrupt character of their outlines, and the naked glare of their immense precipitous walls, give them that intrinsic grandeur which does not depend on measurement. In their geological formation they resemble the Pyrenees; the rocks are of that *palombino*, or dove-colored limestone, so common in Sicily and the Grecian islands — pale bluish gray, taking a soft orange tint on the faces most exposed to the weather. Rising directly from the sea on the west, they cease almost as suddenly on the land side, leaving all the central portion of the island a plain, slightly inclined toward the southeast, where occasional peaks or irregular groups of hills interrupt its monotony.

In due time my team made its appearance — an omnibus of basket-work, with a canvas cover, drawn by two horses. It had space enough for twelve persons, yet was the smallest vehicle I could discover. There appears to be nothing between it and the two-wheeled cart of the peasant, which, on a pinch, carries six or eight. For an hour and a half we traversed the teeming plain, between stacks of wheat worthy to be laid on the altar at Eleusis, carob trees with their dark, varnished foliage, almond-orchards bending under the weight of their green nuts, and the country houses with their garden clumps of orange, cactus, and palm. As we drew near the base of the mountains, olive-trees of great size and luxuriance covered the earth with a fine sprinkle of shade. Their gnarled and knotted trunks, a thousand years old, were frequently split into three or four distinct and separate trees, which in the process assumed forms so marvelously human in their distortion, that I could scarcely believe them to be accidental. Doré never drew anything so weird and grotesque. Here were two club-headed individuals fighting, with interlocked knees, convulsed shoulders, and fists full of each other's hair; yonder a bully was threatening attack, and three cowards appeared to be running away from him with such speed that they were tumbling over one another's heels. In one place a horrible dragon was devouring a squirming, shapeless animal; in another, a drunken man, with whirling arms and tangled feet, was pitching forward upon his face. The living wood in Dante was tame beside these astonishing trees.

We now entered a wild ravine, where, nevertheless, the mountain-sides, sheer and savage as they were, had succumbed to the rule of man, and nourished an olive or a carob tree on every corner of earth between the rocks The road was built along the edge of the deep, dry bed of a winter stream, so narrow that a single arch carried i from side to side, as the windings of the glen compelled. After climbing thus for a mile in the shadows of threatening masses of rock, an amphitheatre of gardens, enframed by the spurs of two grand, arid mountains, opened before us. The bed of the valley was filled with vines and orchards, beyond which rose long terraces, dark with orange and citron trees, obelisks of cypress and magnificent groups of palm, with the long white front and shaded balconies of a hacienda between. Far up, on a higher plateau between the peaks I saw the church-tower of Valldemosa. The sides of the mountains were terraced with almost incredible labor, walls massive as the rock itself being raised to a height of thirty feet, to gain a shelf of soil two or three yards in breadth. Where the olive and the carob ceased, box and ilex took possession of the inaccessible points, carrying up the long waves of vegetation until their foam-sprinkles of silver-gray faded out among the highest clefts. The natural channels of the rock were straightened and made to converge at the base, so that not a wandering cloud could bathe the wild growths of the summit without being caught and hurried into some tank below. The wilderness was forced, by pure toil, to become a Paradise.

and each stubborn feature, which toil could not subdue, now takes its place as a contrast and an ornament in the picture. Verily, there is nothing in all Italy so beautiful as Valldemosa!

Lest I should be thought extravagant in my delight, let me give you some words of George Sand, which I have since read. "I have never seen," she says, "anything so bright, and at the same time so melancholy, as these perspectives where the ilex, the carob, pine, olive, poplar, and cypress mingle their various hues in the hollows of the mountain — abysses of verdure, where the torrent precipitates its course under mounds of sumptous richness and an inimitable grace. . . . . While you hear the sound of the sea on the northern coast, you perceive it only as a faint shining line beyond the sinking mountains and the great plain which is unrolled to the southward — a sublime picture, framed in the foreground by dark rocks covered with pines; in the middle distance by mountains of boldest outline, fringed with superb trees; and beyond these by rounded hills which the setting sun gilds with burning colors, where the eye distinguishes, a league away, the microscopic profile of trees, fine as the antennæ of butterflies, black and clear as pen-drawings of India ink on a ground of sparkling gold. It is one of those landscapes which oppress you because they leave nothing to be desired, nothing to be imagined. Nature has here created that which the poet and the painter behold in their dreams. An immense *ensemble*, infinite details, inexhaustible variety, blended forms, sharp contours, dim, vanishing depths — all are present, and art can suggest nothing further. Majorca is one of the most beautiful countries of the world for the painter, and one of the least known. It is a green Helvetia under the sky of Calabria, with the solemnity and silence of the Orient."

The village of Valldemosa is a picturesque, rambling place, brown with age, and buried in the foliage of fig and orange trees. The highest part of the narrow plateau where it stands is crowned by the church and monastery of the Trappists (*Cartusa*), now deserted. My coachman drove under the open roof of a venta, and began to unharness his horses. The family, who were dining at a table so low that they appeared to be sitting on the floor, gave me the customary invitation to join them, and when I asked for a glass of wine brought me one which held nearly a quart. I could not long turn my back on the bright, wonderful landscape without; so, taking books and colors, I entered the lonely cloisters of the monastery. Followed first by one small boy, I had a retinue of at least fifteen children before I had completed the tour of the church, court-yard, and the long drawn, shady corridors of the silent monks; and when I took my seat on the stones at the foot of the tower, with the very scene described by George Sand before my eyes, a number of older persons added themselves to the group. A woman brought me a chair, and the children then planted themselves in a dense row before me, while I attempted to sketch under such difficulties as I had never known before. Precisely because I am no artist, it makes me nervous to be watched while drawing; and the remarks of the young men on this occasion were not calculated to give me courage.

When I had roughly mapped out the sky with its few floating clouds, some one exclaimed, " He has finished the mountains, there they are ! " and they all crowded around me, saying, " Yes, there are the mountains ! " While I was really engaged upon the mountains, there was a violent discussion as to what they might be; and I don't know how long it would have lasted, had I not turned to some cypresses nearer the foreground. Then a young man cried out: " O, that's a cypress ! I wonder if he will make them all, — how many are there ? One, two, three, four, five, — yes, he makes five ! " There was an immediate rush, shutting out earth and heaven from my sight, and they all cried in chorus, "One, two, three, four, five — yes, he has made five!"

"Cavaliers and ladies," I said, with solemn politeness "have the goodness not to stand before me."

"To be sure! Santa Maria! How do you think he can see?" yelled an old woman, and the children were hustled away. But I thereby won the ill-will of those garlic-breathing and scratching imps, for very soon a shower of water-drops fell upon my paper. Next a stick, thrown from an upper window, dropped on my head, and more than once my elbow was intentionally jogged from behind. The older people scolded and threatened, but young Majorca was evidently against me. I therefore made haste to finish my impotent mimicry of air and light, and get away from the curious crowd.

Behind the village there is a gleam of the sea, near, yet at an unknown depth. As I threaded the walled lanes seeking some point of view, a number of lusty young fellows, mounted on unsaddled mules, passed me with a courteous greeting. On one side rose a grand pile of rock, covered with ilex-trees — a bit of scenery so admirable, that I fell into a new temptation. I climbed a little knoll and looked around me. Far and near no children were to be seen; the portico of an unfinished house offered both shade and seclusion. I concealed myself behind a pillar, and went to work. For half an hour I was happy; then a round black head popped up over a garden wall, a small brown form crept towards me, beckoned, and presently a new multitude had assembled. The noise they made provoked a sound of cursing from the interior of a stable adjoining the house. They only made a louder tumult in answer; the voice became more threatening, and at the end of five minutes the door burst open. An old man, with wrath flashing from his eyes, came forth. The children took to their heels; I greeted the new-comer politely, but he hardly returned the salutation. He was a very fountain of curses, and now hurled stones with them after the fugitives. When they had all disappeared behind the walls, he went back to his den, grumbling and muttering It was not five minutes, however, before the children were back again, as noisy as before; so, at the first thunder from the stable, I shut up my book, and returned to the inn.

While the horses were being harnessed, I tried to talk with an old native, who wore the island costume, and was as grim and grizzly as Ossawatomie Brown. A party of country people from the plains, who seemed to have come up to Valldemosa on a pleasure trip, clambered into a two-wheeled cart drawn by one mule, and drove away. My old friend gave me the distances of various places, the state of the roads, and the quality of the wine; but he seemed to have no conception of the world outside of the island. Indeed, to a native of the village, whose fortune has simply placed him beyond the reach of want, what is the rest of the world? Around and before him spreads one of its loveliest pictures; he breathes its purest air; and he may enjoy its best luxuries, if he heeds or knows how to use them.

Up to this day the proper spice and flavor had been wanting. Palma had only interested me, but in Valldemosa I found the inspiration, the heat and play of vivid, keen sensation, which one (often somewhat unreasonably) expects from a new land. As my carriage descended, winding around the sides of the magnificent mountain amphitheatre, in the alternate shadows of palm and ilex, pine and olive, I looked back, clinging to every marvelous picture, and saying to myself, over again, "I have not come hither in vain." When the last shattered gate of rock closed behind me, and the wood of insane olive-trunks was passed, with what other eyes I looked upon the rich orchard-plain! It had now become a part of one superb whole; as the background of my mountain view, it had caught a new glory, and still wore the bloom of the invisible sea.

In the evening I reached the "Four Nations," where I was needlessly invited to dinner by certain strangers, and dined alone, on meats cooked in rancid oil. When the cook had dished the last course, he came into a room adjoining the dining apartment, sat down to a piano in his white cap, and played loud, long, and badly. The landlord had papered this room with illustrations from all the periodicals of Europe: dancing-girls pointed their toes under cardinals' hats, and bulls were baited before the shrines of saints. Mixed with the wood-cuts were the landlord's own artistic productions, wonderful to behold. All the house was proud of this room, and with reason; for there is assuredly no other room like it in the world. A notice in four languages, written with extraordinary flourishes, announced in the English division that travellers will find "confortation and modest prices." The former advantage, I discovered, consisted in the art of the landlord, the music and oil of the cook, and the attendance of a servant so distant that it was easier to serve myself than seek him; the latter may have been "modest" for Palma, but in any other place they would have been considered brazenly impertinent. I should therefore advise travellers to try the "Three Pigeons," in the same street, rather than the "Four Nations."

The next day, under the guidance of my old friend, M. Laurens, I wandered for several hours through the streets, peeping into court-yards, looking over garden-walls, or idling under the trees of the Alameda. There are no pleasant suburban places of resort, such as are to be found in all other Spanish cities; the country commences on the other side of the moat. Three small cafés exist, but cannot be said to flourish, for I never saw more than one table occupied. A theatre has been built, but is only open during the winter, of course. Some placards on the walls, however, announced that the national (that is, Majorcan) diversion of baiting bulls with dogs would be given in a few days.

The noblesse appear to be even haughtier than in Spain perhaps on account of their greater poverty; and much more of the feudal spirit lingers among them, and gives character to society, than on the main-land. Each family has still a crowd of retainers, who perform a certain amount of service on the estates, and are thenceforth entitled to support. This custom is the reverse of profitable; but it keeps up an air of lordship, and is therefore retained. Late in the afternoon, when the new portion of the Alameda is in shadow, and swept by a delicious breeze from the sea, it begins to be frequented by the people; but I noticed that very few of the upper class made their appearance. So grave and sombre are these latter, that one would fancy them descended from the conquered Moors, rather than the Spanish conquerors.

M. Laurens is of the opinion that the architecture of Palma cannot be ascribed to an earlier period than the beginning of the sixteenth century. I am satisfied, however, either that many fragments of Moorish sculpture must have been used in the erection of the older buildings, or that certain peculiarities of Moorish art have been closely imitated. For instance, that Moorish combination of vast, heavy masses of masonry with the lightest and airiest style of ornament, which the Gothic sometimes attempts, but never with the same success, is here found at every step. I will borrow M. Laurens' words, descriptive of the superior class of edifices, both because I can find no better of my own, and because this very characteristic has been noticed by him. "Above the ground-floor," he says, "there is only one story and a low garret. The entrance is a semi-circular portal without ornament; but the number and dimensions of the stones, disposed in long radii, give it a stately aspect. The grand halls of the main story are lighted by windows divided by excessively slender columns, which are entirely Arabic in appearance. This character is so pronounced, that I was obliged to examine more than twenty houses constructed in the same manner, and to study all the details of their construction, in order to assure myself that the windows had not really been taken from those fairy Moresque palaces, of which the Alhambra is the only remaining specimen. Except in Majorca, I have nowhere seen columns which, with a height of six feet, have a diameter of only three inches. The fine grain of the marble of which they are made, as well as the delicacy of the capitals, led me to suppose them to be of Saracenic origin."

I was more impressed by the *Lonja*, or Exchange, than any other building in Palma. It dates from the first half of the fifteenth century, when the kings of the island had built up a flourishing commerce, and expected to rival Genoa and Venice. Its walls, once crowded with merchants and seamen, are now only opened for the Carnival balls and other festivals sanctioned by religion. It is a square edifice, with light Gothic towers at the corners, displaying little ornamental sculpture, but nevertheless a taste and symmetry, in all its details, which are very rare in Spanish architecture. The interior is a single vast hall, with a groined roof, resting on six pillars of exquisite beauty. They are sixty feet high, and fluted spirally from top to bottom, like a twisted cord, with a diameter of not more than two feet and a half. It is astonishing how the airy lightness and grace of these pillars relieve the immense mass of masonry, spare the bare walls the necessity of ornament, and make the ponderous roof light as a tent. There is here the trace of a law of which our modern architects seem to be ignorant. Large masses of masonry are always oppressive in their effect; they suggest pain and labor, and the Saracens, even more than the Greeks, seem to have discovered the necessity of introducing a sportive, fanciful element, which shall express the delight of the workman in his work.

In the afternoon, I sallied forth from the western coast gate, and found there, sloping to the shore, a village inhabited apparently by sailors and fishermen. The houses were of one story, flat-roofed, and brilliantly whitewashed. Against the blue background of the sea, with here and there the huge fronds of a palm rising from among them, they made a truly African picture. On the brown ridge above the village were fourteen huge windmills, nearly all in motion. I found a road leading along the brink of the overhanging cliffs, toward the castle of Belver, whose brown mediæval turrets rose against a gathering thunder-cloud This fortress, built as a palace for the kings of Majorca immediately after the expulsion of the Moors, is now a prison. It has a superb situation, on the summit of a conical hill, covered with umbrella-pines. In one of its round, massive towers, Arago was imprisoned for two months in 1808. He was at the time employed in measuring an arc of the meridian, when news of Napoleon's violent measures in Spain reached Majorca. The ignorant populace immediately suspected the astronomer of being a spy and political agent, and would have lynched him at once. Warned by a friend, he disguised himself as a sailor, escaped on board a boat in the harbor, and was then placed in Belver by the authorities, in order to save his life. He afterwards succeeded in reaching Algiers, where he was seized by order of the Bey, and made to work as a slave. Few men of science have known so much of the romance of life.

I had a long walk to Belver, but I was rewarded by a grand view of the Bay of Palma, the city and all the southern extremity of the island. I endeavored to get into the fields, to seek other points of view; but they were surrounded by such lofty walls that I fancied the owners of the soil could only get at them by scaling-ladders. The grain and trees on either side of the road were hoary with dust, and the soil, of the hue of burnt chalk, seemed never to have known moisture. But while I loitered on the cliffs the cloud in the west had risen and spread; a cold wind blew over the hills, and the high gray peaks behind Valldemosa disappeared, one by one, in a veil of rain. A rough *tartana*, which performed the service of an omnibus, passed me returning to the city, and the driver, having no passengers, invited me to ride. "What is your fare?" I asked. "Whatever people choose to give," said he, — which was reasonable enough; and I thus reached the "Four Nations" in time to avoid a deluge.

The Majorcans are fond of claiming their island as the birthplace of Hannibal. There are some remains supposed to be Carthaginian near the town of Alcudia, but, singularly enough, not a fragment to tell of the Roman domination, although their *Balearis Major* must have been then, as now, a rich and important possession. The Saracens, rather than the Vandals, have been the spoilers of ancient art. Their religious detestation of sculpture was at the bottom of this destruction. The Christians could consecrate the old temple to a new service, and give the names of saints to the statues of the gods; but to the Moslem every representation of the human form was worse than blasphemy. For this reason, the symbols of the most ancient faith, massive and unintelligible, have outlived the monuments of those which followed.

In a forest of ancient oaks near the village of Arta, there still exist a number of Cyclopean constructions, the character of which is as uncertain as the date of their erection. They are cones of huge, irregular blocks, the jambs and lintels of the entrances being of single stones. In a few the opening is at the top, with rude projections resembling a staircase to aid in the descent. Cinerary urns have been found in some of them, yet they do not appear to have been originally constructed as tombs. The Romans may have afterwards turned them to that service. In the vicinity there are the remains of a Druid circle, of large upright monoliths. These singular structures were formerly much more numerous, the people (who call them "the altars of the Gentiles") having destroyed a great many in building the village and the neighboring farm-houses.

I heard a great deal about a cavern on the eastern coast of the island, beyond Arta. It is called the Hermit's Cave, and the people of Palma consider it the principal thing to be seen in all Majorca. Their descriptions of the place, however, did not inspire me with any very lively desire to undertake a two days' journey for the purpose of crawling on the belly through a long hole, and then descending a shaky rope-ladder for a hundred feet or more. When one has performed these feats, they said, he finds himself in an immense hall, supported by stalactitic pillars, the marvels of which cannot be described. Had the scenery of the eastern part of the island been more attractive, I should have gone as far as Arta; but I wished to meet the steamer Minorca at Alcudia, and there were but two days remaining.

BALEARIC DAYS.

II.

The same spacious omnibus and span of dun-colored ponies which had taken me to Valldemosa came to carry me across the island. As there is an excellent highway, and the distance to Alcudia is not more than ten leagues, I could easily have made the journey in a day; but I purposely divided it, in order to secure a quiet, unhurried enjoyment of the scenery of the interior. It had rained violently all night, and the morning of my departure from Palma was cold and overcast. The coachman informed me that four months had elapsed since a drop of rain had fallen, and that for two years past the island had suffered from drought. I therefore wrapped myself in my cloak, contented with the raw air and threatening sky, since the dry *acequias* would now flow with new streams, and the empty tanks of the farmers be filled.

It was like a rainy day in the tropics. There was a gray veil all over the sky, deepening into blackness where the mountains drew down the showers. The soil, yesterday as dry as a cinder, already looked soggy and drenched, and in place of white, impalpable dust, puddles of water covered the road. For the first two leagues we drove over a dead level, seeing nothing but fig, olive, and almond trees, with an occasional palm or cactus, fading out of sight in the rain. Majorca is in reality the orchard of the Mediteranean. All its accessible surface is not only covered with fruit-trees, but the fruit is of the most exquisite quality. The apricots are not dry and insipid, but full of juice, and with a flavor as perfect as that of a peach. The oranges and figs seemed to me the finest I had ever tasted; even the date-palm matures its fruit, and the banana grows in the same garden with the cherry and apple. The valley of Soller, the only port on the western side of the mountains, was described to me as one unbroken orchard of superb orange-trees, a league or two in length. The difficulty of transportation has hitherto robbed the people of the profits of their production, and a new prosperity has come with the recent improvement of their roads. Within a league of Palma an entire village has been built within the last five years; and most of the older towns are in rapid process of enlargement.

After the second league, the country became undulating, the trees were loftier and more luxuriant, and woods of picturesque Italian pine covered the rocky crests of the hills. The mountains on the left assumed very bold and violent forms, rising through the dim atmosphere like so many detached towers and fortresses. There were two dominant peaks, which in the sheer escarpment of their summits resembled the crags of Königstein and Lilienstein in Saxony. They were the Torrella and the Puig (Peak) Major — grand, naked, almost inaccessible mountains, which shed the rain like a roof. The water-courses which came down from them were no longer dry hollows, but filled to the brim with swift, roaring, turbid floods. These peaks appeared to be detached nearly to the base, and between their steep abutments the mouths of dim, folding gorges gave promise of rare and original scenery within their recesses.

We passed Santa Maria, a beautiful little village of two streets, at the intersection of which rises a fine square belfry, connected with the buildings of a defunct monastery. The picture was so pleasant that I brought its outlines away with me. In spite of the rain, the people were at work in the fields, turning the red soil about the roots of the olive-trees. The flowing trousers were no longer to be seen; even the old men here wore the *gigot*. Others, with the words *Peon caminero* on their caps, were breaking stones by the roadside. I received a friendly *Bōn dī*! from each and all. Both robbery and beggary are unknown in Majorca; they have no place in a land of so much material order and cheerful industry.

Beyond Santa Maria the road again became quite level, and the courses of the streams pointed to the northern shore. The fruit-trees temporarily gave place to vineyards so luxuriant that the shoots, unsupported by stake or trellis, threw their tendrils around each other, and hid the soil under a deluge of green. The wine of Benisalem (Arabic *beni-salaam*, "the children of peace") is considered the best on the island. It is a fiery, golden-brown vintage, resembling ripe old Malaga in flavor.

We were within a league of Inca, — my destination, — when the rain, which had already blotted out the mountains, began to drive over the plain. A fine spray beat through the canvas cover of the omnibus, condemning me to a blind, silent, and cheerless half-hour of travel. Then, between garden-walls, over which the lemon-trees hung great boughs breaking with fruit, and under clumps of rustling and dripping palms, I entered Inca. My equipage drew up before the door of a new *fonda* in a narrow old street. There were billiards and coffee on the ground-floor; over them a long hall, out of which all the doors and staircases issued, served as a dining-room. The floors were tiled, the walls white-washed and decorated with the lithographed histories of Mazeppa and Hernan Cortez, and the heavy pine joists of the ceiling were fresh and unpainted. There was an inconsiderate waste of space in the disposition of the rooms and passages which was pleasant to behold. Contrary to the usual habit of travellers, I ventured into the kitchen, and found it — as it ought to be — the most cheerful and attractive part of the house. The landlord brought a glass of the wine of Benisalem to stay my hunger; but I was not obliged to wait overlong for the excellent meal of eggs, kid with pepper-sauce, and an exquisite dish of lobster stewed with leeks and tomatoes, which I tasted for the first time.

Towards evening the rain subsided, and I went forth to view the place, finding a picture at every turn. First, a group of boys burning shavings before a church-door; then a gable embowered with one enormous grape-vine, and touched with sunshine, while beneath, in the gloom of a large arch, the family ate their supper; then a guitar-player in the door of a barber's shop, with a group around him, or a company of women, filling their jars at a fountain. The town is built upon an irregular hill, overlooking the finest orchards of Majorca. The clusters of palm-trees which spring from its topmost gardens are far more beautiful than its church-towers. Nothing can be more picturesque than the narrow valleys on either side, which slope sufficiently to bring out in sumptuous contrast the foliage of the terraced gardens. The people looked at me curiously, but with no unfriendly air, as I followed the winding streets into the country, or loitered through some country lane back into the town. Only two persons spoke to me — the letter-carrier, and a boy who was trying to knock down swallows with a long pole. The latter made a remark which I did not understand, but it was evidently witty, for we both laughed. The workmen at their avocations sang with all their force, and very dismally. It was difficult to say which were the more insignificant — the melodies or the words of their songs. One specimen of the latter will suffice to give an idea of both: —

> "On Sundays the young girls you may view,
> (Since they nothing better have then to do),
> Watering their pots of carnations sweet:
> Saying, Drink, my dears, for you cannot eat!"

When I returned to the fonda, the landlord took me into a part of his house which was built like a tower above the level of the city roofs. A thunderous mass of clouds still hung over the Puig Major, but between its rifts the low sun cast long lines of brassy radiance over the wide landscape. Westward rose the torn and shattered mountains; eastward the great orchard-plain stretched away into purple dimness, only broken by the chapel-crowned peak of Santa Maddalena, near at hand, and the signal mountain of Felaniche in the distance. Inca, under my feet, resounded with wailing noises, which, nevertheless, expressed the cheerfulness and content of the inhabitants. Through the lanes dividing the rich vegetation, the laborers were flocking homeward from their fields; rude *tartanas* rattled along the broad white highway; and the chimes of vesper presently floated over the scene in slow, soothing vibrations. "You see how beautiful the country is!" said the landlord; "I suppose there is nothing finer in the world. You will think so too, when you have been to the cemetery, and have seen the new monument. It is wonderful! A basket full of flowers, and if they were not all white, you would take them to be real. They say it cost an immense amount of money."

When I asked for *juevos* (eggs) for my supper the landlady shook her head, until somebody suggested *joãos!* with a sound like the whistling of wind through a keyhole. They were then speedily forthcoming, with another dish of the lobster and leeks, and a bottle of excellent wine. I was kept awake for a long time, that night, by the thrumming of guitars and the click of billiard balls in the café below; and when sleep finally came, it was suddenly broken by the bursting open of the doors and windows of my room. The house seemed to rock under the stress of the hurricane; the lightning played through the torrents of rain in rapid flashes of transparent silver, accompanied with peals like the crashing down of all the *Puigs* in the mountain-chain. But at sunrise, when I went upon the roof, I found the island sparkling under the purest of morning skies, every leaf washed, every outline of the landscape recut and all its colors bright as if newly dyed. A bracing north wind blew over the fields, and there was an expression of joy in the very dance of the boughs and the waving of the vines.

When we set out for Alcudia, the coachman first drove to a fountain at the foot of the hill, and watered his horses. There was a throng about the place, — old women with huge earthen amphoræ, young girls with jars which they carried on the hip, donkeys laden with casks, and children carrying all sorts of smaller vessels. The water is brought from the mountains to this fountain, which never fails in its supply. It is shaded by grand old plane and carob trees, which throw a network of light and gloom over the great stone tanks and the picturesque moving crowds. Rising out of the glen where it stands, I saw the mountains bare in the morning sun, every crevice and jag of their rocky fronts painted with a pre-Raphaelite pencil. Past the foot of the solitary mountain of Santa Maddalena ran our road, and then northward over a second plain, even richer than that of Palma.

The olive and almond trees by the roadside had been washed clean of dust, but they hissed in the breeze as dryly as if they had never known rain. The very colors of the olive, ilex, and myrtle express aridity. Their dry leaves seem to repel moisture, even as the mellow, sappy green of the North seems to attract it. But their soft grays relieve the keen, strong tints of soil, sea, and sky, and we could ill spare them from these landcapes. As accessories to sunbrowned houses, or masses of ruined architecture, they are invaluable. They belong naturally to an atmosphere of age and repose, while fresh turf and deciduous trees perpetually reproduce the youth of Nature. Something of Attica always comes to me with the olive, something of Tusculum and the Sabine Farm with the ilex. The box, I know not why, suggests the Euphrates; and the myrtle in bloom, the Garden of Eden.

While these thoughts were passing through my mind, the road slowly fell to the northward; and I beheld in the distance fields of a green so dazzling that the hackneyed term "emerald" seems much too dull to express it. It positively *burned* in the sun, drawing into itself the lustre of the sky, the distant sea, and the leagues of glittering foliage. Over it rose, as a completer foil, the gray mountains of the peninsula dividing the bays of Pollenza and Alcudia. I was at a loss to guess what plant could give such an indescribable color; and not until we were within a stone's throw did I recognize the leaves of hemp. An open, marshy plain, entirely bare of trees, bordered the bay at this point. The splendid orchards ceased; the road crossed some low hills overgrown with ilex and pine, a turbid, roaring stream, with poplars on its banks; and then a glimmer of the sea on either hand showed that we had reached the peninsula. There were Moorish *atalayas*, or watch-towers, on the summits nearest the sea, and a large ruined fortress of the Middle Ages on a hill inland. Alcudia, with its yellow walls, its cypress and palm trees, now appeared at the foot of the barren heights, oriental in every feature. It was a picture from the Syrian coast, needing only the old Majorcan costume for the laborers in the fields to be perfect.

Contrasted with those parts of the island which I had seen, the country appeared singularly lonely and deserted. Few persons met us on the road, and we passed none on their way to the town. Grass grew on the huge walls of defense, the stones were slipping from the arch of the gateway, and we passed into a silent street without seeing a living thing. My coachman stopped before a mean-looking house, with no sign or other indication of its character, and informed me that it was the only fonda in the place. A woman who came to the door confirmed this statement, modestly adding, "We are not very fine, but we will give you what we have." A narrow room on the ground-floor was at once entrance-hall, dining-room, and kitchen; it contained one table, three chairs, much dirt, and very nimble insects. The inmates were two women, and a small dog with a bell on his neck, which, whenever he scratched his head with his hind foot, rang a peal of alarm through the house. Feeling the need of consolation, I summoned a boy from the street, and gave him some money to bring me cigars from the *estanco;* but the hostess, taking the coin, cried out in great excitement: "Don't send that! Holy Mother, don't send that! You'll lose a *'chavo* on it!" The coachman burst into a laugh, repeating, "Lose a *'chavo!*" — which is about the eighth part of a cent; but the woman was so horrified at the idea that I gave the boy another coin.

While the eggs and tough scraps of beef destined for my meal were simmering in pans of strong oil, the hostess conducted me into a room above, which contained a large and very ancient bed, five blue chests, and twenty-three pictures of saints. "There!" she exclaimed, with a wave of the arm and a look of triumph, "my own room, but you shall have it! We may not be very fine, but we give what we have." Whatever my thoughts may have been, it was quite impossible to avoid expressing my entire satisfaction.

I took my books, went outside the walls to a tower which I had noticed on the ridge, and there found the very view of the town, the mountains, and the bay, which a stranger would desire to take home with him. In the full noonday sunshine, there was scarcely shadow enough to relieve the clear golden tints of the landscape; but the place was entirely deserted, which was a better fortune than I enjoyed at Valldemosa. Three peasants were reaping wheat in a little field behind the tower; now and then a donkey and rider jogged slowly along the distant highway; but no one seemed to notice the mysterious stranger. I had an undisturbed dream of two hours, for the forms before me, half borrowed from my memories of Oriental life, half drawn from those landscapes which rise in our minds as we read the stories of the Middle Ages, satisfied both the eye and the fancy. Some scenes suggest the sound of a flute and Theocritan idyls; others, horns and trumpets, and fragments of epic poetry; but here the only accompaniment was cymbals, the only poems suggested were "Fatima and "Rudel to the Lady of Tripoli."

In the afternoon I walked around the city walls, climbed upon them, visited the deserted monastery of San Diego, and wandered at will through its picturesque ruins. The place is surrounded by double walls of great strength, divided by a moat cut out of the solid rock. The caper-plant, the ivy, and the wild fig-tree have taken possession of the parapet and the rifts between the stones, goats browse in the bottom of the moat, and children's faces peep forth from the watch-towers on the ramparts. Outside the principal gate, I came upon a Gothic cross, resting on an octagonal base, so very old and weather-beaten that it must certainly have been erected during the first years of the conquest. The walls of the city are said to be Saracenic; but the people are poor authority on this or any other historical point. It is certain, at least, that Alcudia was formerly much more important than now. Its bay was a naval station, whence expeditions were sent out to Africa or the Levant; and there were times when the kings of Spain built whole fleets from the forests of the island.

Of late, a little fresh life has begun to flow into the silent old town. On the shore of the bay, a few miles off, an English company has undertaken agricultural operations on a grand scale. Many square leagues of the former useless, pestiferous marshes have been drained, steam-engines erected to supply water for irrigation, and an attempt made to cultivate cotton. Concerning the success of the undertaking, I heard the most contradictory accounts. The people could only tell me of the immense sums expended, — sums which appeared almost fabulous to them. The agents, of course, claimed to be entirely successful, notwithstanding the cotton-plants, this year, will scarcely produce enough to pay for the seed. Last year (1866), I was informed, the yield was very fine: the staple being equal to that of our Sea-island cotton. The intention of the English capitalists was probably to produce a similar article, and it cannot be denied that they have shrewdly chosen the spot for the experiment.

When the afternoon shadow filled the street, I seated myself at the door of the fonda, and amused myself with the movements of some carpenters in an opposite shop. Two lusty apprentices were engaged in the slow labor of sawing beams into boards, while the master fitted together the parts of a door. The former used an upright saw, one standing on a frame overhead, and the other on the floor below; they were just an hour and a half in sawing five boards from a beam a foot wide and sixteen feet long. Whenever a neighbor dropped in to gossip with the master, the saw stopped, and the apprentices took an active part in the conversation. There was also a boy of twelve years old, who did no work except in the way of singing. With his head thrown back, and his mouth open to its fullest extent, he poured forth an endless succession of piercing cries, recommencing, at the end of each lamentable close of the measure, with a fury and frenzy which nearly drove me wild. The little dog in the fonda, from time to time, rang a suggestive peal upon his bell, and echoes from other streets, and distant bells from other tormented dogs, filled up the pauses of the performance.

At sunset the other inmates of the fonda began to collect. First, there arrived two French workmen, of mean aspect; then a Spanish cavalier, who was evidently a person of some importance, for he invited nobody to partake of his supper. He was a large, olive-colored man, with a loud voice and opaque gray eyes, in which, as he fixed them upon my face, I read the question, "Are you not going to salute me?" I returned the look, and my eyes answered, "Who art thou, that I should salute thee?" After these remarks, which both understood, we spoke no more. Several natives came, during the evening, to be paid for some service; but they received no money. The two Frenchmen supped with the hostess and her family, but the important Spaniard and myself had our meals apart. Finally the comedy became tiresome, and I went to bed.

Not to sleep, alas! The little dog's bell was silent through the night, but had there been one around my neck it would have chimed the quarter-hours without a single failure. The steamer for Minorca was expected in the bay at sunrise; so I arose with the first stir in the house, and found two gentlemen who had come from Palma during the night, and three man-of-war's men, waiting in the street for an omnibus which was to carry us to the mole. We all waited together an hour, took chocolate, and then, after another half-hour, were requested to climb into a two-wheeled cart, drawn by a single horse. The hostess said to me, "We are not very fine, and I don't know how much you ought to pay, but I will take what you think right," — which she did, with honest thanks, and then we clattered out of the gate.

A descent of two miles between fields of wheat and olives brought us to the mole, where we found only a few lazy boatmen lying upon heaps of iron castings, which were waiting, apparently, for the English engineers. Shoals of young sardines sprinkled the clear green deeps of the sea with a million points of light, and some dead flounders lay like lozenges of silver among the dark weeds of the bottom. A new fish-crate, floating beside the pier, was a mild evidence of enterprise. The passengers sat in the sun until it became too powerful, then in the shade, and so another hour and a half rolled away. With the first appearance of the steamer, we got into a boat, and slowly floated out between two crystal atmospheres (so transparent is the sea) into the roadstead.

The extent of the Bay of Alcudia cannot be less than fifteen miles, for our deliberate steamer was nearly two hours in getting its southern headland abeam. Once outside, the eastern coast of Majorca opened finely with a long, diminishing group of mountains, and the dim, nearly level outline of Minorca appeared in front. The sea was like a mirror, broken only at times by a floating turtle or the leap of a dolphin. I found the Mahonese on board to be a very different class of persons from the Majorcans in whose company I had left Barcelona. Port Mahon was for twenty years our Mediterranean naval station; and although for twenty years it has ceased to be so, there are still traces of intelligence, of sympathy, of language, and of blood, which our quasi-occupation has left behind. Two of the passengers had visited America, one had an American wife in Minorca, and all became friendly and communicative when my nationality was announced. They had faithfully followed the history of our navy through the war, and took especial pains to claim Admiral Farragut as a countryman. His father, they said, was a Minorcan, and the farm in the interior of the island upon which he once lived still bears the family name. I was brought back suddenly from the times of Tancred (which had faded out of sight with the walls of Alcudia) to our stormy politics and the new names they have given to history.

All the afternoon we skirted the southern coast of Minorca. The town of Ciudadela, at its western extremity, showed like a faint white mark in the distance; then some groups of hills interrupted the level table of the island, and, farther eastward, the solitary mountains of El Toro. The two gentlemen of Palma, neither of whom had ever before made a journey, went below and slept the sleep of indifference. Many of the Mahonese followed their example; and, the quarter-deck being left clear, I stretched myself out over the cabin skylight, and quietly watched the moving shore, as if it were some immense diorama unrolled for my eyes only.

The white cliffs along the sea, the tawny harvest-fields, the gray olives embosoming villages and country-houses, and the occasional shafts of cypress or palm, slowly photographed themselves upon my consciousness, and became enduring pictures. Had I climbed and hammered the cliffs as a geologist, scoured the fields as a botanist, analyzed the soil, or even measured its undulations, I could not have obtained a completer impression of Minorca.

El Toro was drifting astern, and the island of Ayre showed its light-house in front, when the sound of a guitar disturbed my comfortable process of absorption, and brought the sleepy passengers upon deck. The performer was a blind Spaniard, a coarse-featured, clumsy man, whose life and soul had gone into his instrument, separating light, beauty, and refinement from earthy darkness. When he played, the guitar really seemed to be the man, and his body a mere holder, or music-stand. The Mahonese, I was glad to see, not only appreciated the performance, but were very liberal in their contributions.

The island of Ayre lies off the southeastern extremity of Minorca. In the intervening strait, the sea was so wonderfully transparent that the alternations of bare limestone floor and fields of sea-weed far below our keel, changed the color of the water from a turquoise so dazzling that I can only call it blue fire to an emerald gloom pierced with golden lightnings. Even that southern temperament which cares so little for Nature, was aroused by the sight of these splendors. The passengers hung over the railing with cries of admiration, and the blind minstrel was left to soliloquize on his guitar. Against a headland in front, the smooth sea suddenly rose in a crest of foam, behind which a gleam of darker sapphire denoted the mouth of a harbor. In a few minutes more we were abreast of the entrance to Port Mahon, with a great ascending slope of new fortifications on the north. Hundreds of men are now employed on defenses which the new developments in naval warfare have rendered useless; and the officials conceal, with the most jealous fear the plan of a system of forts and batteries which no other nation need care to know.

The lower ground, on the southern side of the entrance to the inner harbor, is entirely covered with the ruins of the immense fortress of San Felipe, built by the English during their occupation of Minorca from 1708 to 1802. The fate of Admiral Byng, executed for a naval victory over the French, gives a tragic interest to these ruins, which, in their extent, resemble those of a city. All governments (our own included) know how to make their individual servants the scapegoats for their blunders or their incapacity; but I know not, in all history, of a case so flagrant as that of Byng. The destruction of Fort San Felipe cost nearly half a million of dollars, and yet it appears to be only partial.

On passing the channel between the fort and Cape Mola, we found ourselves in the port, but only at its entrance; the city was not yet visible. A bright white town crowned the low cliffs of the southern shore — the former Georgetown of the English, the present Villa Carlos of the Spaniards. Opposite to it, the long quarantine island divided the intensely blue water; and my fellow-passengers claimed with pride that it was capable of accommodating a whole fleet. Beyond this island the harbor bends southward, shutting out of sight the sea entrance; it becomes a still lake, inclosed by bare, bright hills. The Isle of the King, with a splendid military hospital; the ship-yard, with a vessel of a thousand tons on the stocks, and various other public constructions, appeared successively on our right. The nearer southern shore, a wall of dark gray rock, broken by deep gashes in which houses were hidden and steep roads climbed to the summit, increased in height: as we approached the end of the harbor, quays along the water, and a fresh, many-colored, glittering town on the rocks, showed that we had reached Port Mahon. Nature has made this basin as picturesque as it is secure. The wild cliffs of the coast here pierce inland, but they are draped with splendid gardens; fields of wheat climb the hills, and orchards of olive clothe their feet; over the table-land of the island rises in the distance the purple peak of El Toro; and the city before you, raised on a pedestal a hundred feet in height, seems to be one of the most beautiful of the Mediterranean. "Did you ever see a place like that?" asked a Mahonese at my elbow. "Captain ——, of your navy, used to say that there were only three good harbors in the Mediterranean,—the months of July and August, and Port Mahon!" Captain ——, however, as my friend perhaps did not know, borrowed the remark from Admiral Andrea Doria, who made it centuries ago.

The "Fonda del Oriente" looked down upon me invitingly from the top of the rock, which was made accessible by a road carried up in steep, zigzag ramps. At the door of the hotel I was received by a stout old man with a cosmopolitan face, who, throwing his head on one shoulder, inspected me for a few moments with a remarkably knowing air. Then, with a nod of satisfaction at his own acuteness, he said, "Walk in, sir; how do you find yourself?" Ushering me into a chamber furnished with an old mahogany secretary, heavy arm-chairs, and antiquated prints,—the atmosphere of Portsmouth or Gravesend hanging over everything,—he continued, after another critical survey, "Mr. Alexander, I believe?"

"That is not my name," I said.

"Not Alexander! Then it must be Sykes; they are brothers-in-law, you know," persisted the stout old man.

I answered him with a scrutinizing stare, and the words, "Your name is Bunsby, I think?"

"O no!" he exclaimed; "I am Antonio. You can't be Mr. Sykes, either, or you'd know me."

"You are talking of Englishmen; I am not English."

"Not English?" he cried. "H'm, well, that's queer; but, to be sure, you must be American. I know all the

American officers that ever were here, and they know me. Ask Commodore —— and —— if they don't know Antonio! The greatest mistake I ever made was that I didn't move to Spezia with the squadron."

"Can you give me dinner?" I asked, cutting off the coming yarn.

"Stop!" he said; "don't tell me; I can guess what you want. A beefsteak rare, hey? and mixed pickles, hey? and potatoes with their jackets on, hey? But it's too late to make a pudding, and there's no Stilton cheese! Never mind! let me alone; nobody in Port Mahon can come nearer the real thing than I can."

In vain I declared my willingness to take the Minorcan dishes. Such a taste had probably never before been expressed in all Antonio's experience of English and Americans; and my meals then and thenceforth were a series of struggles to reproduce Portsmouth or Gravesend. But the hotel was large, airy, and perfectly clean; Antonio honestly endeavored to make me comfortable; he knew a great many of my naval friends, and I had no complaint to make with his reckoning at the close of my stay. He was, moreover, a man of progress; he corned beef, and cured hams, and introduced the making of butter (not very successfully), and taught the people how to cook potatoes. He even dispatched a cheese, as a present, to Marshal Serrano, before I left Port Mahon.

Refreshed by a long sleep, which was not disturbed by any little dog with a bell on his neck, or that which the sound of the latter suggested, I sallied forth in the morning without any objective point. The city must first be seen, because it lay between me and the country. I was delighted to find wide, well-paved streets as compared with those of Palma, clean, cheerful houses, and an irregularity sufficient for picturesque effect, without being bewildering to a stranger. Very few of the buildings appeared to be older than the last century; there was nothing characteristic in their architecture; but the city, from end to end, was gay, sunny, full of color, *riante*, and without a trace of the usual Spanish indolence and uncleanliness. It has somewhat fallen from its former estate. Grass grows in many of the streets, and there is less noise and movement than one would look for with the actual population — some fifteen thousand. Three or four small craft in the harbor did not indicate an active commerce, and I presume the place is kept alive mainly by the visits of foreign men-of-war. A great many of the common people speak a few words of English, and you may even read " Adams, Sastre," over the door of a native tailor!

The climate, although considered harsh by the Spaniards, seemed to me perfect. The sun of June shone in a cloudless sky, flooding the sharp, clear colors of the town with a deluge of light; yet a bracing wind blew from the north, and the people in the fields and gardens worked as steadily as Connecticut farmers. I saw no loafers upon the island; and I doubt whether there are enough of them to form a class among the native population. While there was evidently a great deal of poverty, I encountered no beggars. I felt, as in Majorca, that I was among a simple-minded, ignorant, but thoroughly honest and industrious people.

The street I had chosen gradually rose as I proceeded inland; walled gardens succeeded to the houses, and then fields of wheat or vines, separated by huge agglomerations of stones. I looked over an undulating table-land, covered with such lines and mounds of rocky *débris*, that they seemed to be the ruins of a city. Every patch of grain or fruit was inclosed by a cannon-proof fortification, and the higher ridges terminated in bald parapets, whereon the dark mounds of box and ilex held fast and flourished without any appearance of soil. At the foot of these wild growths the fig-tree grew with wonderful luxuriance, and very often the foliage of the untamable rock was mingled with that of the gardens Here every foot of ground had been won by the rudest, the most patient toil. Even the fields conquered centuries ago are not yet completely manageable; hundreds of stony fangs still protrude from the surface, and the laborer is obliged to follow the plough with hoe and spade. Thus, in spite of the almost incredible triumphs of agriculture with which the island is covered, its general aspect is that of a barren, torn, hopeless wilderness. Without broad or grand features of landscape, it is crowded with startling contrasts and picturesque details.

I wandered southward between the high, loose walls, towards a mound which promised me a wider inland view; but on approaching it, the road entered an impenetrable shade, and passed beyond. There was no gate or entrance of any kind into the fields, so I took advantage of a jagged corner of the wall, and climbed to the top. On the other side there was a wheat-field, in which three men were reaping. I now saw that what I had taken for a mound was a circular tower, the top of which had been torn down, forming a slope around its base, which was covered with rank thickets of mastic and myrtle. I asked the men, who had stopped work, and were curiously regarding me, whether I might cross their field and visit the ruin. "Certainly, Señor," said the master; "come down and walk about where you please." He then called, in a loud voice, "Miguel!" and presently a small boy came to light from behind a pile of rocks. "Miguel," said he, "go with the Señor to the *atalaya*, and show him the steps."

I clambered down into the little field, which, sunken between enormous walls of stone, somewhat resembled a volcanic crater. Miguel piloted me silently across the stubble, between solid mounds of ilex, which seemed no less ancient and indestructible than the rocks upon which they grew, and by a gap in an outer wall into the bed of a dry moat around the tower. The latter, though only ten feet wide, stood thick with ripe wheat; but it was bridged in one place by a line of stones, and we thus crossed with out trampling down the precious stalks. There were no steps to the tower, but a zigzag path had been trampled among the ruins, at the foot of which I dismissed Miguel, and then mounted to the summit. I first looked abroad upon the bright, busy, wild, savage, wonderfully cultivated fields and gardens, the white towers and tiled roofs of the city behind me, and a single blue fragment of the sea (like a piece chipped out of the edge of a bowl) in the east. The characteristics of Minorcan scenery, which I have already described, gave the view a character so novel and so remarkable, that I studied them for a long time before examining more closely the ruin upon which I stood.

The farmer had called it an *atalaya*, and the tower was clearly of Moorish construction. Its height must have been originally much greater, or it could not have answered its purpose of watching the sea. The hollow interior is entirely filled with the fragments, so that nothing of the structure remains except its circular form. Outside of the dry moat there is a massive pentangular wall, with a lozenge-shaped pile of solid masonry at each corner; the whole evidently designed for defense, and of later date than the tower itself. Such quantities of stones had been heaped upon the old foundations by the farmers, in clearing spaces for their crops, that very little of the masonry was to be seen. To be of service, however, the walls must have been at least twenty feet higher than at present. Many of the stones have no doubt been carried away for buildings, and there are still huge piles of them in the adjacent fields. Towering out of one of these piles I caught a glimpse of another relic of a still remoter past — an object so unexpected that I at first took it for an accidental disposition of the stones. I descended to the moat, clambered over the outer wall, and made my way to the spot.

It was a Celtic *tor*, or altar — a large upright block of gray limestone, supporting a horizontal block about ten feet in length. The pillar was so buried in fragments which had been piled about it, that I could not ascertain its height; but the character of the monument was too distinctly marked to admit of a question. After returning to Port Mahon, I found that its existence was well known. In fact, the first question asked me was, "Have you seen the Phœnician altar?" When and by whom these remarkable monuments — which are found in all the Mediterranean islands between Greece and Gibraltar — were erected, is a point which I will leave antiquarians to discuss. It pleased me, as I sat under a fig-tree which shot up through the stones, to fancy that the remains of three memorable phases in the history of man were before me, — of the Druids in the crumbling altar, of the Saracens in the watch-tower, and of the house of Aragon or Castile in the fortress enclosing it.

According to Strabo, the Balearic Islands were colonized by the Rhodians; but Strabo probably knew less about the matter than any respectable antiquarian of our own day. The people of Minorca firmly believe that Magon, the brother of Hannibal, founded Port Mahon, and they attribute the Druidic stones and the Cyclopean constructions (which are here found side by side) to the Phœnicians. The English occupation, which left at least a good map behind it, led to no historic investigations; and I cannot learn that any detailed account of the antiquities of the island has ever been published. Those remains which we call Druidic are very numerous; some of the upright monoliths are more than twenty feet in height, supporting horizontal stones of nearly equal dimensions. Nothing but the lack of archæological knowledge prevented me from making a journey through the interior for the purpose of examining the other monuments.

I made use of my brief visit, however, to test the truth of another story, which is among the permanent traditions of the American navy. Every one has read the account of a captain's son leaping from the main-truck of a frigate; and in the days when Morris was popular, his verses commencing —

"Old Ironsides at anchor lay
In the harbor of Mahon,"

went the rounds of all the country newspapers. There was a melodramatic air about the incident which made me suspicious. I suppose the lines recalled themselves to my mind from the fact that Port Mahon is nowhere else noted in song. The Consul, who kindly seconded my curiosity in a matter of so little importance, went to an old Mahonese, who has had the greatest experience of our vessels and officers, and questioned him, taking care not to suggest the story in advance. But the old man instantly said: "O yes! I remember all about it. Fifty years ago, or more, when the Constitution frigate was here, a boy climbed to the very top of the mainmast, and was obliged to jump into the harbor, as there was no other way of getting down. Not many persons saw the act, but it was much talked about, and nobody doubted that the boy had done it." Whether the captain forced his son to take the terrible leap by threatening to shoot him with a rifle, the old man could not tell.

The next morning the Consul accompanied me on another excursion into the country. We passed through the town, and descended to an alameda which skirts the harbor to its western end, where the highway to Ciudadela strikes off towards the centre of the island. The harbor once penetrated a mile deeper into the country than at present, so the people say; but it must have been a shallow, marshy basin, as the hills around could not possibly spare enough soil to fill up and make fruitful the valley which one now enters after leaving the harbor-wall. This valley is the largest tract of unbroken garden land which I saw in Minorca. Its productiveness is apparently unlimited. Maize, cabbages, sweet potatoes, hemp, vines, vegetables of all kinds, covered the surface; date-palms and orange-trees, so overwhelmed with fruit that scarcely a green leaf showed through the dazzling gold, turned it into a garden of the tropics; while precipitous walls of limestone, resting on rough natural vaults and arches, shut out the rocky upper plateau from view. The laborers were planting new crops in the place of the old; so valuable is this rich basin that no part of its surface is allowed to lie fallow for a day.

On the left, the inclosing walls were broken by the mouth of a glen, the sides of which — regular terraces of rock, resting on arched foundations — seemed at first sight to be the work of art. Here, in the shade of a group of poplars and sycamores, stood the chapel of San Juan, white, cool, and solitary. A fountain, issuing from the base of the rocks near it, formed a little pool in which some women were washing clothes. The picture was Oriental in every feature, — so much so that I was surprised not to hear " Saba' el-kheyr ! " when the women said to us, " Bōn di' tenga ! "

Entering the glen behind the chapel, a few paces brought us into a different world. Except upon some painfully constructed shelf of soil, built up or rescued in some way from the rocks, there was no cultivation. Our path was a natural pavement, torn by the occasional rains; bare cliffs of gray limestone, vaulted at the base, overhung us on either side, and the mounds of box on the summit sparkled against the sky. Every feature of the scenery bore the marks of convulsion. Enormous blocks had been hurled from above; the walls were split with deep, irregular crevices; and even the stubborn evergreen growths took fantastic shapes of horns, fluttering wings, tufts of hair, or torn garments. Now and then a dry-leaved ilex rustled and rattled in the breeze; and the glen, notwithstanding it brimmed over with intensest sunshine, would have seemed very drear and desolate but for the incessant songs of the nightingales. While I crept under a rock to sketch a singularly picturesque combination of those crag-forms, — every one of which was a study, — the joyous birds made the place ring with their pæans. The *day*-song of the nightingale is as cheerful as that of the lark; its passion and sorrow is kept for the night.

If I had been an artist, I should have spent a fortnight in the glen of San Juan; but as it was, having only another day in Minorca, I could not linger there beyond an hour. At the point where I sat it divides into two branches, which gradually rise, as they wind, to the level of the table-land; and the great stone-heaps commence immediately behind the topmost fringe of box. The island, in fact, is a single rock, upon the level portions of which a little soil has lodged. Wherever one may travel in the interior, it presents the same appearance. The distance from Port Mahon to the old town of Ciudadela, at the western extremity of Minorca, is about twenty-five miles; and the Consul informed me that I should find the same landscapes all the way. There is nothing remarkable in Ciudadela except a cathedral of the thirteenth century, and some Saracenic walls. On the way are the three other principal towns of the island — Alayor, Mercadal, and Ferrerias, — all of which are rudely built, and have an equal air of poverty. It was for a moment a question with me whether I should employ my little remaining time in a rapid journey to Ciudadela and back, or in strolling leisurely through the country around Port Mahon, and setting down my observations as typical of all Minorca. The reports of the Consul justified me in adopting the latter and easier course.

In the afternoon we walked to the village of San Luis, about four miles distant, and recently made accessible by a superb highway. The great drought which has prevailed in all the Balearic Islands during the past two years has seriously injured the crops, and there is much suffering in Minorca, which is so much less favored by nature than its larger sister island. I heard of families of five persons living for months on less than twenty-five cents a day. Agriculture is profitable in good seasons, on account of the excellent quality of the wheat, oil, and oranges; but the deposit of soil, as I have already explained, is very shallow, there is no sheltering range of mountains as in Majorca, no supply of water for irrigation, and the average production is therefore much less certain. The price of land is nigh, for the reason that the proprietors are satisfied if it yields them annually two per cent. of its value. Shoemaking is one of the principal branches of industry in Port Mahon; but of late the foreign market has been disturbed, and the profits are so slight — whether through slow and imperfect labor or the sharpness of contractors I did not ascertain — that any check in the trade brings immediate suffering. The people, nevertheless, are very patient; they invariably prefer work to mendicancy, and are cheerful and contented so long as they succeed in clothing and feeding themselves.

The Minorcans seemed to me even more independent and original in character than the Majorcans. There is still less of the Spaniard, but also less of the Moor, about them. I should guess their blood to be mostly Vandal, but I stand ready to be corrected by any ethnologist who knows better. They have a rugged, sturdy air, little grace and elegance, either of body or of manner, and a simplicity which does not exclude shrewdness or cunning. It is considered almost an insult if the stranger speaks of them as Spaniards. The Governor of the island said to Marshal Serrano, the other day, when the latter was in Port Mahon in temporary exile: "The Minorcans are a curious people. You probably find that they do not take off their hats to you in the street, as you are accustomed to be saluted in Madrid?" "Yes," answered the Marshal, "I have already learned that they care nothing whatever for either you or me." The older people look back on the

English occupation with regret; the younger generation would be exceedingly well satisfied if Spain would sell the island to the United States for a naval station. But all unite in calling themselves Minorcans, or Mahonese, and in drawing a very broad line between themselves and the Spaniards of the Peninsula.

The Consul confirmed my first impressions of the honesty of the people. "You may walk on any road in the island," said he, "at any hour of the day or night, with the most perfect security." He also gave them the highest praise for cleanliness and order in their domestic life, which are certainly not Spanish qualities. The young men and women who are betrothed save every penny of their earnings, and invest them in the articles of furniture necessary to the establishment of a household. Simple as are these latter, many years often elapse before they are all procured and the nuptials may be celebrated, the parties remaining steadfastly constant to each other during the long time of waiting. They are a people in whom almost any honest system of education, any possible sound ideas of progress, would take immediate root; but under the combined shadow of Spain and Rome, what progress *is* possible?

I have never seen Broek, in Holland, but I think San Luis must be the cleanest village in Europe. I attributed its amazing brightness, as we approached, to the keen, semi-African sun and the perfectly clear air; but I found that all the houses had been whitewashed that very afternoon, as they regularly are every Saturday. The street was swept so conscientiously that we might have seated ourselves and taken our dinner anywhere, without getting more than each man's inevitable proportion of dust in the dishes. In the open doors, as I passed, I saw floors of shining tiles, clean wooden furniture, women in threadbare but decent dresses, and children — no, the children *were* dirty, and I confess I should not have been pleased to see them otherwise. The sand and fig-stains on those little faces and hands were only health-marks, and they made the brightness of the little village endurable. It would else have seemed to be struck with an unusual disease. We went into a house where two old women — very, very poor they were, but uncomplaining — received us with simple, unaffected friendliness. I spoke in Spanish and they in Minorcan, so that the conversation was not very intelligible; but the visit gave me a fleeting impression of the sterling qualities of the people, inasmuch as it harmonized with all that I had previously seen and heard.

The Consul conducted me to a little *casino*, where refreshments, limited in character, were to be procured. The *maestro*, a stout fellow, with the air of a Bowery butcher, opened his heart on learning that we were Americans. He had served a year on board one of our men-of-war, and repeated, over and over again, "The way things were managed there satisfied me, — it corresponded with my own ideas!" He made me read, around a spiral pillar, the words, "Casino del Progreso," saying, "*That*'s what I go for!" There was a church nearly opposite, and from its architecture a man with half an eye could see that the Jesuits had had a hand in building it. This I sketched, and the progressive host, leaning over my shoulder, interpreted the drawing correctly. His extravagant admiration made me feel that I had done well, and we parted mutually satisfied. Indeed, this little village interested me even more than Port Mahon, because it was more purely Minorcan in character.

The quantities of the fig-bearing cactus about the country-houses surprised me, until I learned that the fleshy leaves are used during the dry season as food for the mules and asses. The fruit, which is said to be remarkably fine on the island, is eaten by the inhabitants, and must form, in times of want, an important article of their food; yet so much space would not be given to the plant, or rather tree, if the animals had not been taught to subsist upon it. I have never before heard, in any part of the world, of the cactus being made useful in this way. Its huge, grotesque masses are an inseparable part of every landscape on the island.

We walked back to Port Mahon in the face of a north wind which was almost cold, which blew away the rich color from the sunset sky, leaving it pale, clear, and melancholy in tone; yet thunder and violent rain followed in the night. I spent my last evening with the Consul and his agreeable family, and embarked on the steamer for Barcelona in the morning. As we passed out of the harbor, Antonio's daughter waved her handkerchief from the window high above, on the cliff. The salute was not intended for me, but for her husband, who was bound for Madrid, carrying with him the cheese for Marshal Serrano. Rocked on a rough sea, and with a keen wind blowing, we again coasted along the southern shore of Minorca, crossed the strait, touched at Alcudia, and then, passing the mouth of the Bay of Pollenza, reached the northern headland of Majorca at sunset. Here the mountain-chain falls off in perpendicular walls a thousand feet in height, the bases of which are worn into caverns and immense echoing vaults. The coast-forms are as grand and wonderful as those of Norway. Point after point, each more abrupt and distorted than the last, came into view as we cleared the headland — all growing luminous in the mist and the orange light of the setting sun.

Then the light faded; the wild mountain-forms were fused together in a cold gray mass above the sea; the stars came out, and my last Balearic day was at an end.

CATALONIAN BRIDLE-ROADS.

"And mule-bells tinkling down the mountain-paths of Spain."

Whiting.

I LEARNED something of the bridle-roads of Catalonia in defiance of advice and warning, and almost against my own inclination. My next point of interest, after leaving the Balearic Islands, was the forgotten Republic of Andorra, in the Pyrenees; and the voice of the persons whom I consulted in Barcelona — none of whom had made the journey, or knew any one who had — was unanimous that I should return to France, and seek an entrance from that side. Such a course would certainly have been more comfortable; but the direct route, from the very insecurity which was predicted, offered a prospect of adventure, the fascination of which, I regret to say, I have not yet entirely outgrown. "It is a country of smugglers and robbers," said the banker who replenished my purse; "and I seriously advise you not to enter it. Moreover, the roads are almost impassable, and there is nothing to be seen on the way."

These words, uttered with a grave face by a native Catalan, ought to have decided the matter, yet they did not. To be sure, I thanked the man for his warning, and left him to suppose that I would profit by it, rather than enter into any discussion; but when I quitted his office, with fresh funds in my pocket, and corresponding courage in my bosom, my course was already decided. Had I not heard the same warnings, in all parts of the world, and had not the picturesque danger always fled as I approached it? Nevertheless, there came later moments of doubt, the suggestions of that convenient life which we lead at home, and the power of which increases with our years. Fatigue and hardship do not become lighter from repetition, but the re verse; the remembrance of past aches and past hunger returns whenever the experience is renewed, and aggravates it.

So, when I had descended from Montserrat, and was waiting in the cool of the evening at the door of the rudest possible restaurant, at the railway station of Monistrol, a little imp whispered: "The first train is for Barcelona. Take it and you will be in France to-morrow night. This way is safe and speedy; you know not what the other may be." I watched the orange-light fade from the topmost pinnacles of Montserrat; a distant whistle sounded, and the other pilgrims hurried towards the ticket-office. I followed them as far as the door, paused a moment, and then said to myself: "No, if I back out now, I shall never be sure of myself again!" Then I returned to my seat beside the door, and saw the train go by, with the feeling of a man who has an appointment with a dentist.

In another hour came the upward train, which would carry me as far as the town of Manresa, where my doubtful journey commenced. It was already dusk, and deliciously cool after the fierce heat of the day. A full moon shone upon the opposite hills as I sped up the valley of the Llobregat, and silvered the tops of the olives; but I only saw them in glimpses of unconquerable sleep, and finally descended at the station of Manresa not fully awake.

A rough, ragged porter made a charge upon my valise, which I yielded to his hands. "Take it to the best hotel," I said. "Ah, that is the 'Chicken!'" he replied. Now, the driver of the omnibus from Montserrat had recommended the "San Domingo," which had altogether a better sound than the "Chicken;" but I did not think of resisting my fate. I was conscious of a wonderful moonlight picture,— of a town on a height, crowned by a grand cathedral; of a winding river below, of steep slopes of glimmering houses; of lofty hills, seamed with the shadows of glens; and of the sparkle of orange-leaves in the hanging gardens. This while we were crossing a suspension-bridge; at the end, we plunged into narrow, winding streets, full of gloom and disagreeable odors. A few oil-lamps burned far apart; there were lights in the upper windows of the houses, and the people were still gossiping with their neighbors. When we emerged into a plaza, it was more cheerful; the single *café* was crowded, the *estanco* for the sale of tobacco, and the barber's shop were still open. A little farther and we reached the "Chicken," which was an ancient and uninviting house, with a stable on the ground-floor. Here the porter took his fee with a grin, and saying, "You will want me in the morning!" wished me good night.

I mounted to a dining-room nearly fifty feet in length, in which a lonely gentleman sat, waiting for his supper. When the hostess had conducted me to a bedroom of equal dimensions, and proceeded to put clean sheets upon a bed large enough for four Michigan soldiers, I became entirely reconciled to my fate. After trying in vain to extract any intelligence from a Madrid newspaper, I went to bed and slept soundly; but the little imp was at my ear when I woke, saying: "Here you leave the railway; after this it will not be so easy to turn back." "Very well," I thought, "I will go back now." I opened the shutters, let the full morning sun blaze into the room, dipped my head into water, and then cried out: "Begone, tempter! I go forwards." But, alas! it was not so once. There is a difference between springing nimbly from one's rest with a "Hurrah! there's another rough day before me!" and a slow clinging to one's easy pillow, with the sigh, "Ah! must I go through another rough day?" However, that was my last moment of weakness, and physical only — being an outcry of the muscles against the coming aches and strains, like that of the pack-camel before he receives his load.

The first stage of my further journey, I learned, could be made by a diligence which left at eleven o'clock. In the mean time I wandered about the town, gathering an impression of its character quite distinct from that of the previous evening. It has no architectural monuments; for the cathedral. like all such edifices in Spain, is unfinished, internally dark, and well supplied with bad pictures. Its position, nevertheless, is superb, and the platform of rock upon which it stands looks over a broad, bright, busy landscape. The sound of water-wheels and the humming looms of factories fills the air; however primitive the other forms of labor may be, the people all seem to be busy. The high houses present an agreeable variety of color, although a rich brown is predominant; many of them have balconies, and the streets turn at such unexpected angles that light and shade assist in making pictures everywhere. Manresa has a purely Spanish aspect, and the groups on the plaza and in the shady alleys are as lively and glowing as any in Andalusia.

I read the history of the place, as given in the guidebooks, but will not here repeat it. According to my English guide, it was sacked and its inhabitants butchered by the French, during the Peninsular War; according to the French guide, nothing of the kind ever took place. As I read the books alternately, I came to the conclusion that both sides must have been splendidly victorious in the battles which were fought in Spain. When the Englishman said: "Here our army, numbering only eighteen thousand men (of whom eight thousand were Spanish allies, of doubtful service), encountered thirty-seven thousand French, and completely routed them," the Frenchman had: "Here our army, numbering only fifteen thousand, including seven thousand Spaniards, put to flight thirty-three thousand English — one of the most brilliant actions of the war." At this rate of representation, it will be a disputed question, in the next century, whether Soult or Wellington was driven out of Spain.

My porter of the night before made his appearance, and as I had suspected him of interested motives in conducting me to the "Chicken," I tested his character by giving a smaller fee for an equal service; but he took it with the same thanks. Moreover, the diligence office was in the "San Domingo Hotel," and I satisfied myself that the "Chicken" was really better than the Saint. Two lumbering yellow coaches stood in the spacious stable, which was at the same time entrance-hall and laundry. On one side some lean mules were eating their barley; on another, a pump and stone trough supplied the house with water; a stone staircase led to the inhabited rooms, and three women were washing clothes at a tank in the rear. Dogs ran about scratching themselves; country passengers, with boxes and baskets, sat upon stone posts and did the same; and now and then a restless horse walked forth from the stalls, snuffing at one person after another, as if hoping to find one who might be eatable. Two *mayorals* or coachmen, followed by two grooms, bustled about with bits of harness in their hands, and the washerwomen made a great clatter with their wooden beetles; but the time passed, and nothing seemed to be accomplished on either side. The whole scene was so thoroughly Spanish that no one would have been surprised had the Don and Sancho ridden into the doorway. One of the women at the tank was certainly Maritornes.

At length, after a great deal of ceremony, one of the vehicles drove off. "It's going to Berga," said a man in faded velvet, in answer to my question; "and all I know is, that *that*'s the way to Puigcerda." The mules were now harnessed to our diligence and we took our places — my friend in velvet; two stout women, one of whom carried six dried codfish tied in a bundle; a shriveled old man, a mild brown soldier, and myself. It was an hour behind the appointed time, but no one seemed to notice the delay. We rolled out of the ammoniated shadows of the stable into a blaze which was doubled on the white highway, and thrown back to us from the red, scorched rocks beside it. The valley of the Cardoner, which we entered on leaving Man resa, quivered in the breathless heat: the stream was almost exhausted in its bed, and the thin gray foliage of the poplars and olives gave but a mockery of shadow. Everywhere the dry, red soil baked in the sunshine. The only refreshing thing I saw was a break in an irrigating canal, which let down a cascade over the rocks into the road. No water in the world ever seemed so cool, so fresh, so glittering; in the thirsty landscape it flashed like a symbol of generous, prodigal life. Who could fling gold around him with so beautiful a beneficence?

The features of the scenery, nevertheless, were too bold and picturesque to be overlooked. As we gained a longer vista, Montserrat lifted his blue horns over the nearer hills, and a dim streak of snow, far in the northwest, made signal for the Pyrenees. Abrupt as were the heights inclosing the valley, they were cultivated to the summit, and the brown country-houses, perched on projecting spurs, gave them a life which the heat and thirsty color of the soil could not take away. Our destination was Cardona, and after a smothering ride of two hours we reached the little village of Suria, half-way in distance, but by no means in time. Beyond it, the country became rougher, the road steep and toilsome; and our three mules plodded slowly on, with drooping heads and tails, while, inside, the passengers nodded one after the other, and became silent. We crossed the Cardoner, and ascended a long slope of the hills, where the view, restricted to the neighboring fields, became so monotonous that I nodded and dozed with the rest.

We were all aroused by the diligence stopping beside a large farm-house. There was a general cry for water, and the farmer's daughter presently came out with a stone pitcher, cool and dripping from the well. The glass was first given to me, as a stranger; and I was about setting it to my lips, when two or three of the passengers suddenly cried out, "Stop!" I paused, and looked around in surprise. The man in velvet had already dropped a piece of sugar into the water, and the old woman opposite took a bottle from her basket, saying, "This is better!" and added a spoonful of anise-seed brandy. "Now," exclaimed both at the same time, "you can drink with safety." The supply of sugar and anise-seed held out, and each passenger was regaled at the expense of the two Samaritans. After this, conversation brightened, and we all became talkative and friendly. The man in velvet, learning my destination, exclaimed: "O, you ought to have gone by way of Berga! It is a dreadful country about Solsona and the Rio Segre." But the old woman leaned over and whispered: "Don't mind what he says. *I* come from Solsona, and it's a good country — a very good country, indeed. Go on, and you will see!"

The valley of the Cardoner had become narrower, the mountains were higher, and there were frequent ruins of mediæval castles on the summits. When we had reached the top of the long ascent, the citadel of Cardona in front suddenly rose sharp and abrupt over the terraced slopes of vine. It appeared to be within a league, but our coachman was so slow and the native passengers so patient, that we did not arrive for two hours. Drawing nearer, the peculiar colors of the earth around the base of an isolated mountain announced to us the celebrated salt-mines of the place. Red, blue, purple, yellow, and gray, the bare cliffs glittered in the sun as if frosted over with innumerable crystals. This mass of native salt is a mile and a half in circumference, with a height of about two hundred and fifty feet. The action of the atmosphere seems to have little effect upon it, and the labor of centuries has no more than tapped its immense stores. As in Wieliczka, in Poland, the workmen in the mines manufacture cups, ornaments, pillars, and even chandeliers, from the pure saline crystal — objects which, although they remain perfect in the dry atmosphere of Spain, soon melt into thin air when carried to Northern lands.

The town of Cardona occupies the crest of a sharp hill, rising above the mountain of salt. Between it and the river on the north, stands the citadel, still more loftily perched, like a Greek acropolis. Our road passed entirely around the latter and mounted to the town on the opposite side, where the diligence set us down in front of a rude *fonda.* The old gate was broken down, the walls ruined, and the first houses we passed were uninhabited. There was no longer an *octroi;* in fact, the annoyances of travel in Spain diminish in proportion as one leaves the cities and chief thoroughfares. As I dismounted, the coachman took hold of my arm, saying, "Cavalier, here is a decent man who will get a horse for you, and travel with you to the Seo de Urgel. I know the man, and it is I who recommend him." The person thus introduced was a sturdy, broad-shouldered fellow, with short black hair, and hard, weather-beaten features. He touched his red Catalan cap, and then looked me steadily in the face while, in answer to my inquiries, he offered to be ready at four o'clock the next morning, and demanded six dollars for himself and horse, the journey requiring two days. There were two or three other *arrieros* present, but I plainly saw that none of them would enter into competition with a man recommended by the coachman. Moreover, as far as appearances went, he was the best of the lot, and so I engaged him at once.

While the fat hostess of the *fonda* was preparing my dinner, I strolled for an hour or two about the town. The church is renowned for having been founded in the year 820, immediately after the expulsion of the Moors from this part of Spain, and for containing the bodies of St. Celadonio and St. Emeterio — whoever those holy personages may have been. I confess I never heard of them before. What I admired in the church was the splendid mellow brown tint of its massive ancient front. Brown is the characteristic color of Spain, from the drapery of Murillo and the walls of cathedrals to the shadow of cypresses and the arid soil of the hills. Whether brightening into gold or ripening into purple, it always seems to give the key of color. In the streets of Cardona, it was the base upon which endless picturesque groups of people were painted, — women spinning flax, children cooling their bare bodies on the stones, blacksmiths and cobblers forging and stitching in the open air — all with a keen glance of curiosity, but also a respectful greeting for the stranger. The plaza, which was called, like all plazas in Catalonia, *de la Constitucion*, overhung the deep ravine at the foot of the salt mountain. From its parapet I looked upon the vineyard-terraces into which the hills have been fashioned, and found them as laboriously constructed as those of the Rheingau. A cliff of salt below sparkled like prismatic glass in the evening light, but all the nearer gardens lay in delicious shadow, and the laden asses began to jog homewards from the distant fields. There was a *café* on the plaza patronized only by two or three military idlers; the people still worked steadily while the daylight lasted, charming away their fatigue by the most melancholy songs.

The inn was not an attractive place. The kitchen was merely one corner of the public room, in which chairs lay overturned and garments tumbled about, as if the house had been sacked. The members of the family sat and chattered in this confusion, promising whatever I demanded, but taking their own time about getting it. I had very meagre expectations of dinner, and was therefore not a little surprised when excellent fresh fish, stewed rabbits, and a roasted fowl were set successively before me. The merry old landlady came and went, anxious to talk, but prevented by her ignorance of the pure Spanish tongue. However, she managed to make me feel quite at home, and well satisfied that I had ventured so far into the region of ill-repute.

What was going on in the town that night I cannot imagine; but it was a tumult of the most distracting kind. First, there were drums and — as it seemed to me — tin pans beaten for an hour or two in the street below; then a chorus of piercing, dreadfully inharmonious voices; then a succession of short cries or howls, like those of the oriental dervishes. Sometimes the noises moved away, and I settled myself to sleep, whereupon they came back worse than before. "O children of Satan!" I cried, "will ye never be still?" Some time after midnight the voices became hoarse: one by one dropped off, and the charivari gradually ceased, from the inability of the performers to keep it up longer. Then horses were led forth from the stable on the ground-floor, whips were violently cracked, and the voices of grooms began to be heard. At three o'clock Juan, my new guide, came into the room with a coarse bag, in which he began packing the contents of my valise, which could not otherwise be carried on horseback, and so my rest was over before it had commenced.

I found the diligence about starting on its return to Manresa, and my horse, already equipped, standing in the stable. The sack, valise, and other articles were so packed, before and behind the saddle, that only a narrow, deep cleft remained for me to sit in. The sun had not yet risen, and the morning air was so cool that I determined to walk down the hill and mount at the foot. Stepping over two grooms who were lying across the stable door on a piece of hide, sound asleep, we set forth on our journey.

The acropolis rose dark against the pearly sky, and the valley of the Cardoner lay cool and green in the lingering shadows. Early as was the hour, laborers were already on their way to the fields; and when we reached the ancient bridge of seven arches, I saw the two old ladies of Solsona in advance, mounted on mules, and carrying their baskets, boxes, and dried codfish with them. Although my French guide-book declared that the road before me was scarcely practicable, the sight of these ladies was a better authority to the contrary. I mounted at the bridge, and joined the cavalcade, which was winding across a level tract of land between walled fields and along the banks of irrigating canals. Juan, however, found the mules too slow, and soon chose a side-path, which, in the course of a mile or two, brought us into the main track, some distance in advance of the old ladies. By this time the sun was up and blazing on all the hills; the wide, open country about Cardona came to an end, and we struck into a narrow glen, covered with forests of pine. Juan directed me to ford the river and follow the track on the opposite side, while he went on to a foot-bridge farther up. "In a few minutes," he said, "you will find a *carretera*," — a cart-road, which proved to be a superb macadamized highway, yet virgin of any wheel. Men were working upon it, smoothing the turf on either side, and leveling the gravel as carefully as if the Queen's mail-coach travelled that way; but the splendid piece of workmanship has neither beginning nor end, and will be utterly useless until it touches a finished road somewhere.

A short distance farther the glen expanded, and I recrossed the river by a lofty new bridge. The road was carried over the bottom-land on an embankment at least forty feet high, and then commenced ascending the hills on the northern bank. After passing a little village on the first height, we entered a forest of pine, which continued without interruption for four or five miles. The country became almost a wilderness, and wore a singular air of loneliness, contrasted with the busy region I had left behind. As I approached the summit, the view extended far and wide over a dark, wooded sweep of hills, rarely broken by a solitary farm-house and the few cleared fields around it. On the nearer slope below me there was now and then such a house; but the most of them were in ruins, and young pines were shooting up in the deserted vineyards. The Catalans are so laborious in their habits, so skilled in the art of turning waste into fruitful land, that there must have been some special reason for this desolation. My guide either could not or would not explain it.

When we reached the northern side of the mountain, cultivation again commenced, and I saw the process of clearing woodland and preparing the soil for crops. The trees are first removed, the stumps and roots dug up, and then all the small twigs, brambles, weeds, and dry sticks, — everything, in fact, which cannot be used for lumber and firewood, — are gathered into little heaps all over the ground, and covered with the top soil. A year, probably, must elapse, before these heaps are tolerably decomposed; then they are spread upon the surface and ploughed under. The virgin soil thus acquired is manured after every crop, and there is no such thing as an exhausted field.

The fine highway came to an end as suddenly as it had commenced, in the rough forest, with no village near. The country became broken and irregular, and the bridle-path descended continually through beautiful groves of oak, with an undergrowth of box and lavender, the odors from which filled the air. I was nearly famished, when, after a journey of five or six leagues, we emerged from the woods, and saw the rich valley-basin of Solsona before us, with the dark old town in its centre. Here, again, every available foot of soil was worked into terraces, drained or irrigated as the case might be, and made to produce its utmost. As I rode along the low walls, the ripe, heavy ears of wheat leaned over and brushed my head. Although there is no wheeled vehicle — not even a common cart — in this region, all the roads being the rudest bridle-paths, the town is approached by a magnificent bridge of a dozen arches, spanning a grassy hollow, at the bottom of which flows a mere thread of a brook.

At the farther end of the bridge, a deserted gateway ushers the traveller into Solsona. Few strangers, I suspect, ever enter the place; for labor ceased as I passed along the streets, and even Don Basilio, on his way home from morning mass, lifted his shovel hat, and bowed profoundly. Many of the houses were in ruins, and bore the marks of fire and balls. I rode into the ground-floor of a dark house which bore no sign or symbol over the door, but Juan assured me that it was an inn. A portly, dignified gentleman advanced out of the shadows, and addressed me in the purest Castilian; he was the landlord, and his daughter was cook and waiting-maid. The rooms above were gloomy and very ancient; there was scarcely a piece of furniture which did not appear to be two centuries old; yet everything was clean and orderly.

"Can we have breakfast?" I asked.

"Whatever we have is at your disposition," said the landlord. "What would you be pleased to command?"

"Eggs, meat, bread, and wine; but nothing that cannot be got ready in a few minutes."

The landlord bowed, and went into the kitchen. Presently he returned and asked, "Did I understand you to wish for *meat*, Cavalier?"

"Certainly, if you have it," I replied.

"Yes, we have it in the house," said he; "but I didn't know what your *custom* was."

I did not guess what he meant until a plate of capital mutton-chops was smoking under my nose. Then it flashed across my mind that the day was Friday, and I no better than a heathen in the eyes of my worthy host. According to the country custom of Spain, master and groom fare alike, and Juan took his seat beside me without waiting for an invitation. I ought to have invited the landlord, but I was too hungry to remember it. To my surprise — and relief also — Juan ate his share of the chops, and there was a radiant satisfaction on his countenance. I have no doubt he looked upon me as the responsible party, and did not even consider it worth while to confess afterwards.

"You have a beautiful country here," I remarked to the landlord, knowing that such an expression is always accepted as a half-compliment.

"It is a country," he exclaimed with energy, "*que nada falta*, — which lacks nothing! There is everything you want; there is not a better country under the sun! No, it is not the *country* that we complain of."

"What then?" I asked.

For a moment he made no reply, then, apparently changing the subject, said, "Did you see the houses in ruins as you came into Solsona? That was done in the Carlist wars. We suffered terribly: nearly half the people of this region were slaughtered."

"What good comes of these wars?" I asked. "Is anything better than it was before? What have you to offset all that fire and murder?"

"That's it!" he cried; "that was what I meant."

He shook his head in a melancholy way, drank a glass of wine, and said, as if to prevent my continuing the subject: "You understand how to travel, or you would not come into such wild parts as these. But here, instead of having the rattling of cart-wheels in your ears all day, you have the songs of the nightingales. You don't have dust in your nose, but the smell of grain and flowers; you can start when you please, and ride as far as you like. That's *my* way to travel, and I wish there were more people of the same mind. We don't often see a foreign cavalier in Solsona yet it's not a bad country, as you yourself say."

By this time Juan and I had consumed the chops and emptied the bottle; and, as there were still six leagues to be travelled that day, we prepared to leave Solsona. The town, of barely two thousand inhabitants, has an ancient church, a deserted palace of the former Dukes of Cardona, and a miraculous image of the Virgin — neither of which things is sufficiently remarkable in its way to be further described. The age of the place is apparent; a dark, cool, mournful atmosphere of the Past fills its streets, and the traces of recent war seem to have been left from mediæval times.

The sky was partly overcast, but there was an intense, breathless heat in the air. Our path led across the bounteous valley into a wild ravine, which was spanned by two ancient aqueducts. The pointed arch of one of them hinted of Moorish construction, as well as the platform and tank of a fountain in a rocky nook beyond. Here the water gushed out in a powerful stream, as in those fountains of the Anti-Lebanon in the country of Galilee. Large plane-trees shaded the spot, and the rocks overhung it on three sides, yet no one was there to enjoy the shade and coolness. The place was sad, because so beautiful and so lonely.

At the farther end of the ravine we entered a forest of pine, with an undergrowth of box, and commenced ascending the mountain-range dividing the Valley of Solsona from that of the Rio Salado. It might have been the Lesser Atlas, and the sky that of Africa, so fierce was the heat, so dry and torn the glens up the sides of which toiled my laboring horse. Birds and insects were alike silent: the lizard, scampering into his hole in the red bank of earth, was the only living thing. For an hour or more we slowly plodded upward; then, emerging from the pine wood upon a barren summit, I looked far and wide over a gray, forbidding, fiery land. Beyond the Salado Valley, which lay beneath me, rose a range of uninhabited mountains, half clothed with forest or thicket, and over them the outer Pyrenees, huge masses of bare rock, cut into sharp, irregular forms. A house or two, and some cultivated patches, were visible along the banks of the Salado; elsewhere, there was no sign of habitation.

The *bajada*, or descent to the river, was so steep and rough that I was forced to dismount and pick my way down the zigzags of burning sand and sliding gravel. At the bottom I forded the river, the water of which is saline and then hastened to a mill upon the further bank, to procure a cup of water. The machinery was working in charge of a lusty girl, who shut off the water while she ran to a spring in the ravine behind, and filled an earthen jar. There was nothing of Spanish grace and beauty about her. She had gray eyes, a broad, flat nose, brown hair, broad shoulders, and the arms and legs of a butcher. But she was an honest, kind-hearted creature, and the joyous goodwill with which she served me was no less refreshing than the water.

The path now followed the course of the Rio Salado, under groves of venerable ilex, which fringed the foot of the mountain. Thickets of box and tamarisk overhung the stream, and the sight of the water rushing and murmuring through sun and shade, made the heat more endurable. Another league, however, brought me to the little hamlet of Ojern, where my road took to the hills again. Nature has given this little place a bay of rich soil between the river and the mountains, man has blackened it with fire and riddled it with shot; and between the two it has become a complete and surprising picture. Out of superb gardens of orange and fig trees, over hedges of roses and wild mounds of woodbine, rise the cracked and tottering walls — heaps of ruin, but still inhabited. Nothing could be finer than the contrast of the riotous vegetation, struggling to grow away from the restraining hand into its savage freedom, with the firm texture, the stubborn forms and the dark, mellow coloring of the masonry. Of course the place was dirty, and offended one sense as much as it delighted the other. It is a pity that neatness and comfort cannot be picturesque.

I knew that the Rio Segre could not be very distant, but I was far from guessing how much the way might be lengthened by heat and almost impracticable roads. This ascent was worse than the former, since there was no forest to throw an occasional shade. A scrubby chaparral covered the red and flinty slopes, upon which the sun beat until the air above them quivered. My horse was assailed with a large gad-fly, and kicked, stamped, and whirled his head as if insane. I soon had occasion to notice a physiological fact — that the bones of a horse's head are more massive than those of the human shin. When we reached the summit of the mountain, after a long, long pull, I was so bruised, shaken, and exhausted that Juan was obliged to help me out of the saddle, or rather, the crevice between two piles of baggage in which I was wedged. The little imp came back chuckling, and said, "I told you so!" In such cases, I always recall Cicero's consolatory remark, and go on my way with fresh courage.

Moreover, far below, at the base of the bare peaks of rock which rose against the western sky, I saw the glitter of the Rio Segre, and knew that my day's labor was nearly at an end. The descent was so rugged that I gave the reins to Juan, and went forward on foot. After getting down the first steep, the path fell into and followed the dry bed of a torrent, which dropped rapidly towards the river. In half an hour I issued from the fiery ravine, and was greeted by a breeze that had cooled its wings on the Pyrenean snow. Olive-trees again shimmered around me, and a valley-bed of fruitful fields expanded below. A mile further, around the crest of the lower hills, I found myself on a rocky point, just over the town of Oliana. It was the oldest and brownest place I had seen, up to this time; but there was shade in its narrow streets, and rest for me under one of its falling roofs. A bell in the tall, square tower of the church chimed three; and Juan, coming up with the horse, insisted that I should mount, and make my entrance as became a cavalier.

I preferred comfort to dignity; but when everybody can see that a man *has* a horse, he really loses nothing by walking. The first houses we passed appeared to be deserted; then came the main street, in which work, gossip and recreation were going on in the open air. Here there was a swinging sign with the word "Hostal" over the inn door, and most welcome was that inn, with its unwashed floors, its fleas, and its odors of garlic. I was feverish with the absorption of so much extra heat, and the people gave me the place of comfort at an open window, with a view of green fields between the poplars. Below me there was a garden belonging to the priest, who, in cassock and shovel-hat, was inspecting his vegetables. Gathering up his sable skirts, he walked mincingly between the rows of lettuce and cauliflower, now and then pointing out a languishing plant, which an old woman in attendance then proceeded to refresh by flinging water upon it with a paddle, from a tank in a corner of the garden. Browning's "Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister" came into my head, and I think I should have cried out, could the padre have understood the words: "O, that rose has prior claims!" I must say, however, that the garden was admirably kept, and the priest's table was all the better for his horticultural tastes.

There were three or four jolly fellows in the inn, who might have served in Sherman's army, they were so tall and brown and strong. My attention was drawn from the priest by their noise and laughter, and I found them gathered about a wild-looking man, dressed in rags. The latter talked so rapidly, in the Catalan dialect, that I could understand very little of what he said; but the landlady came up and whispered, "He's a *loco* (an idiot), but he does no harm." To me he seemed rather to be a genius, with a twist in his brain. He was very quick in retort, and often turned the laugh upon his questioner; while from his constant appeals to "Maria Santissima," a strong religious idea evidently underlay his madness. The landlord gave him a good meal, and he then went on his way. cheerful, perhaps happy, in his isolation.

I suppose Juan must have been well satisfied to eat meat on a Friday without the sin being charged to his personal account, and must therefore have given a hint to the landlord; for, without my order, a chicken was set before me at dinner, and he took the drumsticks as of right. When the sun got behind the tall mountain opposite, I wandered about the town, seeing nothing that seems worthy of being recorded, yet every view was a separate delight which I cannot easily forget. There were no peculiarities of architecture or of costume; but the houses were so quaintly irregular, the effects of light and shade so bold and beautiful, the colors so balanced, that each street with its inhabitants might have been painted without change. There was a group before the shoemaker's door — the workman on his bench, a woman with a shoe, a young fellow in a scarlet cap, who had paused to say a word, and two or three children tumbling on the stones; another at the fountain — women filling jars, coming and going with the load on hip or head; another at the barber's, and all framed by houses brown as Murillo's color, with a background of shadow as rich as Rembrandt's. These are subjects almost too simple to paint with the pen; they require the pencil.

In the evening, the sultry vapors which had been all day floating in the air settled over the gorge, and presently thunder-echoes were buffeted back and forth between the rocky walls. The skirts of a delicious rain trailed over the valley, and Night breathed odor and coolness and healing balsam as she came down from the western peaks. Rough and dirty as was the guests' room of the "hostal," my bedroom was clean and pleasant. A floor of tiles, a simple iron washstand resembling an ancient tripod, one chair, and a bed, coarsely, but freshly spread — what more can a reasonable man desire? The linen (though it is a bull to say so) was of that roughly woven cotton which one finds only in southern Europe, Africa, and the Orient, which always seems cool and clean, and has nothing in common with the frouzy, flimsy stuff we find in cheap places at home. Whoever has slept in a small new town (I beg pardon, "city") on an Illinois prairie, knows the feeling of soft, insufficient sheets and flabby pillows, all hinting of frequent use, between which he thinks, ere sleep conquers his disgust, of the handkerchief which awaits him as towel in the morning. In the poorest inn in Spain I am better lodged than in the Jimplecute House in Roaring City.

Juan called me at three o'clock, for another severe day was before us. Our road followed the course of the Rio Segre, and there were no more burning mountains to climb; but both M. de Lavigne and Mr. Ford, in the little which they vouchsafed to say of this region, mentioned the frightful character of the gorges through which the river breaks his way downward to the Ebro; and their accounts, if the timid traveller believes them, may well deter him from making the journey. In the cool half-hour before sunrise, as I rode across the circular valley, or *conque*, of Oliana, towards the gloomy portals of rock out of which the river issues, my spirits rose in anticipation of the wild scenery beyond. The vineyards and orchards were wet and fresh, and the air full of sweet smells. Clouds rested on all the stony summits, rising or falling as the breeze shifted. The path mounted to the eastern side of the gorge, where, notched along the slanting rock, it became a mere thread to the eye, and finally disappeared.

As I advanced, however, I found that the passage was less dangerous than it seemed. The river roared far below, and could be reached by a single plunge; but there was a good, well-beaten mule-track — the same, and probably the only one, which has been used since the first human settlement. Soon after entering the gorge, it descended to within a hundred feet of the river, and then crossed to the opposite bank by a bold bridge of a single arch, barely wide enough for a horse to walk upon. The parapet on either side was not more than two feet high, and it was not a pleasant sensation to look down from the saddle upon the roaring and whirling flood. Yet the feeling was one which must be mastered; for many a mile of sheer precipice lay before me. The Segre flows through a mere cleft in the heart of the terrible mountains, and the path continuously overhangs the abyss. Bastions of naked rock, a thousand feet high, almost shut out the day; and the traveller, after winding for hours in the gloom of their shadows, feels as if buried from the world.

The sides of the gorge are nearly perpendicular, and the dark gray rock is unrelieved by foliage, except where soil enough has lodged to nourish a tuft of box; yet here and there, wherever a few yards of less abrupt descent occur, in spots not entirely inaccessible, the peasants have built a rude wall, smoothed the surface, and compelled a scanty tribute of grass or grain. Tall, wild-looking figures, in brown jackets and knee-breeches, with short, broad-bladed scythes flashing on their shoulders, met us; and as they leaned back in the hollows of the rock to let us pass, with the threatening implements held over their heads, a very slight effort of the imagination made them more dangerous than the gulf which yawned on the opposite side of the path. They were as rough and savage as the scenery in appearance; but in reality they were simple-hearted, honest persons. All that I saw of the inhabitants of this part of Catalonia assured me that I was perfectly safe among them. After the first day of my journey, I gave up the prospect of finding danger enough to make an adventure.

By and by the path, so lonely for the first hour after starting, began to be animated. The communication between the valleys of the Spanish Pyrenees and the lower Segre, as far as Lerida, is carried on through this defile, and pack-mules were met from time to time. Juan walked in advance, listening for the tinkling bells of the coming animals, and selecting places were the road was broad enough for us to pass without danger. Sometimes I waited, sometimes they — one leaning close against the rock, one pacing slowly along the brink, with the river below booming into caverns cut out of the interlocking bases of the mountains. As the path sank or rose, accommodating itself to the outline of the cliffs, and the bells of the unseen mules or horses chimed in front around some corner of the gorge, they chimed to my ears the words of another, who foresaw as well as remembered.

O, dear and distant Friend and Poet! henceforth I shall hear your voice in this music of Spain. All that day, in the wild and wonderful cañons of the Segre, you rode with me; and poetical justice demanded that I should have paid, like Uhland to his boatman, for the other spirit who sat upon my weary steed. I tried to look with your clear eyes, so quick to detect and interpret beauty; and I try now to write of the scenery, so that you may behold it through mine. As turn after turn of the winding gorge disclosed some grander conformation of the overhanging heights, some new pinnacle of rock piercing the air, or cavern opening its dark arch at the base of a precipice, I drew you from your quiet cottage by the Merrimack, and said, as we paused together in a myrtle-roofed niche in the rocks, "All this belongs to us, for we alone have seen it!"

But, alas! how much of subtle form, of delicate gradation of color, of fleeting moods of atmosphere, escapes us when we try to translate the experience of the eyes! I endeavor to paint the living and breathing body of Nature, and I see only a hard black silhouette, like those shadows of grandfathers which hang in old country homes. Only to minds that of themselves understand and can guess is the effort not lost. A landscape thus partly describes itself; and so, in this case, I must hope that something of the grand and lonely valley of the Rio Segre may have entered into my words.

Perhaps the best general impression of the scenery may be suggested by a single peculiarity. Two hours after entering the defile, I issued from it into the *conque* of Nargo — an open circular basin some three miles in breadth, beyond which the mountains again interlock. The term *conque* (shell?) is applied to these valleys, which occur regularly at intervals of from six to ten miles; and their arrangement is picturesquely described in French as as being *en chapelet*, for they are literally strung like beads on the thread of the river. No part of Europe is so old (to the eye) as these valleys. There seems to have been no change for a thousand years. If the air were not so dry, one could fancy that the villages would be gradually buried under a growth of moss and lichens. The brown rust on their masonry is almost black, the walls of the terraced fields are as secure in their places as the natural rock, and the scars left by wars are not to be distinguished from those of age. Whenever there is a surplus of population it must leave, for it cannot be subsisted. There may be mountain-paths leading inland from these valleys, but none are visible; each little community is inclosed by a circle of tremendous stony walls and pinnacles, which the river alone has been able to pierce.

At the further end of the *conque* of Nargo lay the village, perched upon a bold crag. Several sharp, isolated mountains, resembling the horns and needles of the Alps, rose abruptly out of the open space; and their lower faces of dark vermilion rock made a forcible contrast with the splendid green of the fields. We did not pause in the village, but descended its ladder of a street to the river-wall, and plunged at once into a second gorge, as grand and savage as the first, though no more than a league in extent. Juan again went ahead and warned the coming muleteers. In another hour I reached the *conque* of Orgañá, a rich and spacious tract of land, with the village of the same name on a rock, precisely like Nargo. A high, conical peak on the left appeared to be inaccessible, yet there was a white chapel on its very summit. "Look there!" said Juan, "*that* saint likes a cool place."

Fine old walnut-tree made their appearance in this valley; water was everywhere abundant, and the gardens through which I approached the village were filled with shade and the sound of streams. Indeed, the terraces of ancient vines and fruit-trees, mixed with cypresses and bosky alleys of flowering shrubs, might have belonged to the palaces of an extinct nobility; but the houses which followed were those of peasants, smoky with age, low, dark, and dirty. A pack of school-children, in the main street, hailed me with loud shouts, whereat the mechanics looked up from their work, and the housewives came to the doors. There was a dusky inn, with a meek, pinched landlady, who offered eggs and a *guisado* (stew) with tomatoes. While these were cooking, she placed upon the table a broad-bellied bottle with a spout, something like an old-fashioned oil-can in shape. I was not Catalan enough to drink without a glass; but Juan raising the bottle above his head, spirted a thin stream of wine into his open mouth, and drank long and luxuriously. When he was satisfied, a dexterous turn of the wrist cut off the stream, and not a drop was spilled. At the table, these bottles pass from hand to hand — one cannot say from mouth to mouth, for the lips never touch them. I learned to drink in the same fashion without much difficulty, and learned thereby that much of the flavor of the wine is lost. The custom seems to have been invented to disguise a bad vintage.

While we were breakfasting, a French peasant, whom I had seen at Oliana, arrived. He was on foot, and bound for Foix, by way of Andorra. This was also my route, and I accepted his offer of engaging another horse for me at Urgel, in the evening, and accompanying me over the Pyrenees. He was not a very agreeable person, but it was a satisfaction to find some one with whom I could speak. I left him at the table. with a company of Spanish muleteers, and never saw him afterwards.

Before leaving Organá, I was stopped in the street by a man who demanded money, saying something about the "Pons," which I could not comprehend. It finally occurred to me that the defile through which I was about to pass is named *Los tres Pons* (The Three Bridges) on the old maps of Catalonia, and that the man was asking for toll — which proved to be the case. The three *cuartos* which I paid were the veriest trifle for the privilege of passing over such a road as followed. The mountains were here loftier, and therefore more deeply cloven; the former little attempts at cultivation ceased, for even Catalonian thrift shrank from wresting any profit out of walls so bare and bluff that scarcely a wild goat could cling to their ledges. Two hundred feet below, the river beat against the rocks with a sullen, mysterious sound, while, from one to two thousand feet above, the jagged coping of the precipices cut the sky. A cool, steady wind drew down the cleft, filling it with a singular humming sound. The path crossed to the eastern side by a tremulous wooden bridge laid flat upon natural abutments; then, a mile further, recrossed by a lofty stone arch, under which there was a more ancient one, still perfect. Several miles of the same wonderful scenery succeeded — scenery the like of which I know not where to find in Switzerland. The gorge of Gondo, on the Italian side of the Simplon, is similar in character, but less grand and majestic. Far up in the enormous cliffs, I saw here and there the openings of caverns, to which no man has ever climbed; cut into the heart of inaccessible walls were unexpected glens, green nests of foliage, safe from human intrusion, where the nightingales sang in conscious security; and there were points so utterly terrible in all their features that the existence of a travelled path was the greatest wonder of all.

In the preceding defiles, Nature had accidentally traced out the way, but here it had been forced by sheer labor and daring. Sometimes it was hewn into the face of the upright rock; sometimes it rested on arches built up from below, the worn masonry of which threatened to give way as I passed over. Now, fortunately, the tinkling of mule-bells was rare, for there were few points where travellers could safely meet. Convulsion was as evident in the structure of the mountains themselves as in their forcible separation. In some places the perpendicular strata were curiously bent, as if the top had cooled rapidly and begun to lean over upon the fluid ascending mass. The summits assumed the wildest and most fantastic forms, especially about the centre of the mountain range. When I had crossed the third bridge, which is more than a league above the second, the heights fell away, the glen gradually opened, and I saw before me the purple chain of the Pyrenees, mottled with dark patches of forest, and crested with snow.

The pass of The Three Bridges has its tragic episode of recent history, in addition to those which the centuries have forgotten. Here, forty years ago, the Count of Spain, who governed Catalonia in the name of Ferdinand VII., was betrayed by his own adjutant, by whom, and by a priest named Ferrer, he was murdered. The deed is supposed to have been committed at the instigation of Don Carlos. A stone was tied to the corpse, and it was flung from the rocks into the torrent of the Segre. The place breathes of vengeance and death; and one seems to inhale a new air when he emerges into the *conque* of Le Pla, after being inclosed for two hours within those terrible gates.

It was a double delight to me to come upon lush meadows, and smell the vernal sweetness of the flowering grass. Leaving the river on my left, I struck eastward along the sides of clayey hills, with slopes of vine above me, and the broad green meadows below. The vegetation had already a more northern character; clumps of walnut, poplar, and willow grew by the brooksides, and the fields of wheat were not yet ripe for harvest. I passed a picturesque, tumbling village called Arfa, crossed the Segre for the last time, and then rode onward into a valley several miles in diameter, the bed of which was broken by rounded hills. This was the Valley of Urgel, or "the See," — *el seú,* as it is called by the people in their dialect. The term recalls the days when the Bishop was a sovereign prince, and his see a temporal, as well as ecclesiastical government.

Juan pointed out a fortress in advance, which I supposed to be the town. Near it, on the slope of the hill, there was a mass of buildings, baking in the afternoon sun; and I know not which was most melancholy, the long lines of cracked, deserted ramparts on the hill, or the crumbling, uninhabited houses on the slope below. I did not see six persons in the place, which was not Urgel, but Castel Ciudad. The former city is a mile further, seated in the centre of the plain. I saw, on my left, the mouth of a glen of the Pyrenees, and guessed, before the groom said so, that within its depths lay the forgotten Republic of Andorra. The Valira, the one stream of the Republic, poured upon the plain its cold green waters, which I forded, in several channels, before reaching the gates of Urgel.

Juan had cheered me with the promise of a good inn. The exterior of the house was, if anything, a trifle meaner than that of the neighboring houses; the entrance was through a stable, and the kitchen and public room very dirty; yet, these once passed, I entered a clean, spacious, and even elegant bedroom. A door therefrom opened upon a paved terrace, with a roof of vine and a superb view of the Pyrenees; and hither, as I sat and rested my weary bones, came the landlord, and praised the country. There was inexhaustible coal in the mountains, he said; there was iron in the water; the climate was the best in Spain; people were healthy and lived long — and the only thing wanting was a road to some part of the world.

The towns through which I had passed seemed as old and lonely as any towns could well be; but they are tame beside the picturesque antiquity of Urgel. Nothing seems to have been changed here since the twelfth century. The streets are narrow and gloomy, but almost every house rests on massive arches, which form continuous arcades, where the mechanics sit and ply their avocations. The vistas of these arched passages are closed either with a single building of very primitive and ponderous architecture, or by the stones of a wall as old as the times of the Moors. The place is like a gallery of old sepia drawings. I attracted the usual wonder, as I loitered through the gloom of the arcades; work was suspended while I passed, and tongues were silent. When I entered the venerable cathedral, which was finished six hundred years ago, the solitary worshipper stopped in the midst of an *ave*, and stared at me with open mouth. The spacious Gothic nave, however, was less attractive than the pictures outside; so I passed from the interior to the exterior shadows — one about as dense as the other. Presently I came upon a massive house, with a magnificent flat-roofed arbor of grapes beside it, and was saying to myself that there was one fortunate person in the poverty-stricken capital, when the door opened and Don Basilio came forth with sweeping cassock and enormous hat. A little further, I found myself in a small plaza, one side of which was occupied by a building resembling a fortress. Over the door I read the inscription, "Princeps soberan del Valls de Andorra." This was the residence of the bishop, who claims the title of sovereign of the little republic; his powers, in fact, being scarcely more than nominal.

I was tempted to present myself to his Reverence, and state my intention of visiting Andorra; but my information with regard to the republic was so vague that I knew not how such a visit might be regarded. I might be creating difficulty where none existed. With this prudent reflection I returned to the inn, and engaged a fresh horse and guide for the morrow, sending Juan back to Cardona. It was but an hour's ride, the landlord said, to the frontier

The region of ill-repute lay behind me; the difficult bridle-roads were passed, and all evil predictions had come to naught. By-ways are better than highways, and if an intelligent young American, who knows the Spanish language, will devote a year to the by-ways of Spain, living with the people and in their fashion, he will find that all the good books of observation and adventure have not yet been written.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE PYRENEES.

THERE are remote, forgotten corners of history as there are of geography. When Halévy brought out his opera *Le Val d'Andorre*, the name meant no more to the most of those who heard it than the Valley of Rasselas to our ears, — a sound, locating a fiction. But the critic, who must seem to know everything, opened one of his lexicons, and discovered that Andorra was an actual valley, buried in the heart of the Pyrenees. Furthermore, he learned, for the first time, that its territory was an independent republic, preserved intact since the days of Charlemagne; that both France and Spain, incredible as the fact may appear, have always scrupulously respected the rights granted to its inhabitants more than a thousand years ago. While the existence of every other state has in turn been menaced, while hundreds of treaties have been made only to be broken, here is a place where, like the castle of the Sleeping Beauty, time has stood still, and History shut up her annals.

Napoleon, when a deputation from the little republic visited him in Paris, said: "I have heard of this Andorra, and have purposely abstained from touching it, because I thought it ought to be preserved as a political curiosity." Louis Philippe, thirty years later, exclaimed: "What! is it possible that I have a neighbor whose name I never heard before?" I suspect that the name of Andorra on the excellent German maps, which overlook nothing, was the first indication of the existence of the state to many of those who are now acquainted with it. It was so in my case. From noting its position, and seeing its contracted boundaries, so carefully marked out, I went further, and picked up what fragments of information could be found in French and German geographical works. These were sufficiently curious to inspire me with the design of visiting the valley.

On reaching Urgel, in the Spanish Pyrenees, I was within a league of the Andorran frontier. My way thither lay through the deep gorge out of which the river Valira issues, on its way to the Segre. The bald, snow-streaked summits in the north belonged to the territory of the republic, but whatever of life and labor it contained was buried out of sight in their breast. Nevertheless, the vague and sometimes threatening reports of the people which had reached me at a distance here vanished. Everybody knew Andorra, and spoke well of it. I had some difficulty in finding a horse, which the landlord declared was on account of the unpractical shape and weight of my valise; but, when I proposed going on foot, an animal was instantly produced. The arrieros could not let a good bargain slip out of their hands.

It was a wonderful morning in mid June. The shadow of the Pyrenees still lay cool upon the broad basin of Urgel; but the brown ramparts of Castel Ciudad on the rocks, and all the western heights, sparkled in sunshine. I found a nimble mountain pony waiting for me at the door of the inn, and Julian, my guide, a handsome fellow of twenty, in rusty velvet jacket and breeches, and scarlet Phrygian cap. A skin as brown as an Arab's; an eye full of inexpressible melancholy; a grave, silent, but not gloomy nature — all these had Julian; yet he was the very companion for such a journey. He strode from the gate of Urgel with a firm, elastic step, and I followed through the gray olive orchards across the plain. The lower terraces of the mountain were silvery with the olive; but when the path turned into the gorge of the Valira, the landscape instantly changed. On one side rose a rocky wall; on the other, meadows of blossoming grass, divided by thickets of alder and willow, slanted down to the rapid stream, the noise of which could scarcely be heard for the songs of the nightingales. Features like these, simple as they may seem, sometimes have a singular power to warm one's anticipations of what lies beyond. There is a *promise* in certain scenery; wherein it exists I cannot tell, but I have felt it frequently, and have never yet been disappointed.

After I had threaded the gorge for two miles, it expanded into a narrow valley, where the little Spanish village of Arcacel lay huddled among the meadows. Beyond it, the mountains closed together again, forming an almost impassable cañon, along the sides of which the path was laboriously notched. There were a great many people abroad, and Julian was obliged to go in advance, and select spots where my horse could pass their mules without one or the other being pushed into the abyss below. Some of those I met were probably Andorrans, but I found as yet no peculiarities of face or costume. This is the only road from Spain into the republic, and is very rarely, if ever, traversed by a foreign tourist. The few persons who have visted Andorra, made their way into the valley from the side of France.

As I rode forward, looking out from time to time, for some mark which would indicate the frontier, I recalled what little I had learned of the origin of the republic. There is not much which the most patient historian could establish as positive fact; but the traditions of the people and the few records which they have allowed to be published run nearly parallel, and are probably as exact as most of the history of the ninth century. On one point all the accounts agree — that the independence of the valley sprang indirectly from the struggle between the Franks and Saracens. When the latter possessed themselves of the Peninsula, in the beginning of the eighth century, a remnant of the Visigoths took refuge in this valley, whence, later, they sent to Charlemagne, imploring assistance. After Catalonia had been reconquered, the Emperor — so runs the popular tradition — gave them the valley as a reward for their bravery in battle. The more probable account is, that Charlemagne sent his son, Louis le Débonnaire, who followed the last remnants of the Saracen army up the gorge of the Valira, and defeated them on the spot where the town of Andorra now stands. After the victory he gave the valley to certain of his soldiers, releasing them from all allegiance except to himself. This was in the year 805. What is called the " Charter of Charlemagne," by some of the French writers, is evidently this grant of his son.

Within the following century, however, certain difficulties arose, which disturbed the inhabitants of the little state less than their powerful neighbors. Charlemagne had previously given, it appears, the tithes of all the region to Possidonius, Bishop of Urgel, and the latter insisted on retaining his right. Moreover, Charles the Bald, in 843, presented to Siegfrid, Count of Urgel, the right of sovereignty over Andorra, which Louis le Débonnaire had reserved for himself and his successors. Thus the spiritual and temporal lords of Urgel came in direct conflict, and the question remained undecided for two centuries; the Andorrans, meanwhile, quietly attending to their own affairs, and consolidating the simple framework of their government. Finally, at the consecration of the Cathedral of Urgel, in the year 1040, the widowed Countess Constance publicly placed the sovereignty claimed by her house in the hands of Bishop *Heribald.* (How curious it seems to find the name of Garibaldi occurring in this obscure history!) But this gift of Constance was not respected by her successors, and the trouble broke out anew in the following century. We have but a meagre chain of detached incidents, yet what passion, what intrigue, what priestly thirst of power and jealous resistance on the part of the nobles are suggested, as we follow the scanty record! The Bishop of Urgel triumphs to this day, as he reads the in scription over his palace-door: "Princeps soberan del Valls de Andorra."

At the end of the twelfth century, Arnald, Count of Castelbo, purchased certain privileges in the valley from Ermengol, Count of Urgel. The sale was resisted by the bishop, and a war ensued, in which the latter was defeated. Raymond-Roger, Count of Foix, was then called to aid the episcopal cause — his promised reward being a share in the sovereignty of Andorra, the territory of which bordered his own. Notwithstanding he was victorious, having taken and sacked the city of Urgel, he seems to have considered his claim to the reward still insecure. In the year 1202 he married his son and successor, Roger-Bernard II., to the daughter and only child of the Count of Castelbo. Thus the Bishop of Urgel saw the assumption of sovereignty which he had resisted transferred to the powerful house of Foix. It is stated, however, that, in all the wars which followed, both parties refrained from touching the disputed territory, in order that the value of the revenue expected from it might not be diminished. The Andorrans themselves, though certainly not unconcerned, remained perfectly passive. The fastnesses of the Pyrenees on all sides of them resounded with the noise of war, while they, one generation after another, tended their flocks and cultivated their fields.

The quarrel (and it is almost the end of all history relating to Andorra) came to a close in the year 1278. Roger-Bernard III. of Foix, before the gates of Urgel, which must soon have yielded to him, accepted the proposal for an arbitration — Don Pedro of Aragon having offered his name as security for the fulfillment of the terms which might be agreed upon. Two priests and four knights were the arbitrators; and the *Pariatges* (Partitions) which they declared on the 7th of September of the year already mentioned settled the question of the sovereignty of Andorra from that day to this. Its principal features were that a slight tribute should be paid by the people, on alternate years, to the Counts of Foix and the Bishops of Urgel and that certain officials of the Valley should, in like manner, be named alternately by the two parties. In all other respects, the people were left free. The neutrality of their territory, which had been so marvelously preserved for four centuries and a half, was reaffirmed ; and it has never since been violated. During the wars of Napoleon, a French army appeared on the frontiers of the republic with the intention of marching through it into Spain ; but on the judges and consuls representing to the commanding general the sacred neutrality of their valley, he turned about and chose another route.

The house of Foix became merged in that of Béarn, and the inheritance of the latter, in turn, passed into the hands of the Bourbons. Thus the crown of France succeeded to the right reserved by Louis le Débonnaire, and presented by Charles the Bald to Siegfrid, Count of Urgel. The Andorrans, who look upon their original charter as did the Hebrews on their Ark of the Covenant, consider that the *Pariatges* are equally sanctioned by time and the favor of God ; and, so far from feeling that the tribute is a sign of subjection, they consider that it really secures their independence. They therefore do not allow the revolutions, the change of dynasties which France has undergone, to change their relation to the governing power. They were filled with dismay, when, in 1793, the representative of the French Republic in Foix refused to accept the tribute, on the ground that it was a relic of the feudal system. For six or seven years thereafter they feared that the end of things was at hand ; but the establishment of the Empire, paradoxical as it may appear, secured to them their republic. They seem never to have considered that the refusal of the French authorities gave them a valid pretext to cease the further payment of the tribute.

This is the sum and substance of the history of Andorra

No one can help feeling that a wholly exceptional fortune has followed this handful of people. All other rights given by Charlemagne and his successors became waste paper long since · the Counts of Urgel, the houses of Foix and Béarn, have disappeared, and the Bourbons have ceased to reign in France, — yet the government of the little republic preserves the same forms which were established in the ninth century, and the only relations which at present connect it with the outer world date from the year 1278. I endeavored to impress these facts upon my mind, as the gorge opened into a narrow green valley, blocked up in front by the Andorran mountains. I recalled that picturesque legend of the knight of the Middle Ages, who, penetrating into some remote nook of the Apennines, found a forgotten Roman city, where the people still kept their temples and laid their offerings on the altars of the gods. The day was exquisitely clear and sunny; the breezes of the Pyrenees blew away every speck of vapor from the mountains, but I saw everything softly through that veil which the imagination weaves for us.

Presently we came upon two or three low houses. At the door of the furthest two Spanish soldiers were standing, one of whom stepped forward when he saw me. A picture of delay, examination, bribery, rose in my mind. I assumed a condescending politeness, saluted the man gravely, and rode forward. To my great surprise no summons followed. I kept on my way without looking back, and in two minutes was out of Spain. Few travellers have ever left the kingdom so easily.

The features of the scenery remained the same — narrow, slanting shelves of grass and grain, the Valira foaming below, and the great mountains of gray rock towering into the sky. In another half-hour I saw the little town of San Julian de Loria, one of the six municipalities of Andorra. As old and brown as Urgel, or the villages along the Rio Segre, it was in no wise to be distinguished from them. The massive stone walls of the houses were nearly black; the roofs of huge leaves of slate were covered with a red rust; and there were no signs that anything had been added or taken away from the place for centuries. As my horse clattered over the dirty paving-stones, mounting the one narrow, twisted street, the people came to the doors, and looked upon me with a grave curiosity. I imagined at once that they were different from the Catalans, notwithstanding they spoke the same dialect, and wore very nearly the same costume. The expression of their faces was more open and fearless; a *cheerful* gravity marked their demeanor. I saw that they were both self-reliant and contented.

While Julian stopped to greet some of his friends, I rode into a very diminutive plaza, where some thirty or forty of the inhabitants were gossiping together. An old man, dressed in pale blue jacket and knee-breeches, with a red scarf around his waist, advanced to meet me, lifting his scarlet cap in salutation.

"This is no longer Spain?" I asked.

"It is neither France nor Spain," said he; "it is Andorra."

"The Republic of Andorra?"

"They call it so."

"I am also a citizen of a republic," I then said; but, although his interest was evidently excited, he asked me no questions. The Andorran reserve is proverbial throughout Catalonia; and as I had already heard of it, I voluntarily gave as much information respecting myself as was necessary. A number of men, young and old, had by this time collected, and listened attentively. Those who spoke Spanish mingled in the conversation, which, on my part, was purposely guarded. Some degree of confidence, however seemed to be already established. They told me that they were entirely satisfied with their form of government and their secluded life; that they were poor, but much wealth would be of no service to them, and, moreover (which was true), that they were free because they were poor. When Julian appeared, he looked with surprise upon the friendly circle around me, but said nothing. It was still two hours to *Andorra la Vella* (Old Andorra), the capital, which I had decided to make my first resting-place; so I said, "Adios!" — all the men responding, "Dios guarda!"

Beyond the village I entered upon green meadow-land, shaded by grand walnut-trees, mounds of the richest foliage. The torrent of Aviña came down through a wild glen on the left, to join the Valira, and all the air vibrated with the sound of waters and the incessant songs of the nightingales. People from the high, unseen mountain farms and pasture-grounds met me on their way to San Julian; and their greeting was always "God guard you!" — hinting of the days when travel was more insecure than now. When the mountains again contracted, and the path clung to the sides of upright mountain walls, Julian went in advance, and warned the coming muleteers. Vegetation ceased, except the stubborn clumps of box, which had fastened themselves in every crevice of the precipices; and the nightingales, if any had ventured into the gloomy gorge, were silent. For an hour I followed its windings, steadily mounting all the while; then the rocks began to lean away, the smell of flowering grass came back to the air, and I saw, by the breadth of blue sky opening ahead, that we were approaching the Valley of Andorra.

The first thing that met my eyes was a pretty pastoral picture. Some rills from the melting snows had been caught and turned into an irrigating canal, the banks of which were so overgrown with brambles and wild-flowers that it had become a natural stream. Under a gnarled, wide-armed ilex sat a father, with his two youngest children; two older ones gathered flowers in the sun; and the mother, with a basket in her hand, paused to look at me in the meadow below. The little ones laughed and shouted; the father watched them with bright, happy eyes, and over and around them the birds sang without fear. And this is the land of smugglers and robbers! I thought. Turning in the saddle, I watched the group as long as it was visible.

When I set my face forward again, it was with a sudden catch of the breath and a cry of delight. The promise of the morning was fulfilled; beautiful beyond anticipation was the landscape expanded before me. It was a valley six miles in length, completely walled in by immense mountains, the bases of which, withdrawn in the centre, left a level bed of meadows, nearly a mile broad, watered by the winding Valira. Terraces of grain, golden below, but still green above, climbed far up the slopes; then forest and rock succeeded; and finally the gray pinnacles, with snow in their crevices, stood mantled in their own shadows. Near the centre of the valley, on a singular rocky knoll, the old houses and square tower of Andorra were perched, as if watching over the scene. In front, where the river issued from a tremendous split between two interlocking mountains, I could barely distinguish the houses of Escaldas from the cliffs to which they clung. Nothing could be simpler and grander than the large outlines of the scene, nothing lovelier than its minuter features, — so wonderfully suggesting both the garden and the wilderness, the fresh green of the North and the hoary hues and antique forms of the South. Brimming with sunshine and steeped in delicious odors, the valley — after the long, dark gorge I had threaded — seemed to flash and sparkle with a light unknown to other lands.

Shall I ever forget the last three miles of my journey? Crystal waters rushed and murmured beside my path; great twisted ilex-trees sprang from the masses of rock; mounds of snowy eglantine or purple clematis crowned the cliffs or hung from them like folded curtains; and the dark shadows of walnut and poplar lay upon the lush fields of grass and flowers. The nightingale and thrush sang or the earth, and the lark in the air; and even the melancholy chant of the young farmer in his fields seemed to be only that soft undercurrent of sadness which was needed to make the brightness and joy of the landscape complete

Climbing the rocks to the capital, I was pleasantly surprised to see the sign "Hostal" before I had made more than two turns of the winding street. The English guides, both for France and Spain, advise the adventurous tourist who wishes to visit Andorra to take his provender with him, since nothing can be had in the valley. A friendly host came to the door, and welcomed me. Dinner, he said, would be ready in an hour and a half; but the appearance of the cheerful kitchen into which I was ushered so provoked my already ravenous hunger that an omelette was made instantly, and Julian and I shared it between us. An upper room, containing a coarse but clean bed, which barely found room for itself in a wilderness of saddles and harness, was given to me, and I straightway found myself at home in Andorra. So much for guide-books!

I went forth to look at the little capital before dinner. Its population is less than one thousand; the houses are built of rudely broken stones of schist or granite, and roofed with large sheets of slate. The streets seem to have been originally located where the surface of the rock rendered them possible; but there are few of them, and what the place has to show may be speedily found. I felt at once the simple, friendly, hospitable character of the people: they saluted me as naturally and genially as if I had been an old acquaintance. Before I had rambled many minutes, I found myself before the *Casa del Valls*, the House of Government. It is an ancient, cracked building, but when erected I could not ascertain. The front is simple and massive, with three irregular windows, and a large arched entrance. A tower at one corner threatens to fall from want of repair. Over the door is the inscription: "Domus consilii, sedes justitiæ." There is also a marble shield, containing the arms of the Republic, and apparently inserted at a more recent date. The shield is quartered with the mitre and crosier of the Bishop of Urgel, the four crimson bars of Catalonia, the three bars on an azure field of Foix, and the cows of Béarn. Under the shield is sculptured the Latin verse: —

> "Suspice : sunt vallis neutrius stemmata ; sunt que
> Regna, quibus gaudent nobiliora tegi :
> Singula si populos alios, Andorra, beabunt,
> Quidni juncta ferent aurea secla tibi !"

I suspect, although I have no authority for saying so, that this verse comes from Fiter, the only scholar Andorra ever produced, who flourished in the beginning of the last century. The ground-floor of the building consists of stables, where the members of the council lodge their horses when they meet officially. A tumbling staircase leads to the second story, which is the council-hall, containing a table and three chairs on a raised platform, a picture of Christ between the windows, and oaken benches around the walls. The great object of interest, however, is a massive chest, built into the wall, and closed with six strong iron locks, connected by a chain. This contains the archives of Andorra, including, as the people devoutly believe, the original charters of Charlemagne and Louis le Débonnaire. Each consul of the six parishes is intrusted with the keeping of one key, and the chest can only be opened when all six are present. It would be quite impossible for a stranger to get a sight of the contents. The archives are said to be written on sheets of lead, on palm-leaves, on parchment, or on paper, according to the age from which they date. The chest also contains the "Politar," or Annals of Andorra, with a digest of the laws, compiled by the scholar Fiter. The government did not allow the work to be published, but there is another manuscript copy in the possession of the Bishop of Urgel.

I climbed the huge mass of rock behind the building and sat down upon its crest to enjoy the grand, sunny picture of the valley. The mingled beauty and majesty of the landscape charmed me into a day-dream, in which the old, ever-recurring question was lazily pondered, whether or not this plain, secluded, ignorant life was the happiest lot of man. But the influences of the place were too sweet and soothing for earnest thought, and a clock striking noon recalled me to the fact that a meal was ready in the hostal. The host sat down to the table with Julian and myself, and the spout of the big-bellied Catalonian bottle overhung our mouths in succession. We had a rough but satisfactory dinner, during which I told the host who I was and why I came, thereby winning his confidence to such an extent that he presently brought me an old, dirty Spanish pamphlet, saying, "You may read this."

Seeing that it was a brief and curious account of Andorra, I asked, "Cannot I buy this or another copy?"

"No," he answered; "it is not to be bought. You can read it; but you must give it to me again."

I selected a dark corner of the kitchen, lit my cigar, and read, making rapid notes when I was not observed. The author was a nephew of one of the bishops of Urgel, and professed to have seen with his own eyes the charter of Louis le Débonnaire. That king, he stated, defeated the Saracens on the plain towards Escaldas, where the western branch of the Valira comes down from the Valley of Ordino. Before the battle, a passage from the Book of Kings came into his mind: "Endor, over against Mount Tabor, where the children of Israel, preparing for war against the heathen, pitched their camp"; and after the victory he gave the valley the name of Endor, whence Andorra. The resemblance, the author innocently remarks, is indeed wonderful. In both places there are high mountains; the same kinds of trees grow (!); a river flows through each; there are lions and leopards in Endor, and bears and wolves in Andorra! He then gives the following quotation from the charter, which was written in Latin "The men who actually live in this country are Licindo, Laurentio, Obaronio, Antimirio, Guirinio, Suessonio, Barrulio, rustic laborers, and many others." Louis le Débonnaire returned to France by the present Porte de Fontargente, where, on the summit of the Pyrenees, he caused a chain to be stretched from rock to rock. The holes drilled for the staples of the rings are still to be seen, the people say.

When I had finished the book, I went out again, and in the shade of a willow in the meadow below, made a rough sketch of the town and the lofty Mont Anclar (*mons clavus*) behind it. As I returned, the lower part of the valley offered such lovely breadths of light and shade that I sought a place among the tangle of houses and rocks to make a second drawing. The women, with their children around them, sat at their doors, knitting and chatting. One cried out to another, as I took my seat on the ground, "Why don't you bring a chair for the cavalier?" The chair was brought immediately, and the children gathered around, watching my movements. The mothers kept them in good order, every now and then crying out, "Don't go too near, and don't stand in front!" Among themselves they talked freely about me; but, as they asked no questions, I finally said, "I understand you; if you will ask, I will answer," — whereupon they laughed and were silent.

I have already said that reserve is a marked characteristic of the Andorrans. No doubt it sprang originally from their consciousness of their weakness, and their fear to lose their inherited privileges by betraying too much about themselves. When one of them is questioned upon a point concerning which he thinks it best to be silent, he assumes a stupid expression of face, and appears not to understand. That afternoon a man came to me in the inn, produced a rich specimen of galena, and said, "Do you know what that is?" "Certainly," I answered; "it is the ore of lead. Where did you get it?" He put it in his pocket, looked up at the sky, and said, "What fine weather we have!" It is known that there is much lead in the mountains, yet the mines have never been worked. The people say, "We must keep poor, as our fathers have been. If we become rich, the French will want our lead and the Spaniards our silver, and then one or the other will rob us of our independence."

So well is this peculiarity of the inhabitants understood, that in Catalonia to assume ignorance is called "to play the Andorran." A student from the frontier, on entering a Spanish theological seminary, was called upon to translate the New Testament. When he came to the words, "Jesus autem tacebat," he rendered them, in perfect good faith, "Jesus played the Andorran." For the same reason, the hospitality of the people is of a passive rather than of an active character. The stranger may enter any house in the valley, take his seat at the family board, and sleep under the shelter of the roof; he is free to come and go; no questions are asked, although voluntary information is always gladly received. They would be scarcely human if it were not so.

The principal features of the system of government which these people have adopted may be easily described. They have no written code of laws, the *Politar* being only a collection of precedents in certain cases, accessible to the consuls and judges, and to them alone. When we come to examine the modes in which they are governed, — procedures which, based on long custom, have all the force of law, — we find a singular mixture of the elements of democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy. The sovereignty of France and the Bishop of Urgel is acknowledged in the appointment of the two *viguiers* (*vicarii*), who, it is true, are natives of the valley, and devoted to its interests. In all other respects the forms are democratic; but the circumstance that the officials are unpaid, that they must be married, and that they must be members of families in good repute, has gradually concentrated the government in the hands of a small number of families, by whom it is virtually inherited. Moreover, the law of primogeniture prevails to the fullest extent, still further lessening the number of qualified persons.

The Republic consists of six communes, or parishes, each of which elects two consuls and two councillors, whose term of service is four years; one official of each class being elected every two years. There is no restriction of the right of suffrage. The twenty-four officials form the deliberative body, or Grand Council, who alone have the power of electing the Syndic, the executive head of the government. He is chosen for life; he presides over the Council, and carries its decisions into effect, yet is responsible to it for his actions. Only half the Council being chosen at one time, the disadvantage of having an entirely new set of men suddenly placed in office is obviated. The arrangement, in fact, is the same which we have adopted in regard to the election of United States Senators.

The consuls, in addition, have their municipal duties. Each one names ten petty magistrates, called decurions, whose functions are not much more important than those of our constables. They simply preserve order, and assist in bringing offenses to light. All the persons of property, or who exercise some useful mechanical art, form what is called the Parish Council, whose business it is to raise the proportionate share of the tribute, to apportion the pastures, fix the amount of wood to be sold (part of the revenue of Andorra being derived from the forests), and to regulate all ordinary local matters. These councils, of course, are self-existing; every person who is not poor and insignificant taking his place naturally in them. No one can be chosen as consul who is under thirty years of age, who has not been married, who is blind, deaf, deformed, or epileptic, who is addicted to drink, or who has committed any offense against the laws.

The functions of the parish councils and the Grand Council of the Republic are carefully separated. The former have charge of inns, forges, bakeries, weaving, and the building of dwelling-houses; the latter has control of the forests, the ways of communication, the chase, the fisheries, the finances, and the building of all edifices of a public character. It has five sessions a year. Its members are not paid, but they are lodged and fed, during these sessions, at the public expense. Each parish owns two double-beds in the upper story of the *Casa del Valls* at Andorra; in each bed sleep two consuls or two councillors. There is a kitchen, with an enormous pot, in which their frugal meals are cooked, and a dining-room in which they are served. Formerly their sessions were held in the church-yard, among the tombs, as if to render them more solemnly impressive; but this practice has long been discontinued.

The expenses of the state, one will readily guess, must be very slight. The tribute paid to France is nineteen hundred and twenty francs; that to the Bishop of Urgel, eight hundred and forty-two francs — an average of two hundred and seventy-five dollars per annum. The direct tax is five cents annually for each person; but a moderate revenue is derived from the sale of wood and charcoal, and the rent of pastures on the northern slope of the Pyrenees. Import. export, and excise duties, licenses, and stamps are unknown, although, in civil cases, certain moderate fees are established. The right of tithes, given by Charlemagne to Possidonius, remains in force; but they are generally paid in kind; and in return the Bishop of Urgel, who appoints the priests, contributes to their support. The vicars, of whom there is one to each parish, are paid by the government. The inhabitants are, without exception, devout Catholics, yet it is probably ancient custom, rather than the influence of the priests, which makes them indifferent to education. The schools are so few that they hardly de serve to be mentioned. Only one man in a hundred, and one woman in five hundred can read and write.

The two viguiers, one of whom is named by France and the other by the Bishop of Urgel, exercise the functions of judges. They are the representatives of the two sovereign powers, and their office is therefore surrounded with every mark of respect. Although nominally of equal authority their activity is in reality very unequally divided. Usually some prominent official of the Départment de l'Ariége is named on the part of France, and contents himself with an annual visit to the valley. The Bishop, on the other hand, always names a native Andorran, who resides among the people, and performs the duties of both viguiers. When a new viguier is appointed, he must be solemnly installed at the capital. The members of the Grand Council then appear in their official costume — a long surtout of black cloth, with crimson facings, a red shawl around the waist, gray knee-breeches, sky-blue stockings, and shoes with silver buckles. The Syndic of the Republic wears a crimson mantle; but the viguier is dressed in black, with a sword, cocked hat, and gold-headed staff. As the tribute paid to France is much larger than that paid to the Bishop, the people have voluntarily added to the latter a Christmas offering of the twelve best hams, the twelve richest cheeses, and the twelve fattest capons to be found in the six parishes.

The sovereign powers have two other representatives in addition to the viguiers. These are the *batlles* (*bailes*, bailiffs?) who are chosen from a list of six persons selected by the Grand Council. Their principal duty is to hear and decide, in the first instance, all civil and criminal cases, except those which the government specially reserves for its own judgment. The batlles, however, are called upon to prevent, rather than solve litigation. When a case occurs, they first endeavor to reconcile the parties, or substitute a private arbitration. If that fails, the case is con sidered; and, after the help of God is solemnly invoked, judgment is pronounced. Where the dispute involves a delicate or doubtful point, the batlle consults separately the three men of best character and most familiar with the laws who are to be found in the parish, and decides as the judgment of two of them may coincide. It rarely happens that any serious lawsuit occurs, or that any capital crime is committed. The morals of the people are guarded with equal care; any slip from chastity is quietly looked after by the priests and officials, and the parties, if possible, legally united.

The more important cases, or appeals from the decision of the batlles, come before the Supreme Tribunal of Justice, which is composed of the two viguiers, a judge of appeal (chosen to give the casting vote when there is a difference of opinion between the viguiers), a government prosecutor, and two *rahonadors* (pleaders) chosen for the defense by the Grand Council. This tribunal has the power to pronounce a capital sentence, which is then carried out by an executioner brought either from France or Spain.

The army, if it may be called such, consists of six hundred men, or one from each family. They are divided into six companies, according to the parishes, with a captain for each; the decurions acting as subaltern officers. The only special duty imposed upon them, beyond the occasional escort and guard of prisoners, is an annual review by the viguiers and the Grand Council, which takes place on the meadow below Andorra. The officials are seated in state around a large table, upon which a muster-roll of the army is laid. When the first name is read, the soldier to whom it belongs steps forward, discharges his musket in the air, then advances to the table and exhibits his ammunition, which must consist of a pound of powder, twenty-four balls, and as many caps. Each man is called in turn, until the whole six hundred have been thus reviewed.

Such is an outline of the mode of government and the forms of judicial procedure in this little republic. I have not thought it necessary to add the more minute details which grow naturally out of the peculiarities already described. Two things will strike the reader: first, the sufficiency of the system, quaint and singular as it may be in some respects, to the needs of the people; secondly, the skill with which they have reconciled the conditions imposed upon them by the Pariatges, in 1278, with the structure of government they had already erected. For a people so ignorant, so remote from the movement of the world, and so precariously situated, their course has been directed by a rare wisdom. No people value independence more; they have held it, with fear and trembling, as a precious gift; and for a thousand years they have taken no single step which did not tend to secure them in its possession.

According to the host's volume, the population of the towns is as follows: Andorra, 850 inhabitants; San Julian de Loria, 620; Encamp, 520; Canillo, 630; Ordino, 750; and Massana, 700. The population of the smaller hamlets, and the scattered houses of the farmers and herdsmen, will probably amount to about as many more, which would give eight thousand persons as the entire population of the state. I believe this estimate to be very nearly correct. It is a singular circumstance, that the number has not materially changed for centuries. Emigration from the valley has been rare until recent times; the climate is healthy; the people an active, vigorous race; and there must be some unusual cause for this lack of increase. A young man, a native of the parish of Ordino, with whom I had a long conversation in the evening, gave me some information upon this point. The life of families in Andorra is still regulated on the old patriarchal plan. The landed property descends to the oldest son or daughter, or, in default of direct issue, to the nearest relative. This, indeed, is not the law, which gives only a third to the chief inheritor, and divides the remainder equally among the other members of the family. But it has become a custom stronger than law — a custom which is now never violated — to preserve the old possessions intact. The *caps*, or heads of families, are held in such high estimation, that all other family and even personal rights are subordinate to theirs. They are rich and respected, while the younger brothers and sisters, who, by this arrangement, may be left too poor to marry, cheerfully accept a life of celibacy. "I am a younger son," said my informant; "but I have been able to marry, because I went down into Catalonia, entered into business, and made some money." When a daughter inherits, she is required to marry the nearest relative permitted by canonical law, who takes her family name and perpetuates it.

In the course of centuries, however, the principal families have become so inter-related that their interests frequently require marriages within the prohibited degrees. In this case the Andorran undertakes a journey to Rome, to procure a special dispensation from the Pope. He is generally the representative of other parties, similarly situated, who assist in defraying the expenses of the journey. After a collective dispensation has been issued, all the marriages must be celebrated by proxy — the Andorran and a Roman woman who is paid for the service representing, in turn, each bridal pair at home. The latter must afterwards perform public penance in church, kneeling apart from the other worshippers, with lighted tapers in their hands and ashes upon their heads.

Owing to the strictness of these domestic laws, the remarkable habit of self-control among the people, and the careful guard over their morals exercised by the officials, they have become naturally virtuous, and hence great freedom of social intercourse is permitted among the sexes. Their sports and pleasures are characterized by a pastoral simplicity and temperance. Excesses are very rare because all ages and classes of both sexes meet together, and the presence of the priests and *caps grossos* (chief men) acts as a check upon the young men. At the festival of some patron saint of the valley, mass in the chapel is followed by a festive meal in the open air, after which the priest himself gives the signal for the dances to commence. The lads and lasses then assemble on a smooth piece of turf, where the sounds of bagpipe and tambourine set their feet in motion. The old people are not always gossiping spectators, speculating on the couples that move before them in the rude, wild dances of the mountains; they often enter the lists, and hold their ground with the youngest.

Thus, in spite of acquired reserve and predetermined poverty, the life of the Andorrans has its poetical side. The republic has produced one historian (perhaps I should say compiler), but no author; and only Love, the source and soul of Art, keeps alive a habit of improvisation in the young which they appear to lose as they grow older. During Carnival, a number of young men in the villages assemble under the balcony of some chosen girl, and praise, in turn, in words improvised to a familiar melody, her charms of person and of character. When this trial of the Minnesingers begins to lag for want of words or ideas, the girl makes her appearance on the balcony, and with a cord lets down to her admirers a basket containing cakes of her own baking, bottles of wine, and sausages. Before Easter, the unmarried people make bets, which are won by whoever, on Easter morning, can first catch the other and cry out, "It is Easter, the eggs are mine!" Tricks, falsehoods, and deceptions of all kinds are permitted: the young man may even surprise the maiden in bed, if he can succeed in doing so. Afterwards they all assemble in public, relate their tricks, eat their Easter eggs, and finish the day with songs and dances.

Two ruling ideas have governed the Andorrans for centuries past, and seem to have existed independent of any special tradition. One is, that they must not become rich; the other, that no feature of their government must be changed. The former condition is certainly the more difficult of fulfillment, since they have had frequent opportunities of increasing their wealth. There is one family which, on account of the land that has fallen to it by inheritance, would be considered rich in any country; half a dozen others possessing from twenty to thirty thousand dollars; and a large number who are in comfortable circumstances simply because their needs are so few. I had heard that a party opposed to the old traditional ideas was growing up among the young men, but it was not so easy to obtain information on the subject. When I asked the gentleman from Ordino about it, he "acted the Andorran," — put on an expression of face almost idiotic, and talked of something else. He and two others with whom I conversed during the evening admitted, however, that a recent concession of the government (of which I shall presently speak) was the entering wedge by which change would probably come upon the hitherto changeless republic.

With the exception of this incommunicativeness, — in itself rather an interesting feature — no people could have been more kind and friendly. When I went to bed among the saddles and harness in the little room, I no longer felt that I was a stranger in the place. All that I had heard of the hospitality of the people seemed to be verified by their demeanor. I remembered how faithfully they had asserted the neutrality of their territory in behalf of political exiles from France and Spain. General Cabrera, Armand Carrel, and Ferdinand Flocon have at different times found a refuge among them. Although the government reserves the right to prohibit residence to any person whose presence may threaten the peace of the valley, I have not heard that the right was ever exercised. Andorra has been an ark of safety to strangers, as well as an inviolate home of freedom to its own inhabitants.

Julian called me at four o'clock, to resume our journey up the valley, and the host made a cup of chocolate while my horse was being saddled. Then I rode forth into the clear, cold air, which the sun of the Pyrenees had not yet warmed. The town is between three and four thousand feet above the sea, and the limit of the olive tree is found in one of its sheltered gardens. As I issued from the houses, and took a rugged path along the base of Mont Anclar, the village of Escaldas and the great gorge in front lay in a cold, broad mantle of shadow, while the valley was filled to its topmost brims with splendid sunshine. I looked between the stems of giant ilexes upon the battle-field of Louis le Débonnaire. Then came a yawning chasm, down which foamed the western branch of the Valira, coming from an upper valley in which lie the parishes of Ordino and Massana. The two valleys thus form a Y, giving the territory of Andorra a rough triangular shape, about forty miles in length — its base, some thirty miles in breadth, overlapping the Pyrenees, and its point nearly touching the Rio Segre, at Urgel.

A bridge of a single arch spanned the chasm, the bottom of which was filled with tumbling foam; while every ledge of rock, above and below, was draped with eglantine, wild fig, clematis, and ivy. Thence, onward towards Escaldas, my path lay between huge masses which had fallen from the steeps, and bowers completely snowed over with white roses, wherein the nightingales were just beginning to awaken. Then, one by one, the brown houses above me clung like nests to the rocks, with little gardens hanging on seemingly inaccessible shelves. I entered the enfolding shadows, and, following the roar of waters, soon found myself at Escaldas — a place as wonderfully picturesque as Ronda or Tivoli, directly under the tremendous perpendicular walls of the gorge; the arrowy Valira sweeping the foundations of the houses on one side, while the dark masses of rock crowded against and separated them on the other. From the edge of the river, and between the thick foliage of ilex and box behind the houses, rose thin columns of steam, marking the hot springs whence the place (*aguas caldas*) was named.

Crossing the river, I halted at the first of these springs, and took a drink. Some old people who collected informed me that there were ten in all, besides a number of cold mineral fountains, furnishing nine different kinds of water — all of which, they said, possessed wonderful healing properties. There were both iron and sulphur in that which I tasted. A little further, a rude fulling-mill was at work in the open air; and in a forge on the other side of the road three blacksmiths were working the native iron of the mountains. A second and third hot spring followed; then a fourth, in which a number of women were washing clothes. All this in the midst of a chaos of rock, water, and foliage.

These springs of Escaldas have led to the concession which the Andorrans described to me as opening a new, and, I fear, not very fortunate, phase of their history. The exploiters of the gambling interest of France, on the point of being driven from Wiesbaden, Homburg. and Baden-Baden, ransacked Europe for a point where they might at the same time ply their business and attract the fashionable world. They detected Andorra; and by the most consummate diplomacy they have succeeded in allaying the suspicions of the government, in neutralizing the power of its ancient policy, and in acquiring privileges which, harmless as they seem, may in time wholly subvert the old order of things. It is impossible that this result could have been accomplished unless a party of progress, the existence of which has been hinted, has really grown up among tne people. The French speculators, I am told, undertake to build a carriage-road across the Pyrenees; to erect bathing-establishments and hotels on a magnificent scale at Escaldas, and to conduct the latter, under the direction of the authorities of Andorra, for a period of forty years, at the end of which time the latter shall be placed in possession of the roads, buildings, and all other improvements. The expense of the undertaking is estimated at ten millions of francs. A theatre and a bank (faro?) are among the features of the speculation. Meanwhile, until the carriage-road shall be built, temporary hotels and gaming-houses are to be erected in the valley of the Ariège, on the French side of the Pyrenees, but within the territory belonging to Andorra.

I do not consider it as by any means certain that the plan will be carried out; but if it should be, the first step towards the annexation of Andorra to France will have been taken. In any case, I am glad to have visited the republic while it is yet shut from the world.

Behind Escaldas an affluent of the Valira dashed down the mountain on the right, breaking the rich masses of foliage with silver gleams. I halted on the summit of the first rocky rampart, and turned to take a last view of the valley. What a picture! I stood in the deep shadow of the mountains, in the heart of a wilderness of rocks which towered out of evergreen verdure, and seemed to vibrate amidst the rush, the foam, and the thunder of streams. The houses of the village, clinging to and climbing the sides of the opening pass, made a dark frame, through which the green and gold of the splendid valley, drowned in sunshine, became, by the force of contrast, limpid and luminous as a picture of the air. The rocks and houses of Old Andorra and the tower of the House of Government made the central point of the view; dazzling meadows below and mountain terraces above basked in the faint prismatic lustre of the morning air. High up, in the rear of the crowning cliffs, I caught glimpses of Alpine pastures; and on the right, far away, streaks of snow. It was a vision never to be forgotten: it was one of the few perfect landscapes of the world.

As the path rose in rapid zigzags beside the split through which the river pours, I came upon another busy village. In an open space among the rocks there were at least a hundred bee-hives, formed of segments of the hollowed trunks of trees. They stood in rows, eight or ten feet apart; and the swarms that continually came and went, seemed to have their separate paths marked out in the air. They moved softly and swiftly through each other without entanglement. After passing the gateway of the Valira, the path still mounted, and finally crept along the side of a deep trough, curving eastward. There were fields on both slopes, wherever it was possible to create them. Here I encountered a body of road-makers, whom the French speculators had set to work. They were engaged in widening the bridle-path, so that carts might pass to Escaldas from the upper valleys of Encamp and Canillo. The rock was blasted on the upper side; while, on the lower, workmen were basing the walls on projecting points of the precipice. In some places they hung over deep gulfs, adjusting the great masses of stone with equal skill and coolness.

In an hour the gorge opened upon the Valley of Encamp, which is smaller, but quite as wild and grand in its features as that of Andorra. Here the fields of rye and barley were only beginning to grow yellow, the flowers were those of an earlier season, and the ilex and box alone remained of the southern trees and shrubs. Great thickets of the latter fringed the crags. A high rock on the left served as a pedestal for a church, with a tall, square belfry, which leaned so much from the perpendicular that it was not pleasant to ride under it. The village of Encamp occupied a position similar to that of Escaldas, at the farther end of the valley, and in the opening of another gorge, the sides of which are so closely interfolded that the river appears to issue out of the very heart of the mountain. It is a queer, dirty, mouldy old place. Even the immemorial rocks of the Pyrenees look new and fresh beside the dark rust of its walls. The people had mostly gone away to their fields and pastures; only a few old men and women, and the youngest children, sunned themselves at the doors. The main street had been paved once, but the stones were now displaced, leaving pits of mud and filth. In one place the houses were built over it, forming dark, badly smelling arches, under which I was forced to ride.

The path beyond was terribly rough and difficult, climbing the precipices with many windings, until it reached a narrow ledge far above the bed of the gorge. There were frequent shrines along the way, at the most dangerous points; and Julian, who walked ahead, always lifted his cap and muttered a prayer as he passed them. After three or four miles of such travel, I reached the church of Merichel, on an artificial platform, cut out of the almost perpendicular side of the mountain. This is the shrine of most repute in Andorra, and the goal of many a summer pilgrimage. Here the mass, the rustic banquet, and the dance draw old and young together from all parts of the republic.

I climbed another height, following the eastern curve of the gorge, and finally saw the village of Canillo, the capital of one of the six parishes, lying below me, in the lap of a third valley. It had a brighter and fresher air than Encamp; the houses were larger and cleaner, and there were garden-plots about them. In this valley the grain was quite green; the ilex had disappeared, making way for the poplar and willow, but the stubborn box still held its ground. In every bush on the banks of Valira sat a nightingale; the little brown bird sings most lustily where the noise of water accompanies his song. I never saw him so fearless; I could have touched many of the minstrels with my hand as I passed.

At Canillo I crossed the Valira, and thenceforward the path followed its western bank. This valley was closed, like all the others, by a pass cloven through the mountains. Upon one of the natural bastions guarding it there is an ancient tower, which the people say was built by the Saracens before the Frank conquest. The passage of the gorge which followed was less rugged than the preceding ones, — an indication of my approach to the summit of the Pyrenees. In following the Rio Segre and the Valira, I had traversed *eight* of those tremendous defiles, varying from one to six miles in length; and the heart of the mountain region, where the signs of force and convulsion always diminish, was now attained. One picture on the way was so lovely that I stopped and drew it. In the centre of the valley, on a solitary rock, stood an ancient church and tower, golden-brown in the sun. On the right were mountains clothed with forests of pine and fir; in the distance, fields of snow. All the cleared slopes were crimson with the Alpine-rose, a dwarf variety of rhododendron. Perfect sunshine covered the scene, and the purest of breezes blew over it. Here and there a grain-field clung to the crags, or found a place among their tumbled fragments, but no living being was to be seen.

The landscapes were now wholly northern, except the sun and sky. Aspens appeared on the heights, shivering among the steady pines. After a time I came to a point where there were two valleys, two streams, and two paths. Julian took the left, piloting me over grassy meadows, where the perfume from beds of daffodil was almost too powerful to breathe. On one side, all the mountain was golden with broom-flowers; on the other, a mass of fiery crimson, from the Alpine-rose. The valley was dotted with scattered cottages of the herdsmen, as in Switzerland. In front there were two snowy peaks, with a "saddle" between — evidently one of the *portes* of the Pyrenees; yet I saw no indications of the hamlet of Soldeu, which we must pass. Julian shouted to a herdsman, who told us we had taken the wrong valley. The porte before us was that of Fontargente, across which Louis le Débonnaire stretched his chain on leaving Andorra.

We retraced our steps, and in half an hour reached Soldeu, in a high, bleak pasture-valley, where cultivation ceases. It is at least six thousand feet above the sea, and the vegetation is that of the high Alps. We were nearly famished, and, as there was no sign of a "hostal," entered the first house. The occupant, a woman, offered to give us what she had, but said that there was another family who made a business of entertaining travellers, and we would there be better served. We found the house, and truly, after waiting an hour, were refreshed by a surprising dinner of five courses. There was another guest, in the person of a French butcher from the little town of Hospitalet, in the valley of the Ariége. It was so cold that we all crowded about the kitchen fire. Two Andorrans came in, and sat down to the table with us. I have dined at stately entertainments where there was less grace and refinement among the company than the butcher and the two peasants exhibited. There was a dessert of roasted almonds and coffee (with a *chasse*); and after the meal we found the temperature of the air very mild and balmy.

Hospitalet being also my destination, I accepted the butcher's company, and at one o'clock we set forth for the passage of the Pyrenees. On leaving Soldeu I saw the last willow, in which sat and sang the last nightingale. The path rose rapidly along the steep slopes of grass, with an amphitheatre of the highest summits around us. The forests sank out of sight in the glens; snow-fields multiplied far and near, sparkling in the thin air, and the scenery assumed a bleak, monotonous grandeur. I traced the Valira, now a mere thread, to its source in seven icy lakes, fed by the snow: in those lakes, said the butcher, are the finest trout of the Pyrenees. The *Porte de Valira* was immediately above us, on the left; a last hard pull up the steep, between beds of snow, and we stood on the summit.

The elevation of the pass is nearly eight thousand feet above the sea. On either hand you descry nothing but the irregular lines of the French and Spanish Pyrenees, rising and falling in receding planes of distance. Rocks, grass, and snow make up the scenery, which, nevertheless, impresses by its very simplicity and severity.

The descent into France is toilsome, but not dangerous A mile or two below the crest we saw the fountain of the Ariége, at the base of a grand escarpment of rock. Thence for two hours we followed the descending trough of the river through bleak, grassy solitudes, uncheered by a single tree, or any sign of human life except the well-worn path. Finally the cottage of a grazing-farm came into view, but it was tenantless — all the inhabitants having been overwhelmed by an avalanche three years ago. Then I discovered signs of a road high up on the opposite mountain, saw workmen scattered along it, and heard a volley of explosions. This was the new highway to Porte St. Louis and Puigcerdà. On a green meadow beside the river walked two gentlemen and two ladies in round hats and scarlet petticoats

"They are picking out a spot to build their gaming-houses upon," said the butcher; "this is still Andorra."

A mile further there was a little bridge — the Pont de Cerda. A hut, serving as a guard-house, leaned against the rocks, but the *gens d'armes* were asleep or absent, and I rode unquestioned into France. It was already sunset in the valley, and the houses of Hospitalet, glimmering through the shadows, were a welcome sight. Here was the beginning of highways and mail-coaches, the movement of the living world again. I supped and slept (not very comfortably, I must confess) in the house of my friend the butcher, said good-by to Julian in the morning, and by noon was resting from my many fatigues in the best inn of Foix.

But henceforth the Valley of Andorra will be one of my enthusiasms.

THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE.

On my way from the Pyrenees to Germany, I turned aside from the Rhone highway of travel to make acquaintance with a place of which everybody has heard, yet which seems to have been partly dropped from the rapid itineraries which have come into fashion with railways. This is the celebrated monastery called the "Grande Chartreuse," situated in an Alpine wilderness known as the "Desert," on the borders of Savoy. During the last century, when Gray and Horace Walpole penetrated into those solitudes, it was a well-known point of interest in the "grand tour;" but it seems to have been neglected during and since the great upheaval of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire. The name, however, is kept alive on the tongues of gourmands by a certain greenish, pungent, perfumed liquor, which comes upon their tables at the end of dinner.

The traveller from Lyons to Marseilles passes within a six-hours' journey of the Grande Chartreuse. If he leave the train at Valence, the branch road to Grenoble will take him up the Valley of the Isère, and he will soon exchange the rocky vine-slopes of the Rhone for Alpine scenery on a scale hardly surpassed in Switzerland. This was the route which I took, on my way northward. The valley of the Isère, at first broad, and showing on its flat, stony fields traces of frequent inundations, gradually contracted; the cultivation of silk gave place to that of grain and vines, and the meadows of deep grass, studded with huge walnut-trees, reproduced, but on a warmer and richer scale, the character of Swiss scenery. Night came on before I reached the Vale of Grésivaudan, which is considered the paradise of Dauphiné, and when the train halted at the station of Voreppe, it was pitch-dark under a gathering rain. There was a rustic omnibus in waiting, into which I crowded with a priest and two farmers, all of whom recommended the "Petit Paris" as the best inn, and thither, accordingly, I went when we reached the village.

It was a primitive, but picturesque and inviting place. I was ushered into a spacious kitchen, with a paved floor and a huge stone range standing in the centre. The landlady stood before her pans and gave the finishing touch to some cutlets while she received my orders and those of the priest. The latter, when he came into the light, proved to be a young man, pale, thin, and melancholy, with a worn breviary under his arm. He asked to have a bed immediately. In an adjoining room, a company of peasants were drinking cider and thin wine, and discussing crops around a deal table. I listened awhile, but finding it impossible to understand their dialect, followed the example of the priest. The landlady gave me a clean bed in a clean room, and I speedily slept in spite of rain and thunder.

I had barely taken coffee in the morning before an omnibus drove up, on its way to St. Laurent du Pont, a village at the mouth of the ravine which descends from the Grande Chartreuse. There was a place inside, between two sharp-featured women and opposite another priest, who was middle-aged and wore an air of cheerful resignation. This place I occupied, and was presently climbing the long mountain road, with a glorious picture of the Vale of Grésivaudan deepening and widening below. Half-way up the mountains beyond the Isère floated shining belts of cloud, the shadows of which mottled the sunlit fields and gardens. Above us, huge walls of perpendicular rock, crowned with forests, shut out the morning sky, but the glens plunging down from their bases were filled with the most splendid vegetation. Our way upward was through the shadows of immense walnut-trees, beside the rushing of crystal brooks, and in the perfume of blossoming grass and millions of meadow flowers. It seemed incredible that we should be approaching a "Desert" through such scenery.

My fellow-travellers were inclined to be social. We lost the women at the first little hamlet above Voreppe, and there only remained the priest and a stout, swaggering person, who had the appearance and manners of a government contractor. The former told us that he had a parish on the high, windy table-lands of Champagne, and had never before seen such wonderful mountain landscapes. He was now on his way to Rome — one of the army of six thousand "migratory ravens" (as the Italians called them), who took part in the Festival of St. Peter. He was cheerful and tolerant, with more heart than intellect, and we got on very agreeably. The contractor informed us that the monks of the Chartreuse had an income of a million francs a year, a part of which they spend in building churches and schools. They have recently built a new church for the village of St. Laurent du Pont.

In an hour or more we had reached the highest point of the road, which now ran eastward along the base of a line of tremendous mountains. On the topmost heights, above the gray ramparts of rock, there were patches of a bright rosy color, which I at first took to be the Alpine rhododendron in blossom, but they proved to be forests of beech, which the recent severe frosts had scorched. The streams from the heights dropped into gulfs yawning at the base of the mountains, making cataracts of several hundred feet. Here the grain, already harvested in the valley of the Rhone, was still green, and the first crop of hay uncut.

St. Laurent du Pont is a little village directly in the mouth of the gorge. The omnibus drew up before the café, and my clerical friend got into a light basket wagon for the journey to the monastery, two leagues distant. I preferred to climb the gorge leisurely, on foot, and set about engaging a man as companion rather than guide The sky was full of suspicious clouds, there were mutterings of thunder in the mountains, and the sun stung with an insupportable power; but after breakfast I set out with a middle-aged man, who had an eye to profit, followed the stream for a mile, and found myself in the heart of a terrific wilderness of rock and forest. In front the mountains closed, and only a thin line of shadow revealed the split through which we must pass. Before reaching it, there is an ancient forge on the left, and a massive building on the right, which the monks have recently erected for the manufacture of the *liqueur* which bears the name of their monastery.

Just beyond the forge are the remains of an ancient gate, which once closed the further passage. The road is hewn out of the solid rock, and the sides of the cleft are so near together that the masonry supporting the road is held firm by timbers crossing the abyss and morticed into the opposite rock. Formerly there was only a narrow and dangerous mule-path, and the passage must have had an exhilarating character of danger which the present security of the road destroys. It was so in Gray's time, inspiring him with these almost Horatian lines: —

> "Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
> Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
> Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem."

This closed throat of the mountains is short: it soon expands a little, allowing the splendid deciduous forests to descend to the water's brink. But above, on all sides, the rocks start out in sheer walls and towers, and only a narrow strip of sky is visible between their crests. After a mile of this scenery I reached a saw-mill, beside which there was some very fine timber. Still another mile, and the road was carried across the defile by a lofty stone bridge of a single arch. "This is the bridge of San

Bruno," said the guide, "and we are now just half-way to the monastery." In spite of the shadows of the forests, the air was almost stifling in its still heat, and I sat down on the parapet of the bridge to take breath. This was the "Desert," whither the Bishop of Grenoble directed San Bruno to fly from the temptations of the world. At that time it could have been accessible only with great labor and danger, and was much more secluded than the caves of the Thebaid. But the word conveys no idea of the character of the scenery. For the whole distance it is a deep cleft in the heart of lofty mountains, overhung with precipices a thousand feet high, yet clothed, wherever a root can take hold, by splendid forests. Ferns and wild flowers hang from every ledge, and the trees are full of singing birds.

Still climbing, we mounted high above the stream, and in twenty minutes reached a natural gateway, formed by a solitary pillar of rock, three hundred feet high, and not more than forty feet in diameter. Here, six weeks before, a wagon with six young peasants went over the brink, and fell into the terrible abyss. The driver, whose carelessness occasioned the accident, leaped from the wagon ; the other five went down, and were dashed to pieces. Between the *aiguille* (needle), as it is called, and the mountain-wall, there was formerly a gate, beyond which no woman was allowed to pass. The sex is now permitted to visit the monastery, but not to enter its gates. This part of the road is almost equal to the famous Via Mala. A series of tunnels have been cut through the sheer, projecting crags, the intervening portions of the road being built up with great labor from below. One hangs in mid-air over the dark chasm, where the foam of the rushing waters shines like a phosphoric light.

Finally, the slope of the mountains becomes less abrupt, the shattered summits lean back, and the glen grows brighter under a broader field of sky. On the right the forests are interrupted by pasture grounds; the road is now safe, though very steep, and the buildings of the monastery presently come into view, a mass of quadrangular piles of masonry, towers, and pyramidal roofs, inclosed by a high wall which must be considerably more than a mile in circuit. The place, in fact, resembles a fortified city. The gateway was closed on the side by which I approached, but an old monk, with shaven head and flowing beard, who was driving an ox-cart (the first time I ever saw one of his class so usefully employed), directed me to go around to the eastern front. An isolated house, shaded by a group of old linden-trees, is set apart for the use of the female visitors, who are attended by an old woman, usually a sister of some conventual order.

My guide rang the bell at the entrance, and the door was immediately opened by a young monk in a long, brown gown. "Can I be admitted?" I asked. "Yes," said he in a whisper, "the guide will take you to the father who receives strangers." I was conducted across a grassy court-yard, in which there were two large stone fountains, to the main building. Several brethren in brown were passing swiftly to and fro in the cool, spacious corridors, but they took no notice of me. I found the father in a comfortable chamber, hung with maps. He was a bright, nimble man of sixty, with shaven head and face; but for his keen eyes, he would not have seemed more than half alive, his complexion and his shroud-like gown being nearly the same color. I told him who I was, why I came, and asked permission to stay until the next day. "Certainly," he whispered, "as long as you please. I will show you into the refectory, and order that you have a room."

I was somewhat unwell, and the heat and fatigue had made me weak, which the father probably noticed, for on reaching the refectory — a great, bare apartment, with an old-fashioned chimney-place for burning logs — he said: "You must have a glass of our *liqueur*, the green kind, which is the strongest." It was like an aromatic flame, but it really gave me a different view of life, in the space of fifteen minutes. The *garçon* was a sturdy fellow in a blue blouse, evidently a peasant hired for the season. His services were confined to the refectory. Another brother in brown, with a mild, ignorant countenance, conducted me to an upper chamber, or rather cell, containing a bed, a table, a chair, and bowl of water, with a large private altar and *prie-dieu.* Having taken possession and put the key in my pocket, I returned to the refectory, where the white father begged me to make myself at home, and likewise vanished. There are fixed hours when strangers are conducted through the buildings, and, as I had still some time to wait, I went forth from the monastery and set to work at a sketch of the place.

The monks of the Chartreuse now belong to the order of La Trappe. San Bruno first came hither in the year 1084, and the foundation of the monastery dates from 1137. The Trappist, or silent system, arose in the sixteenth century, but I am ignorant of the date when it was here introduced. It is probably the severest and most unnatural of all forms of monastic discipline. Isolation is cruel enough in itself, without the obligation of silence. The use of monasteries, as conservatories of learning, as sanctuaries of peace in the midst of normal war, has long since ceased: they are now an anachronism and they will soon become an offense. The grand pile of buildings before me was ravaged during the French Revolution, and the monks turned adrift. Although the government still keeps its hold on the greater part of the property then sequestrated, it has favored the monastery in every other possible way. France swarms with black robes, as it has not before for a hundred years. The Empress Eugenie is a petted daughter of the Church of Rome, and the willing instrument of its plans, so far as her influence extends. The monks of La Chartreuse, however, to judge from what I saw of their industry and business talent, are far less objectionable than those of their brethren who are not bound to solitude and silence.

At the appointed hour I was again admitted with a whisper, and joined three dark priests (also on their way to Rome) for a tour of the interior. The mild brother in brown was our guide. After calling our attention to a notice which requested that all visitors to the monastery would neither stand still nor speak above their breath, he unlocked a gate and ushered us into the inner corridors. We walked down the dim echoing vaults of solid masonry and paused at a door, through which came the sound of a sepulchral chant. It was the church, wherein two ancient fathers were solemnly intoning a service which seemed like a *miserere.* The brother conducted us to an upper gallery, dipped his fingers into the font, and presented the holy water to me with a friendly smile. I am afraid he was cut to the heart when I shook my head, saying: "Thank you, I don't need it." There was an expression of stupefaction in his large, innocent eyes, and thenceforward he kept near me, always turning to me with a tender, melancholy interest, as if hoping and praying that there might, for me, be some escape from the hell of heretics.

There was nothing worthy of notice in the architecture of the church, or the various chapels. That for the dead was hung with skulls and cross-bones, on a ground of black; the grave-yard, in which the dead monks lie, like the Quakers, under unmarked mounds, was more cheerful. Here, at least, grass and wild-flowers are not prohibited, the sweetest mountain breezes find their way over the monastic walls, and the blue sky above is filled with a silence, in which there is nothing painful. The most interesting thing I saw was the Hall of the Order, filled with portraits of its generals, and with frescoes illustrating the life of San Bruno. A statue of the Saint represents him as a venerable man, of pure, noble, and benevolent aspect. The head, I suspect, is imaginary, but it is very fine. As works of art, the pictures have no merit; the three priests, however, looked upon them with awful reverence. So much depends on place, circumstance, and sentiment! The brush of Raphael could have added nothing to the impression which these men drew from the stiff workmanship of some unknown painter.

I was astonished at the extent of the buildings. There is a single corridor, Gothic, of solid stone, six hundred and sixty feet in length. Looking down it, the perspective dwindles almost to a point. Opening from it and from the other intersecting corridors are the cells of the monks, each with a Biblical sentence in Latin (generally of solemn import) painted on the doors. The furniture of these cells is very simple, but a human skull is always part of it. In the rear of each is a small garden, inclosed by a wall, where the fathers and brothers attend to their own flowers and vegetables. They *must* have, it seems, some innocent solace; the silence, the fasting, the company of the skull, and the rigid ceremonials, would else, I imagine, drive the most of them mad. Those whom we met in the corridor walked with an excited, flying step, as if trying to outrun their own thoughts. Their faces were pale and stern; they rarely looked at us, and, of course, never spoke. The gloom and silence, the hushed whispers of the priests and guide, and the prohibition put upon my own tongue, oppressed me painfully at last. I longed to startle the dead repose of the corridors by a shout full of freedom and rejoicing.

There are at present forty *patres* and twenty *fratres* in the monastery. The direction of external matters is intrusted to a few, who enjoy more contact with the world, and must be absolved from the obligation of silence. Moreover the rules in this respect are not so strenuously enforced as formerly. The monks are allowed to converse slightly on Sundays and saints' days, and once a week, when they walk in procession to the Chapel of St. Bruno, higher up the mountain. An experienced father has charge of the manufacture of the *liqueur*, which is made, I learned, from the young shoots of the mountain fir, mixed with certain aromatic herbs. Some parts of the process are kept secret. The *Chartreuse* is sold, even on the spot, at a high price, and is sent to all parts of the world.

When we returned to the refectory, I found several gentlemen from Chambéry in waiting. They, also, intended to stay all night, and to start at one in the morning for the ascent of the Grand Somme, the highest pinnacle of the mountain. I predicted rain, but they were not to be discouraged. The result was, as I learned next morning, that they rose at the appointed time, groped about in the forest in perfect darkness, and came back in half an hour drenched to the skin. The servitor informed me that two Englishmen had arrived, and were entertained in another part of the monastery. I learned for the first time that, the better to preserve quiet and order, the guests are separated according to their nationalities. This explained the meaning of "Salle de la France" on the door of the hall in which I found myself. Americans are rare visitors, and I presume they thought it safest to put me with the Frenchmen.

It is always Lent in the Grand Chartreuse. Nevertheless, the dinner of eggs, fish, fruits, cheese, and wine which was served to us was of excellent quality. The bed was coarse but clean, and after putting out my lamp to hide the reproachful eyes of the Virgin, I slept soundly. Breakfast, however, was a little too lean for my taste. Instead of coffee they gave me half-cooked cabbage soup and a lump of black bread. The bill was five francs. Herein, I think, the monks are right. They make a moderate charge for what they furnish, instead of expecting the traveller (as in other monasteries) to give five times the worth of it as a donation. Living in such a wilderness, at the height of 4,300 feet above the sea, it is a great labor to keep the requisite supplies on hand. Poor travellers are not only lodged and fed gratuitously, but sometimes receive a small addition to their funds.

Nevertheless, while I felt a positive respect for the industry, fortitude, and charity of the monks of the Chartreuse, I drew a long breath of relief as I issued from its whispering corridors. I believe I talked to my guide in a much louder voice than usual, as we returned down the gorge. The visit had been full of interest, yet I could not have guessed, in advance, how oppressive was the prohibition of speech. I shall never again admire the silent and solitary system of some of our penitentiaries.

At St. Laurent du Pont I took the omnibus, getting a front seat beside the coachman, which I kept, not only to Voreppe, but down the magnificent valley of Grèsivaudan to Grenoble. The mountains, on the side toward the Isère, appear to be absolutely inaccessible. No one would guess, on looking up at them from below, what a remarkable settlement has existed for centuries within their solitudes.

THE KYFFHÄUSER AND ITS LEGENDS.

THÜRINGIA, "The Heart of Germany," has for many a century ceased to be a political designation, yet it still lives in the mouths and the songs of the people as the well-beloved name for all that middle region lying between the Hartz on the north and the mountain-chain stretching from the Main to the Elbe on the south. A few points, such as Eisenach, Weimar, and Jena, are known to the tourist; the greater part, although the stage whereon many of the most important events in early and mediæval German history were enacted, has not yet felt the footstep of the curious stranger. From the overthrow of its native monarchy by the Franks, in the sixth century, to the close of the Thirty Years' War, in the seventeenth, the fortunes of this land symbolized, in a great measure, those of the Teutonic race. Behind battle and crime and knightly deed sprang up those flowers of legend whose mature seed is poetry. In no part of Europe do they blossom so thickly as here.

I had already stood in the hall of the Minnesingers on the Wartburg; had crept into the Cave of Venus, on the mountain of Tannhäuser; had walked through the Valley of Joy, where the two wives of the Count of Gleichen first met face to face; and had stood on the spot where Winfried, the English apostle, cut down the Druid oaks, and set up in their stead the first altar to Christ. But on the northern border of Thüringia, where its last mountains look across the Golden Mead towards the dark summits of the Hartz, there stands a castle, in whose ruins sleeps the favorite tradition of Germany, — a legend which, changing with the ages, became the embodiment of an idea, and now represents the national unity, strength, and freedom. This is the Kyffhäuser; and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa sleeps under it, in a crypt of the mountain, waiting for the day when the whole land, from the Baltic to the Alps, shall be ready to receive a single ruler. Then he will come forth, and the lost Empire will be restored.

Many a time, looking towards the far-away Brocken from the heights of the Thüringian Forest, had I seen the tower of the Kyffhäuser like a speck on the horizon, and as often had resolved to cross the twenty intervening leagues. The day was appointed and postponed — for years, as it happened; but a desire which is never given up works out its own fulfillment in the course of time, and so it was with mine. It is not always best to track a legend too closely. The airy brow of Tannhäuser's Mountain proved to be very ugly rock and very tenacious clay, when I had climbed it; and I came forth from the narrow slit of a cavern torn, squeezed out of breath, and spotted with tallow. Something of the purple atmosphere of the mountain and the mystery of its beautiful story has vanished since then. But the day of my departure for the Kyffhäuser was meant for an excursion into dream-land. When the Summer, departing, stands with reluctant feet; when the Autumn looks upon the land, yet has not taken up her fixed abode; when the freshness of Spring is revived in every cloudless morning, and the afternoons melt slowly into smoke and golden vapor, — then comes, for a short space, the season of illusion, of credulity, of winsome superstition.

On such a day I went northward from Gotha into a boundless, undulating region of tawny harvest and stubble fields. The plain behind me, stretching to the foot of the Thüringian Forest, was covered with a silvery, shimmering atmosphere, on which the scattered villages, the orchards, and the poplar-bordered highways were dimly blotted, like the first timid sketch of a picture, which shall grow into clear, confident color. Far and wide, over the fields, the peasants worked silently and steadily among their flax, oats, and potatoes, — perhaps rejoicing in the bounty of the sunshine, but too much in earnest to think of singing. Only the harvest of the vine is gathered to music. The old swallows collected their flocks of young on the ploughed land, and drilled them for the homeward flight. The sheep, kept together in a dense gray mass, nibbled diligently among the stubble, guarded only by a restless dog. At a corner of the field the box-house of the shepherd rested on its wheels, and he was probably asleep within it. Wains, laden with sheaves, rumbled slowly along the road towards the village barns. Only the ravens wheeled and croaked uneasily, as if they had a great deal of work to do, and couldn't decide what to undertake first.

I stretched myself out luxuriously in the carriage, and basked in the tempered sunshine. I had nothing to do but to watch the mellow colors of the broadening landscape, as we climbed the long waves of earth, stretching eastward and westward out of sight. Those mixed, yet perfect moods which come equally from the delight of the senses and the release of the imagination, seem to be the very essence of poetry, yet how rarely do they become poetry! The subtile spirit of song cannot often hang poised in thin air; it must needs rest on a basis, however slender, of feeling or reflection. Eichendorff is the only poet to whom completely belongs the narrow border-land of moods and sensations. Yet the key-note of the landscape around me was struck by Tennyson in a single fortunate word, —

> "In looking on the *happy* Autumn-fields."

The earth had finished its summer work for man, and now breathed of rest and peace from tree, and bush, and shorn stubble, and reviving grass. It was still the repose of lusty life; the beginning of death, the sadness of the autumn was to come.

In crossing the last hill, before descending to the city of Langensalza, I saw one of the many reverse sides of this fair picture of life. A peasant girl, ragged, dusty, and tired, with a young child in her lap, sat on a stone seat by the wayside. She had no beauty; her face was brown and hard, her hair tangled, her figure rude and strong, and she held the child with a mechanical clasp, in which there was instinct, but not tenderness. Yet it needed but a single glance to read a story of poverty, and of shame and desertion ignorantly encountered and helplessly endured. Here was no acute sense of degradation; only a blind, brutish wretchedness. It seemed to me, as I saw her, looking stolidly into the sunny air, that she was repeating the questions, over and over, without hope of answer: "Why am I in the world? What is to become of me?"

At Langensalza I took a lighter carriage, drawn by a single horse, which was harnessed loosely on the left side of a long pole. Unfortunately I had a garrulous old driver who had seen something of last year's battle, and supposed that nothing could interest me more than to know precisely where certain Prussian regiments were posted. Before I had divined his intention, he left the highway, and carried me across the fields to the top of the Jews' Hill, which was occupied at the commencement of the battle by the Prussian artillery. The turf is still marked with the ragged holes of the cannon-balls. In the plain below, many trees are slowly dying from an overdose of lead. In the fields which the farmers were ploughing one sees here and there a headstone of granite or an iron crucifix; but all other traces of the struggle have disappeared. The little mill, which was the central point of the fight, has been well repaired; only some cannon-balls, grim souvenirs, are left sticking in the gable-wall. A mile further, across the Unstrut, at the commencement of the rising country, is the village of Merxleben, where the Hanoverians were posted. Its streets are as dull and sleepy as ever before. Looking at the places where the plaster has been knocked off the houses, one would not guess the instruments by which it was done.

Some distance further, at a safe height, my old man halted beside two poplars. "Here," he said, "the King of Hanover stood." Did he keep up the mimicry of sight, I wonder, while the tragedy was going on? This blind sovereign represents the spirit of monarchy in its purest essence. Though totally blind, from a boy, he pretends to see, because — the people must perceive no defect in a king. When he rides out, the adjutants on both sides are attached to his arms by fine threads; and he is thus guided, while appearing to guide himself. He visits picture-galleries, admires landscapes, and makes remarks upon the good or ill appearance of his courtiers. After the battle of Langensalza, which he pretended to direct, he sent his uniform to the museum at Hanover, with some straws and wheat-blades from the field where he stood sewed upon it in various places! Other monarchs of Europe have carried the tattered trappings of absolutism into a constitutional form of government, but none of them has been so exquisitely consistent as this man.

We plodded forward over vast tawny waves of landscape, as regular as the swells of the sea. All this territory, once so rich and populous, was reduced to a desert during the Thirty Years' War, and two centuries have barely sufficed to reclaim it. After that war, Germany possessed only twenty-five per cent. of the men, the cattle, and the dwellings which she owned when it began, and this was the least of the evil. The new generation had grown up in insecurity, in idleness, immorality, and crime; the spirit of the race was broken, its blood was tainted, and it has ever since then been obliged to struggle from decadence into new power. We must never lose sight of these facts when we speak of the Germany of the present day. Well for us that we have felt only the shock and struggle, the first awakening of the manly element, not the later poison of war!

After more than two hours on the silent, lonely heights,

— scarcely a man being here at work in the fields or abroad on the road, — I approached a little town called Ebeleben, in the principality of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. The driver insisted on baiting his horse at the "municipal tavern," as it was called; and I remembered that in the place lived a gentleman whom I had met nine years before. Everybody knew the Amtsrath; he was at home; it was the large house beside the castle. Ebeleben was a former residence of the princess; but now its wonderful rococo gardens have run wild, the fountains and waterfalls are dry, the stone statues have lost their noses and arms, and the wooden sentries posted at all the gates have rotted to pieces. The remains are very funny. Not a particle of melancholy can be attached to the decayed grotesque.

I went into the court-yard of the house to which I had been directed. A huge parallelogram of stone and steep roofs inclosed it; there were thirteen ploughs in a row on one side, and three mountains of manure on the other. As no person was to be seen, I mounted the first flight of steps, and found myself in a vast, antiquated kitchen. A servant, thrusting her head from behind a door, told me to go forward. Pantries and store-rooms followed, passages filled with antique household gear, and many a queer nook and corner; but I at last reached the front part of the building, and found its owner. His memory was better than I had ventured to hope; I was made welcome so cordially, that only the sad news that the mistress of the house lay at the point of death made my visit brief. The Amtsrath, who farms a thousand acres, led me back to the tavern through his garden, saying, "We must try and bear all that comes to us," as I took leave.

A few years ago there was a wild, heathery moorland, the haunt of gypsies and vagabonds, beyond Ebeleben. Now it is all pasture and grain-field, of thin and barren aspect, but steadily growing better. The dark-blue line I had seen to the north, during the day, now took the shape of hills covered with forest, and the road passed between them into the head of a winding valley. The green of Thüringian meadows, the rich masses of beech and oak, again refreshed my eyes. The valley broadened as it fell, and the castle and spires of Sondershausen came into view. An equipage, drawn by four horses, came dashing up from a side-road. There were three persons in it; the short, plain-faced man in a felt hat was the reigning prince, Günther von Schwarzburg. There was not much of his illustrious namesake, the Emperor, in his appearance; but he had an honest, manly countenance, and I thought it no harm to exchange greetings.

I think Sondershausen must be the quietest capital in Europe. It is said to have six thousand inhabitants, about two hundred of whom I saw. Four were walking in a pleasant, willow-shaded path beside the mills; ten were wandering in the castle-park; and most of the remainder, being children, were playing in the streets. When I left, next morning, by post for the nearest railway station, beyond the Golden Mead, I was the only passenger. But the place is well built, and has an air of contentment and comfort.

I was here on the southern side of the mountain ridge which is crowned by the Kyffhäuser, and determined to cross to Kelbra, in the Golden Mead, at its northern base. The valley was draped in the silver mists of the morning as I set out; and through them rose the spire of Jechaburg, still bearing the name of the Druid divinity there overthrown by the apostle Winfried. But there was another point in the landscape where my fancy settled — the Trauenberg, at the foot of which was fought the first great *Hunnenschlacht* (battle of the Huns). When that gallant emperor, Henry the Bird-Snarer, sent a mangy dog to Hungary, instead of the usual tribute, he knew and prepared for the consequences of his act. The Huns burst into Germany; he met and defeated them, first here, and then near Merseburg (A. D. 933), so utterly that they never again attempted invasion. Kaulbach's finest cartoon represents one or the other of these battles. Those fierce groups of warriors, struggling in a weird atmosphere, made the airy picture which I saw. One involuntarily tries to vivify history, and the imagination holds fast to any help.

After an hour and a half among the hills, I saw the Golden Mead, — so bright, so beautiful, that I comprehended the love which the German emperors, for centuries, manifested for it. I looked across a level valley, five or six miles wide, meadows green as May interrupting the bands of autumnal gold, groves and winding lines of trees marking the watercourses, stately towns planted at intervals, broad, ascending slopes of forest beyond, and the summit of the Brocken crowning all. East and west, the Mead faded out of sight in shining haze. It is a favored region. Its bounteous soil lies low and warm, sheltered by the Hartz; it has an earlier spring and a later summer than any other part of Northern Germany. This I knew, but I was not prepared to find it, also, a delight to the eye. Towards Nordhausen the green was dazzling, and there was a blaze of sunshine upon it which recalled the plain of Damascus.

At Kelbra, I looked in vain for the Kyffhäuser, though so near it; an intervening summit hides the tower. On the nearest headland of the range, however, there is a ruined castle called the Rothenburg, which has no history worth repeating, but is always visited by the few who find their way hither. I procured a small boy as guide, and commenced my proper pilgrimage on foot. An avenue of cherry-trees gave but scanty shade from the fierce sun, while crossing the level of the Golden Mead; but, on reaching the mountain, I found a path buried in forests. It was steep, and hard to climb; and I soon found reason for congratulation in the fact that the summit has an altitude of only fifteen hundred feet. It was attained at last;

the woods, which had been nearly impenetrable, ceased, and I found myself in front of a curious cottage, with a thatched roof, built against the foot of a tall round tower of other days. There were benches and tables under the adjoining trees; and a solid figure, with a great white beard, was moving about in a semi-subterranean apartment, inserted among the foundations of the castle.

Had it been the Kyffhäuser, I should have taken him for Barbarossa. The face reminded me of Walt Whitman, and, verily, the man proved to be a poet. I soon discovered the fact; and when he had given us bread and beer, he brought forth, for my purchase, the third edition of "Poems by the Hermit of the Rothenburg," published by Brockhaus, Leipzig. His name is Friedrich Beyer. His parents kept an inn on ground which became the battle-field of Jena, three or four years after he was born. His first recollection is of cannon, fire, and pillage. This is all that I learned of his history; his face suggests a great deal more. The traces of old passions, ambitions, struggles, and disappointments have grown faint from the exercise of a cheerful philosophy. He is proud to be called a poet, yet serves refreshments with as much alacrity as any ordinary *kellner*.

After a time he brought an album, saying: "I keep this for such poets as happen to come, but there are only two names, perhaps, that you have ever heard — Ludwig Storch and Müller von der Werra. Uhland was once in the Hartz, but he never came here. Rückert and a great many others have written about the Kyffhäuser and Barbarossa; but the poets, you know, depend on their fancies, rather than on what they see. I can't go about and visit them, so I can only become acquainted with the few who travel this way."

He then took an immense tin speaking-trumpet, stationed himself on a rock, pointed the trumpet at an opposite ridge of the mountain, and bellowed forth four notes which sounded like the voice of a dying bull. But, after a pause of silence, angels replied. Tones of supernatural sweetness filled the distant air, fading slowly upwards, until the blue, which seemed to vibrate like a string that has been struck, trembled into quiet again. It was wonderful! I have heard many echoes, but no other which so marvelously translates the sounds of earth into the language of heaven. "Do you notice," said the poet, "how one tone grows out of the others, and silences them? Whatever sound I make, that same tone is produced — not at first, but it comes presently from somewhere else, and makes itself heard. I call it *reconciliation* — atonement; the principle in which all human experience must terminate. You will find a poem about it in my book."

The Rothenburg has been a ruin for about three hundred years. It was a small castle, but of much more elegant and symmetrical architecture than most of its crumbling brethren. The trees which have grown up in court-yard and hall have here and there overthrown portions of the walls, but a number of handsome Gothic portals and windows remain. The round tower appears to have belonged to a much earlier structure. The present picturesque beauty of the place compensates for the lack of history and tradition. Its position is such that it overlooks nearly the whole extent of the Golden Mead and the southern slope of the Hartz — a hemisphere of gold and azure at the time of my visit. It was a day which had strayed into September out of midsummer. Intense, breathless heat filled the earth and sky, and there was scarcely a wave of air, even upon that summit.

The Kyffhäuser is two or three miles further eastward, upon the last headland of the range, in that direction. The road connecting the two castles runs along the crest, through forests of the German oak, as is most fit. Taking leave of the poet, and with his volume in my pack, I plodded forward in the shade, attended by "spirits twain," in visible to my young guide. Poetry walked on my right hand, Tradition on my left. History respectfully declined to join the party; the dim, vapory, dreamful atmosphere did not suit her. Besides, in regard to the two points concerning which I desired to be enlightened she could have given me little assistance. Why was the dead Barbarossa supposed to be enchanted in a vault under the Kyffhäuser, a castle which he had never made his residence? Fifteen years ago, at the foot of the Taurus, in Asia Minor, I had stood on the banks of the river in which he was drowned; and in Tyre I saw the chapel in which, according to such history as we possess, his body was laid. Then, why should he, of all the German emperors, be chosen as the symbol of a political resurrection? He defied the power of the popes, and was placed under the ban of the Church; he gained some battles and lost others; he commenced a crusade, but never returned from it; he did something towards the creation of a middle class, but in advance of the time when such a work could have been appreciated. He was evidently a man of genius and energy, of a noble personal presence, and probably possessed that individual magnetism, the effect of which survives so long among the people; yet all these things did not seem to constitute a sufficient explanation.

The popularity of the Barbarossa legend, however, is not to be ascribed to anything in the Emperor's history. In whatever way it may have been created, it soon became the most picturesque expression of the dream of German unity — a dream to which the people held fast, while the princes were doing their best to make its fulfillment impossible. Barbarossa was not the first, nor the last, nor the best of the great Emperors; but the legend, ever willful in its nature, fastened upon him, and Art and Literature are forced to accept what they find already accepted by the people. This seemed to me, then, to be the natural explanation, and I am glad to find it confirmed in the main points by one of the best living writers of Germany. The substance of the popular tradition is embodied in this little song of Rückert: —

" The Ancient Barbarossa,
Friedrich, the Kaiser great,
Within the castle-cavern
Sits in enchanted state.

" He did not die; but ever
Waits in the chamber deep,
Where, hidden under the castle,
He sat himself, to sleep.

" The splendor of the Empire
He took with him away,
And back to earth will bring it
When dawns the chosen day.

" The chair is ivory purest
Whereof he makes his bed;
The table is of marble
Whereon he props his head.

" His beard, not flax, but burning
With fierce and fiery glow,
Right through the marble table
Beneath his chin doth grow.

" He nods in dreams, and winketh
With dull, half-open eye,
And, once an age, he beckons
A page that standeth by.

" He bids the boy in slumber:
' O dwarf, go up this hour,
And see if still the ravens
Are flying round the tower.

" ' And if the ancient ravens
Still wheel above me here,
Then must I sleep enchanted
For many a hundred year.' "

Half-way from the Rothenburg after passing a curious pyramid of petrified wood, I caught sight of the tower of the Kyffhäuser, a square dark-red mass, looming over the oak woods. The path dwindled to a rude forest road, and the crest of the mountain, on the left, hid from view the glimmering level of the Golden Mead. I saw nothing but the wooded heights on the right, until, after climbing a space, I found myself suddenly in the midst of angular mounds of buried masonry. The "Kaiser Friedrich's tower," eighty feet high and about thirty feet square, appeared to be all that remained of the castle. But the extensive mounds over which I stumbled were evidently formed from the *débris* of roofs and walls, and something in their arrangement suggested the existence of vaults under them. The summit of the mountain, four or five hundred feet in length, is entirely covered with the ruins A cottage in the midst, occupied by three wild women, is built over an ancient gateway, the level of which is considerably below the mounds; and I felt sure, although the women denied it, that there must be subterranean chambers. They permitted me, in consideration of the payment of three cents, to look through a glass in the wall, and behold a hideous picture of the sleeping Emperor. Like Macbeth's witches, they cried in chorus: —

"Show! show!
Show his eyes and grieve his heart;
Take his money, and let him depart!"

That, and a bottle of bad beer, which my small boy drank with extraordinary facility, was all the service they were willing to render me. But the storied peak was deserted; the vast ring of landscape basked in the splendid day; the ravens were flying around the tower; and there were seats at various points where I could rest at will and undisturbed. The Kyffhäuser was so lonely that its gnomes might have allowed the wonder-flower to grow for me, and have opened their vaults without the chance of a profane foot following. I first sketched the tower, to satisfy Duty; and then gave myself up to the guidance of Fancy, whose face, on this occasion was not to be distinguished from that of Indolence. There was not a great deal to see, and no discoveries to make; but the position of the castle was so lordly, the view of the Golden Mead so broad and beautiful, that I could have asked nothing more. I remembered, as I looked down, the meadows of Tarsus, and pictured to myself, in the haze beyond the Brocken, the snowy summits of the Taurus. "What avails the truth of history?" I reflected; "I know that Barbarossa never lived here, yet I cannot banish his shadowy figure from my thoughts. Nay, I find myself on the point of believing the legend."

The word "Kyffhäuser" means, simply, "houses on the peak" (*kippe* or *kuppe*). The people, however, have a derivation of their own. They say that, after Julius Cæsar had conquered the Thüringian land, he built a castle for his prætor on this mountain, and called it *Confusio*, to signify the state to which he had reduced the ancient monarchy. Long afterwards, they add, a stag was found in the forest, with a golden collar around its neck, on which were the words: "Let no one hurt me; Julius gave me my liberty." The date of the foundation of the castle cannot be determined. It was probably a residence, alternately, of the Thüringians and Franks, in the early Christian centuries; the German emperors afterwards occasionally inhabited it; but it was ruined in the year 1189, just before the departure of Barbarossa for the Orient. Afterwards rebuilt, it appears to have been finally overthrown and deserted in the fourteenth century. It is a very slender history which I have to relate; but, as I said before, History did not accompany me on the pilgrimage.

The Saga, however, — whose word is often as good as the written record, — had a great deal to say. She told me, first, that the images and ideas of a religion live among the people for ages after the creed is overthrown; that the half of a faith is simply *transferred*, not changed. Here is the thread by which the legend of the Kyffhäuser may be unraveled. The gods of the old Scandinavian and Teutonic mythology retreated into the heart of certain sacred mountains during the winter, and there remained until the leaves began to put forth in the forests, when the people celebrated their reappearance by a spring festival, the Druid Pentecost. When Christianity was forced upon the land, and the names of the gods were prohibited, the prominent chiefs and rulers took their place. Charlemagne sat with his paladins in the Untersberg, near Salzburg, under the fortress of Nuremberg, and in various other mountains. Two centuries later, Otto the Great was, in like manner, invested with a subterranean court; then, after an equal space of time, came Barbarossa's turn. Gustav Freytag,[1] to whom I am indebted for some interesting information on this point, read to me, from a Latin chronicle of the year 1050, the following passage: "This year there was great excitement among the people, from the report that a ruler would come forth and lead them to war. Many believed that it would be Charlemagne; but many also believed that it would be another, whose name cannot be mentioned." This other was Wuotan (Odin), whose name the people whispered three centuries after they had renounced his worship.

This explanation fits every particular of the legend. The Teutonic tribes always commenced their wars in the spring, after the return of the gods to the surface of the earth. The ravens flying around the tower are the well-known birds of Odin. When Barbarossa comes forth, he will first hang his shield on the barren tree, which will then burst into leaf. The mediæval legend sprang naturally from the grave of the dead religion. Afterwards, —

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[1] The well-known author of *Debit and Credit*, and ***Pictures of the German Past.***

probably during the terrible depression which followed the Thirty Years' War, — another transfer took place. The gods were at last forgotten; but the aspirations of the people, connecting Past and Future, found a new meaning in the story, which the poets, giving it back to them in a glorified form, fixed forever.

We have only two things to assume, and they will give us little trouble. The Kyffhäuser must have been one of those sacred mountains of the Teutons in which the gods took up their winter habitation. Its character corresponds with that of other mountains which were thus selected. It is a projecting headland, partly isolated from the rest of the range, — like Tabor, "a mountain apart." This would account for the location of the legend. The choice of Barbarossa may be explained partly by the impression which his personal presence and character made upon the people (an effect totally independent of his place in history), and partly from the circumstance, mysterious to them, that he went to the Holy Land, and never returned. Although they called him the "Heretic Emperor," on account of his quarrel with the Pope, this does not appear to have diminished the power of his name among them. The first form of the legend, as we find it in a fragment of poetry from the fourteenth century, says that he disappeared, but is not dead; that hunters or peasants sometimes meet him as a pilgrim, whereupon he discovers himself to them, saying that he will yet punish the priests, and restore the Holy Roman Empire. A history, published in the year 1519, says: "He was a man of great deeds, marvelously courageous, lovable, severe, and with the gift of speech, — renowned in many things as was no one before him save Carolus the Great, — and is at last lost, so that no man knows what is become of him."

I know not where to look for another tradition made up of such picturesque elements. Although it may be told in a few words, it contains the quintessence of the history of two thousand years. Based on the grand Northern mythology, we read in it the foundation of Christianity the Crusades, that hatred of priestcraft which made the Reformation possible, the crumbling to pieces of the old German Empire, and finally that passionate longing of the race which is now conducting it to a new national unity and power. For twenty years the Germans have been collecting funds to raise a monument to Herrmann, the Cheruskian chief, the destroyer of Varus and his legions in the Teutoburger Forest; yet Germany, after all, grew great from subjection to the laws and learning of Rome. The Kyffhäuser better deserves a monument, not specially to Barbarossa, but to that story which for centuries symbolized the political faith of the people.

The local traditions which have grown up around the national one are very numerous. Some have been transplanted hither from other places, — as, for instance, that of the key-flower, — but others, very naïve and original, belong exclusively here. It is possible, however, that they may also be found in other lands; the recent researches in fairy lore teach us that scarcely anything of what we possess is new. Here is one which suggests some passages in Wieland's "Oberon."

In Tilleda, a village at the foot of the Kyffhäuser, some lads and lasses were met, one evening, for social diversion. Among them was a girl whom they were accustomed to make the butt of their fun — whom none of them liked, although she was honest and industrious. By a secret understanding, a play of pawns was proposed; and when this girl's turn came to redeem hers, she was ordered to go up to the castle and bring back three hairs from the sleeping Emperor's beard. She set out on the instant, while the others made themselves merry over her simplicity. To their great surprise, however, she returned in an hour, bringing with her three hairs, fiery-red in color and of astonishing length. She related that, having entered the subterranean chambers, she was conducted by a dwarf to the Emperor's presence, where, after having drained a goblet of wine to his health, and that of the Frau Empress, she received permission to pluck three hairs from the imperial beard, on condition that she would neither give them away nor destroy them. She faithfully kept the promise. The hairs were laid away among her trinkets; and a year afterwards she found them changed into rods of gold, an inch in diameter. Of course the former Cinderella then became the queen.

There are several stories, somewhat similar in character, of which musicians or piping herdsmen are the heroes. Now it is a company of singers or performers, who, passing the Kyffhäuser late at night, give the sleeping Emperor a serenade; now it is a shepherd, who saying to himself, "This is for the Kaiser Friedrich" plays a simple melody upon his flute. In each case an entrance opens into the mountain. Either a princess comes forth with wine, or a page conducts the musicians into the Emperor's presence. Sometimes they each receive a green bough in payment, sometimes a horse's head, a stick, or a bunch of flax. All are either dissatisfied with their presents, or grow tired of carrying them, and throw them away, — except one (generally the poorest and silliest of the company), who takes his home with him as a souvenir of the adventure, or as an ironical present to his wife, and finds it, next morning, changed into solid gold. How faithful are all these legends to the idea of compensation! It is always the poor, the simple, the persecuted to whom luck comes.

I have two more stories, of a different character, to repeat. A poor laborer in Tilleda had an only daughter, who was betrothed to a young man equally poor, but good and honest. It was the evening before the wedding-day; the guests were already invited, and the father suddenly remembered with dismay that there was only one pot, one dish, and two plates in the house. "What shall we do?"

he cried. "You must go up to the Kyffhäuser, and ask the Princess to lend us some dishes." Hand in hand the lovers climbed the mountain, and at the door of the cavern found the Princess, who smiled upon them as they came. They made their request timidly and with fear; but she bade them take heart, gave them to eat and drink, and filled a large basket with dishes, spoons, and everything necessary for a wedding feast. When they returned to the village with their burden, it was day. All things were strange; they recognized neither house nor garden: the people were unknown to them, and wore a costume they had never before seen. Full of distress and anxiety, they sought the priest, who, after hearing their story, turned over the church-books, and found that they had been absent just two hundred years.

The other legend is that of Peter Klaus, the source from which Irving drew his Rip Van Winkle. I had read it before (as have, no doubt, many of my readers), but was not acquainted with its local habitation until my visit to the Kyffhäuser. It was first printed, so far as I can learn, in a collection made by Otmar, and published in Bremen in the year 1800. Given in the briefest outline, it is as follows: Peter Klaus, a shepherd of Sittendorf, pastured his herd on the Kyffhäuser, and was in the habit of collecting the animals at the foot of an old ruined wall. He noticed that one of his goats regularly disappeared for some hours every day; and, finding that she went into an opening between two of the stones, he followed her. She led him into a vault, where she began eating grains of oats which fell from the ceiling. Over his head he heard the stamping and neighing of horses. Presently a squire in ancient armor appeared, and beckoned to him without speaking. He was led up stairs, across a court-yard, and into an open space in the mountain, sunken deep between rocky walls, where a company of knights, stern and silent were playing at bowls. Peter Klaus was directed by gestures to set up the pins, which he did in mortal fear, until the quality of a can of wine, placed at his elbow, stimulated his courage. Finally, after long service and many deep potations, he slept. When he awoke, he found himself lying among tall weeds, at the foot of the ruined wall. Herd and dog had disappeared; his clothes were in tatters, and a long beard hung upon his breast. He wandered back to the village, seeking his goats, and marveling that he saw none but strange faces. The people gathered around him, and answered his questions, but each name he named was that upon a stone in the church-yard. Finally, a woman who seemed to be his wife pressed through the crowd, leading a wild-looking boy, and with a baby in her arms. "What is your name?" he asked.

"Maria."

"And your father?"

"He was Peter Klaus, God rest his soul! who went up the Kyffhäuser with his herd, twenty years ago, and has never been seen since."

Irving has taken almost every feature of his story from this legend; but his happy translation of it to the Catskills. and the grace and humor which he has added to it, have made it a new creation. Peter Klaus is simply a puppet of the people's fancy, but Rip Van Winkle has an immortal vitality of his own. Few, however, who look into the wild little glen, on climbing to the Catskill Mountain House, suspect from what a distance was wafted the thistle-down which there dropped and grew into a new plant, with the richest flavor and color of the soil. Here, on the Kyffhäuser, I find the stalk whence it was blown by some fortunate wind.

No doubt some interesting discoveries might be made, if the ruins were cleared and explored. At the eastern end of the crest are the remains of another tower, from which I detected masses of masonry rising through the oaks, on a lower platform of the mountain. The three wild women informed me that there was a chapel down there; but my small boy had never heard of it, and didn't know the way.

"Where do you come from, boy?" the woman asked.

"From Kelbra."

"O. ah! To be sure you don't know! The Kelbra people are blockheads and asses, every one of 'em. They think their Rothenburg is everything, when the good Lord knows that the Kaiser Red-beard never lived there a day of his life. From Kelbra, indeed! It's the Tilleda people that know how to guide strangers; you've made a nice mess of it, Herr, taking a Kelbra boy!"

Perhaps I had; but it wasn't pleasant to be told of it in that way. So I took my boy, said farewell to Barbarossa's tower, and climbed down the steep of slippery grass and stones to the ruins of the lower castle. The scrubby oaks and alder thickets were almost impenetrable; a single path wound among them, leading me through three ancient gateways, but avoiding several chambers, the walls of which are still partially standing. However, I finally reached the chapel — a structure more Byzantine than Gothic, about fifty feet in length. It stands alone, at the end of a court-yard, and is less ruined than any other part of the castle. The windows remain, and a great part of the semicircular chancel, but I could find no traces of sculpture. The floor had been dug up in search of buried treasure. Looking through an aperture in the wall, I saw another inclosure of ruins on a platform further below. The castle of Kyffhäuser, then, embraced three separate stages of buildings, all connected, and forming a pile nearly a quarter of a mile in length. Before its fall it must have been one of the stateliest fortresses in Germany.

I descended the mountain in the fierce, silent heat which made it seem so lonely, so far removed from the bright world of the Golden Mead. There were no flocks on the dry pasture-slopes, no farmers in the stubble-fields under them; and the village of Tilleda, lying under my eyes, bared its deserted streets to the sun. There, nevertheless, I found rest and refreshment in a decent inn. My destination was the town of Artern, on the Unstrut, at the eastern extremity of the Golden Mead; and I had counted on finding a horse and hay-cart, at least, to carry me over the intervening nine or ten miles. But no; nothing of the kind was to be had in Tilleda — even a man to shoulder my pack was an unusual fortune, for which I must be grateful. "Wait till evening," said the landlady, after describing to me the death of her husband, and her business troubles, "and then Hans Meyer will go with you."

The story being that the family of Goethe originally came from Artern, and that some of its members were still living in the neighborhood, I commenced my inquiries at Tilleda.

"Is there anybody of the name of Goethe in the village?" I asked the landlady.

"Yes," said she, "there 's the blacksmith Goethe, but I believe he 's the only one."

The poet's great-grandfather having been a blacksmith, and the practice of a certain trade or profession being so frequently hereditary among the Germans, I did not doubt but that this was a genuine branch of the family. All that the landlady could say of the man, in reply to my questions, was, "He 's only a blacksmith."

The sun had nearly touched the tower on the Kyffhäuser when Hans Meyer and I set out for Artern; but the fields still glowed with heat, and the far blue hills, which I must reach, seemed to grow no nearer, as I plodded painfully along the field-roads. The man was talkative enough, and his singular dialect was not difficult to understand. He knew no tradition which had not already been gathered, but, like a genuine farmer, entertained me with stories of hail-storms, early and late frosts, and inundations. He was inveterately wedded to old fashions, and things of the past, had served against the Republicans in 1849, and not a glim mering idea of the present national movement had ever entered his mind. I had heard that this region was the home of conservative land-owners, and ignorant peasants who believe in them, but I am not willing to take Hans Meyer as a fair specimen of the people.

It is wearisome to tell of a weary journey, The richest fields may be monotonous, and the sweetest pastoral scenery become tame, without change. I looked over the floor of the Golden Mead, with ardent longing towards the spire of Artern in the east, and with a faint interest towards the castle of Sachsenberg, in the south, perched above a gorge through which the Unstrut breaks its way. The sun went down in a splendor of color, the moon came up like a bronze shield, grain-wagons rolled homewards, men and women flocked into the villages, with rakes and forks on their shoulders, and a cool dusk slowly settled over the great plain. Hans Meyer was silent at last, and I was in that condition of tense endurance when an unnecessary remark is almost as bad as an insult; and so we went over the remaining miles, entering the gates of Artern by moonlight.

The first thing I did in the morning, was to recommence my inquiries in regard to Goethe. "Yes," said the landlord, "his *stammhaus* (ancestral house) is here, but the family don't live in it any longer. If you want to see it, one of the boys shall go with you. There was formerly a smithy in it; but the smiths of the family left, and then it was changed."

I followed the boy through the long, roughly-paved main street, until we had nearly reached the western end of the town, when he stopped before an old yellow house, two stories high, with a steep tiled roof. Its age, I should guess, was between two and three hundred years. The street-front, above the ground floor, — which, having an arched entrance and only one small window, must have been the former smithy, — showed its framework of timber as one sees in all old German houses. Before the closely ranged windows of the second story there were shelves with pots of gilliflowers and carnations in blossom. It was a genuine mechanic's house, with no peculiar feature to distinguish it particularly from the others in the street. A thin-faced man, with sharp black mustache, looked out of one of the windows, and spoke to the boy, who asked whether I wished to enter. But as there was really nothing to be seen, I declined.

According to the chronicles of Artern, the great-grandfather Goethe, the blacksmith, had a son who was apprenticed to a tailor, and who, during his *wanderschaft*, sojourned awhile in Frankfort-on-the-Main. He there captivated the fancy of a rich widow, the proprietress of the Willow-Bush Hotel (the present "Hotel Union"), and married her, — or she married him, — a fact which presupposes good looks, or talents, or both, on his part. His son, properly educated, became in time the Councillor Goethe, who begat the poet. The latter, it is said, denied that the tailor was his *grandfather*, whence it is probable that an additional generation must be interpolated; but the original blacksmith has been accepted, I believe, by the most of Goethe's biographers. A generation, more or less, makes no difference. Goethe's ancestry, like that of Shakespeare, lay in the ranks of the people, and their strong blood ran in the veins of both.

No author ever studied himself with such a serene, objective coolness as Goethe; but when he speaks to the world, one always feels that there is a slight flavor of *dichtung* infused into his *wahrheit*. Or perhaps, with the arrogance natural to every great intellect, he reasoned outward, and assumed material from spiritual facts. Fiction being only Truth seen through a different medium, the poet who can withdraw far enough from his own nature to contemplate it as an artistic study, works under a different law from that of the autobiographer. So when Goethe illustrates himself, we must not always look closely for facts. The only instance, which I can recall at this moment, wherein he speaks of his ancestors, is the poetical fragment: —

"Stature from father, and the mood
  Stern views of life compelling;
From mother I take the joyous heart,
  And the love of story-telling;
Great-grandsire's passion was the fair —
  What if I still reveal it?
Great-grandam's was pomp, and gold, and show,
  And in my bones I feel it."

It is quite as possible, here, that Goethe deduced the character of his ancestors from his own, as that he sought an explanation of the latter in their peculiarities. The great-grandsire may have been Textor, of his mother's line; it is not likely that he knew much of his father's family-tree. The burghers of Frankfurt were as proud, in their day, as the nobility of other lands; and Goethe, at least in his tastes and habits, was a natural aristocrat. It is not known that he ever visited Artern.

Concerning the other members of the original family, the landlord said: "Not one of them lives here now. The last Goethe in the neighborhood was a farmer, who had a lease of the *scharfrichterei*" (an isolated property, set apart for the use of the government executioner), "but he left here some six or eight years ago, and emigrated to America." "Was he the executioner?" I asked. "O, by no means!" the landlord answered; "he only leased the farm; but it was not a comfortable place to live upon, and, besides, he didn't succeed very well." So the blacksmith in Tilleda and the American Goethe are the only representatives left. What if a great poet for our hemisphere should, in time, spring from the loins of the latter?

I ordered a horse and carriage with no compunctions of conscience, for I was really unable to make a second day's journey on foot. The golden weather had lasted just long enough to complete my legendary pilgrimage. The morning at Artern came on with cloud and distant gray sweeps of rain, which soon blotted out the dim headland of the Kyffhäuser. I followed the course of the Unstrut, which here reaches the northern limit of his wanderings, and winds southward to seek the Saale. The valley of the river is as beautiful as it is secluded, and every hour brings a fresh historical field to the traveller. No highway enters it; only rude country roads lead from village to village, and rude inns supply plain cheer. Tourists are here an unknown variety of the human race.

I passed the ruins of Castle Wendelstein, battered during the Thirty Years' War, — a manufactory of beet-sugar now peacefully smokes in the midst of its gray vaults and buttresses, — and then Memleben, where Henry the Bird-Snarer lived when he was elected Emperor, and Otto II. founded a grand monastery. Other ruins and ancient battle-fields followed, and finally Nebra, where, in 531, the Thuringians fought with the Franks three days, and lost their kingdom. On entering Nebra, I passed an inn with the curious sign of "Care" (*Sorge*), — represented by a man with a most dismal face, and his head resting hopelessly upon his hand. An inn of evilest omen; and, assuredly, I did not stop there.

Further down the valley, green vineyards took the place of the oak forests, and the landscapes resembled those of the Main and the Neckar. There were still towns, and ruined castles, and battle-fields, but I will not ask the reader to explore the labyrinthine paths of German history. The atmosphere of the legend had faded, and I looked with an indifferent eye on the storied scenes which the windings of the river unfolded. At sunset, I saw it pour its waters into those of the Saale, not far from the railway station of Naumburg, where I came back to the highways of travel.

A WEEK ON CAPRI.

LOOKING seaward from Naples, the island of Capri lies across the throat of the bay like a vast natural breakwater, grand in all its proportions, and marvelously picturesque in outline. The fancy is at once excited, and seeks to find some definite figure therein. Long ago, an English traveller compared it to a couchant lion; Jean Paul, on the strength of some picture he had seen, pronounced it to be a sphinx; while Gregorovius, most imaginative of all, finds that it is "an antique sarcophagus, with bas-reliefs of snaky-haired Eumenides, and the figure of Tiberius lying upon it."

Capri is not strictly a by-way of travel, inasmuch as most of the tourists who come to Naples take the little bay-steamer, visit the Blue Grotto, touch an hour at the *marina*, or landing-place, and return the same evening *via* Sorrento. But this is like reading a title-page, instead of the volume behind it. The few who climb the rock, and set themselves quietly down to study the life and scenery of the island, find an entire poem, to which no element of beauty or interest is wanting, opened for their perusal. Like Venice, Capri is a permanent island in the traveller's experience — detached from the mainland of Italian character and associations. It is not a grand dramatic epic, to which light waves keep time, tinkling on the marble steps; but a bright, breezy pastoral of the sea, with a hollow, rumbling undertone of the Past, like that of the billows in its caverns. Venice has her generations, her ages of heroic forms: here one sole figure, supremely fierce and abominable, usurps the historic background. Not only that: its shadow is projected over the life of the island, now and for all time to come. Here, where Nature has placed terror and beauty side by side, the tragedy of one man is inextricably blended with the idyllic annals of a simple, innocent people. To feel this, one must live a little while on Capri.

It was nearly the end of January, when Antonio, our boat man, announced that we had the "one day-out of a dozen," for crossing the ten miles of sea between Sorrento and the island. I had my doubts, placing my own weather-instinct against the boatman's need of making a good fare in a dull season; but we embarked, nevertheless. The ripple of a sirocco could even then be seen far out on the bay, and a cloudy wall of rain seemed to be rising from the sea. "*Non c'è paura*," said the sailors; "we have a god-mother at the marina of Capri, and we are going to burn a lamp for her to-night. She will give us good weather." They pulled gayly, and we soon passed the headland of Sorrento, beyond which the mouth of the Bay of Naples opened broadly to view. Across the water, Ischia was already dim with rain; and right in front towered Capri, huge, threatening, and to the eye inaccessible but for the faint glimmer of houses at the landing-place.

Here we met the heavy swell rolling in from the sea. The men bent to their oars, with cries of "*Hal-lì! maccheroni à Capri!*" The spray of the coming rain struck us, but it was light and warm. Antonio set the sail, and we steered directly across the strait, the sky becoming darker and wilder every minute. The bold Cape of Minerva, with its Odyssean memories, and the Leap of Tiberius, on Capri, were the dim landmarks by which we set our course. It was nearly two hours before we came to windward of the latter, and I said to Antonio: "It is one day out of a dozen for cold and wet." He was silent, and made an attempt to look melancholy. However, the rocks already overhung us; in front was a great curving sweep of gardens, mounting higher and ever higher in the twilight; and the only boat we had seen on the deserted bay drew in towards us, and made for the roadstead.

The row of fishermen's houses on the beach beckoned welcome after the dreary voyage. At first I saw no human being, but presently some women and children appeared, hurrying to the strand. A few more lifts on the dying swell, and our keel struck the shore. The sailors jumped into the water; one of the women planted a tall bench against the bow, and over this bridge we were landed. There was already a crowd surrounding us with clamors for gifts and service. The woman with the bench was the noisiest: "It is mine!" she continually cried, — "*I* brought it!" I gave her a copper coin, expecting, after my Neapolitan experiences to hear wilder cries for more; but she only uttered, "*Eh? due bajocchi!*" in an indescribable tone, shouldered her bench, and walked away. Antonio picked out two maidens, piled our baggage upon their heads, and we set off for the town of Capri. The clamorous crowd dissolved at once; there was neither insult nor pursuit. It was a good-humored demonstration of welcome — nothing more.

It was but a single step from the strand — the only little fragment of beach on ten miles of inaccessible shore — to the steep and stony pathway leading up the height. It still rained, and the night was rapidly falling. High garden walls further darkened the way, which was barely wide enough to allow two persons to pass, and the bed of which, collecting the rain from the steeps on either side, was like that of a mountain torrent. Before us marched the bare-legged porteresses, with astonishing lightness and swiftness, while we plodded after, through the rattling waters, often slipping on the wet stones, and compelled to pause at every corner to regain our breath. The bright houses on the ridge overhead shone as if by their own light, crowning the dusky gardens, and beckoning us upwards.

After nearly half an hour of such climbing, we emerged from between the walls. A vast, hollow view opened dimly down to the sea for a moment; then we passed under an arch, and found ourselves in the little square of the town, which is planted on the crest of the island, at its lowest point. There are not forty feet of level ground; the pavement falls to both shores. A few paces down the southern slope brought us to a large white mansion, beside which the crown of a magnificent palm-tree rustled in the wind. This was the hostelry of Don Michele Pagano, known to all artists who have visited Capri for the last twenty years. A stately entrance, an ample staircase, and lofty, vaulted chambers, gave the house a palatial air, as we came into it out of the stormy night. The two maidens, who had carried forty pounds apiece on their heads, were not in the least flushed by their labor. The fee I gave seemed to me very small, but they were so well pleased that Antonio's voice, demanding, "Why don't you thank the Signore?" made them start out of a dream, — perhaps of pork and macaroni. At once, like children saying their lessons, they dipped a deep courtesy, side by side, saying, "*Grazie, Signore!*" I then first saw how pretty they were, how bright their eyes, how dazzling their teeth, and how their smiles flashed as they said "Good-night!" Meanwhile, Don Michele's daughter had kindled a fire on the hearth, there was a promise of immediate dinner, and we began to like Capri from that moment.

My first walk satisfied me that no one can make acquaintance with the island, from a boat. Its sea-walls of rock are so enormous, that they hide almost its entire habitable portion from view. In order to make any description of its scenery clear to the reader, the prominent topographical features must be first sketched. Capri lies due south of Naples, its longer diameter running east and west, so that it presents its full broadside to the capital. Its outline, on the ground plan, is that of a short, broad-topped boot, the toe pointing towards the Sorrentine headland. The breadth, across the top, or western end, is two miles, and the length of the island is about four miles. The town of Capri lies just at the top of the instep, where the ankle is narrowest, occupying also the crest between the northern and southern shores. Immediately to the west of it rises a tremendous mountain-wall, only to be scaled at one point. All the island beyond this wall is elevated considerably above the eastern half, the division being also municipal and social. The eastern part, however, possesses the only landing-places on both shores, whence it is the most animated and populous, claiming at least two thirds of the entire number of five thousand souls on the island. The most elevated points are the Salto (leap) di Tiberio, the extreme eastern cape, which rises nearly a thousand feet above the sea; and Monte Solaro, a part of the dividing wall which I have just mentioned, about double the height of the Salto. In addition to the landing-place on the northern shore, there is a little cove just opposite, below the town, where boats can land in still weather. Elsewhere, the rocks descend to the water in a sheer wall, from one to eight hundred feet in height. Although so near Naples, the winds from the mountains of the Peninsula are somewhat softened in crossing the bay, and the winter temperature is about ten degrees higher in consequence.

When we crossed the little square of the town to the entrance-gate, on the morning after our arrival, there was a furious *tramontana* blowing. The whole circuit of the Bay of Naples was visible, drawn in hard, sharp outlines, and the blue basin of water was freckled with thousands of shifting white-caps. The resemblance of the bay to a vast volcanic crater struck my fancy: the shores and islands seem to be the ruins of its rim. Such a wind, in Naples, would have been intolerable: here it was only strong at exposed points, and its keen edge was gone. We turned eastward, along the narrow, dirty street, to get into the country. In a hundred yards the town ceased, and the heavy walls gave place to enormous hedges of cactus. A boy, walking the same way, asked: "Are you going to

Timberio" (Tiberius)? The ruins of the Villa Jovis, the principal palace of the Emperor, were already to be seen, on the summit of the eastern headland of the island. Along a roughly paved lane, under the shade of carob and olive trees, we finally came to a large country-house in a most picturesque state of ruin. A crumbling archway, overhung by a fringe of aloes, which had thrust their roots between the stones, attracted my attention, and I began to sketch it. Not many minutes elapsed before five or six boys came out, and watched me from the arch. They would have been good accessories, but, whenever I looked at one, he got out of the way. Presently they brought an aloe, and set it upon the rocks; but, seeing that I paid no attention to it, one of them remarked with a grimace, "No butiglia," — meaning that he expected no gratuity from me. They were lively, good-natured imps, and so it was a pleasure to disappoint them agreeably.

We went also down the southern slope of the island, and came at random into the Val Tragara, — a peaceful solitude, where twenty-five centuries of labor have turned the hostile rocks into tiers of ever-yielding gardens. One range of these is supported upon arches of masonry that formerly upheld the highway which Tiberius constructed between his palaces. I afterwards found other traces of the road, leading in easy zigzags to the site of the fourth palace on San Michele. Descending deeper in the Val Tragara we missed the main path, and stumbled down the channels of the rain between clumps of myrtle and banks whereon the red anemone had just begun to open its blossoms. The olive-trees, sheltered from the wind, were silent, and their gray shadows covered the suggestive mystery of the spot. For here Tiberius is supposed to have hidden those rites of the insane Venus to which Suetonius and Tacitus so darkly allude.

"Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa."

A single almond-tree, in flower, made its own sunshine in the silvery gloom; and the secluded beauties of the place tempted us on, until the path dropped into a ravine, which fell towards the sea. Following the line of the ancient arches there is another path — the only level walk on the island — leading to a terrace above the three pointed rocks off the southern coast, called the Faraglioni. In the afternoon, when all the gardens and vineyards from the edge of the white cliffs to the town along the ridge lie in light, and the huge red and gray walls beyond, literally piled against the sky, are in hazy shadow, the views from this path are poems written in landscape forms. One does not need to remember that here once was Rome; that beyond the sea lie Sicily and Carthage; that Augustus consecrated the barren rock below to one of his favorites, and jested with Thrasyllus at one of his last feasts. The delight of the eye fills you too completely; and Capri, as you gaze, is released from its associations, classic and diabolic. If Nature was here profaned by man, she has long ago washed away the profanation. Her pure air and healthy breezes tolerate no moral diseases. Such were brought hither; but they took no root, and have left no trace, except in the half-fabulous "Timberio" of the people.

It is time to visit the Villa Jovis, the Emperor's chief residence. The *tramontana* still blew when we set out; but, as I said, it had lost its sharp edge in coming over the bay, and was deliciously bracing. As the gulf opened below us, after passing Monte San Michele, we paused to look at the dazzling panorama. Naples was fair in sight; and the smoke of Vesuvius, following the new lava, seemed nearly to have reached Torre del Greco. While we were studying the volcano through a glass, a tall man in Scotch cap and flannel shirt came up, stopped, and addressed us in Italian.

"You see that white house yonder on the cliff?" said he; "a Signore Inglese lives there. It's a nice place, a beautiful situation. There's the place for the cows and there are the columbaria, and all sorts of things. It's what they call a *quinta* in Portugal."

"Is the Englishman married?" I asked.

"I don't know," he replied; "I believe there's a certain woman in the house."

I handed him the glass, which he held to his eyes for five minutes, without saying a word. Suddenly he broke out in English: "Yes, as you say, the powdery appearance — the — ah, the sudden change! Boreal weather, you know; but the indications seem to me, having watched and kept the thing in view, quite — ah — *quite* of *your* opinion!"

I was speechless, as may easily be imagined; and, before I could guess what to reply, he handed me the glass, took off his cap, said: "Here's hoping — ah, wishing that we may meet again — *perhaps!*" and went off with tremendous strides.

"Who is that, Augusto?" I asked of the small Caprese boy who carried our books and umbrellas.

"*Un Signo' Inglese.*"

"Is anything the matter with him?"

"*È un po' pazzo*" (a little cracked).

"Where does he live?"

"Yonder!" said Augusto, pointing to the very house, and place for the cows, and the columbaria, to which the gentleman himself had called my attention. It was his own house! The "certain woman," I afterwards learned, was his legal wife, a girl of Capri. As for himself, he bears a name noted in literature, and is the near relative of three authors.

Two pleasant girls kept us company a little further, and then we went on alone, by a steep, slippery path, paved with stone, between the poor little fields of fig and olive. The patches of wheat were scarcely bigger than cottage flower-beds, and in many places a laborious terrace supported only ground enough to produce a half-peck of grain.

Lupines and horse-beans are the commonest crop at this season. Along our path bloomed "the daisy-star that never sets," with anemone and golden broom. The Villa Jovis was full in view, and not distant; but the way first led us to the edge of the cliffs on the southeastern side of the island. From a rough pulpit of masonry we looked down on the wrinkled sea near a thousand feet below. The white-caps were but the tiniest sprinkles of silver on its deep-blue ground.

As we mounted towards the eastern headland, the tremendous walls of the western half of Capri rose bold and bright against the sky; but the arcs of the sea horizon, on either side, were so widely extended that they nearly clasped behind Monte Solaro. It was a wonderful, an indescribable view; how can I give it in words? Here I met an old man, in a long surtout, who stopped and conversed a minute in French. He was a soldier of Napoleon, now the keeper of a little restaurant at the Salto di Tiberio, and had just been made happy by the cross and a pension. The restaurant was opened by a peasant, and we passed through it to the Salto. A protecting rampart of masonry enables you to walk to the very brink. The rock falls a thousand feet, and so precipitously that the victims flung hence must have dropped into the waves. We looked directly across the strait to the Cape of Minerva, and towards Salerno as well as Naples. The snow-crowned Monte Sant' Angelo, rising in the centre, gave the peninsula a broad pyramidal form buttressed by the headlands on either side. The Isles of the Sirens were full in view; and, beyond them, the whole curve of the Salernic gulf, to the far Calabrian cape of Licosa The distance was bathed in a flood of airy gold, and the gradations in the color of the sea, from pale amethyst to the darkest sapphire below us, gave astonishing breadth and depth to the immense perspective. But the wind, tearing round the point in furious gusts, seemed trying to snatch us over the rampart, and the horror of the height became insupportable.

Much of the plan of the Villa Jovis may still be traced. As we approached the ruins, which commence a few paces beyond the Salto, a woman made her appearance, and assumed the office of guide. "Here lived Timberio," said she; "he was a great man, a beautiful man, but O, he was a devil! Down there are seven chambers, which you can only see by a torch-light; and here are the *piscine*, one for salt water and one for fresh; and now I'll show you the mosaic pavement — all made by Timberio. O, the devil that he was!" Timberio is the favorite demon of the people of Capri. I suspect they would not give him up for any consideration. A wine of the island is called the "Tears of Tiberius" (when did he ever shed any, I wonder?), just as the wine of Vesuvius is called the Tears of Christ. When I pointed to the distant volcano, whose plume of silver smoke was the sign of the active eruption, and said to the woman, "Timberio is at work yonder!" she nodded her head, and answered: "Ah, the devil! to be sure he is."

We picked our way through the ruins, tracing three stories of the palace, which must have been four, if not five stories high on the land side. Some drums of marble columns are scattered about, bits of stucco remain at the bases of the walls; there is a corridor paved with mosaic, descending, curiously enough, in an inclined plane, and the ground-plan of a small theatre; but the rubbish left does not even hint of the former splendor. It is not one of those pathetic ruins which seem to appeal to men for preservation; it rather tries to hide itself from view, welcoming the broom, the myrtle, and the caper-shrub to root-hold in its masses of brick and mortar.

On the topmost platform of ruin is the little chapel of Santa Maria del Soccorso, together with the hermitage of a good-natured friar, who brings you a chair, offers you bits of Tiberian marble, and expects a modest alms. Here I found the wild Englishman, sitting on a stone bench beside the chapel. He pointed over the parapet to the awful precipice, and asked me: "Did you ever go over there? I did once — to get some jonquils. You know the rock-jonquils are the finest." Then he took my glass, looked through it at the distant shores, and began to laugh. "This reminds me," said he, "of a man who was blown up with his house several hundred feet into the air. He was immensely frightened, when, all at once, he saw his neighbor's house beside him — blown up too. And the neighbor called out: 'How long do you think it will take us to get down again?' Cool — wasn't it?" Thereupon he went to the ladies of the party, whom he advised to go to the *marina*, and see the people catch shrimps. "It's a beautiful sight," he said. "The girls are so fresh and rosy — but, then, so are the shrimps!"

It is no lost time, if you sit down upon a block of marble in the Villa Jovis, and dream a long, bewildering day-dream. Here it is almost as much a riot for the imagination to restore what once was, as to create what might be. The temples of Minerva and Apollo, across the strait, were both visible from this point. Looking over Capri, you place the second palace of Tiberius on the summit of Monte Tuoro, which rises against the sea on your right; the third on the southern side of the island, a little further; the fourth on Monte San Michele; the fifth and sixth beyond the town of Capri, near the base of the mountain wall. Roads connecting these piles of splendor cross the valleys on high arches, and climb the peaks in laborious curves. Beyond the bay, the headland of Misenum and the shores of Baiæ are one long glitter of marble. Villas and temples crown the heights of Puteoli, and stretch in an unbroken line to Neapolis. Here the vision grows dim, but you know what magnificence fills the whole sweep of the shore — Portici and Pompeii and Stabiæ, growing visible again as the palaces shine above the rocks of Surrentum!

After the wonder that such things were, the next greatest wonder is that they have so utterly vanished. What is preserved is so fresh and solid that Time seems to have done the least towards their destruction. The masonry of Capri can scarcely have been carried away, while such quarries — still unexhausted — were supplied by the mainland; and the tradition is probably correct, that the palaces of Tiberius were razed to the ground immediately after his fall. The charms of the island were first discovered by Augustus. Its people were still Greek, in his day; and it belonged to the Greek Neapolis, to which he gave the larger and richer Ischia in exchange for it. The ruins of the Villa Jovis are supposed to represent, also, the site of his palace; and Tiberius, who learned diplomacy from the cunning Emperor, and crime from the Empress, his own mother, first came hither with him. A period of twenty or thirty years saw the splendors of Capri rise and fall. After Tiberius, the island ceased to have a history.

Every walk on these heights, whence you look out far over bays, seas, and shores, is unlike anything else in the world. It is surprising what varieties of scenery are embraced in this little realm. In the afternoon we saw another phase of it on the southern shore, at a point called the Marina Piccola. After passing below the town and the terraced fields, we came upon a wild slope, grown with broom and mastic and arbutus, among which cows were feeding. Here the island shelves down rapidly between two near precipices. The wind was not felt; the air was still and warm, and the vast, glittering sea basked in the sun. At the bottom we found three fishers' houses stuck among the rocks, more like rough natural accretions than the work of human hand; a dozen boats hauled up on the stones in a cove about forty feet in diameter; and one solitary man. Silence and savage solitude mark the spot. Eastward, the Faraglioni rise in gray-red, inaccessible cones; the ramparts of the Castello make sharp, crenelated zigzags on the sky, a thousand feet above one's head; and only a few olive-groves, where Monte Tuoro falls into the Val

Tragara, speak of cultivation. One might fancy himself to be upon some lone Pacific island. The fisher told us that in tempests the waves are hurled entirely over the houses, and boats in the cove are then dashed to pieces. But in May, the quails, weary with their flight from Africa, land on the slope above, and are caught in nets by hundreds and thousands.

We had not yet exhausted the lower, or eastern half of the island. Another morning was devoted to the Arco Naturale, on the southern coast, between Monte Tuoro and the Salto. Scrambling along a stony lane, between the laborious terraces of the Capri farmers, we soon reached the base of the former peak, where, completely hidden from view, lay a rich circular basin of level soil, not more than a hundred yards in diameter. Only two or three houses were visible; some boys, hoeing in a field at a distance, cried out, "*Signo', un baioc'!*" with needless iteration, as if the words were a greeting. Presently we came upon a white farmhouse, out of which issued an old woman and four wild, frouzy girls — all of whom attached themselves to us, and would not be shaken off.

We were already on the verge of the coast. Over the jagged walls of rock we saw the plain of Pæstum beyond the sea, which opened deeper and bluer beneath us with every step. The rich garden-basin and the amphitheatre of terraced fields on Monte Tuoro were suddenly shut from view. A perpendicular cliff of white rock arose on the right; and below some rough shelves wrought into fields stood the Natural Arch, like the front of a shattered Gothic cathedral. Its background was the sea, which shone through the open arch. High up on the left, over the pointed crags, stood a single rock shaped like a Rhine-wine beaker, holding its rounded cup to the sky. There is scarcely a wilder view on Capri.

Following the rough path by which the people reach their little fields, we clambered down the rocks, along the brink of steeps which threatened danger whenever the gusts of wind came around the point. The frouzy girls were at hand, and eager to help. When we declined, they claimed money for having given us their company, and we found it prudent to settle the bill at once. The slope was so steep that every brink of rock, from above, seemed to be the last between us and the sea. Our two boy-attendants went down somewhere, out of sight; and their song came up through the roar of the wind like some wild strain of the Sirens whose isles we saw in the distance. The rock is grandly arched, with a main portal seventy or eighty feet high, and two open windows at the sides.

Half-way down the cliff on the right is the grotto of Mitromania — a name which the people, of course, have changed into "Matrimonio," as if the latter word had an application to Tiberius! There were some two hundred steps to descend, to a little platform of earth, under the overhanging cliffs. Here the path dropped suddenly into a yawning crevice, the floor of which was traversed with cracks, as if ready to plunge into the sea which glimmered up through them. Passing under the gloomy arch, we came upon a chamber of reticulated Roman masonry, built in a side cavity of the rock, which forms part of the main grotto or temple of Mithras. The latter is about one hundred feet deep and fifty wide, and opens directly towards the sunrise.

Antiquarians derive the name of the grotto from *Magnum Mithræ Antrum*. There seems to be no doubt as to its character: one can still perceive the exact spot where the statue of the god was placed, to catch the first beams of his own luminary, coming from Persia to be welcomed and worshipped on the steeps of Capri. It is difficult to say what changes time and earthquakes may not have wrought; but it seems probable that the ancient temple extended to the front of the cliffs, and terminated in a platform hanging over the sea. A Greek inscription found in this grotto associates it both with the superstition and the cruelty of

Tiberius. I have not seen the original, which is in the Museum at Naples, but here repeat it from the translation of Gregorovius: —

> "Ye who inhabit the Stygian land, beneficent demons,
> Me, the unfortunate, take ye also now to your Hades, —
> Me, whom not the will of the gods, but the power of the Ruler,
> Suddenly smote with death, which, guiltless, I never suspected.
> Crowned with so many a gift, enjoying the favor of Cæsar,
> Now he destroyeth my hopes and the hopes of my parents.
> Not fifteen have I reached, not twenty the years I have numbered,
> Ah! and no more I behold the light of the beautiful heavens.
> Hypatos am I by name: to thee I appeal, O my brother, —
> Parents, also, I pray you, unfortunate, mourn me no longer!"

A human sacrifice is here clearly indicated. This mysterious cavern, with its diabolical associations, the giddy horror of the Salto, and the traces of more than one concealed way of escape, denoting the fear which is always allied with cruelty, leave an impression which the efforts of those historiasters who endeavor to whitewash Tiberius cannot weaken with all their arguments. Napoleon was one of his admirers, but his opinion on such matters is of no great weight. When Dr. Adolf Stahr, however, devotes a volume to the work of proving Tiberius to have been a good and much-abused man, we turn to the pages of Suetonius and the Spintrian medals, and are not convinced. The comment of the old woman at the Villa Jovis will always express the general judgment of mankind, — "*O, che diavolo era Timberio!*"

If you stand at the gate of the town, and look eastward towards the great dividing wall, you can detect, on the corner nearest the sea, the zigzag line of the only path which leads up to Anacapri and the western part of the island. One morning when the boy Manfred, as he brought our coffee, told us that the *tramontana* had ceased blowing, we sent for horses, to make the ascent. We had been awakened by volleys of musketry; the church-bells were chiming, and there were signs of a festa, — but Felice, the owner of the horses, explained the matter. Two young men, mariners of Capri, had recently suffered shipwreck on the coast of Calabria. Their vessel was lost, and they only saved their lives because they happened, at the critical moment, to call on the Madonna del Carmine. She heard and helped them : they reached home in safety, and on this day they burned a lamp before her shrine, had a mass said in their names, and invited their families and friends to share in the thanksgiving. I heard the bells with delight, for they expressed the poetry of superstition based on truth.

We set out, in

> "The halcyon morn
> To hoar February born."

Indeed, such a day makes one forget *tramontana*, sirocco, and all the other weather-evils of the Italian winter. Words cannot describe the luxury of the air, the perfect stillness and beauty of the day, and the far, illuminated shores of the bay as they opened before us. We saw that the season had turned, in the crocusses and violets which blossomed beside the path — the former a lovely pale-purple flower, with fire-tinted stamens. With Felice came two little girls, Luigia and Serafina, the former of whom urged on a horse, while the other carried on her head the basket of provisions. Our small factotum, Augusto, took charge of the bottles of wine, and Felice himself bore the shawls and books. Beyond the town, the path wound between clumps of myrtle, arbutus, and the delicate white erica, already in bud. Under us lay the amphitheatre of vineyards and orange-groves; and the town of Capri, behind, stretching from San Michele to the foot of the Castello, seemed a fortified city of the Middle Ages. Over the glassy sea rose Vesuvius. apparently peaceful, yet with a demon at work under that silvery cloud ; Monte St. Angelo, snowy and bleak ; and the rich slopes of Sorrento and Massa.

One of the *giumente* (as Felice called his horses) turned on seeing the rocky staircase, and tried to escape. But it was a sign of protest, not of hope. They were small, unshod, very peaceful creatures, doomed to a sorry fate, but they never had known anything better. Their horse-ideal was derived from the hundred yards of *un*stony path below Capri, and the few fresh turnips and carrots which they get on holidays. It was, perhaps, a waste of sympathy to pity them ; yet one inclines to pity beasts more readily than men.

At the foot of the staircase we dismounted, and prepared to climb the giddy steep. There are five hundred and sixty steps, and they will average more than a foot in height. It is a fatiguing but not dangerous ascent, the overhanging side being protected by a parapet, while the frequent landings afford secure resting-places. On the white precipices grew the blue " flower of spring " (*fiore della primavera*), and the air was sweet with odors of unknown buds. Up and still up, we turned at each angle to enjoy the wonderful aerial view, which, on such a morning, made me feel half-fledged, with sprouting wings which erelong might avail to bear me across the hollow gulf. We met a fellow with a splendid Roman head, whereon he was carrying down to the *marina* the huge oaken knee of some future vessel. Surprised at the size of the timber, I asked Felice whether it really grew upon the island, and he said there were large oaks about and beyond Anacapri.

Half-way up, the chapel of Sant' Antonio stands on a little spur, projecting from the awful precipices. Looking down, you see the ruins of the Palazzo a' Mare of Tiberius, the bright turquoise patches where the water is shallow, and its purple tint in shadow. White sails were stretching across from the headland of Sorrento, making for the Blue Grotto. There were two more very long and steep flights of steps, and then we saw the gate on the summit, arched against the sky. Hanging from the rocks, but inaccessible, were starry bunches of daffodils. It had seemed to me, on looking at the rocky walls from Capri, that an easier point of ascent might have been chosen, and I believe it is settled that Tiberius visited his four western palaces by a different path; but I now saw that the islanders (not possessing despotic power) have really chosen the most accessible point. The table-land beyond does not, as I had imagined, commence at the summit of the cliffs, but far below them, and this staircase strikes the easiest level.

There are few equal surprises on Capri. Not many more steps, and we found ourselves on a rich garden-plain, bounded on the left by stony mountains, but elsewhere stretching away to sky and sea, without a hint of the tremendous cliffs below. Indeed, but for the luminous, trembling haze around the base of the sky, one would not surmise the nearness of the sea, but rather think himself to be in some inland region. The different properties are walled, but there is no need of terraces. Shining white houses, with domed roofs, stand in the peaceful fields. The fruit-trees grow rank, huge oaks and elms with ivied trunks rise above them, and the landscape breathes a sweet, idyllic air. I noticed many cherry-trees of great size. The oaks, though deciduous, still wore the green leaves of last summer, which will only be pushed from the twigs when this year's buds open. High over this pleasant land, on a bare rock, are the towers of a mediæval castle, now named after Barbarossa — the corsair, not the Emperor.

Presently we came to Anacapri, cleanest, most picturesque and delightful of Italian villages. How those white houses, with their airy *loggias*, their pillared *pergolas*, and their trim gardens, wooed us to stay, and taste the delight of rest, among a simple, beautiful, ignorant, and honest people! The streets were as narrow and shady as those of any oriental city, and the houses mostly presented a blank side to them; but there were many arches, each opening on a sunny picture of slim, dark-haired beauties spinning silk, or grandams regulating the frolics of children. The latter, seeing us, begged for *bajocchi;* and even the girls did the same, but laughingly, with a cheerful mimicry of mendicancy. The piazza of the village is about as large as the dining-room of a hotel. A bright little church occupies one side; and, as there was said to be a view from the roof, we sent for the key, which was brought by three girls. I made out the conjectured location of the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth palaces of Tiberius, whereof only a few stones remain, and then found that the best view was that of the three girls. They had the low brow, straight nose, short upper lip, and rounded chin which belongs to the Caprese type of beauty, and is rather Hellenic than Roman. Their complexion was dark, sunburnt rather than olive, and there was a rich flush of blood on their cheeks; the eyes long and large, and the teeth white as the kernels of fresh filberts. Their bare feet and hands, spoiled by much tramping and hard work, were out of keeping with their graceful, statuesque beauty. A more cheerful picture of Poverty (for they are all miserably poor), it would be difficult to find.

It was but a mile further to the headland of Damecuta. Felice, however, advised us rather to visit the tower of Lima, above the Punta della Carena, the northwestern extremity of the island, and his advice proved to be good in the end. We descended a stony steep into a little valley, shaded by superb olive-groves, under which the crops of lupines were already beginning to blossom. The dell fell deeper as we advanced; the grass was starred with red anemones, and there were odors of concealed violets. A mile further, we came upon a monastery, with a square, crenelated tower, beyond which the fields gave place to a narrow strip of stony down. All at once the shore yawned beneath us, disclosing the extremity of the island, with three deserted batteries on as many points of rock, a new light-house, and the little cove where the troops of Murat landed, when they surprised the English and recaptured

Capri, in 1808. Westward, there was a wide sweep of sunny sea; northward, Ischia, Procida with its bright town, Baiæ and Pozzuoli. Here, at the foot of an old martello tower, we made our noon halt, relieving Serafina of the weight of her basket, and Augusto of his bottles.

The children and young girls, going out to their work in the fields, begged rather pertinaciously. "We are very poor," they cried; "and you are so grand and beautiful you can surely give us something." On the return, we met a group of lively maidens coming up from Capri, who said, when I told them there were no more *bajocchi* in my pockets: "Well, then, give us a franc, and we will divide it among us!" Nevertheless, begging is not the nuisance on Capri that it is on the main-land. It is always good-humored, and refusal is never followed by maledictions. The poor are positively and certainly poor, and they seem to think it no shame to take what they can get over and above their hard earnings. When one sees how very industrious and contented they are, it is rather a pleasure to add a few coppers to the little store laid aside for their holidays.

With every day, every hour, of our residence, we more fully realized the grandeur and variety of the landscapes of Capri. The week which I thought sufficient to enable us to see the island thoroughly drew towards its close; and although we had gone from end to end of the rocky shores, climbed all the principal peaks, and descended into every dell and ravine, our enjoyment was only whetted, not exhausted. The same scenes grow with every repetition. There is not a path or crooked lane among the old houses, which does not keep a surprise in reserve. The little town, with only here and there a stone to show for the Past, with no architectural interest whatever, is nevertheless a labyrinth of picturesque effects. In the houses, all the upper chambers are vaulted, and the roofs domed above them as in the Orient; while on one or more sides there is a *loggia* or arched veranda, overhung with cornice of grapevines, or gay with vases of blooming plants. Thick walls, narrow windows, external staircases, palm-trees in the gardens, and raised platforms of masonry placed so as to catch the breezes of summer nights, increase the resemblance to the Orient. Living there, Syria seems to be nearer than Naples.

In the Val Tragara, near the sea, there is a large deserted monastery, the Certosa, dating from the fourteenth century. Here, as elsewhere, the monks have either picked out the choicest spot for their abode or have made it beautiful by their labor. The Certosa is still stately and imposing in its ruin. In the church the plaster is peeling off, leaving patches of gay fresco on the walls and ceiling. The sacristy and an adjoining chapel are riddled with cannon-balls; and two recumbent marble statues of the founders, resting on their sarcophagi, look at each other from opposite sides, and seem to wonder what the desolation means. The noble court-yard, surrounded with arched corridors, is dug up for a garden; there is straw and litter in the crumbling cells; and the prior's apartment, with its wonderful sea and coast views, is without an occupant. The garden only has not forgotten its former luxury. Its vines and fig-trees equal those of Crete and Syria; and its cactuses have become veritable trees, twenty feet in height. The monks succeeded in getting hold of the best land on the island; yet I have no doubt that the very people they impoverished wish them back again.

The Caprese are very devout and superstitious. They have two devils ("Timberio" being one), and a variety of saints. The beautiful little church in the town, externally so much like a mosque, is filled with votive offerings, painted or modeled in wax, each of which has its own story of miraculous interposition and escape. On one side of the nave sits in state the Madonna del Carmine, — a life-sized doll, with fair complexion, blue eyes, and a profusion of long curling tresses of real blonde hair. In her lap she holds a dwarfish man, with hair of nearly equal length. A dozen wax-candles were burning before her, in anticipation of her coming *festa*, which took place before we left Capri. She is the patron saint of the coral-fishers, none of whom neglected to perform their share of the celebration.

The day was ushered in with volleys of musketry, and the sounds, or rather cries, of the worst brass band I ever heard, which went from house to house, blowing, and collecting coppers. After the forenoon mass, the procession was arranged in the church, and then set out to make the tour of the town. First came the members of a confraternity, mostly grizzly old men, in white gowns, with black capes, lined with red; then followed a number of small boys, behind whom marched the coral-fishers, forty or fifty in number — brown, weather-beaten faces, burned by the summers of the African coast. They were dressed with unusual care, and their throats seemed ill at ease inside of collar and cravat. Every one in the procession carried a taper, which he shielded from the wind with the hollow left hand, while his right managed also to collect the melted wax. Next appeared the Madonna, on her litter of state, followed by six men, who bore her silken canopy. In her train were the priests, and about a hundred women and girls brought up the rear.

Among the latter there were some remarkably lovely faces. The mixture of yellow, blue, and scarlet colors which they delight to wear contrasted brilliantly with the glossy blackness of their hair and the sunny richness of their complexion. The island costume, however, is beginning to disappear. Only a few girls wore the *mucadore*, or folded handkerchief, on the head, while several were grand in wide silk skirts and crinolines. The people are not envious, but many a longing glance followed these progressive maidens.

In so small a domain as Capri, all that happens is known to everybody. A private romance is not possible; and so, on this occasion, the crowd on the little piazza were moved by a curiosity which had no relation to the Madonna del Carmine. The story, as I received it, is this: Nearly a year ago, the aunt of a beautiful girl who was betrothed to one of the young coral-fishers was visited by an Englishman then staying at the Hotel Tiberio, who declared to her his violent love for the niece, and solicited her good offices to have the previous engagement broken off. Soon after this the Englishman left; the aunt informed the girl's father of the matter, the betrothal with the coral-fisher was suspended, and the father spent most of his time in frequenting the hotels to ascertain whether a rich young Englishman had arrived. A few days before our visit to Capri, the girl received presents from her unseen and unknown wooer, with a message requesting her not to appear in the procession of the Madonna del Carmine. The Englishman stated that he was at the Hotel Tiberio, and only waited the arrival of certain papers in order to claim her as his bride. Thereupon the father came to the hotel, but failed to discover the mysterious stranger. Two artists, and several ladies who were there, offered to assist him; but the mystery still remained unsolved. Other letters and presents came to the girl; but no young, rich Englishman could be found on the island. The artists and ladies took up the matter (determined, I am very glad to say, to drive away the Englishman, if there were one, and marry the girl to the coral-fisher), but I have not yet heard of any *dénoûement*. The young fisher appeared in the procession, but the girl did not; consequently, everybody knew that the mysterious letters and presents had made her faithless. For my part, I hope the coral-fisher — a bright, stalwart, handsome young fellow — will find a truer sweetheart.

After making the complete tour of the town, which occupied about half an hour, the procession returned to the church. The coral-fishers were grave and devout; one could not question their sincerity. I was beginning to find the scene touching, and to let my sympathy go forth with the people, when the sight of them dropping on their knees before the great, staring doll of a Madonna, as she bobbed along on the shoulders of her bearers, turned all my softness into granite. The small boys, carrying the tapers before her, were employed in trying to set fire to each other's shocks of uncombed hair. Two of them succeeded, and the unconscious victims marched at least a dozen steps with blazing heads, and would probably have been burned to the scalp had not a humane by-stander extinguished the unfragrant torches. Then everybody laughed; the victims slapped those who had set fire to them; and a ridiculous comedy was enacted in the very presence of the Madonna, who, for a moment, was the only dignified personage. The girls in the rear struck up a hymn without the least regard to unison, and joked and laughed together in the midst of it. The procession dissolved at the church door, and not a moment too soon, for it had already lost its significance.

I have purposely left the Blue Grotto to the last, as for me it was subordinate in interest to almost all else that I saw. Still it was part of the inevitable programme. One calm day we had spent in the trip to Anacapri, and another, at this season, was not to be immediately expected. Nevertheless, when we arose on the second morning afterwards the palm-leaves hung silent, the olives twinkled without motion, and the southern sea glimmered with the veiled light of a calm. Vesuvius had but a single peaceful plume of smoke, the snows of the Apulian Mountains gleamed rosily behind his cone, and the fair headland of Sorrento shone in those soft, elusive, aerial grays, which must be the despair of a painter. It was a day for the Blue Grotto, and so we descended to the *marina*.

On the strand, girls with disordered hair and beautiful teeth offered shells and coral. We found mariners readily and, after a little hesitation, pushed off in a large boat, leaving a little one to follow. The *tramontana* had left a faint swell behind it, but four oars carried us at a lively speed along the shore. We passed the ruins of the baths of Tiberius (the *Palazzo a' Mare*), and then slid into the purple shadows of the cliffs, which rose in a sheer wall five hundred feet above the water. Two men sat on a rock, fishing with poles ; and the boats further off the shore were sinking their nets, the ends of which were buoyed up with gourds. Pulling along in the shadows, in less than half an hour we saw the tower of Damecuta shining aloft, above a slope of olives which descended steeply to the sea. Here, under a rough, round bastion of masonry, was the entrance to the Blue Grotto.

We were now transshipped to the little shell of a boat which had followed us. The swell rolled rather heavily into the mouth of the cave, and the adventure seemed a little perilous, had the boatmen been less experienced. We lay flat in the bottom ; the oars were taken in, and we had just reached the entrance, when a high wave, rolling up, threatened to dash us against the iron portals. "Look out!" cried the old man. The young sailor held the boat back with his hands, while the wave rolled under us into the darkness beyond ; then, seizing the moment, we shot in after it, and were safe under the expanding roof. At first, all was tolerably dark : I only saw that the water near the entrance was intensely and luminously blue. Gradually, as the eye grew accustomed to the obscurity, the irregular vault of the roof became visible, tinted by a faint reflection from the water. The effect increased, the longer we remained ; but the rock nowhere repeated the dazzling sapphire of the sea. It was rather a blue-gray, very beautiful, but far from presenting the effect given in the pictures sold at Naples. The silvery, starry radiance ot foam or bubbles on the shining blue ground was the loveliest phenomenon of the grotto. To dip one's hand in the sea, and scatter the water, was to create sprays of wonderful, phosphorescent blossoms, jewels of the Sirens, flashing and vanishing garlands of the Undines.

A chamber, and the commencement of a gallery leading somewhere. — probably to the twelfth palace of Tiberius, on the headland of Damecuta, — were to be distinguished near the rear of the cavern. But rather than explore further mysteries, we watched our chance and shot out, after a full-throated wave, into the flood of white daylight Keeping on our course around the island, we passed the point of Damecuta. — making a chord to the arc of the shore, — to the first battery, beyond which the Anacapri territory opened fairly to view. From the northern to the northwestern cape the coast sinks, like the side of an amphitheatre, in a succession of curving terraces, gray with the abundant olive. Two deep, winding ravines, like the *wadies* of Arabia, have been worn by the rainfall of thousands of years, until they have split the shore-wall down to the sea. Looking up them, we could guess the green banks where the violets and anemones grew, and the clumps of myrtle that perfumed the sea-breeze.

Broad and grand as was this view, it was far surpassed by the coast scenery to come. No sooner had we passed the pharos, and turned eastward along the southern shore of the island, than every sign of life and laborious industry ceased. The central mountain-wall, suddenly broken off as it reached the sea. presented a face of precipice a thousand feet high, not in a smooth escarpment, as on the northern side, but cut into pyramids and pinnacles of ever-changing form. Our necks ached with gazing at the far summits. piercing the keen blue deeps of air. In one place the vast gable of the mountain was hollowed into arches and grottos, from the eaves of which depended fringes of stalactite; it resembled a Titanic cathedral in ruins. Above the orange and dove-colored facets of the cliff, the jagged topmost crest wore an ashen tint which no longer suggested the texture of rock. It seemed rather a soft, mealy substance, which one might crumble between the fingers. The critics of the realistic school would damn the painter who should represent this effect truly.

Under these amazing crags, over a smooth, sunny sea, we sped along towards a point where the boatman said we should find the Green Grotto. It lies inside a short, projecting cape of the perpendicular shore, and our approach to it was denoted by a streak of emerald fire flashing along the shaded water at the base of the rocks. A few more strokes on the oars carried us under an arch twenty feet high, which opened into a rocky cove beyond. The water being shallow, the white bottom shone like silver; and the pure green hue of the waves, filled and flooded with the splendor of the sun, was thrown upon the interior facings of the rocks, making the cavern gleam like transparent glass. The dance of the waves, the reflex of the "netted sunbeams," threw ripples of shifting gold all over this green ground; and the walls and roof of the cavern, so magically illuminated, seemed to fluctuate in unison with the tide. It was a marvelous surprise, making truth of Undine and the Sirens, Proteus and the foam-born Aphrodite. The brightness of the day increased the illusion, and made the incredible beauty of the cavern all the more startling, because devoid of gloom and mystery. It was an idyl of the sea, born of the god-lore of Greece. To the light, lisping whisper of the waves, — the sound nearest to that of a kiss, — there was added a deep, dim, subdued undertone of the swell caught in lower arches beyond; and the commencement of that fine posthumous sonnet of Keats chimed thenceforward in my ears: —

> "It keeps eternal whisperings around
> Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
> Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell
> Of Hecate leaves them *their old shadowy sound.*"

After this, although the same enormous piles of rock overhung us, there were no new surprises. The sublimity and the beauty of this southern coast had reached their climax; and we turned from it to lean over the gunwale of the boat, and watch the purple growth of sponges through the heaving crystal, as we drew into the cove of the *piccola marina.* There Augusto was waiting our arrival, the old fisher was ready with a bench, and we took the upper side of Capri.

My pen lingers on the subject, yet it is time to leave. When the day of our departure came, I wished for a *tramontana*, that we might be detained until the morrow; but no, it was a mild sirocco, setting directly towards Sorrento, and Antonio had come over, although, this time, without any prediction of a fine day. At the last fatal and prosaic moment, when the joys that are over must be paid for, we found Don Michele and Manfred as honest as they had been kind and attentive. Would we not come back some time? asked the Don. Certainly we will.

When the sail was set, and our foamy track pointed to the dear isle we were leaving, I, at least, was conscious of a slight heart-ache. So I turned once more and cried out, "*Addio, Capri!*" but the stern Tiberian rocks did not respond, "*Ritornate.*" and so Capri passed into memory.

A TRIP TO ISCHIA.

The island of Ischia, rising like a loftier Salamis at the northern entrance of the Bay of Naples, is so unlike its opposite sentinel, Capri, that the landscape-painter, to whom the peculiarities of mountain forms are as familiar as to the geologist, would pronounce as readily on the diversity of its origin. The latter might say: "This island is Plutonic, that Neptunic;" and the former: "Here are long, finely broken outlines, and sharp, serrated summits; yonder, broad masses and sudden, bold escarpments;" but both would express the same fact in different dialects. The two islands are equidistant from the main land; they occupy the same relative position to the bay and to the central Vesuvian peak; they are equally noble land-marks to the mariners coming from the Tyrrhene or the Ionian Sea. Here the resemblance ends. Capri is the resort of artists, Ischia of invalids. Tiberius and the Blue Grotto belong to the litany of travel; but Ischia — larger, richer, more accessible than Capri — has no such special attractions to commend it. It must be sought for its own sake.

The little steamer upon which I embarked at Naples was called the *Tifeo*, from Typhœus, the Titan who lies buried under Epomeo, like Enceladus under Etna. The decks were crowded; but every face was Italian, and every tongue uttered the broad, barbaric dialect of Southern Italy. Priests, peasant-women, small traders, sailors, and fishermen were mingled in a motley mass, setting their faces together in earnest gossip, and turning their backs upon sea, shore, and sky. As we passed Castell' dell' Ovo, the signs of the recent terrible land-slide on the rock of Pizzofalcone drew their attention for a minute; and I, too, looked with a shudder at the masses of rock under which I had lived, unsuspectingly, until within three days of the catastrophe. The house wherein we had chosen quarters was crushed to atoms; and, although nearly a month had elapsed, the great pile of ruin was not yet cleared away.

Onward over the bright blue sea, — past the shores of Posilippo, the marine villa of Lucullus, and the terraced steep, yonder, where the poet Silius Italicus kept sacred the tomb of his master, Virgil, — past the burnt-out crater of Nisida, and the high, white houses of Pozzuoli, until the bay of Baiæ opens to the right, and we fetch a compass for the ancient Cape Misenum. How these names stir the blood! Yet my fellow-voyagers never lifted their eyes to the shores; and if they mentioned the names, it was, perhaps, to say, "I bought some pigs at Baiæ the other day," or, "What is land worth about Lake Avernus?" or, "Do you raise pumpkins at Cumæ?"

Between Cape Misenum and the island of Procida there is a strait two or three miles in width. The town of Procida rests on the water like a long, white wedge, the butt of which bears up the immense old fortress. Approaching from Naples, the whole island lies before the loftier Ischia like Imbros before Samothrace, and seems to belong to it, as ancient geographers declare that it once did. The town is like a seaport of the Grecian Archipelago, and, as seen from the water, one could not wish it cleaner or less irregular. Fronting the sea, it presents a crescent of tall white houses, broken with arched balconies, and deep, scattered windows, and stained with patches of gray and moss-green. Over the domed roofs rises here and there a palm. The castle to the left, on its rock, rejoices in its ancient strength, and seems to command the Bay of Gaeta as well as that of Naples.

I tried to recall something of the history of Procida, and struck in the middle of the thirteenth century on the famous Giovanni, — "John of Procida," — before and after whom there was a blank. The island once belonged to him *in toto*, and must have been a goodly possession. I believe he lost it for a time, on account of the part which he took in the Sicilian Vespers. Meanwhile the steamer came to a stop in the little port, and boats crowded about the gangways. I determined to go the length of the island towards Ischia by land, and so scrambled down with the rest

I landed on a narrow quay, so filthy and malodorous that I made haste to accept the guidance of the first boy who offered his services. He led me into a street just as bad; but, as we mounted towards the castle, the aspect of the town improved. This is the only place in Italy where the holiday costume is Greek, and one might therefore expect to find faces of the Hellenic type; yet such are fewer than on Capri. The costume disappears more and more, and only on grand festas do the women appear in bodices embroidered with gold, and gowns edged with the ancient labyrinth pattern. They have splendid eyes, like all the islanders; but I saw no beauties in my rapid march across Procida.

After the view from the castle, there is really nothing of interest in the little town. The island is low and nearly level, so that the high walls which inclose the road shut out all view of its vineyards and gardens. The eastern shore, near which my path led, is formed by three neighboring craters, the rims of which are broken down on the seaside, and boats anchor on the lava of the bottoms. The road was almost a continuous street, the suburb of Procida running into that of the large village of L' Olmo. A crowd of wayfarers went to and fro, and in all the open arches women sat spinning in the sun. There were no beggars; one of the women, indeed, called across the road to another, as I passed, "Ask him for a bajocco!" but the latter laughed, and turned her head aside. Although so little of the island was to be seen, there was no end to the pictures made by the windings of the road, the walls draped with fern and ivy, the deep arches of shade with bright, sunlit court-yards behind them, and the quaint terraces overhung with vines.

A walk of two miles brought me to the western shore, where the road descended to the fishing hamlet of Chiaiolella. The place seemed to be deserted; I walked between the silent old houses, and had nearly reached the beach, when a brown old mariner glided out from the shadow of a buttress, and followed me. Some boats lay on the sand in the little land-locked crater-bay; and presently three other men, who had been sleeping somewhere in the corners, came forward, scenting a fee. Of course they asked too much; but, to my surprise, they gradually abated the demand, although there was no competition. The old man said, very frankly, "If you give us a franc apiece, we shall only make ten sous, and we should like to earn a little more." We thereupon soon came to terms; two of them carried me into the boat, and we set off for Ischia.

Just beyond the last point of Procida rises the rocky island of Vivara, which is nothing but a fragment left from the ruin of a volcanic crater. Its one slanting side is covered with olive-trees, and a single house stands on the summit. The landing-place is a rocky shelf a yard or so in width, only accessible when the sea is quite smooth. The island belongs to Signor Scotti, of Procida, so the boatmen told me, but he is too shrewd to live upon it. As we floated past it into the open strait, the Bay of Gaeta opened broadly on the right, stretching away to the far Cape of Circe, beyond Terracina. In front Ischia, grand in its nearness, possessed the sea. One is here still in Odyssean waters. Here Homer once sailed, so sure as there ever was a Homer, and heard Typhœus groaning under Inarime. What Kinglake so finely says of the Troad is here equally true. The theories of scholars go to the winds; one learns to believe in Homer, no less than in Moses.

The picture of Ischia, from the sea, is superb. In front towers the castle, on a thrice bolder and broader wedge of rock than that of Procida; withdrawn behind it, as if for protection, the white crescent of the town sweeps along the water; garden-groves rise in the rear, then great, climbing slopes of vine, and, high over all, Monte Epomeo converges the broken outlines of the island, and binds them together in his knotted peak. The main features are grandly broad and simple, yet there is an exquisite grace and harmony in the minor forms of the landscape. As we ran under the shadows of the castle-rock, whereon the Marquis Pescara was born, my thoughts were involuntarily directed to two women, — his sister, the heroic Costanza, whose defense of the castle gave the governorship of Ischia to her family for two hundred and fifty years; and his wife, Vittoria Colonna. Her, however, we remember less as the Marchesa Pescara than as the friend of Michael Angelo, in whose arms she died. Theirs was the only friendship between man and woman, which the breath of that corrupt age did not dare to stain, — noble on both sides, and based on the taste and energy and intellect of both. Vittoria, of whom Ariosto says, —

> "Vittoria è 'l nome; e ben conviensi a nata
> Fra le vittorie,"

retired to this castle of Ischia to mourn her husband's death. Strange that her sorrow excites in us so little sympathy; while, at this distance of time, the picture of Michael Angelo after her death gives us a pang. Moral, — it is better to be the friend of a great artist than the wife of a great general.

The landing at Ischia is as attractive as that at Procida is repulsive. The town comes down to the bright, sunny quay in a broad, clean street; the houses are massive, and suggestive of comfort, and there are glimpses of the richest gardens among them. "You must go to the *locanda nobile*," said the sailors; and to make sure they went with me. It is, in fact, the only tolerable inn in the place; yet my first impression was not encouraging. The locanda consisted of a large hall, filled with mattresses, a single bare bedroom, and the landlord's private quarters. The only person I saw was a one-eyed youth, who came every five minutes, while I sat watching the splendid sunset illumination of the castle and sea, to ask, "Shall I make your soup with rice or macaroni?" "Will you have your fish fried or *in umido?*" Notwithstanding all this attention, it was a most meagre dinner which he finally served, and I longed for the flesh-pots of Capri. In spite of Murray, artists are not stoics, and where they go the fare is wont to be good. The English guide says, very complacently: "Such or such an hotel is third-rate, *patronized by artists!*" or, "The accommodations are poor; *but artists may find them sufficient!*" — as if "artists" had no finer habits of palate or nerves! When I contrasted Pagano's table in Capri with that of the *nobile locanda* of Ischia, I regretted that artists had not been staying at the latter.

In walking through the two cold and barren rooms of the hotel I had caught a glimpse, through an open door, of a man lying in bed, and an old Franciscan friar, in a brown gaberdine, hanging over him. Now, when my Lenten dinner (although it was Carnival) was finished, the *padrona* came to me, and said: "Won't you walk in and see Don Michele? He's in bed, sick, but he can talk, and it will pass away the time for him."

"But the Frate" — here I hesitated, thinking of extreme unction.

"O, never mind the Frate," said the *padrona;* "Don Michele knows you are here, and he wants to have a talk with you."

The invalid landlord was a man of fifty, who lay in bed, groaning with a fearful lumbago, as he informed me. At the foot of the bed sat the old friar, gray-headed, with a snuffy upper lip, and an expression of amiable imbecility on his countenance. The one-eyed servant was the landlord's son; and there were two little daughters, one of whom, Filomena, carried the other, Maria Teresa. There was also a son, a sailor, absent in Egypt. "Four left out of twelve," said Don Michele; "but you notice there will soon be thirteen; so I shall have five, if the Lord wills it."

"And so you are from America," he continued; "my son was there, but, whether in North or South, I don't know They say there is cholera in Africa, and I hope the saints will protect him from it. Here on Ischia — as perhaps you don't know — we never had the cholera; we have a saint who keeps it away from the island. It was San Giuseppe della Croce, and nobody can tell how many miracles he has wrought for us. He left a miraculous plant, — it's inside the castle, — and there it grows to this day, with wonderful powers of healing; but no one dares to touch it. If you were to so much as break a leaf, all Ischia would rise in revolution."

"What a benefit for the island!" I remarked.

"Ah, you may well say that!" exclaimed Don Michele. "Here everything is good, — the fish, the wine, the people. There are no robbers among us, — no, indeed! You may go where you like, and without fear, as the Frate will tell you. This is my brother" (pointing to the friar). "I am affiliated with the Franciscans, and so he comes to keep me company."

The friar nodded, took a pinch of snuff, and smiled in the vague, silly way of a man who don't know what to say.

"I have met many of your brethren in the Holy Land," I said, to the latter.

"Gran Dio! you have been there?" both exclaimed.

I must needs tell them of Jerusalem and Jericho, of Nazareth and Tiberias; but Don Michele soon came back to America. "You are one of the nobility, I suppose?" he said.

"What!" I answered, affecting a slight indignation; "don't you know that we have no nobility? All are equal before the law, and the poorest man may become the highest ruler, if he has the right degree of intelligence." (I was about to add, *and honesty*, but checked myself in time.)

"Do you hear that?" cried Don Michele to the friar. "I call that a fine thing."

"*Che bella cosa!*" repeated the friar, as he took a fresh pinch of snuff.

"What good is your nobility?" I continued. "They monopolize the offices, they are poor and proud, and they won't work. The men who do the most for Italy are not nobles."

"True! true! listen to that!" said Don Michele. "And so, in America, all have an equal chance?"

"If you were living there," I answered, "your son, if he had talents, might become the governor of a State, or a minister to a foreign court. Could he be that here, whatever might be his intellect?"

"*Gran Dio! Che bella cosa!*" said the friar.

"It is the balance of Astræa!" cried Don Michele, forgetting his lumbago, and sitting up in bed. I was rather astonished at this classical allusion; but it satisfied me that I was not improvidently wasting my eloquence; so I went on: —

"What is a title? Is a man any the more a man for having it? He may be a duke and a thief, and, if so, I put him far below an honest fisherman. Are there titles in heaven?" Here I turned to the friar.

"Behold! A noble — a beautiful word!" cried the Don again. The friar lifted his hands to heaven, shook his head in a melancholy way, and took another pinch of snuff.

We were in a fair way to establish the universal fraternal republic, when a knock at the door interrupted us. It was Don Michele's sister, accompanied by an old man, and a young one, with a handsome but taciturn face.

"Ah, here is my *figliuccio!*" said Don Michele, beckoning forward the latter. "He will furnish a donkey, and guide you all over Ischia — up to the top of Epomeo, to Fori', and Casamich'."

Now I had particularly requested a young and jovial fellow, not one of your silent guides, who always hurry you forward when you want to pause, and seem to consider you as a bad job, to be gotten rid of as soon as possible. Giovanni's was not the face I desired, but Don Michele insisted stoutly that he was the very man for me; and so the arrangement was concluded.

I went to bed, feeling more like a guest of the family than a stranger; and, before sleeping, determined that I would make an experiment. The rule in Italy is, that the man who does not bargain in advance is inevitably cheated; here, however, it seemed that I had stumbled on an unsophisticated region. I would make no bargains, ask no mistrustful questions, and test the natural honesty of the people.

Mounted on the ass, and accompanied by Giovanni, I left the *locanda nobile* the next morning to make the tour of the island. "Be sure and show him everything and tell him everything!" cried Don Michele, from his bed; whereat Giovanni, with a short "Yes!" which promised nothing to my ear, led the way out of the town.

We ascended the low hill on which the town is built, under high garden walls, overhung by the most luxuriant foliage of orange and olive. There were fine cypresses, — a tree rare in Southern Italy, — and occasional palms. We very soon emerged into the country, where Epomeo towered darkly above us, in the shadow of clouds which the sirocco had blown from the sea. The road was not blinded by walls, as on Procida, but open and broad, winding forward between vineyards of astonishing growth. Here the threefold crops raised on the same soil, about Naples and Sorrento, would be impossible. In that rich volcanic earth wheat is only the *parterre* or ground-floor of cultivation. The thin shade of the olive, or the young leaves of vine, do not intercept sun enough to hinder its proper maturity; and thus oil or wine (or sometimes both) becomes a higher crop, a *bel étage;* while the umbrella-pines, towering far above all, constitute an upper story for the production of lumber and firewood. Ischia has the same soil, but the vine, on account of the superior quality of its juice, is suffered to monopolize it. Stems of the thickness of a man's leg are trained back and forth on poles thirty feet high. The usual evergreen growths of this region, which make a mimicry of summer, have no place here; far and wide, high and low, the landscape is gray with vines and poles. I can only guess what a Bacchic labyrinth it must be in the season of vintage.

The few trees allowed to stand were generally fig or walnut. There are no orange-groves, as about Sorrento, for the reason that the wine of Ischia, being specially imported to mix with and give fire and temper to other Italian wines, is a very profitable production. The little island has a population of about thirty thousand, very few of whom are poor, like the inhabitants of Capri. During my trip I encountered but a single beggar, who was an old woman on crutches. Yet, although the fields were gray, the banks beside the road were bright with young grass, and gay with violets, anemones, and the golden blossoms of the broom.

On our left lay the long slopes of Monte Campagnano, which presents a rocky front to the sea. Between this mountain and Epomeo the road traversed a circular valley, nearly a mile in diameter, as superbly rich as any of the favored gardens of Syria. The aqueduct which brings water from the mountains to the town of Ischia crosses it on lofty stone arches. Beyond this valley, the path entered a singular winding ravine thirty or forty feet in depth, and barely wide enough for two asses to pass each other. Its walls of rock were completely hidden in mosses and ferns, and old oak-trees, with ivied trunks, threw their arms across it. The country people, in scarlet caps and velvet jackets, on their way to enjoy the *festa* (the Carnival) at the villages, greeted me with a friendly "*buon dì!*" I was constantly reminded of those exquisitely picturesque passes of Arcadia, which seem still to be the haunts of Pan and the Nymphs.

Bishop Berkeley, whose happiest summer (not even excepting that he passed at Newport) was spent on Ischia, must have frequently travelled that path; and, without having seen more of the island, I was quite willing to accept his eulogies of its scenery. I had some difficulty, however, in adjusting to the reality Jean Paul's imaginary description, which it is conventional to praise, in Germany. The mere enumeration of orange-trees, olives, rocks, chestnut woods, vines, and blue sea, blended into a glimmering whole, with no distinct outlines, does not constitute description of scenery. An author ventures upon dangerous ground, when he attempts to paint landscapes which he has never seen. Jean Paul had the clairvoyant faculty of the poet, and was sometimes able to "make out" (to use Charlotte Brontë's expression) Italian atmospheres and a tolerable dream of scenery; but he would have described Ischia very differently if he had ever visited the island.

Winding on and upward through the ravine, I emerged at last on the sunny hillside, whence there was a view of the sea beyond Monte Campagnano. A little further, we reached the village of Barano, on the southeastern slope of Epomeo — a deep, gray gorge below it, and another village beyond, sparkling in the sun. The people were congregated on the little piazza, enjoying the day in the completest idleness. The place was a picture in itself, and I should have stopped to sketch it, but Giovanni pointed to the clouds which were hovering over Epomeo, and predicted rain. So I pushed on to Moropano, the next village, the southern side of the island opening more clearly and broadly to view. A succession of vine-terraces mounted from the sea to a height of two thousand feet, ceasing only under the topmost crags. At intervals, however, the slopes were divided by tremendous fissures, worn hundreds of feet deep through the ashen soil and volcanic rock. Wherever a little platform of shelving soil had been left on the sides of the sheer walls, it was covered with a growth of oaks.

The road obliged me to cross the broadest of these chasms, and, after my donkey had once fallen on the steep path notched along the rock, I judged it safest to climb the opposite side on foot. A short distance further we came to another fissure, as deep but much narrower, and resembling the cracks produced by an earthquake. The rocky walls were excavated into wine-cellars, the size of which, and of the tuns within, gave good token of the Ischian vintages. Out of the last crevice we climbed to the village of Fontana, the highest on the island. A review of the National Guards was held in a narrow open space before the church. There were perhaps forty men — fishermen and vine-growers — under arms, all with military caps, although only half a dozen had full uniforms. The officers fell back to make room for me, and I passed the company slowly in review, as I rode by on the donkey. The eyes were "right," as I commenced, but they moved around to left, curiously following me, while the heads remained straight. Gallant-looking fellows they were nevertheless; and moreover, it was pleasant to see a militia system substituted for the former wholesale conscription.

At the end of the piazza, a dry laurel-bush hanging over the door, denoted a wine-shop; and Giovanni and I emptied a bottle of the Fontana vintage before going further. I ordered a dinner to be ready on our return from Epomeo, and we then set out for the hermitage of San Nicola, on the very summit. In a ravine behind the village we met a man carrying almost a stack of straw on his head, his body so concealed by it that the mass seemed to be walking upon its own feet. It stopped on approaching us, and an unintelligible voice issued from it; but Giovanni understood the sounds.

"The hermit of San Nicola is sick," he said; "this is his brother."

"Then the hermit is alone on the mountain?" I asked.

"No, he is now in Fontana. When he gets sick, he comes down, and his brother goes up in his place, to keep the lamp a-burning."

We were obliged to skirt another fissure for some distance, and then took to the open side of the mountain, climbing between fields where the diminishing vines struggled to drive back the mountain gorse and heather. In half an hour the summit was gained, and I found myself in front of a singular, sulphur-colored peak, out of which a chapel and various chambers had been hewn. A man appeared, breathless with climbing after us, and proved to be the moving principle of the straw-stack. He unlocked a door in the peak, and allowed the donkey to enter; then, conducting me by a passage cut in the living rock, he led the way through, out of the opposite side, and by a flight of rude steps, around giddy corners, to a platform about six feet square, on the very topmost pinnacle of the island, 2,700 feet above the sea.

Epomeo was an active volcano until just before Vesuvius awakened, in A. D. 79; and as late as the year 1302 there was an eruption on Ischia, at the northern base of the mountain. But the summit now scarcely retains the crater form. The ancient sides are broken in, leaving four or five jagged peaks standing apart; and these, from the platform on which I stood, formed a dark, blasted foreground, shaped like a star with irregular rays, between which I looked down and off on the island, the sea, and the Italian shores. The clouds, whose presence I had lamented during the ascent, now proved to be marvelous accessories. Swooping so low that their skirts touched me, they covered the whole vault of heaven, down to the sea horizon, with an impenetrable veil; yet, beyond their sphere, the sunshine poured full upon the water, which became a luminous under-sky, sending the reflected light *upward* on the island landscape. In all my experience, I have never beheld such a phenomenon. Looking southward, it was scarcely possible not to mistake the sea for the sky; and this illusion gave the mountain an immeasurable, an incredible height. All the base of the island — the green shores and shining towns visible in deep arcs between the sulphury rocks of the crater — basked in dazzling sunshine; and the gleam was so intense and golden under the vast, dark roof of cloud, that I know not how to describe it. From the Cape of Circe to that of Palinurus, two hundred miles of the main-land of Italy were full in view. Vesuvius may sweep a wider horizon, but the view from Epomeo, in its wondrous originality, is far more impressive.

When I descended from the dizzy pinnacle, I found Giovanni and the hermit's brother drying their shirts before a fire of brush. The latter, after receiving a fee for his services, begged for an additional fee for St. Nicholas. "What does St. Nicholas want with it?" I asked. "*You* will buy food and drink, I suppose, but the saint needs nothing." Giovanni turned away his head, and I saw that he was laughing.

"O, I can burn a lamp for the saint," was the answer.

Now, as St. Nicholas is the patron of children, sailors, and travellers, I might well have lit a lamp in his honor; but as I could not stay to see the oil purchased and the lamp lighted, with my own eyes, I did not consider that there was sufficient security in the hermit's brother for such an investment.

When I descended to Fontana the review was over, and several of the National Guards were refreshing themselves in the wine-shop. The black-bearded host, who looked like an affectionate bandit, announced that he had cooked a pig's liver for us, and straight-way prepared a table in the shop beside the counter. There was but one plate, but Giovanni, who kept me company, ate directly from the dish. I have almost a Hebrew horror of fresh pork; but since that day I confess that a pig's liver, roasted on skewers, and flavored with the smoke of burning myrtle, is not a dish to be despised. Eggs and the good Ischian wine completed the repast; and had I not been foolish enough to look at the host as he wiped out the glasses with his unwashed fingers, I should have enjoyed it the more.

The other guests were very jolly, but I could comprehend little of their jargon when they spoke to each other. The dialect of Ischia is not only different from that of Capri, but varies on different sides of the island. Many words are identical with those used on Sardinia and Majorca; they have a clear, strong ring, which — barbaric as it may be — I sometimes prefer to the pure Italian. For instance, *freddo* (with a tender lingering on the double *d*) suggests to me only a bracing, refreshing coolness, while in the Ischian *frett* one feels the sharp sting of frost. Filicaja's pathetic address to Italy, —

> "Deh fossi tu men bella, o almen più forte!"

might also be applied to the language. The elision of the terminal vowels, which is almost universal in this part of Italy, roughens the language, certainly, but gives it a more masculine sound.

When the people spoke to me, they were more careful in the choice of words, and so made themselves intelligible. They were eager to talk and ask questions, and after one of them had broken the ice by pouring a bottle of wine into a glass, while he drank from the latter as fast as he poured, the Captain of the Guard, with many apologies for the liberty, begged to know where I came from.

"Now tell me, if you please," he continued, "whether your country is Catholic or Protestant?"

"Neither," said I; "it is better than being either."

The people pricked up their ears, and stared. "How do you mean?" some one presently asked.

"All religions are free. Catholics and Protestants have equal rights; and that is best of all — is it not?"

There was a unanimous response. "To be sure that is best of all!" they cried; "*avete ragione*."

"But," said the Captain, after a while, "what religion is your government?"

"None at all," I answered.

"I don't understand," said he; "surely it is a Christian government."

It was easy to explain my meaning, and I noticed that the village magistrate, who had entered the shop, listened intently. He was cautiously quiet, but I saw that the idea of a separation of Church and State was not distasteful to the people. From religion we turned to politics, and I gave them a rough sketch of our republican system. Moreover, as a professed friend of Italian nationality, I endeavored to sound them in regard to their views of the present crisis. This was more delicate ground; yet two or three spoke their minds with tolerable plainness, and with more judgment and moderation than I expected to find. On two points all seemed to be agreed, — that the people must be educated, and must have patience.

In the midst of the discussion a mendicant friar appeared, barefooted, and with a wallet on his shoulder. He was a man of thirty, of tall and stately figure, and with a singularly noble and refined countenance. He did not beg, but a few bajocchi were handed to him, and the landlord placed a loaf of bread on the counter. As he was passing me, without asking alms, I gave him some money, which he took with a slight bow and the words, "Providence will requite you." Though so coarsely dressed, he was not one of those friars who seem to think filth necessary to their holy character. I have rarely seen a man whose features and bearing harmonized so ill with his vocation. He looked like a born teacher and leader; yet he was a useless beggar.

The rain, which had come up during dinner, now cleared away, and I resumed my journey. Giovanni, who had made one or two desperate efforts at jollity during the ascent of the mountain, was remarkably silent after the conversation in the inn, and I had no good of him thenceforth. A mistrustful Italian is like a tortoise; he shuts up his shell, and crow-bars can't open him. I have not the least doubt that Giovanni believed, in his dull way, in the temporal power of the Pope and the restoration of the Bourbons.

There were no more of the great volcanic fissures to be crossed. The road, made slippery by the rain, descended so rapidly that I was forced to walk during the remainder of the day's journey. It was a country of vines, less picturesque than I had already passed; but the sea and south-western shore of the island were constantly in view. I first reached the little village of Serrara, on a projecting spur of Epomeo; then, after many steep and rugged descents, came upon the rich garden-plain of Panza. Here the surface of the island is nearly level, the vegetation is wonderfully luxuriant, and the large gray farm-houses have a stately and commanding air. In another hour, skirting the western base of Epomeo, the towers of Foria, my destination for the night, came into view. There were some signs of the Carnival in the lively streets — here and there a mask, followed by shouting and delighted children; but the greater part of the inhabitants contented themselves with sitting on the doorsteps and exchanging jokes with their neighbors.

The guide-book says there is no inn in Foria. Don Michele, however, assured me that Signor Scotti kept a *locanda* for travellers, and I can testify that the Don is right. I presume it is "noble," also, for the accommodations were like those in Ischia. On entering, I was received by a woman, who threw back her shoulders and lifted her head in such an independent way that I asked, "Are you the padrona?"

"No," she answered, laughing; "I'm the *modestica;* but that will do just as well." (She meant *domestica,* but I like her rendering of the word so well that I shall retain it.)

"Can you get me something for dinner?"

"Let us see," said she, counting upon her fingers; "fish, that's one; kid, that's two; potatoes, that's three; and — and — surely there's something else."

"That will do," said I; "and eggs?"

"*Sicuro!* Eggs? I should think so. And so that will suit your Excellency!"

Thereupon the *modestica* drew back her shoulders, threw out her chest, and, in a voice that half Foria might have heard, sang I know not what song of triumph as she descended to the kitchen. Signor Scotti, for whom a messenger had been sent, now arrived. He had but one eye, and I began to imagine that I was on the track of the Arabian Prince. After a few polite commonplaces, I noticed that he was growing uneasy, and said, "Pray, let me not keep you from the Carnival."

"Thanks to your Excellency," said he, rising; "my profession calls me, and with your leave I will withdraw." I supposed that he might be a city magistrate, but on questioning the *modestica,* when she came to announce dinner, I found that he was a barber.

I was conducted into a bedroom, in the floor of which the *modestica* opened a trap-door, and bade me descend a precipitous flight of steps into the kitchen. There the table was set, and I received my eggs and fish directly from the fire. The dessert was peculiar, consisting of raw stalks of anise, cut off at the root, very tough, and with a sickly sweet flavor. Seeing that I rejected them, the *modestica* exclaimed, in a strident voice, —

"Eh? What would you have? They are beautiful, — they are superb! The gentry eat them, — nay, what do I know? — the King himself, and the Pope! Behold!" And with these words she snatched a stalk from the plate, and crunched it between two rows of teeth which it was a satisfaction to see.

Half an hour afterwards, as I was in the bedroom which had been given to my use, a horribly rough voice at my back exclaimed, "What do you want?"

I turned, and beheld an old woman as broad as she was short, — a woman with fierce eyes and a gray mustache on her upper lip.

"What do *you* want?" I rejoined.

She measured me from head to foot, gave a grunt, and said, "*I*'m the padrona here."

I was a little surprised at this intrusion, and considerably more so, half an hour afterwards, as I sat smoking in the common room, at the visit of a gendarme, who demanded my passport. After explaining to him that the document had never before been required in free Italy, — that the law did not even oblige me to carry it with me, — I handed it to him.

He turned it up and down, and from side to side, with a puzzled air. "I can't read it," he said, at last.

"Of course you can't," I replied; "but there is no better passport in the world, and the Governor of Naples will tell you the same thing. Now," I added, turning to the padrona, "if you have sent for this officer through any suspicion of me, I will pay for my dinner and go on to Casamicciola, where they know how to receive travellers."

The old woman lifted up her hands, and called on the saints to witness that she did not mistrust me. The gendarme apologized for his intrusion, adding: "We are out of the way, here, and therefore I am commanded to do this duty. I cannot read your passport, but I can see that you are a *galantuomo*."

This compliment obliged me to give him a cigar, after which I felt justified in taking a little revenge. "I am a republican," I cried, "and a friend of the Italian Republicans! I don't believe in the temporal power of the Pope I esteem Garibaldi!"

"Who doesn't esteem him?" said the old woman, but with an expression as if she didn't mean it. The gendarme twisted uneasily on his seat, but he had lighted my cigar, and did not feel free to leave.

I shall not here repeat my oration, which spared neither the Pope, nor Napoleon the Third, nor even Victor Emanuel. I was as fierce and reckless as Mazzini, and exhausted my stock of Italian in advocating freedom, education, the overthrow of priestly rule, and the abolition of the nobility. When I stopped to take breath, the gendarme made his escape, and the padrona's subdued manner showed that she began to be afraid of me.

In the evening there was quite an assemblage in the room, — two Neapolitan engineers, a spruce young Forian, a widow with an unintelligible story of grievances, and the never-failing *modestica*, who took her seat on the sofa, and made her tongue heard whenever there was a pause. I grew so tired with striving to unravel their dialect, that I fell asleep in my chair, and nearly tumbled into the brazier of coals; but the chatter went on for hours after I was in bed.

In the heavenly morning that followed I walked about the town, which is a shipping port of wine. The quay was piled with tuns. purple-stained. The situation of the place, at the foot of Epomeo, with all the broad Tyrrhene sea to the westward, is very beautiful, and, as usual, a Franciscan monastery has usurped the finest position. No gardens can be richer than those in the rear, mingling with the vineyards that rise high on the mountain slopes.

After the *modestica* had given me half a tumbler of coffee and a crust of bread for my breakfast, I mounted the donkey, and set out for Casamicciola. The road skirts the sea for a short distance, and then enters a wild dell, where I saw clumps of ilex for the first time on the island. After a mile of rugged, but very beautiful, scenery, the dell opened on the northern shore of Ischia, and I saw the bright town and sunny beach of Lacco below me. There was a sudden and surprising change in the character of the landscape. Dark, graceful carob-trees overhung the road; the near gardens were filled with almonds in light green leaf, and orange-trees covered with milky buds; but over them, afar and aloft, from the edge of the glittering sapphire to the sulphur-crags of the crowning peak, swept a broad, grand amphitheatre of villas, orchards, and vineyards. Gayly colored palaces sat on all the projecting spurs of Epomeo, rising above their piles of garden terraces; and, as I rode along the beach, the palms and cypresses in the gardens above me were exquisitely pencilled on the sky. Here everything spoke of old cultivation, of wealth and luxurious days.

In the main street of Lacco I met the gendarme of Foria, who took off his cocked hat with an air of respect, which, however, produced no effect on my donkey-man, Giovanni. We mounted silently to Casamicciola, which, as a noted watering-place, boasts of hotels with Neapolitan prices, if not comforts. I felt the need of one, and selected the Sentinella Grande on account of its lordly position. It was void of guests, and I was obliged to wait two hours for a moderate breakfast. The splendor of the day, the perfect beauty of the Ischian landscapes, and the soft humming of bees around the wall-flower blossoms, restored my lost power to enjoy the *dolce far niente*, and I had forgotten all about my breakfast when it was announced.

From Casamicciola it is little more than an hour's ride to Ischia, and my tour of the island lacked but that much of completion. The season had not commenced, and the marvelous healing fountains and baths were deserted; yet the array of stately villas, the luxury of the gardens, and the broad, well-made roads, attested the popularity of the watering-place. Such scenery as surrounds it is not surpassed by any on the Bay of Naples. I looked longingly up at the sunny mountain-slopes and shadowed glens, as I rode away. What I had seen was but the promise, the hint, of a thousand charms which I had left unvisited.

On the way to Ischia I passed the harbor, which is a deep little crater connected with the sea by an artificial channel. Beside it lies the Casino Reale, with a magnificent park, uninhabited since the Bourbons left. Beyond it I crossed the lava-fields of 1302, which are still unsubdued. Here and there a house has been built, some pines have been planted, clumps of broom have taken root, and there are a few rough, almost hopeless, beginnings of fields. Having passed this dreary tract, the castle of Ischia suddenly rose in front, and the bright town received me. I parted from the taciturn Giovanni without tears, and was most cordially welcomed by Don Michele, his wife, the one-eyed son, and the Franciscan friar. The Don's lumbago was not much better, and the friar's upper lip, it seemed to me, was more snuffy than ever.

In the evening I heard what appeared to be a furious altercation. I recognized Don Michele's voice, threatening vengeance, at its highest pitch, while another voice, equally excited, and the screams of women, gave additional breath to the tempest. But when I asked my one-eyed servitor, "What in Heaven's name has happened?" he mildly answered, "O, it's only the uncle *discoursing* with papa!"

I arose at dawn, the next day, to take the steamer for Naples. The flaming jets of Vesuvius, even against the glowing morning sky, were visible from my window, twenty-five miles distant. I was preparing to bid farewell to Ischia with a feeling of profund satisfaction. My experiment had succeeded remarkably well. I had made no bargains in advance, and had not been overcharged to the extent of more than five francs during the whole trip. But now came the one-eyed son, with a bill fifty per cent higher than at first, for exactly the same accommodation. This, too, after I had promised to send my friends to the *locanda nobile*, and he had written some very grotesque cards, which I was to disseminate.

Don Michele was calling me to say good-by. I went to his chamber, and laid the grotesque cards upon the bed. "Here!" I exclaimed; "I have no use for these. I shall recommend *no* friends of mine to this hotel. You ask another price now for the same service."

The Don's countenance fell. "But we kept the same room for you," he feebly urged.

"Of course you kept it," I said, "because you have no other, and nobody came to take it! This is not the balance of Astræa! You lament over the condition of Italy, — you say she has fallen behind the other nations of Europe, — and here is one of the causes! So long as you, and the people of whom you are one, are dishonest, — so long as you take advantage of strangers, — just so long will you lack the order, the security, the moral force which every people possess who are ashamed to descend to such petty arts of cheating!"

"*Ma — Signore!*" pleaded Don Michele.

"It is true!" I continued; "I, who am a friend of Italy, say it to you. You talk of corruption in high places, — begin your reforms at home! Learn to practice common honesty; teach your children to do it; respect yourselves sufficiently to be above such meanness, and others will respect you. What were my fine, my beautiful words worth to you? I thought I was sowing seed on good ground" —

"Signore, Signore, hear me!" cried the Don.

"I have only one word more to say, and that is *Addio* and not *a rivederci!* I am going, and I shall not come back again."

Don Michele jumped up in bed, but I was already at the door. I threw it open, closed it behind me, and dashed down the stairs. A faint cry of "Signore!" followed me.

In two minutes more I was on the pier, waiting for the steamer to come around the point from Casamicciola. The sweet morning air cooled my excitement, and disposed me to gentler thoughts. I fancied Don Michele in his bed, mortified and repentant, and almost regretted that I had not given him a last chance to right himself in my eyes. Moreover, reviewing the incidents of my trip, I was amused at the part which I had played in it. Without the least intent or premeditation, I had assumed the character of a missionary of religious freedom, education, and the Universal Republic. But does the reader suppose that I imagine any word thus uttered will take root, and bring forth fruit, — that any idea thus accidentally planted will propagate itself further?

No, indeed!

THE LAND OF PAOLI.

The Leghorn steamer slid smoothly over the glassy Tyrrhene strait, and sometime during the night came to anchor in the harbor of Bastia. I sat up in my berth at sunrise, and looked out of the bull's eye to catch my first near glimpse of Corsican scenery; but, instead of that, a pair of questioning eyes, set in a brown, weather-beaten face, met my own. It was a boatman waiting on the gangway, determined to secure the only fare which the steamer had brought that morning. Such persistence always succeeds, and in this case justly; for when we were landed upon the quay, shortly afterwards, the man took the proffered coin with thanks, and asked for no more.

Tall, massive houses surrounded the little circular port An old bastion on the left, — perhaps that from which the place originally took its name, — a church in front, and suburban villas and gardens on the shoulders of the steep mountain in the rear, made a certain impression of pride and stateliness, notwithstanding the cramped situation of the city. The Corsican coast is here very bold and abrupt, and the first advantage of defense interferes with the present necessity of growth.

At that early hour few persons were stirring in the streets. A languid officer permitted us to pass the *douane* and sanitary line; a large-limbed boy from the mountains became a porter for the nonce; and a waiter, not fully awake, admitted us into the "Hôtel d'Europe," a building with more space than cleanliness, more antiquated furniture than comfort. It resembled a dismantled palace — huge, echoing, dusty. The only tenants we saw then, or later, were the waiter aforesaid, who had not yet learned the ordinary wants of a traveller, and a hideous old woman, who twice a day deposited certain oily and indescribable dishes upon a table in a room which deserved the name of *manger*, in the English sense of the word.

However, I did not propose to remain long in Bastia. Corte, the old capital of Paoli, in the heart of the island was my destination. After ascertaining that a diligence left for the latter place at noon, we devoted an hour or two to Bastia. The breadth and grandeur of the principal streets, the spacious new *place* with a statue of Napoleon in a Roman toga, the ample harbor in process of construction to the northward, and the fine coast-views from the upper part of the city, were matters of surprise. The place has grown rapidly within the past fifteen years, and now contains twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Its geographical situation is good. The dagger-shaped Cape Corso, rich with fruit and vines, extends forty miles to the northward; westward, beyond the mountains, lie the fortunate lands of Nebbio and the Balagna, while the coast southward has no other harbor for a distance of seventy or eighty miles. The rocky island of Capraja, once a menace of the Genoese, rises over the sea in the direction of Leghorn; directly eastward, and nearer, is Elba, and far to the southeast, faintly seen, Monte Cristo, — the three representing mediæval and modern history and romance, and repeating the triple interest which clings around the name of Corsica.

The growth of Bastia seems to have produced but little effect, as yet, on the character of the inhabitants. They have rather the primitive air of mountaineers; one looks in vain for the keenness, sharpness, and, alas! the dishonesty, of an Italian seaport town. Since the time of Seneca, who, soured by exile, reported of them, —

"Prima est ulcisci lex, altera vivere rapta,
Tertia mentiri, quarta negare Deos," —

the Corsicans have not been held in good repute. Yet our first experience of them was by no means unprepossessing We entered a bookstore, to get a map of the island While I was examining it, an old gentleman, with the Legion of Honor in his button-hole, rose from his seat, took the sheet from my hands, and said: "What's this? what's this?" After satisfying his curiosity, he handed it back to me, and began a running fire of questions: "Your first visit to Corsica? You are English? Do you speak Italian? your wife also? Do you like Bastia? does she also? How long will you stay? Will she accompany you?" etc. I answered with equal rapidity, as there was nothing obtrusive in the old man's manner. The questions soon came to an end, and then followed a chapter of information and advice, which was very welcome.

The same naïve curiosity met us at every turn. Even the rough boy who acted as porter plied me with questions, yet was just as ready to answer as to ask. I learned much more about his situation and prospects than was really necessary, but the sum of all showed that he was a fellow determined to push his way in the world. Self-confidence is a common Corsican trait, which Napoleon only shared with his fellow-islanders. The other men of his time who were either born upon Corsica or lived there for a while — Pozzo di Borgo, Bernadotte, Massena, Murat, Sebastiani — seem to have caught the infection of this energetic, self-reliant spirit.

In Bastia there is neither art nor architecture. It is a well-built, well-regulated, bustling place, and has risen in latter years quite as much from the growth of Italian commerce as from the favor of the French government. From the quantity of small coasting craft in the harbor, I should judge that its trade is principally with the neighboring shores. In the two book-shops I found many devotional works and Renucci's History, but only one copy of the *Storiche Corse*, which I was glad to secure.

When the hour of departure came, we found the inquis itive old gentleman at the diligence office. He was our companion in the *coupé*, and apparently a personage of some note, as at least a score of friends came to bid him adieu. To each of these he announced in turn: "These are my travelling companions — an American gentleman and his wife. They speak French and Italian; they have never been in Corsica before; they are going to Corte; they travel for pleasure and information." Then there were reciprocal salutations and remarks; and if the postilion had not finally given the signal to take our places, we should soon have been on speaking terms with half Bastia.

The road ran due south, along the base of the mountains. As we passed the luxuriant garden-suburbs, our companion pointed out the dusky glitter of the orange-trees, and exclaimed: "You see what the Corsican soil produces. But this is nothing to the Balagna. There you will find the finest olive culture of the Mediterranean. I was prefect of the Balagna in 1836, and in that year the exportation of oil amounted to six millions of francs, while an equal quantity was kept for consumption in the island."

Brown old villages nestled high up in the ravines on our right; but on the left the plain stretched far away to the salt lake of Biguglia, the waters of which sparkled between the clumps of poplars and elms studding the meadows. The beds of the mountain streams were already nearly dry, and the summer malaria was beginning to gather on the low fields through which they wandered. A few peasants were cutting and tedding hay here and there, or lazily hauling it homewards. Many of the fields were given up to myrtle and other wild and fragrant shrubs; but there were far too few workers abroad for even the partial cultivation.

Beyond the lake of Biguglia, and near the mouth of the Golo River, is the site of Mariana, founded by Marius. Except a scattering of hewn stones, there are no remains of the Roman town; but the walls of a church and chapel of the Middle Ages are still to be seen. The only other Roman colony on Corsica — Aleria, at the mouth of the Tavignano — was a restoration of the more ancient Alalia, which tradition ascribes to the Phoceans. Notwithstanding the nearness of the island to the Italian coast, and its complete subjection to the Empire, its resources were imperfectly developed by the Romans, and the accounts of it given by the ancient writers are few and contradictory. Strabo says of the people: "Those who inhabit the mountains live from plunder, and are more untamable than wild beasts. When the Roman commanders undertake an expedition against the island, and possess themselves of the strongholds, they bring back to Rome many slaves; and then one sees with astonishment the savage animal nature of the people. For they either take their own lives violently, or tire out their masters by their stubbornness and stupidity; whence, no matter how cheaply they are purchased, it is always a bad bargain in the end."

Here we have the key to that fierce, indomitable spirit of independence which made the Genoese occupation one long story of warfare; which produced such heroes as Sambucuccio, Sampieri, and Paoli; and which exalted Corsica, in the last century, to be the embodiment of the democratic ideas of Europe, and the marvelous forerunner of the American Republic. Verily, Nature is "careful of the type." After the Romans, the Vandals possessed Corsica; then the Byzantine Greeks; then, in succession, the Tuscan Barons, the Pisans, and the Genoese — yet scarcely one of the political forms planted among them took root in the character of the islanders. The origin of the Corsican Republic lies back of all our history; it was a natural growth, which came to light after the suppression of two thousand years.

As we approached the gorge through which the Golo breaks its way to the sea, the town of Borgo, crowning a mountain summit, recalled to memory the last Corsican victory, when Clement Paoli, on the 1st of October, 1768, defeated and drove back to Bastia a French force much greater than his own. Clement, the brooding monk in his cloister, the fiery leader of desperate battle, is even a nobler figure than his brother Pascal in the story of those days.

We changed horses at an inn under the mountain of Borgo, and then entered the valley of the Golo, leaving the main road, which creeps onward to Bonifacio through lonely and malarious lands. The scenery now assumed a new aspect. No more the blue Tyrrhene Sea, with its dreams of islands; a valley wilder than any infolded among the Appenines opened before us. Slopes covered with chestnut groves rose on either side; slant ravines mounted between steep escarpments of rock; a village or two, on the nearer heights, had the appearance of refuge and defense, rather than of quiet habitation, and the brown summits in the distance held out no promise of softer scenes beyond.

Our companion, the prefect, pointed to the chestnut groves. "There," said he, "is the main support of our people in the winter. Our Corsican name for it is 'the bread tree.' The nuts are ground, and the cakes of chestnut-flour, baked on the hearth, and eaten while fresh, are really delicious. We could not live without the chestnut and the olive."

The steep upper slopes of the mountains were covered with the *macchia* — a word of special significance on the island. It is equivalent to "jungle" or "chaparral"; but the Corsican *macchia* has a character and a use of its own. Fancy an interminable thicket of myrtle, arbutus, wild laurel, lentisk, box, and heather, eight or twelve feet in height, interlaced with powerful and luxuriant vines, and with an undergrowth of rosemary, lavender, and sage. Between the rigid, stubby stems the wild boar can scarcely make his way; thorns and dagger-like branches meet above — yet the richest balm breathes from this impenetrable wilderness. When the people say of a man, "he has taken to the macchia," every one understands that he has committed a murder. Formerly, those who indulged in the fierce luxury of the *vendetta* sometimes made their home for years in the thickets, communicating privately, from time to time, with their families. But there is now no scent of blood lurking under that of the myrtle and lavender. Napoleon, who neglected Corsica during his years of empire (in fact, he seemed to dislike all mention of the island), remembered the odors of the macchia upon St. Helena.

Our second station was at a saw-mill beside the river. Here the prefect left us, saying: "I am going to La Porta, in the country of Morosaglia. It is a beautiful place, and you must come and see it. I have a ride of three hours, on horseback across the mountains, to get there."

His place in the *coupé* was taken by a young physician bound for Pontenuovo, further up the valley. I was struck by the singular loneliness of the country, as we advanced further into the interior. Neither in the grain-fields below, nor the olive-orchards above, was any laborer to be seen. Mile after mile passed by, and the diligence was alone on the highway. "The valley of the Golo is so unhealthy," said the physician, "that the people only come down to their fields at the time for ploughing, sowing, and reaping. If a man from the mountains spends a single night below here, he is likely to have an attack of fever."

"But the Golo is a rapid mountain stream," I remarked; "there are no marshes in the valley, and the air seems to me pure and bracing. Would not the country become healthy through more thorough cultivation?"

"I can only explain it," he answered, "by the constant variation of temperature. During the day there is a close heat, such as we feel now, while at night the air becomes suddenly chill and damp. As to agriculture, it don't seem to be the natural business of the Corsican. He will range the mountains all day, with a gun on his shoulder, but he hates work in the fields. Most of the harvesting on the eastern coast of the island, and in the Balagna, is done by the Lucchese peasants, who come over from the mainland every year. Were it not for them, the grain would rot where it stands."

This man's statement may have been exaggerated, but further observation convinced me that there was truth in it. Yet the people are naturally active and of a lively temperament, and their repugnance to labor is only one of the many consequences of the vendetta. When Paoli suppressed the custom with an iron hand, industry revived in Corsica; and now that the French government has succeeded in doing the same thing, the waste and pestilent lands will no doubt be gradually reclaimed.

The annals of the Corsican vendetta are truly something terrible. Filippini (armed to the teeth and protected by a stone wall, as he wrote) and other native historians estimate the number of murders from revenge in the three and a half centuries preceding the year 1729 at three hundred and thirty-three thousand, and the number of persons wounded in family feuds at an equal figure! Three times the population of the island killed or wounded in three hundred and fifty years! Gregorovius says: "If this island of Corsica could vomit back all the blood of battle and vendetta which it has drunk during the past ages, its cities and towns would be overwhelmed, its population drowned, and the sea be incarnadined as far as Genoa. Verily, here the red Death planted his kingdom." France has at last, by two simple, practical measures, stayed the deluge. First, the population was disarmed; then the bandits and blood-outlaws were formed into a body of *Voltigeurs Corses*, who, knowing all the hiding-places in the macchia, easily track the fugitives. A few executions tamed the thirst for blood, and within the past ten years the vendetta has ceased to exist.

While we were discussing these matters with the physician, the diligence rolled steadily onwards, up the valley of the Golo. With every mile the scenery became wilder, browner, and more lonely. There were no longer villages on the hill-summits, and the few farm-houses perched beside the chestnut-orchards appeared to be untenanted. As the road crossed by a lofty stone arch to the southern bank of the river, the physician said: "This is Pontenuovo, and it is just a hundred years to-day since the battle was fought." He was mistaken; the battle of Pontenuovo, fatal to Paoli and to the independence of Corsica, took place on the 9th of May, 1769. It was the end of a struggle all the more heroic because it was hopeless from the start. The stony slopes on either side of the bridge are holy ground; for the Corsicans did not fight in vain. A stronger people beyond the sea took up the torch as it fell from their hands, and fed it with fresh oil. History (as it has hitherto been written) deals only with events, not with popular sympathies and enthusiasms; and we can therefore scarcely guess how profoundly the heart of the world was stirred by the name of Corsica, between the years 1755 and 1769. To Catharine of Russia as to Rousseau, to Alfieri as to Dr. Johnson, Paoli was one of the heroes of the century.

Beyond Pontenuovo the valley widens, and a level road carried us speedily to Ponte alla Leccia, at the junction of the Golo with its principal affluent, the Tartaglia. *Pontelech* and *Tartatch* are the Corsican words. Here the scenery assumes a grand Alpine character. High over the nearer mountains rose the broken summits of Monte Padro and Capo Bianco, the snow-filled ravines glittering between their dark pinnacles of rock. On the south, a byroad wandered away through the chestnut-woods to Morosaglia; villages with picturesque belfries overlooked the valley, and the savage macchia gave place to orchards of olive. Yet the character of the scenery was sombre, almost melancholy. Though the myrtle flowered snowily among the rocks, and the woodbine hung from the banks, and the river filled the air with the incessant mellow sound of its motion, these cheerful features lost their wonted effect beside the sternness and solitude of the mountains.

Towards the end of this stage the road left the Golo, and ascended a narrow lateral valley to the village of Omessa, where we changed horses. Still following the stream to its sources, we reached a spur from the central chain, and slowly climbed its sides to a higher region — a land of rocks and green pasture-slopes, from the level of which a wide sweep of mountains was visible. The summit of the pass was at least two thousand feet above the sea. On attaining it, a new and surprising vista opened to the southward, into the very heart of the island. The valley before us dropped in many windings into that of the Tavignano, the second river of Corsica, which we overlooked for an extent of thirty miles. Eastward the mountains sank into hills of gentle undulation, robed with orchards and vineyards, and crowned with villages; westward they towered into dark, forbidding ranges, and the snows of the great central peaks of Monte Rotondo and Monte d' Oro, nearly ten thousand feet in height, stood gray against the sunset. Generally, the landscapes of an island have a diminished, contracted character; but here the vales were as amply spread, the mountains as grandly planted, as if a continent lay behind them.

For two leagues the road descended, following the bays and forelands of the hills. The diligence sped downward so rapidly that before it was quite dusk we saw the houses and high rock fortress of Corte before us. A broad avenue of sycamores, up and down which groups of people were strolling, led into the town. We were set down at a hotel of primitive fashion, where we took quarters for the night, leaving the diligence, which would have carried us to Ajaccio by the next morning. Several French officials had possession of the best rooms, so that we were but indifferently lodged; but the mountain trout on the dinner-table were excellent, and the wine of Corte was equal to that of Tuscany.

While the moon, risen over the eastern mountains, steeps the valley in misty silver, and a breeze from the Alpine heights deliciously tempers the air, let us briefly recall that wonderful episode of Corsican history of which Pascal Paoli is the principal figure. My interest in the name dates from the earliest recollections of childhood. Near my birthplace there is an inn and cluster of houses named Paoli — or, as the people pronounce it, Peōli. Here twenty-three American soldiers were murdered in cold blood by the British troops, in September, 1777. Wayne's battle-cry at the storming of Stony Point was, "Remember Paoli!" The old tavern-sign was the half-length portrait of an officer (in a red coat, I think), whom, I was told, was "General Paoli," but I knew nothing further of him, until, some years later, I stumbled on Boswell's work; my principal authority, however, is a recent volume,[1] and the collection of Paoli's letters published by Tommaseo.

It is unnecessary to review the long struggle of the Corsicans to shake off the yoke of Genoa; I need only allude to the fact. Pascal, born in 1724 or 1725, was the son of Hyacinth Paoli, who was chosen one of the chiefs of the people in 1734, and in connection with the other chiefs, Ceccaldi and Giaffori, carried on the war for independence with the greatest bravery and resolution, but with little success, for two years. In March, 1736, when the Corsicans were reduced to the last extremity, the Westphalian adventurer, Theodore von Neuhoff, suddenly made his appearance. The story of this man, who came ashore in a caftan of scarlet silk, Turkish trousers, yellow shoes, a

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[1] *Histoire de Pascal Paoli*, par M. Bartoli. Largentiere, 1866.

Spanish hat and feather, and a sceptre in his right hand, and coolly announced to the people that he had come to be their king, is so fantastic as to be scarcely credible; but we cannot dwell upon it. His supplies of money and munitions of war, and still more his magnificent promises, beguiled those sturdy republicans into accepting the cheat of a crown. The fellow was not without ability, and but for a silly vanity, which led him to ape the state and show of other European courts, might have kept his place. His reign of eight months was the cause of Genoa calling in the aid of France; and, after three years of varying fortunes, the Corsicans were obliged to submit to the conditions imposed upon them by the French commander, Maillebois.

Hyacinth Paoli went into exile, and found a refuge at the court of Naples with his son Pascal. The latter was carefully educated in the school of Genovesi, the first Italian political-economist of the last century, and then entered the army, where he distinguished himself during campaigns in Sicily and Calabria. Thus sixteen years passed away.

The Corsicans, meanwhile, had continued their struggle under the leadership of Giaffori, another of the many heroes of the island. When, in 1753, he was assassinated, the whole population met together to celebrate his obsequies, and renewed the oath of resistance to death against the Genoese rule. Five chiefs (one of whom was Clement Paoli, Pascal's elder brother) were chosen to organize a provisional government and carry on the war. But at the end of two years it was found prudent to adopt a more practical system, and to give the direction of affairs into the hands of a single competent man. It was no doubt Clement Paoli who first suggested his brother's name. The military experience of the latter gave him the confidence of the people, and their unanimous voice called him to be their leader.

In April, 1755, Pascal Paoli, then thirty years old, landed at Aleria, the very spot where King Theodore had made his theatrical entry into Corsica nineteen years before. Unlike him, Paoli came alone, poor, bringing only his noble presence, his cultivated intelligence, and his fame as a soldier, to the help of his countrymen. "It was a singular problem," says one of the historians of Corsica; "it was a new experiment in history, and how it might succeed at a time when similar experiments failed in the most civilized lands would be to Europe an evidence that the rude simplicity of nature is more capable of adapting itself to democratic liberty than the refined corruption of culture can possibly be."

Paoli, at first reluctant to accept so important a post, finally yielded to the solicitations of the people, and on the 15th of July was solemnly invested with the Presidency of Corsica. His first step shows at once his judgment and his boldness. He declared that the vendetta must instantly cease; whoever committed blood-revenge was to be branded with infamy, and given up to the headsman. He traversed the island, persuading hostile families to bury their feuds, and relentlessly enforced the new law, although one of his relatives was the first victim. But he was not allowed to enter upon his government without resistance. Matra, one of the Corsican chiefs. was ambitious of Paoli's place, and for a year the island was disturbed with civil war. Matra claimed and received assistance from Genoa, and Paoli, defeated and besieged in the monastery of Bozio, was almost in the hands of his rival, when reinforcements appeared, headed by Clement and by Carnoni, a blood-enemy of the Paolis, forced by his noble mother to forswear the family enmity, and deliver instead of slay. Matra was killed, and thenceforth Paoli was the undisputed chief of Corsica.

It was not difficult for the people, once united, to withstand the weakened power of Genoa. That republic possessed only Bastia, Ajaccio, and Calvi; the garrisoning of which fortresses, by a treaty with France in 1756, was transferred to the latter power, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Corsicans. The French proclaimed a neutrality which Paoli perforce was obliged to respect. He therefore directed his attention to the thorough political organization of the island, the development of its resources, and the proper education of its people. He had found the country in a lamentable condition when he returned from his exile. The greater part of the people had relapsed into semi-barbarism in the long course of war; agriculture was neglected, laws had fallen into disuse, the vendetta raged everywhere, and the only element from which order and industry could be evolved was the passionate thirst for independence, which had only been increased by defeat and suffering.

Paoli made the completest use of this element, bending it all to the purposes of government, and his success was truly astonishing. The new seaport of Isola Rossa was built in order to meet the necessity of immediate commerce; manufactories of all kinds, even powder-mills were established; orchards of chestnut, olive, and orange trees were planted, the culture of maize introduced, and plans made for draining the marshes and covering the island with a network of substantial highways. An educational system far in advance of the times was adopted. All children received at least the rudiments of education, and in the year 1765 the University of Corsica was founded at Corte. One provision of its charter was the education of poor scholars, who showed more than average capacity, at the public expense.

Paoli was obliged to base his scheme of government on the existing forms. He retained the old provincial and municipal divisions, with their magistrates and elders, making only such changes as were necessary to bind the scattered local jurisdictions into one consistent whole, to which he gave a *national* power and character. He declared the people to be the sole source of law and authority; that his office was a trust from their hands, and to be exercised according to their will and for their general good; and that the central government must be a house of glass, allowing each citizen to watch over its action. "Secrecy and mystery in governments," he said, "not only make a people mistrustful, but favor the growth of an absolute irresponsible power."

All citizens above the age of twenty-five years were entitled to the right of suffrage. Each community elected its own magistrates, but the voters were obliged to swear before the officials already in power, that they would nominate only the worthiest and most capable men as their successors. These local elections were held annually, but the magistrates were not eligible to immediate reëlection. A representative from each thousand of the population was elected to the General Assembly, which in its turn chose a Supreme Executive Council of nine members — one from each province of the island. The latter were required to be thirty-five years of age, and to have served as governors of their respective provinces. A majority of two thirds gave the decisions of the General Assembly the force of law; but the Council, in certain cases, had the right of veto, and the question was then referred for final decision to the next Assembly. Paoli was President of the Council and General-in-chief of the army. Both he and the members of the Council, however, were responsible to the nation, and liable to impeachment, removal, and punishment by the General Assembly.

Paoli, while enforcing a general militia system, took the strongest ground against the establishment of a standing army. "In a free land," he said, "every citizen must be a soldier, and ready to arm at any moment in defense of his rights. But standing armies have always served Despotism rather than Liberty." He only gave way that a lim ited number should be enrolled to garrison the fortified places. As soon as the people were sufficiently organized to resist the attempts which Genoa made from time to time to recover her lost dominion, he devoted his energies wholly to the material development of the island. The Assembly, at his suggestion, appointed two commissioners of agriculture for each province. The vendetta was completely suppressed; with order and security came a new prosperity, and the cities held by the *neutral* French began to stir with desires to come under Paoli's paternal rule.

The resemblance in certain forms as in the general spirit and character of the Constitution of the Corsican Republic to that of the United States, which was framed more than thirty years afterwards, is very evident. Indeed, we may say that the latter is simply an adaptation of the same political principles to the circumstances of a more advanced race and a broader field of action. But if we justly venerate the courage which won our independence and the wisdom which gave us our institutions, how shall we sufficiently honor the man and the handful of half-barbarous people who so splendidly anticipated the same great work! Is there anything nobler in history than the Corsican episode? No wonder that the sluggish soul of Europe, then beginning to stir with the presentiment of coming changes, was kindled and thrilled as not for centuries before. What effect the example of Corsica had upon the American Colonies is something which we cannot now measure. I like to think, however, that the country tavern-sign of "General Paoli," put up *before* the Revolution, signified more than the mere admiration of the landlord for a foreign hero.

At the end of ten years the Genoese Senate became convinced that the recovery of Corsica was hopeless; and when Paoli succeeded in creating a small fleet, under the command of Perez, Knight of Malta, they saw their Mediterranean commerce threatened with destruction. In the year 1767 the island of Capraja was captured by the Corsicans; then Genoa set the example which Austria has recently followed in the case of Venetia. A treaty was signed at Versailles on the 15th of May, 1768, between the French Minister, the Duke de Choiseul, and the Genoese Ambassador, whereby Genoa transferred to France all her right and title to the island of Corsica. This was a death-blow to the Republic; but the people armed and organized, determined to resist to the end. The splendid victory at Borgo gave them hope. They asked and expected the assistance of England; but when did England ever help a weak and struggling people? The battle of Pontenuovo, on the 9th of May, 1769, sealed the fate of the island. A month afterwards Paoli went into exile with three hundred of his countrymen. Among those who fled, after the battle, to the wild Alpine fastnesses of Monte Rotondo, was his secretary, Carlo Bonaparte, and the latter's wife, Letitia Ramolino, then seven months *enceinte* with the boy who afterwards made Genoa and France suffer the blood-revenge of Corsica. Living in caves and forests, drenched with rain, and almost washed away by the mountain torrents, Letitia bore her burden to Ajaccio, and Napoleon Bonaparte was one of the first Corsicans who were born Frenchmen.

Paoli's journey through Italy and Germany to England was a march of triumph. On reaching London he was received by the king in private audience; all parties joined in rendering him honor. A pension of two thousand pounds a year was granted to him (the greater part of which he divided among his fellow exiles), and he took up his residence in the country from which he still hoped the liberation of Corsica. For twenty years we hear of him as a member of that society which included Burke, Reynolds, Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith; keeping clear of parties, yet, we may be sure, following with an interest he hardly dared betray the events of the American struggle.

But the French revolution did not forget him. The Corsicans, in November, 1789, carried away by the republican movement in France, had voted that their island should be an integral part of the French nation. There was a general cry for Paoli, and in April 1790, he reached Paris. Lafayette was his friend and guide; the National Assembly received him with every mark of respect; the club of the *Amis de la Constitution* seated him beside its President — Robespierre; Louis XVI. gave him an audience, and he was styled by the enthusiastic populace "the Washington of Europe." At Marseilles he was met by a Corsican deputation, two of the members of which were Joseph and Napoleon Bonaparte, who sailed with him to their native island. On landing at Cape Corso, he knelt and kissed the earth, exclaiming, "O my country, I left thee enslaved and I find thee free!" All the land rose to receive him; *Te Deums* were chanted in the churches, and the mountain villages were depopulated to swell his triumphal march. In September of the same year the representatives of the people elected him President of the Council and General of the troops of the island.

Many things had been changed during his twenty years' absence, under the rule of France. It was not long before the people divided themselves into two parties — one French and ultra-republican; the other Corsican, working secretly for the independence of the island. The failure of the expedition against Sardinia was charged to Paoli, and he was summoned by the Convention to appear and answer the charges against him. Had he complied, his head would probably have fallen under the all-devouring guillotine; he refused, and his refusal brought the two Corsican parties into open collision. Paoli was charged with being ambitious, corrupt, and plotting to deliver Corsica to England. His most zealous defender was the young Napoleon Bonaparte, who wrote a fiery, indignant address, which I should like to quote. Among other things he says, "We owe *all* to him — even the fortune of being a republic!"

The story now becomes one of intrigue and deception, and its heroic atmosphere gradually vanishes. Pozzo di Borgo, the blood-enemy of Napoleon, alienated Paoli from the latter. A fresh, cunning, daring intellect, he acquired a mischievous influence over the gray-haired, simple-hearted patriot. That which Paoli's enemies charged against him came to pass; he asked the help of England, and in 1794 the people accepted the sovereignty of that nation, on condition of preserving their institutions, and being governed by a viceroy, who it was presumed would be none other than Pascal Paoli. The English fleet, under Admiral Hood, speedily took possession of Bastia, Calvi, Ajaccio, and the other seaports. But the English government, contemptuously ignoring Paoli's services and claims, sent out Sir Gilbert Elliott as viceroy; and he, jealous of Paoli's popularity, demanded the latter's recall to England. George III. wrote a command under the form of an invitation; and in 1795, Paoli, disappointed in all his hopes, disgusted with the treatment he had received, and recognizing the hopelessness of healing the new dissensions among the people, left Corsica for the last time. He returned to his former home in London, where he died in 1807, at the age of eighty-two years. What little property he had saved was left to found a school at Stretta, his native village; and another at Corte, for fifteen years his capital. Within a year after his departure the English were driven out of Corsica.

Paoli rejoiced, as a Corsican, at Napoleon's ascendency in France. He illuminated his house in London when the latter was declared Consul for life, yet he was never recalled. During his last days on St. Helena, Napoleon regretted his neglect or jealousy of the old hero; his lame apology was, "I was so governed by political considerations, that it was impossible for me to obey my personal impulses!"

Our first object, on the morning after our arrival in

Corte, was to visit the places with which Paoli's name is associated. The main street conducted us to the public square, where stands his bronze statue, with the inscription on the pedestal: "À PASCAL PAOLI LA CORSE RECONNAISSANTE." On one side of the square is the Palazza, or Hall of Government; and there they show you his room, the window-shutters of which still keep their lining of cork, as in the days of assassination, when he founded the Republic. Adjoining it is a chamber where the Executive Council met to deliberate. Paoli's school, which still flourishes, is his best monument.

High over the town rises the battered citadel, seated on a rock which on the western side falls several hundred feet sheer down to the Tavignano. The high houses of brown stone climb and cling to the eastern slope, rough masses of browner rock thrust out among them; and the place thus has an irregular pyramidal form, which is wonderfully picturesque. The citadel was last captured from the Genoese by Paoli's forerunner, Giaffori, in the year 1745. The Corsican cannon were beginning to breach the walls, when the Genoese commander ordered Giaffori's son, who had previously been taken prisoner, to be suspended from the ramparts. For a moment — but only for a moment — Giaffori shuddered, and turned away his head; then he commanded the gunners, who had ceased firing, to renew the attack. The breach was effected, and the citadel taken by storm; the boy, unhurt amidst the terrible cannonade, was restored to his father.

We climbed towards the top of the rock by streets which resembled staircases. At last the path came to an end in some unsavory back-yards, if piles of shattered rock behind the houses can be so called. I asked a young fellow who was standing in the doorway, watching us, whether any view was to be had by going further.

"Yes," said he, "but there is a better prospect from the other house — yonder, where you see the old woman."

We clambered across the intervening rocks, and found the woman engaged in shearing a goat, which a boy held by the horns. "Certainly," she said, when I repeated the question; "Come into the house, and you shall look from the windows."

She led us through the kitchen into a bright, plainly furnished room, where four women were sewing. They all greeted us smilingly, rose, pushed away their chairs, and then opened the southern window. "Now look!" said the old woman.

We were dazzled by the brightness and beauty of the picture. The house was perched upon the outer angle of the rock, and the valley of the Tavignano, with the gorge through which its affluent, the Restonica, issues from the mountains, lay below us. Gardens, clumps of walnut and groves of chestnut trees, made the valley green; the dark hues of the mountains were softened to purple in the morning air, and the upper snows shone with a brilliancy which I have rarely seen among the Alps. The breeze came down to us with freshness on its wings, and the subdued voices of the twin rivers.

"Now the other window!" the women said.

It opened eastward. There were, first, the roofs of Corte, dropping away to the water-side; then a wide, bounteous valley, green, flecked with harvest gold; then village-crowned hills, and, behind all, the misty outlines of mountains that slope to the eastern shore. It is a fair land, this Corsica, and the friendly women were delighted when I told them so.

The people looked at us with a natural curiosity as we descended the hill. Old women, invariably dressed in black, gossiped or spun at the doors, girls carried water on their heads from the fountains below, children tumbled about on the warm stones, and a young mother, beside her cradle, sang the Corsican lullaby: —

"Ninni ninni, ninna nanna,
Ninni ninni, ninni nolu,
Allegrezza di la mamma,
Addormentati, o figliolu!"

There is another Corsican cradle song which has a singular resemblance to Tennyson's, yet it is quite unlikely that he ever saw it. One verse runs: —

"A little pearl-laden ship, my darling,
Thou carriest silken stores,
And with the silken sails all set
Com'st from the Indian shores,
And wrought with the finest workmanship
Are all thy golden oars.
Sleep, my little one, sleep a little while,
Ninni nanna, sleep!"

The green waters of the Tavignano, plunging and foaming down their rocky bed, freshened the warm summer air. Beyond the bridge a vein of the river, led underground, gushes forth as a profuse fountain under an arch of masonry; and here a number of people were collected to wash and to draw water. One of the girls, who gave us to drink, refused to accept a proffered coin, until a countryman who was looking on said, "You should take it, since the lady wishes it." A few paces further a second bridge crosses the Restonica, which has its source in some small lakes near the summit of Monte Rotondo. Its volume of water appeared to me to be quite equal to that of the Tavignano.

The two rivers meet in a rocky glen a quarter of a mile below the town; and thither we wandered in the afternoon, through the shade of superb chestnut-trees. From this, as from every other point in the neighborhood, the views are charming. There is no threat of malaria in the pure mountain air; the trees are of richest foliage, the water is transparent beryl, and the pleasant, communicative people one meets impress one with a sense of their honest simplicity. We wandered around Corte, surrender ing ourselves to the influences of the scenery and its associations, and entirely satisfied with both.

Towards evening we climbed the hill by an easier path, which brought us upon the crest of a ridge connecting the citadel-rock with the nearest mountains. Directly before us opened the gorge of the Tavignano, with a bridle-path notched along its almost precipitous sides. A man who had been sitting idly on a rock, with a pipe in his mouth, came up, and stood beside me. "Yonder," said he, pointing to the bridle-path, — "yonder is the road to the land of Niolo. If you follow that, you will come to a forest that is four hours long. The old General Arrighi — the Duke of Padua, you know — travelled it some years ago, and I was his guide. I see you are strangers; you ought to see the land of Niolo. It is not so rich as Corte here; but then the forests and the lakes, — ah, they are fine!"

Presently the man's wife joined us, and we sat down together, and gossiped for half an hour. They gave us the recipe for making *broccio;* a kind of Corsican curd, or junket, which we had tasted at the hotel, and found delicious. I also learned from them many details of the country life of the island. They, like all the Corsicans with whom I came in contact, were quite as ready to answer questions as to ask them. They are not so lively as the Italians, but more earnestly communicative, quick of apprehension, and gifted with a rude humor of their own. In Bastia I bought a volume of *Pruverbj Corse*, which contains more than three thousand proverbs peculiar to the island, many of them exceedingly witty and clever. I quote a single one as a specimen of the dialect: —

"Da gattivu calzu un ne piglià magliolu,
Male u babbu e pegghiu u figliolu."

During our talk I asked the pair, "Do you still have the vendetta in this neigborhood?"

They both professed not to know what I meant by "vendetta," but I saw plainly enough that they understood the question. Finally the man said, rather impatiently, "There are a great many kinds of vendetta."

"I mean blood-revenge — assassination — murder."

His hesitation to speak about the matter disappeared as mysteriously as it came. (Was there, perhaps, a stain upon his own hand?) "O," he answered, "that is all at an end. I can remember when five persons were killed in a day in Corte, and when a man could not travel from here to Ajaccio without risking his life. But now we have neither murders nor robberies; all the roads are safe, the people live quietly, and the country everywhere is better than it was."

I noticed that the Corsicans are proud of the present Emperor on account of his parentage; but they have also some reason to be grateful to his government. He has done much to repair the neglect of his uncle. The work of Paoli has been performed over again; law and order prevail from the sea-shore to the highest herdsman's hut on Monte Rotondo; admirable roads traverse the island, schools have been established in all the villages, and the national spirit of the people is satisfied by having a semi-Corsican on the throne of France. I saw no evidence of discontent anywhere, nor need there be; for Europe has nearly reached the Corsican ideal of the last century, and the pride of the people may well repose for a while upon the annals of their heroic past.

It was a serious disappointment that we were unable to visit Ajaccio and the Balagna. We could only fix the inspiring scenery of Corte in our memories, and so make its historical associations vital and enduring. There was nc other direct way of returning to Bastia than the road by which we came; but it kept a fresh interest for us. The conductor of the diligence was one of the liveliest fellows living, and entertained us with innumerable stories; and at the station of Omessa we met with a character so original that I wish I could record every word he said.

The man looked more like a Yankee than any Italian I had seen for six months. He presented the conductor with what appeared to be a bank-note for one thousand francs; but it proved to be issued by the "Bank of Content," and entitled the holder to live a thousand years. Happiness was the president, and Temperance the cashier.

"I am a director of the bank," said the disseminator of the notes, addressing the passengers and a group of countrymen, "and I can put you all in the way of being stockholders. But you must first bring testimonials. Four are required — one religious, one medical, one legal, and one domestic. What must they be? Listen, and I will tell. Religious — from a priest, vouching for four things: that you have never been baptized, never preached, don't believe in the Pope, and are not afraid of the Devil. Medical — from a doctor, that you have had the measles, that your teeth are sound, that you are not flatulent, and that he has never given you medicine. Legal — from a lawyer, that you have never been accused of theft, that you mind your own business, and that you have never employed him. Domestic — from your wife, that you don't lift the lids of the kitchen pots, walk in your sleep, or lose the keyhole of your door! There! can any one of you bring me these certificates?"

The auditors, who had roared with laughter during the speech, became suddenly grave — which emboldened the man to ply them with other and sharper questions. Our departure cut short the scene; but I heard the conductor laughing on his box for a league further.

At Ponte alla Leccia we breakfasted on trout, and, speeding down the grand and lonely valley of the Golo, reached Bastia towards evening. As we steamed out of the little harbor the next day, we took the words of our friend Gregorovius, and made them ours: —

"Year after year, thy slopes of olives hoar
Give oil, thy vineyards still their bounty pour!
Thy maize on golden meadows ripen well,
And let the sun thy curse of blood dispel,
Till down each vale and on each mountain-side
The stains of thy heroic blood be dried!
Thy sons be like their fathers, strong and sure,
Thy daughters as thy mountain rivers pure,
And still thy granite crags between them stand
And all corruptions of the older land.
Fair isle, farewell! thy virtues shall not sleep;
Thy fathers' valor shall their children keep,
That ne'er this taunt to thee the stranger cast, —
Thy heroes were but fables of the Past!"

THE ISLAND OF MADDALENA.

WITH A DISTANT VIEW OF CAPRERA.

Before leaving Florence for the trip to Corsica, in which I intended to include, if possible, the island of Sardinia, I noticed that the Rubattino steamers touched at Maddalena, on their way from Bastia to Porto Torres. The island of Maddalena, I knew, lay directly over against Caprera, separated by a strait not more than two or three miles in breadth, and thus a convenient opportunity was offered of visiting the owner and resident of the latter island, the illustrious General Giuseppe Garibaldi. I have no special passion for making the personal acquaintance of distinguished men, unless it happens that there is some point of mutual interest concerning which intelligence may be given or received. In this case, I imagined there was such a point of contact. Having followed the fortunes of Italy for the past twenty years, with the keen sympathy which springs from a love for the land, and having been so near the events of the last unfortunate expedition against Rome as to feel from day to day the reflection of those events in the temper of the Italian people, I had learned, during a subsequent residence in Rome, certain facts which added to the interest of the question, while they seemed still more to complicate its solution. There were some things, I felt, an explanation of which (so far as he would be able to give it) might be asked of Garibaldi without impropriety. and which he could communicate without any necessity of reserve.

Another and natural sentiment was mingled with my desire to meet the hero of Italian unity. I knew how shamefully he had been deceived in certain respects, before undertaking the expedition which terminated so fruit-lessly at Mentana, and could, therefore, guess the mortification which accompanied him in his imprisonment (for such it virtually is) at Caprera. While, therefore, I should not have sought an interview after the glorious Sicilian and Calabrian campaign, or when the still excited world was reading Nélaton's bulletins from Spezzia, — so confounding myself with the multitude who always admire the hero of the day, and risk their necks to shake hands with him, — I felt a strong desire to testify such respect as the visit of a stranger implies, in Garibaldi's day of defeat and neglect.

"I did not praise thee, when the crowd,
Witched with the moment's inspiration,
Vexed thy still ether with hosannas loud,
And stamped their dusty adoration." [1]

Of all the people who crowded to see him at Spezzia in such throngs that a false Garibaldi, with bandaged foot, was arranged to receive the most of them, there is no trace now. The same Americans who come from Paris chanting pæans to Napoleon III., go to Rome and are instantly stricken with sympathy for Pius IX., and a certain respect for the Papacy, temporal power included. They give Caprera a wide berth. Two or three steadfast English friends do what they can to make the hero's solitude pleasant, and he has still, as always, the small troop of Italian followers, who never forsake him, because they live from his substance.

Before deciding to visit Caprera, I asked the candid advice of some of the General's most intimate friends in Florence. They assured me that scarcely any one had gone to see him for months past; that a visit from an American, who sympathized with the great and generous aims to which he has devoted his life, could not be otherwise than welcome; and, while offering me cordial letters of introduction, declared that this formality was really unnecessary. It was pleasant to hear him spoken of as a man whose refined amiability of manner was equal to his unselfish patriotism, and who was as simple, unpretending, and accessible personally, as he was rigorously democratic in his political utterances.

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[1] Lowell, *Ode to Lamartine*.

I purposely shortened my tour in Corsica, in order to take the Italian steamer which touches at Bastia, on its way to Maddalena. Half smothered in the sultry heat, we watched the distant smoke rounding the rocks of Capraja, and the steamer had no sooner anchored outside the mole, than we made haste to embark. The cloth was already spread over the skylight on the quarterdeck, and seven plates denoted six fellow-passengers. Two of these were ladies, two Italians, with an old gentleman, who proved to English, although he looked the least like it, and an unmistakable Garibaldian, in a red shirt. The latter was my *vis-à-vis* at table, and it was not long before he startled the company by exclaiming: "In fifty years we shall have the Universal Republic!"

After looking around the table, he fixed his eyes on me, as if challenging assent.

"In five hundred years, perhaps," I said.

"But the priests will go down soon!" he shouted; "and as for that brute" (pointing with his fork towards Corsica), "who rules there, his time is soon up."

As nobody seemed inclined to reply, he continued: "Since the coming of the second Jesus Christ, Garibaldi, the work goes on like lightning. As soon as the priests are down, the Republic will come."

This man, so one of the passengers informed me, had come on board *en bourgeois*, but as the steamer approached Corsica, he suddenly appeared on deck in his red shirt. After we left Bastia, he resumed his former costume. In the capacity to swagger, he surpassed any man I had seen since leaving home. His hair hung about his ears, his nose was long, his beard thick and black, and he had the air of a priest rather than a soldier, — but it was an air which pompously announced to everybody: "Garibaldi is the Second Christ, and I am his Prophet!"

Over the smooth sea we sped down the picturesque Corsican coast. An indentation in the grand mountain chain showed us the valley of the Golo; then came the heights of Vescovato, where Filippini wrote the history of the island, and Murat took refuge after losing his Neapolitan kingdom; then, Cervione, where the fantastic King Theodore, the First and Last, held his capital; after which night fell upon the shores, and we saw only mountain phantoms in the moonlight.

At sunrise the steward called me.

"We are passing the *bocca*," — the Straits of Bonifacio, — said he, "and will soon be at Maddalena."

It was an archipelago of rocks in which the steamer was entangled. All around us, huge gray masses, with scarcely a trace of vegetation, rose from the wave; in front, the lofty, dark blue, serrated mountains of Sardinia pierced the sky, and far to the right faded the southern shores of Corsica. But, bleak and forsaken as was the scene, it had a curious historical interest. As an opening between the islands disclosed the white rocks, citadel, and town of Bonifacio, some fifteen miles distant, I remembered the first important episode in the life of Napoleon. It was in the year 1792, while Pascal Paoli was still President of Corsica. An expedition against Sardinia having been determined upon by the Republic, Napoleon, after, perhaps, the severest struggle of his life, was elected second in command of the battalion of Ajaccio. A work[1] written by M. Nasica, of the latter place, gives a singular picture of the fierce family feuds which preceded the election. It was the commencement of that truly Corsican *vendetta* between Pozzo di Borgo and the future emperor, which only terminated when the former was able to say, after Waterloo: "I have not killed Napoleon, but I have thrown the last shovelful of earth upon him."

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[1] *Mémoires sur l'Enfance et la Jeunesse de Napoleon.* Ajaccio, 1853.

The first attempt of the expedition was to be directed against the island of Maddalena. A battery was planted on the uninhabited rock of Santa Teresa (beside which we passed), and Maddalena was bombarded, but without effect. Napoleon prepared a plan for its capture, but Colonna, the first in command, refused to allow him to make the attempt. A heated discussion took place in the presence of the other officers, and Napoleon, becoming at last indignant and impatient, turned to the latter, and said: "He doesn't know what I mean."

"You are an insolent fellow," retorted Colonna.

Napoleon muttered, as he turned away: "We have only a *cheval de parade* for commander."

At Bonifacio, afterwards, his career came near being suddenly terminated. Some Marseilles marines who landed there provoked a quarrel with the soldiers of the Corsican battalion. Napoleon interfered to restore order, whereupon he was seized by the fierce Marseillaise, who would have hung him to a lamp-post, but for the timely aid of the civil authorities. The disfavor of Paoli, who was at that time under the control of Pozzo di Borgo, finally drove Napoleon from Corsica; so that the machinations of his bitterest enemy really forced him into the field where he was so suddenly and splendidly successful.

While we were recalling this fateful fragment of history, the steamer entered the narrow strait between Maddalena and the main land of Sardinia, and at the same moment two stately French vessels made their appearance, crossing tracks on the route between Marseilles and the Orient. The rocky island of San Stefano, lying opposite Maddalena, forms a sheltered harbor, which Caprera, rising eastward against the sea, renders completely landlocked. But what a wild, torn, distorted, desolate panorama! A thin sprinkling of lavender, rosemary, and myrtle serves but to set off the cold gray of the granite rocks; the summits rise in natural bastions, or thrust out huge fangs or twisted horns. There is nowhere any softening of these violent outlines. They print themselves on the farthest distance, and one is not surprised that the little village of Maddalena, the white house on Caprera, and two or three fishing-huts on the Sardinian shore, are the only signs of human habitation.

Beside the village, however, there was a little valley, near the head of which a cool, white villa, perched on a mass of rocks, shone against the rugged background.

"That is my place," said the old Englishman, "and I shall be happy to see you there."

"I shall certainly come, if we have time enough after visiting Caprera," I replied.

The Englishman, an entire stranger, was very kind in his offers of service; the Garibaldian was so pompous and arrogant in his manner, that I soon perceived that no assistance could be expected from him. Nevertheless, chance threw us into the same boat, on landing in the little harbor. I had ascertained that there was a hotel, kept by one Remigio, in Maddalena; and although one of "our mutual friends" had advised me to go directly to Caprera, — Garibaldi's hospitality being as certain as sunrise, or the change of the tide, — I determined to stop with Remigio, and forward my letters. When the Prophet of the Second Coming stepped on shore, he was accosted by an old veteran, who wore a red shirt and blue goggles. They embraced and kissed each other, and presently came up another weather-beaten person, with an unmistakably honest and amiable face, who was hailed with the name of "Basso!"

I knew the name as that of one of Garibaldi's most faithful followers, and as the boat, meanwhile, had been retained to convey the party to Caprera, I stepped up to Basso and the Prophet and asked: "Will one of you be good enough to take these letters to General Garibaldi, and let the boatman bring me word when it will be convenient for him to receive me?"

"Certainly," said the Prophet, taking the letters, and remarking, as he pointed to Basso, "*this* is the General's secretary."

The latter made a modest gesture, disclaiming the honor. and said: "No; *you know* that you are really his secretary."

The boat shoved off with them. "It is a queer company," I said to myself, "and perhaps I ought not to have intrusted the letters to their care." One letter was from a gentleman in a high diplomatic position, whose reputation as a scholar is world-wide, and who possesses the most generous, and at the same time the most intelligent, sympathy with the aspirations of the Italian people. The other was from a noble woman, who has given the best energies of her life to the cause, — who shared the campaigns of Sicily and Calabria, and even went under fire at Monte Rotondo and Mentana to succor the wounded. Probably no two persons had a better right to claim the courtesy of Garibaldi in favor of one, who, though a stranger, was yet an ardent friend.

The Hotel Remigio directly fronted the quay. No sign announced its character, but the first room we entered had a billiard-table, beyond which was a kitchen. Here we found La Remigia, who conducted us up a sumptuous staircase of black and white marble (unwashed) into a shabby dining-room, and then left us to prepare coffee. A door into an adjoining apartment stood half-open. I looked in, but seeing a naked leg stretched out upon a dirty blanket, made a speedy retreat. In a quarter of an hour coffee came, without milk, but with a bottle of rum instead. The servitress was a little girl, whose hands were of so questionable a complexion, that we turned away lest we should see her touch the cups. I need not say that the beverage was vile; the reader will have already guessed that.

We summoned La Remigia, to ascertain whether a breakfast was possible. "*Eh, che vuole?*" ("What can you expect?") said she. "This is a poor little island. What would you like to have?"

Limiting our wishes to the probabilities of the place, we modestly suggested eggs and fish, whereat La Remigia looked relieved, and promised that we should have both. Then, although the heat was furious, I went forth for a stroll along the shore. A number of bronze boys had pulled off their tow shirts, and were either sitting naked on the rocks, or standing in the shallow coves, and splashing each other with scallop-shells. Two or three fishing-boats were lazily pulling about the strait, but the greater part of the population of Maddalena sat in the shade and did nothing.

The place contains about fifteen hundred inhabitants, but scarcely one half that number were at home. The others were sailors, or coral fishers, who are always absent during the summer months. The low, bright-colored houses are scattered along the shore, in such order as the huge, upheaved masses of granite will allow, and each street terminates in a stony path. In the scanty garden-inclosures, bristling masses of the fruit-bearing cactus overhang the walls, repellant as the rocks from which they spring. Evidently the place supplies nothing except the article of fish; all other necessaries of life must be brought from Sardinia. The men are principally pensioned veterans of the Italian navy, who are satisfied with the sight of blue water and passing vessels; the women (rock-widows, one might call them), having the very simplest household duties to perform, usually sit at their doors, with some kind of knitting or netting, and chatter with their nearest neighbors. I had scarcely walked a quarter of a mile before the sleepy spirit of the place took hold of my feet, and I found myself contemplating the shadowy spots among the rocks, much more than the wild and rugged island scenery across the strait.

Garibaldi's house on Caprera flashed in the sun, and after a while I saw a boat pulling away from the landing-place below it. I returned to the harbor to meet the boatman, and receive the answer which my letters required. It was a red-headed fellow, with a face rather Scotch than Italian, and a blunt, direct manner of speech which corresponded thereto.

"The General says he is not well, and can't see you," said he.

"Have you a letter?" I asked.

"No; but he told me so."

"He is sick, then?"

"No," said the boatman, "he is not sick."

"Where did you see him?"

"Out of doors. He went down to the sea this morning and took a bath. Then he worked in the garden."

The first sensation of a man who receives an unexpected blow is incredulity, and not exasperation. It required a slight effort to believe the boatman's words, and the next impression was that there was certainly some misunderstanding. If Garibaldi were well enough to walk about his fields, he was able to receive a visitor; if he had read the letters I forwarded, a decent regard for the writers would have withheld him from sending a rude verbal answer by the mouth of a boatman. The whole proceeding was so utterly at variance with all I had heard of his personal refinement and courtesy, that I was driven to the suspicion that his followers had suppressed the letters, and represented me, perhaps, as a stranger of not very reputable appearance.

Seeing that we were stranded for three days upon Maddalena, — until the steamer returned from Porto Torres, — I determined to assure myself whether the suspicion was just. I could, at least, give the General a chance to correct any misunderstanding. I therefore wrote a note, mentioning the letters and the answer I had received through the boatman; referring to other friends of his in

America and Italy, whom I knew; assuring him that I had had no intention of thrusting myself upon his hospitality, but had only meant to desire a brief personal interview. I abstained, of course, from repeating the request, as he would thus be able to grant it more gracefully, if a misrepresentation had really been made. Summoning the red-headed boatman, I gave him the note, with the express command that he should give it into Garibaldi's own hands, and not into those of any of the persons about him.

La Remigia gave us as good a breakfast as the house could furnish. The wine was acutely sour, but the fish were fresh and delicate. Moreover, the room had been swept, and the hands of the little servant subjected to a thorough washing. There was a dessert of cherries, brought all the way from Genoa, and then the hostess, as she brought the coffee, asked: "When will your Excellencies go to Caprera?"

"If the General is sick," I remarked, "we shall probably not be able to see him."

"He was not well two or three weeks ago," said she; "he had the rheumatism in his hands. But now he goes about his fields the same as before."

A second suspicion came into my head. What if the boatman should not go to Caprera with my letter, but merely sleep two or three hours in the shade, and then come back to me with an invented verbal answer? It was now high noon, and a truly African sun beat down on the unsheltered shores. The veterans had been chased from their seats on the quay, and sat in dozing, silent rows on the shady sides of the houses. A single boat, with sail spread, hardly moved over the dazzling blue of the harbor. There was no sign of active life anywhere, except in the fleas.

Leaving my wife in La Remigia's care, I took one of the rough paths behind the town, and climbed to a bold mass of rocks, which commanded a view of the strait from Ca prera to Sardinia. Far off, beyond the singular horns and needles of rock, cresting the mountains of the latter island, a thunder-gust was brewing; but the dark, cool shadows there only served, by contrast, to make the breathless heat on Maddalena more intense. Nevertheless, a light wind finally came from somewhere, and I stretched myself out on the granite, with Caprera before my eyes, and reflected on the absurdity of any one human being taking pains to make the acquaintance of any other particular human being, while I watched the few boats visible on the surface of the water below. One, rowing and sailing, rounded the point of San Stefano, and disappeared; another crept along the nearer shore, looking for fish, coral, or sponges; and a third, at last, making a long tack, advanced into the channel of La Moneta, in front of Garibaldi's residence. It was Red-head, honestly doing his duty. Two or three hours went by, and he did not return. When the air had been somewhat cooled by the distant thunder, we set forth to seek the English recluse. The path followed the coast, winding between rocks and clumps of myrtle in blossom, until the villa looked down upon us from the head of a stony dell. On three sides, the naked granite rose in irregular piles against the sky, while huge blocks, tumbled from above, lay scattered over the scanty vineyards below. In sheltered places there were a few pines and cedars, of stunted growth. The house, perched upon a mass of rock forty or fifty feet high, resembled a small fortress. As we approached it, over the dry, stony soil, the bushes rustling as the lizards darted through them, the place assumed an air of savage loneliness. No other human dwelling was visible on any of the distant shores, and no sail brightened the intervening water.

The Englishman came forth and welcomed us with a pleasant, old-fashioned courtesy. A dark-eyed Sardinian lady, whom he introduced to us as his daughter-in-law, and her father, were his temporary guests. The people after wards told me, in Maddalena, that he had adopted and educated a Neapolitan boy, who, however, had turned out to be a *mauvais sujet.* We were ushered into a large vaulted room, the walls of which, to my astonishment, were covered with admirable paintings — genuine works of the Flemish and Italian masters. There was a Cuyp, a Paul Potter, a Ruysdael, a Massimo, and several excellent pictures of the school of Corregio. A splendid library filled the adjoining hall, and recent English and Italian newspapers lay upon the table. I soon perceived that our host was a man of unusual taste and culture, who had studied much and travelled much, before burying himself in this remote corner of the Mediterranean. For more than twenty years, he informed us, the island had been his home. He first went thither accidentally, in his search for health, and remained because he found it among those piles of granite and cactus. One hardly knows whether to admire or commiserate such a life.

Our host, however, had long outlived his yearning for the busy world of men. His little plantation, wrung from Nature with immense labor and apparently great expense, now absorbed all his interest. He had bought foreign trees — Mexican, African, and Australian — and set them in sheltered places, built great walls to break the sweep of the wind which draws through the Straits of Bonifacio, constructed tanks for collecting the rains, terraces for vineyards, and so fought himself into the possession of a little productive soil. But the winds kept down the growth of his pines, the islanders cut his choicest trees and carried them off for fire-wood, and it was clear that the scanty beginnings we saw were the utmost he would be able to keep and hold against so many hostile influences.

After we had inspected the costly picture-gallery, and partaken of refreshments, he took us to his orange-garden, a square inclosure, with walls twenty feet high, at the foot of the rocks. The interior was divided by high ramparts of woven brushwood into compartments about thirty feet square, each of which contained half a dozen squat, battered-looking trees, I should have imagined the outer walls high enough to break the strongest wind, but our host informed me that they merely changed its character, giving to the current a spiral motion which almost pulled the trees out of the earth. The interior divisions of brushwood were a necessity. Above the house there was a similar inclosure for pear and apple trees. The vines, kept close to the earth, and tied to strong stakes, were more easily tended. But the same amount of labor and expense would have created a little paradise on the shores of Sorrento, or the Riviera di Ponente; in fact, as many oranges might have been raised in Minnesota, with less trouble.

According to the traditions of the people, the whole island was wooded a hundred and fifty years ago. But, as savage tribes worship trees, so the first inclination of the civilized man is to destroy them. I still hold to the belief that the disforested Levant might be reclothed in fifty years, if the people could be prevented from interfering with the young growth.

When we reached Maddalena, the boatman had returned from Caprera. This time he brought me a note, in Garibaldi's handwriting, containing two or three lines, which, however, were not more satisfactory than the previous message. "*Per motivo de' miei incomodi*" (on account of my ailments), said the General, he could not receive me. This was an equivocation, but no explanation. His motive for slighting the letters of two such friends, and refusing to see one who had come to Maddalena to testify a sympathy and respect which had nothing in common with the curiosity of the crowd, remained a mystery. In the little fishing-village, where nothing could long be kept secret, the people seemed to be aware of all that had occurred. They possessed too much natural tact and delicacy to question us, but it was easy to see that they were much surprised. Red-head made quite a long face when I told him, after reading the letter, that I should not need his boat for a trip to Caprera.

After allowing all possible latitude to a man's individual right to choose his visitors, the manner in which my application had been received still appeared to me very rude and boorish. Perhaps one's first experience of the kind is always a little more annoying than is necessary; but the reader must consider that we had no escape from the burning rocks of Maddalena until the third day afterwards, and the white house on Caprera before our eyes was a constant reminder of the manner or mood of its inmate. Questions of courtesy are nearly as difficult to discuss as questions of taste, each man having his own private standard; yet, I think, few persons will censure me for having then and there determined that, for the future, I would take no particular pains to seek the acquaintance of a distinguished man.

We were fast on Maddalena, as I have said, and the most we could make of it did not seem to be much. I sketched a little the next morning, until the heat drove me indoors. Towards evening, following La Remigia's counsel, we set forth on a climb to the Guardia Vecchia, a deserted fortress on the highest point of the island. Thunder-storms, as before, growled along the mountains of Sardinia, without overshadowing or cooling the rocks of the desert archipelago. The masses of granite, among which we clambered, still radiated the noonday heat, and the clumps of lentisk and arbutus were scarcely less arid in appearance than the soil from which they grew. Over the summit, however, blew a light breeze. We pushed open the door of the fort, mounted to a stone platform with ramparts pierced for six cannon, and sat down in the shade of the watch-tower. The view embraced the whole Strait of Bonifacio and its shores, from the peak of Incudine in Corsica, to the headland of Terranova, on the eastern coast of

Sardinia. Two or three villages, high up on the mountains of the latter island, the little fishing-town at our feet, the far-off citadel of Bonifacio, and — still persistently visible — the house on Caprera, rather increased than removed the loneliness and desolation of the scenery. Island rising behind island thrust up new distortions of rock of red or hot-gray hues which became purple in the distance, and the dark-blue reaches of sea dividing them were hard and lifeless as plains of glass. Perhaps the savage and sterile forms of the foreground impressed their character upon every part of the panorama, since we knew that they were everywhere repeated. In this monotony lay something sublime, and yet profoundly melancholy.

As we have now the whole island of Caprera full and fair before us, let us see what sort of a spot the hero of Italian Unity has chosen for his home. I may at the same time, without impropriety, add such details of his life and habits, and such illustrations of his character, as were freely communicated by persons familiar with both, during our stay in Maddalena.

Caprera, as seen from the Guardia Vecchia, is a little less forbidding than its neighbor island. It is a mass of reddish-gray rock, three to four miles in length and not more than a mile in breadth, its axis lying at a right angle to the course of the Sardinian coast. The shores rise steeply from the water to a central crest of naked rock, some twelve hundred feet above the sea. The wild shrubbery of the Mediterranean — myrtle, arbutus, lentisk, and box — is sprinkled over the lower slopes, and three or four lines of bright, even green, betray the existence of terraced grain-fields. The house, a plain white quadrangle, two stories in height, is seated on the slope, a quarter of a mile from the landing-place. Behind it there are fields and vineyards, and a fertile garden-valley called the Fontanaccia, which are not visible from Maddalena. The house, in its present commodious form, was built by Victor

Emanuel, during Garibaldi's absence from the island, and without his knowledge. The latter has spent a great deal of money in wresting a few fields from the unwilling rock, and his possession, even yet, has but a moderate value. The greater part of the island can only be used as a range for cattle, and will nourish about a hundred head.

Garibaldi, however, has a great advantage over all the political personages of our day, in the rugged simplicity of his habits. He has no single expensive taste. Whether he sleeps on a spring-mattress or a rock, eats *filet* or fish and macaroni, is all the same to him — nay, he prefers the simpler fare. The persons whom he employs eat at the same table with him, and his guests, whatever their character or title, are no better served. An Englishman who went to Caprera as the representative of certain societies, and took with him, as a present, a dozen of the finest hams, and four dozen bottles of the choicest Château Margaux, was horrified to find, the next day, that each gardener, herdsman, and fisherman at the table had a generous lump of ham on his plate and a bottle of Château Margaux beside it! Whatever delicacy comes to Garibaldi is served in the same way; and of the large sums of money contributed by his friends and admirers, he has retained scarcely anything. All is given to "The Cause."

Garibaldi's three prominent traits of character — honesty, unselfishness, and independence — are so marked, and have been so variously illustrated, that no one in Italy (probably not even Pius IX. or Antonelli) dares to dispute his just claim to them. Add the element of a rare and inextinguishable enthusiasm, and we have the qualities which have made the man. He is wonderfully adapted to be the leader of an impulsive and imaginative people, during those periods when the rush and swell of popular sentiment overbears alike diplomacy and armed force. Such a time came to him in 1860, and the Sicilian and Calabrian campaign will always stand as the climax of his achieve ments. I do not speak of Aspromonte or Mentana now. The history of those attempts cannot be written until Garibaldi's private knowledge of them may be safely made known to the world.

It occurred to me, as I looked upon Caprera, that only an enthusiastic, imaginative nature could be content to live in such an isolation. It is hardly alone disgust with the present state of Italy which keeps him from that seat in the Italian Parliament, to which he is regularly reëlected. He can neither use the tact of the politician, nor employ the expedients of the statesman. He has no patience with adverse opinion, no clear, objective perception of character, no skill to calculate the reciprocal action and cumulative force of political ideas. He simply sees *an end*, and strikes a bee-line for it. As a military commander he is admirable, so long as operations can be conducted under his immediate personal control. In short, he belongs to that small class of great men, whose achievements, fame, and influence rest upon excellence of character and a certain magnetic, infectious warmth of purpose, rather than on high intellectual ability. There may be wiser Italian patriots than he; but there is none so pure and devoted.

From all that was related to me of Garibaldi, I should judge that his weak points are, an incapacity to distinguish between the steady aspirations of his life and those sudden impulses which come to every ardent and passionate nature, and an amiable weakness (perhaps not disconnected from vanity) which enables a certain class of adventurers to misuse and mislead him. His impatience of contrary views naturally subjects him to the influence of the latter class, whose cue it is to flatter and encourage. I know an American general whose reputation has been much damaged in the same way. The three men who were his companions on Caprera during my stay in Maddalena were Basso, who occasionally acts as secretary; he whom I termed the Prophet, a certain Dr. Occhipinti

(Painted-Eyes), a maker of salves and pomatums, and Guzmaroli, formerly a priest, and ignominiously expelled from Garibaldi's own corps. There are other hangers-on, whose presence from time to time in Caprera is a source of anxiety to the General's true friends.

Caprera formerly belonged to an English gentleman, a passionate sportsman, who settled there thirty years ago on account of the proximity of the island to the rich game regions of Sardinia. Garibaldi, dining with this gentleman at Maddalena in 1856, expressed his desire to procure a small island on the coast for his permanent home, whereupon the former offered to sell him a part of Caprera at cost. The remainder was purchased by a subscription made in England, and headed by the Duke of Sutherland. I was informed that Garibaldi's faithful and noble-hearted friends, Colonel and Mrs. Chambers of Scotland, had done much towards making the island productive and habitable, but I doubt whether its rocks yet yield enough for the support of the family.

The General's oldest son, Menotti, his daughter Teresa, her husband Major Canzio, and their five children, Mameli, Anzani, Lincoln, Anita, and John Brown, have their home at Caprera. Menotti is reported to be a good soldier and sailor, but without his father's abilities. The younger son, Ricciotti, spends most of his time in England. Teresa, however, is a female Garibaldi, full of spirit, courage, and enthusiasm. She has great musical talent, and a voice which would give her, were there need, a prima donna's station in any theatre. Her father, also, is an excellent singer, and the two are fond of making the rocks of Caprera resound with his *Inno ai Romani*.

Garibaldi was born at Nice in 1807, and is therefore now sixty-one years old. His simple habits of life have preserved his physical vigor, but he suffers from frequent severe attacks of rheumatism. The wound received at Aspromonte, I was told, no longer occasions him inconvenience

In features and complexion he shows his Lombard and German descent. His name is simply the Italian for *Heribald*, "bold in war." In the tenth century Garibald I. and II. were kings of Bavaria. In fact much of the best blood of Italy is German, however reluctant the Italians may be to acknowledge the fact. The Marquis D'Azeglio, whose memoirs have recently been published, says in his autobiographical sketch, "Educated in the hatred of the *Tedeschi* (Germans), I was greatly astonished to find from my historical studies, that I was myself a *Tedesco*." The "pride of race" really is one of the absurdest of human vanities. I have heard half-breed Mexicans boast of their "Gothic blood," born Englishmen who settled in Virginia talk of their "Southern blood," and all the changes rung on Cavalier, Norman, or Roman ancestry. The Slavic Greeks of Athens call themselves "Hellenes," and Theodore of Abyssinia claimed a direct descent from Solomon. Garibaldi might have become purely Italian in name, as Duca di Calatafimi, if he had chosen. His refusal was scarcely a virtue, because the offer of the title was no temptation.

The strait opening eastward to the sea was not wholly in sight from the Guardia Vecchia, but we saw enough of it to enable us to track the path of Garibaldi's escape, the previous October. An intervening point hid the cove of Stagnatello, where he embarked in his little boat called "The Snipe" (*beccacino*): yet its position was shown by the Punta dell' Arcaccio beyond. On the Maddalena shore we saw the gardens and cottage of the English lady, the "Hermitess of La Moneta," who received him after his passage of the strait, and concealed him the following day. While he was thus concealed, he wrote an account of the adventure for his daughter Teresa, yet so evidently with an eye to its future publication, that its style unconsciously reflects the vein of vanity which runs through his character. Before leaving his imprisonment at Varignano, he gave permission to the Frau von S——, an intimate friend, to publish a

German translation, from which I take the chief part of the narrative The Italian original has not yet been published.

Garibaldi, who speaks of himself in the third person, as "The Solitary," left his house on the evening of the 14th of October (1867), accompanied by two friends, Frosciante and Barberini, and a boatman whom he calls Giovanni. They descended through the valley of the Fontanaccia to the cove of Stagnatello, off which, in the strait, the Italian war-steamers lay at anchor. What followed must be given in his own words: —

"Having reached the wall" (at the bottom of the cultivated fields of the Fontanaccia), "the Solitary took off his poncho, and exchanged his white hat for a cap of his son, Menotti. He gave the garments, which he had removed, to Barberini, and after he had convinced himself that there was no one on the other side of the wall, he climbed upon it, and sprang down, with an astonishing activity.

"A memory of his adventurous youth inspired him, and he felt himself twenty years younger. Besides, were not his sons and his companions in arms already fighting the mercenaries of the priestly power? Could he keep quiet? — content himself with the pruning of his trees, and lead the shameful life of the *moderati?* When the Solitary was fortunately over the wall, he said to Barberini: 'It is still too bright; we will wait a little while here, and smoke half a cigar.' Thereupon he drew a match-box — it was a treasured souvenir of the amiable Lady S. — out of his left pocket, used it, and then offered his lighted 'cavour' to his companion, who had a cigarette in readiness. The Solitary is accustomed to cut these long, black Tuscan cigars through the middle, and only smoke half a one at a time.

"Soon the nightly shadows began to obscure the atmosphere, but in the east a faint gleam made itself seen as the herald of the approaching queen of night.

"'Within three-quarters of an hour the moon will have risen behind the mountains,' remarked the Solitary; 'we dare not longer delay.'

"Both men arose and betook themselves to the little harbor. Giovanni was there at his post, and with his and Barberini's help, the *beccacino* was soon launched upon the water. This is our smallest boat, designed for duck-shooting, and so flat that the one person who has room therein must lie upon the bottom and propel it with a paddle. In a moment the Solitary took his place, lying flat upon his poncho. After Giovanni had pushed the light vessel into the sea, and convinced himself that everything was properly arranged, he himself got into the *becca*, a boat built exactly like the *beccacino*, only of greater dimensions, and rowed, singing loudly, in the direction of the yacht.

"'Halt! who goes there?' called out the marines of the war-vessels, degraded to *alguazils*, to police-servants, hailing the boat of the Sardinian, who, meanwhile, did not allow himself to be disturbed either in his song or his journey.

"But when a third challenge came to his ears he answered: 'I am going on board!' for, however without result the musket-shots might be in the darkness, they never fail to strike an inexperienced man with terror. The Solitary, now propelling his *beccacino* with strokes, now with a small paddle, as is customary with the American canoes, followed his course along the shore of Paviano, between the cove of Stagnatello and the cape of Arcaccio; and verily the humming-bird, fluttering around the fragrant flowers of the torrid zone, and sipping their honey in the manner of the industrious bee, is more noisy than was the light *beccacino*, as it rapidly shot over the bosom of the Tyrrhene sea. Arrived at the Punta dell' Arcaccio, the Solitary recognized the faithful Froscianti among the lofty masses of stone. 'Nothing new as far as the rocks of Arcaccio,' whispered the latter from a distance.

Then I am safe!' replied the Solitary, directing his boat with increasing swiftness past the steep cliffs, until he reached a point whence he could see the little Rabbit Isle (the southernmost of three which inclose the harbor of Stagnatello) and then struck out boldly on the sea, in a northwestern direction.

"As the Solitary perceived how fast the moonlight increased, he paddled more rapidly, and, driven by the sirocco, his boat passed the Strait de la Moneta with a swiftness which a steamer might have envied.

"By moonlight and seen at a certain distance, each rock rising out of the sea more or less resembles a vessel, and since the commander of the Ratazzi squadron had laid a requisition upon all the barks of Maddalena in order to increase the number of boats with which he besieged Caprera, it appeared as if the little archipelago of Moneta swarmed with shallops and boats, all for the purpose of hindering *one* man in the performance of his duty.

"As soon as the Solitary had reached the little island of Giardinelli, off the northeastern coast of Maddalena, he turned the *beccacino* into the labyrinth of rocky reefs, which lift themselves like a bulwark along the shore, and from out this secure concealment he sharply inspected the coast, stretching before him in the light of the moon.

"When the Solitary found himself near the island of Giardinelli, he saw that there were three different ways by which he could reach the channel separating it from Maddalena: by water, paddling around it either on the northern or the southern side, or by landing and crossing the island on foot. After full consideration, he determined to try the latter plan.

"Whether it was owing to the skill of the boatman of the *beccacino*, or the neglect of the unsuspicious, sleeping sentinels, I will not discuss; but this is certain, that the Solitary landed upon Giardinelli, not only with a whole skin, but without being disturbed by a single 'Who goes there?'

Yet he had scarcely hauled his skiff ashore before he noticed that there were many impediments in his way to the channel; since the island, which serves as a pasture to the cattle of Maddalena, is divided into several fields, all of which are inclosed by high walls, covered with thorny shrubs.

"When, after many detours and much break-neck climbing, the Solitary was about to pass the last of these walls, he imagined that he saw on the other side a row of crouching sailors. If this were no optical delusion, it would not have surprised him in the least, since it had been reported to him on Caprera, that several seamen and soldiers had landed on the island in the course of the day. The loss of time, which this circumstance occasioned to the Solitary explained also to him, why two of his friends, whom he should have found near the channel, were not at their posts.

"It was not until ten o'clock, and after he had looked very sharply about him, that the Solitary undertook to cross the shallow arm of the sea which divides Giardinelli from Maddalena. He had not taken ten steps when loud calls from the watching war-vessels, accompanied with musket-shots, were heard — but this did not disconcert the Solitary in his zealous passage through the salt flood. He soon had the critical passage behind him, and set foot upon Maddalena. But a very fatiguing way was still before him, for his boots, filled with water, creaked and incommoded him on the uneven ground.

"When, finally, the sight of the house of Mrs. C. showed the Solitary the vicinity of a hospitable refuge, he strode more cautiously forward, through fear that the villa might be surrounded by spies; and only when a cloud covered the moon, did he dare to knock lightly upon one of the windows with his Scotch stick. Mrs. C., however, had had faith in the Solitary's lucky star. Advised in advance of his plan, she had been keenly listening to his footsteps, so that at the first tap on the window, she hurried from the door, and welcomed her old neighbor with her accustomed gracious smile."

All the next day Garibaldi remained concealed in the English lady's cottage. The following night he crossed from the northern shore of Maddalena to Sardinia, where his friends had a sloop in readiness. In three or four days more he was in Tuscany, and the Italian Government was astounded at his appearance in Florence before his escape from Caprera had been discovered by the blockading squadron.

While upon the rocky summits of Maddalena, we made search for the former dwellings of the inhabitants, but became bewildered in the granite labyrinth, and failed to find them. The present village on the shore owes its existence to Nelson. Previous to his day those waters were swept by Barbary corsairs, and the people of the island, being without protection, lived almost like troglodytes, in rude hovels constructed among the rocks. Nelson, while in the Mediterranean, at the end of the last century, made Maddalena one of his stations, and encouraged the inhabitants to come forth from their hiding-places. On the altar of the church in the town which they then began to build there are still the silver candlesticks which he presented. This, and Napoleon's previous attempt to gain possession of the island, are the two incidents which connect Maddalena with history.

We made a few other scrambles during our stay, but they simply repeated the barren pictures we already knew by heart. Although, little by little, an interest in the island was awakened, the day which was to bring the steamer from Porto Torres was hailed by us almost as a festival. But the comedy (for such it began to seem) was not yet at an end. I had procured the return tickets to Leghorn, and was standing in Remigia's door, watching the pensioners as they dozed in the shade, when two figures appeared at the end of the little street. One was Painted-Eyes, the maker of salves, and I was edified by seeing him suddenly turn when he perceived me, and retrace his steps. The other, who came forward, proved to be one of Garibaldi's stanchest veterans, — a man who had been in his service twenty-five years, in Montevideo, Rome, America, China, and finally in the Tyrol.

"Where is the man who was with you?" I asked.

"He was coming to the locanda," said he; "but when he saw you, he left me without explaining why."

The veteran knew so much of what had happened that I told him the rest. He was no less grieved than surprised. His general, he said, had never acted so before; he had never refused to see any stranger, even though he came without letters, and he was at a loss to account for it.

There was a stir among the idlers on the quay; a thread of smoke arose above the rocky point to the westward, and — welcome sight! — the steamer swept up and anchored in the roadstead. La Remigia, who had been unremitting in her attentions, presented a modest bill, shook hands with us heartily, and Red-head, who was in waiting with his boat, carried us speedily on board. The steamer was not to leave for two hours more, but now the certainty of escape was a consolation. The few islanders we had known parted from us like friends, and even the boatman returned to the deck on purpose to shake hands, and wish us a pleasant voyage. I found myself softening towards Maddalena, after all.

In one of the last boats came the same Occhipinti again, accompanied by Guzmaroli, the ex-priest. The former was bound for Leghorn, and the prospect of having him for a fellow-passenger was not agreeable. He avoided meeting us, went below, and kept very quiet during the passage. I felt sure, although the supposition was disparaging to Garibaldi, that this man was partly responsible for the answer I had received.

A fresh breeze blew through the Strait of Bonifacio, and we soon lost sight of the rocks which had been the scene of our three days' Robinsoniad. The only other passenger, by a singular coincidence, proved to be "the Hermitess of La Moneta," as she is called on Maddalena, — the widow of the gentleman who sold Caprera to Garibaldi, and herself one of the General's most trusted friends. Through her, the island acquired a new interest. In the outmost house on the spur which forms the harbor lay an English captain, eighty years old, and ill; in the sterile glen to the north lived another Englishman alone among his books and rare pictures; and under a great rock, two miles to the eastward, was a lonely cottage, opposite Caprera, where this lady has lived for thirty years.

In the long twilight, as the coast of Corsica sped by, we heard the story of those thirty years. They had not dulled the keen, clear intellect of the lady, nor made less warm one human feeling in her large heart. We heard of travels in Corsica on horseback nearly forty years ago; of lunching with bandits in the mountains; of fording the floods and sleeping in the caves of Sardinia; of farm-life (if it can be so called) on Caprera, and of twenty years passed in the cottage of La Moneta, without even a journey to the fishing-village. Then came other confidences, which must not be repeated, but as romantic as anything in the stories of the Middle Ages — yet in all, there was no trace of morbid feeling, of unused affection, of regret for the years that seemed lost to us. Verily, though these words should reach her eyes, I must say, since the chances of life will scarcely bring us together again, that the freshness and sweetness with which she had preserved so many noble womanly qualities in solitude, was to me a cheering revelation of the innate excellence of human nature.

"Yet," she said, at the close, "I would never advise any one to attempt the life I have led. Such a seclusion is neither natural nor healthy. One may read, and one may think; but the knowledge lies in one's mind like an inert mass, and only becomes vital when it is actively communicated or compared. This mental inertness or deadness is even harder to bear than the absence of society. But there always comes a time when we need the face of a friend — the time that comes to all. No, it is not good to be alone."

After all, we had not come to Maddalena in vain. We had made the acquaintance of a rare and estimable nature — which is always a lasting gain, in the renewed faith it awakens. The journey, which had seemed so wearisome in anticipation, came rapidly to an end, and there was scarcely a regret left for Caprera when we parted with the Hermitess of Maddalena at Leghorn, the next afternoon. A few days afterwards she sent me the original manuscript of Garibaldi's "Hymn to the Romans," which he had presented to her. I shall value it as much for the giver's, as for the writer's sake.

Our friends in Florence received the news of our adventure with astonishment and mortification; but, up to the time of this present writing. the matter remains a mystery. One conjecture was made, yet it seemed scarcely credible, — that Garibaldi was getting up a new expedition against Rome.

A short time after my trip to Maddalena, a German professor of note, who had a special interest in communicating personally with Garibaldi, made the journey from Germany for that sole purpose, and was similarly repelled.

IN THE TEUTOBURGER FOREST.

No part of Germany is so monotonous and unlovely as that plain which the receding waves of the North Sea left behind them. The stranger who lands at Bremen or Hamburg enters upon a dead, sandy level, where fields of lean and starveling cereals interchange with heathery moorlands and woods of dwarfish pine. Each squat, ugly farmhouse looks as lonely as if there were no others in sight; the villages are collections of similar houses, huddled around a church-tower so thick and massive that it seems to be the lookout of a fortress. The patient industry of the people is here manifested in its plainest and sturdiest forms, and one cannot look for the external embellishments of life, where life itself is so much of an achievement.

As we advance southward the scenery slowly improves. The soil deepens and the trees rise; the purple heather clings only to the occasional sandy ridges, between which greenest meadows gladden our eyes. Groves of oak make their appearance; brooks wind and sparkle among alder thickets; the low undulations swell into broad, gently rounded hills, and at last there is a wavy blue line along the horizon. If you are travelling from Hanover to Minden, some one will point out a notch, or gap, in that rising mountain outline, and tell you that it is the Porta Westphalica — the gateway by which the river Weser issues from the Teutoburger Forest.

I had already explored nearly every nook of Middle Germany, from the Hartz to the Odenwald; yet this — the storied ground of the race — was still an unknown region. Although so accessible, especially from the celebrated watering-place of Pyrmont, whence any of its many points of interest may be reached in a day's drive, I found little about it in the guide-books, and less in books of travel. Yet here, one may say, is the starting-point of German history. Hermann and Wittekind are the two great representatives of the race, in its struggles against Roman and Christian civilization; and the fact that it adopted both the one and the other, and through them developed into its later eminence, does not lessen the value of those names. Indeed, the power of resistance measures the power of acceptance and assimilation.

It was harvest-time as I sped by rail towards Minden, along the northern base of the mountains. Weeks of drought and heat had forced the fields into premature ripeness, and the lush green meadows were already waiting for the aftermath. About Bückeburg the rye-fields were full of reapers, in an almost extinct costume, — the men in heavy fur caps, loose white over-shirts, and boots reaching to the knee; the women with black head-dress, bodice, and bright scarlet petticoat. These tints of white, scarlet, and black shone splendidly among the sheaves, and the pictures I saw made me keenly regret that progress has rendered mankind so commonplace in costume. When I first tramped through Germany, in 1845, every province had its distinctive dress, and the stamp of the country people was impressed upon the landscapes of their homes; but now a great leveling wave has swept over the country, washing out all these picturesque characteristics, and leaving the universal modern commonplace in their stead. If the latter were graceful, or cheap, or practically convenient, we might accept the change; but it is none of these. Fashion has at last combined ugliness and discomfort in our clothing, and the human race is satisfied.

Soon after leaving Minden the road bends sharply southwards, and enters the Porta Westphalica — a break in the Weser mountains which is abrupt and lofty enough to possess a certain grandeur. The eastern bank rises from the water in a broken, rocky wall to the height of near five hundred feet; the western slants sufficiently to allow foothold for trees, and its summit is two hundred feet higher. The latter is called "Wittekind's Mount," from a tradition that the famous Saxon king once had a fortress upon it. Somewhere in the valley which lies within this Westphalian Gate is the scene of the last battle between Hermann and Germanicus. Although the field of action of both these leaders extended over the greater part of Northern Germany, the chief events which decided their fortunes took place within the narrow circle of these mountains.

I passed through Oeynhausen, — a bright, cheerful watering-place, named after the enterprising baron who drove an artesian shaft to the depth of two thousand feet, and brought a rich saline stream to the surface, — and at Herford, the next station, left the line of rail. I looked in vain for the towers of Enger, a league or so to the west, where Wittekind died as a Christian prince, and where his bones still rest. Before turning aside for Detmold and the hills of the Teutoburger Forest, let me very briefly recall the career of that spiritual successor of Hermann.

Nothing certain is known of Wittekind's descent or early history. We first hear of him as one of the leaders of the Saxons in the invasion of Westphalia, which they undertook in the year 774, while Charlemagne was occupied in subduing the Lombards. Three years later, when this movement was suppressed and the greater part of the Saxon chiefs took the oath of fidelity to the Emperor at Paderborn, Wittekind fled to the court of his brother-in-law, King Siegfried of Jutland. He returned in 778, while Charlemagne was in Spain, driving back the Saracens, and devastated the lands of the Rhine. After carrying on the war with varying success for four years, he finally surprised and almost annihilated the Frank army at the Süntelberg, not far from Hameln, on the Weser. Enraged at his defeat, Charlemagne took a horrible revenge: he executed forty-five hundred Saxons, who were in his hands All the tribes rose in revolt, acknowledged Wittekind as their king, and for three years more continued the desperate struggle, the end of which was a compromise. Wittekind received Christian baptism, was made duke of Saxony, and, according to tradition, governed the people twenty years longer, from his seat at Enger, as a just and humane prince. The Emperor Karl IV. there built him a monument in the year 1377.

At Herford I took my place in the diligence for Detmold, with a horse-dealer for company on the way. It was a journey of three hours, through a very pleasant and beautiful country, lying broad and warm in the shelter of circling mountains, veined with clear, many-branched streams, and wooded with scattered groves of oak and beech. If there was any prominent feature of the scenery, as distinguished from that of other parts of Germany, it was these groves, dividing the bright meadows and the golden slopes of harvest, with their dark, rounded masses of foliage, as in the midland landscapes of England. The hills to the south, entirely clothed with forests, increased in height as we followed their course in a parallel line, and long before we reached Detmold I saw the monument to Hermann, crowning the Grotenburg, a summit more than a thousand feet above the valley.

The little capital was holding its annual horse-fair, yet I had no trouble in finding lodgings at one of its three inns, and should have thought the streets deserted if I had not been told that they were unusually lively. The principality of Lippe has a population of a little more than a hundred thousand, yet none of the appurtenances of a court and state are wanting. There is an old ancestral castle, a modern palace, a theatre, barracks and government buildings — not so large as in Berlin, to be sure, but just as important in the eyes of the people. A stream which comes down from the mountains feeds a broad, still moat, encompassing three sides of the old castle and park beyond which the fairest meadows stretch away to the setting sun. Ducks and geese on the water, children paddling in the shallows, cows coming home from the pastures, and men and women carrying hay or vegetables, suggested a quiet country village rather than a stately *residenz;* but I was very careful not to say so to any Detmolder. The repose and seclusion of the place took hold of my fancy: I walked back and forth, through the same streets and linden-shaded avenues in the long summer evening, finding idyls at every turn; but alas! they floated formlessly by and faded in the sunset.

Detmold is the birthplace of the poet Freiligrath, and I went into the two bookstores to see if they kept his poems — which they did not. Fifty years hence, perhaps, they will have a statue of him. As I sat in my lonely room at the inn, waiting for bedtime, my thoughts went back to that morning by the lake of Zurich, when I first met the banished poet; to pleasant evenings at his house in Hackney; and to the triumphant reception which, at Cologne, a few days before, had welcomed him back to Germany. This was the end of twenty-three years of exile, the beginning of which I remembered. Noble, unselfish, and consistent as his political course had been, had he followed it to his detriment as a poet, or had he bridged the gulf which separates the Muses from party conflicts? That was the question, and it was not so easy to resolve. Poesy will cheer as a friend, but she will not *serve.* She will not be driven from that broad field of humanity, wherein the noise of parties is swallowed up, and the colors of their banners are scarcely to be distinguished. Freiligrath has written the best political poems in the German language, and his life has been the brilliant illustration of his principles; yet I doubt whether "The Dead to the Living" will outlive the "Lion-Ride."

I picked up, however, a description of the Teutoburger Forest, written by the Cantor Sauerländer of Detmold — a little book which no one but a full-blooded Teuton could have written. Fatiguingly minute, conscientious to the last degree, overflowing with love for the subject, exhaustive on all points, whether important or not, the style — or, rather, utter lack of style — so placed the unsuspecting author before the reader's mind, that it was impossible to mistake him, — a mild, industrious, harmless egotist, who talks on and on, and never once heeds whether you are listening to his chatter.

I took him with me, but engaged, in addition, a young gardener of the town, and we set out in the bright, hot morning. My plan for the day embraced the monument to Hermann on the Grotenburg, the conjectured field of the defeat of Varus, and the celebrated Extern Rocks. Cool paths through groves of oak led from the town to the foot of the mountain, having reached which I took out the Cantor, and read: " From this point to the near forest the foot-path mounts by a very palpable grade, wherefore the wanderer will find himself somewhat fatigued, besides suffering (frequently) from the burning rays of the sun, against which, however, it is possible to screen one's self by an umbrella, *for which reason* I would venture to suggest a moderate gait, and observant pauses at various points!" Verily, if his book had been specially prepared for the reigning prince, Paul Friedrich Emil Leopold, he could not have been more considerate.

The fatiguing passage, nevertheless, was surmounted in ten minutes, and thenceforth we were in the shade of the forest. At about two thirds of the height the path came upon a *Hünenring*, or Druid circle, one of the largest in Germany. It is nearly five hundred feet in diameter, with openings on the north and south, and the walls of rough stones are in some places twenty feet high. Large trees are growing upon them. There was another and greater ring around the crest of the mountain, but it has been thrown down and almost obliterated. German antiquarians consider these remains as a sufficient evidence to prove that this is the genuine *Teutoburg*, — the fortress of Teut, or Tuisco, the chief personage of the original Teutonic mythology. They also derive the name of Detmold from "Theotmalle," the place of Teut. There can be no doubt as to the character of the circles, or their great antiquity; and, moreover, to locate the Teutoburg here explains the desperate resistance of the tribes of this region both to Rome and to Charlemagne.

Near the summit I found some traces of the greater circle, many of the stones of which were used, very appropriately, for the foundation of the monument to Hermann. This structure stands in an open, grassy space, inclosed by a young growth of fir-trees. It is still incomplete; but we, who long ago stopped work on the colossal Washington obelisk, have no right to reproach the German people. Thirty years ago the Bavarian sculptor Von Bandel exhibited the design of a statue to Hermann. The idea appealed to that longing for German unity the realization of which seemed then so far distant; societies were formed, collections made, fairs held for the object, and the temple-shaped pedestal, commenced in 1841, was finished in 1846, at a cost of forty thousand thalers. The colossal statue which should crown it demanded an equal sum — two thirds of which, I am told, has been contributed. Parts of the figure have been already cast, and the sculptor, now nearly seventy years old, still hopes to see the dream of his life fulfilled. But the impression has gone abroad that the strength of the winds, sweeping unchecked from the Rhine and from Norway across the Northern Sea, is so great upon this Teutoburger height, that the statue would probably be thrown down, if erected. A committee of architects and engineers has declared that, with proper anchorage, the figure will stand; yet the contributions have ceased.

The design of the temple-base is very simple and massive. On a circular foundation, sixty feet in diameter by eleven in height, stands a structure composed of ten clustered pillars, connected by pointed arches, the outer spans of which are cut to represent stems of oak, while heavy garlands of oak-leaves are set in the triangular interspaces. The first rude beginning of Gothic art is here suggested, not as a growth from the Byzantine and Saracenic schools, but as an autochthonous product. Over the cornice, which is fifty feet above the base, rises a solid hemisphere of masonry, terminating in a ring twenty-five feet in diameter, which is to receive the metal base of the colossus. The latter will be ninety feet in height to the point of the sword, making the entire height of the monument a hundred and eighty-two feet.

I mounted to the summit, and looked over the tops of the forest upon a broad and beautiful panoramic ring of landscape. The well-wooded mountains of the region divided the rich valleys and harvest lands which they inclosed. On all sides except the west they melted away in the summer haze; there, they sank into the tawny Westphalian plain, once the land of marshes, traversed by the legions of Varus. While yonder, beyond the ring of the forest sacred to Teut, the fields were withering and the crops wasting in the sun, here they gave their fullest bounty; here the streams were full, the meadows green, and the land laughed with its abundance. From this point I overlooked all the great battle-fields of Hermann and Wittekind. The mountains do not constitute, as I had supposed, a natural stronghold; but in their heart lies the warmest and most fertile region of Northern Germany.

In the neighboring hostelry there is a plaster model of the waiting statue. Hermann, with the winged helmet upon his head, and clad in a close leathern coat reaching nearly to the knee, is represented as addressing his warriors. The action of the uplifted arm is good, but the left hand rests rather idly upon the shield, instead of unconsciously repeating in the grip of the fingers the energy of the rest of the figure. The face — ideal, of course — is quite as much Roman as Teuton, the nose being aquiline, the eyebrows straight, and the lips very clearly and regularly cut. To me the physiognomy would indicate *dark* hair and beard. I found the body somewhat heavy and ungraceful; but as it was to be seen from below, and in very different dimensions, the effect may be all that is designed.

In the Hall of Busts in the Museum of the Capitol, in Rome, there is a head which has recently attracted the interest of German archæologists. It stands alone among the severe Roman and the exquisitely balanced Grecian heads, like a genial phenomenon of character totally distinct from theirs. When I stood before it, a little puzzled, and wondering at the absurd label of "CECROPS?" affixed to the pedestal, I had not learned the grounds for conjecturing that it may be a portrait of him whom Tacitus calls Arminius; yet I felt that here was a hero, of whom history *must* have some knowledge. It is certainly a blonde head, with abundant locks, a beard sprouting thinly and later than in the South, strong cheek-bones, a nose straight but not Grecian, and lips which somehow express good fellowship, vanity, and the habit of command. The sculptor Bandel made a great mistake in not boldly accepting the conjecture as fact, and giving Hermann this head. Dr. Emil Braun considers that it is undoubtedly a bust of one of the young German chiefs who were educated at the court of Augustus; and he adds, very truly, "If this can be proven, it will be of great importance as a testimony of the intellectual development of the German race, even in those early times."

Hermann, who was born in the year 16 B. C., must have gone to Rome as a boy, during the campaigns of Drusus and Tiberius in Northern Germany. He became not only a citizen, but a Roman knight, was intrusted with the command of a German legion, and fought in Pannonia. He acquired the Latin tongue, and acquainted himself with the military and civil science of the Romans. Had the wise and cautious policy of Tiberius been followed, he might have died as a Consul of the Empire; but the brutal rule of Varus provoked the tribes to resistance, and Hermann became a German again. He turned against Rome the tactics he had learned in her service, enticed Varus away from the fortified line of the Rhine, across the marshes of the Lippe, and on the southern slope of the Teutoburger Forest, in a three days' battle fought amid the autumn storms, annihilated the Roman army of fifty thousand men. Well might the Imperial city tremble, and the old Augustus cry out to the shade of the slain commander, "Varus, Varus, give me back my legions!"

For five years the sovereignty of Hermann and the independence of his people were not disturbed. But after the death of Augustus, in the year 14 A. D., Germanicus determined to restore the prestige of the Roman arms. In the mean time Hermann had married Thusnelda, daughter of Segestus, another chief of the Cheruski, who had reclaimed her by force in consequence of a quarrel, and was then besieged by his son-in-law. Segestus called the Romans to his aid, and delivered Thusnelda into their hands to grace, two years later, the triumph decreed to Germanicus. Hermann, infuriated by the loss of a wife whom he loved, summoned the tribes to war, and the Roman commander collected an army of eighty thousand men. The latter succeeded in burying the bones of Varus and his legions, and was then driven back with great loss. Returning in the year 16 with a still larger army, he met the undaunted Hermann on the Weser, near Hameln. The terrible battle fought there, and a second near the Porta Westphalica, were claimed as victories by the

Romans, yet were followed by a retreat to the fortresses on the Rhine. Germanicus was preparing a third campaign when he was recalled by the jealous Tiberius. The Romans never again penetrated into this part of Germany.

Hermann might have founded a nation but for the fierce jealousy of the other chieftains of his race. He was victorious in the civil wars which ensued, but was waylaid and murdered by members of his own family in the year 21. His short life of thirty-seven years is an unbroken story of heroism. Even Tacitus, to whom we are indebted for these particulars, says of him: "He was undoubtedly the liberator of Germany, having dared to grapple with the Roman power, not in its beginnings, like other kings and commanders, but in the maturity of its strength. He was not always victorious in battle, but in war he was never subdued. He still lives in the songs of the Barbarians, unknown to the annals of the Greeks, who only admire that which belongs to themselves — nor celebrated as he deserves by the Romans, who, in praising the olden times, neglect the events of the later years."

Leaving the monument, my path followed the crest of the mountain for two or three miles, under a continuous roof of beech. Between the smooth, clean boles I looked down upon the hot and shining valley, where the leaves hung motionless on the trees, but up on the shaded ridge of the hills there was a steady, grateful breeze. The gardener was not a very skillful guide, and only brought me to the *Winnefeld* (Winfield) after a roundabout ramble. I found myself at the head of a long, bare slope, falling to the southwest, where it terminated in three dells, divided by spurs of the range. The town of Lippspringe, in the distance, marked the site of the fountains mentioned by Tacitus. The *Winnefeld* lies on the course which an army would take, marching from those springs to assault the Teutoburg, and the three dells, wooded then as now, would offer rare chances of ambuscade and attack. There is no difficulty in here locating the defeat of Varus. That the Teuton victory was not solely the result of Hermann's military skill is proven by the desperate bravery with which his warriors confronted the legions of Germanicus five years later.

Standing upon this famous battle-field, one cannot but recall the subsequent relations of Germany and Rome, which not only determined the history of the Middle Ages, but set in action many of the forces which shape the present life of the world. The seat of power was transplanted, it was exercised by another race, but its elements were not changed. Hermann, a knight of Rome, learned in her service how to resist her, and it was still the Roman mind which governed Italy while she was a defiant dependency of the German Empire. Charlemagne took up the uncompleted work of Germanicus, and was the true avenger of Varus after nearly eight hundred years. The career of Hermann, though so splendidly heroic, does not mark the beginning of Germany; the race only began to develop after its complete subjection to the laws and arts and ideas of Rome. Thus the marvelous Empire triumphed at last.

I descended the bare and burning slopes of the mountain into a little valley, plunged into a steep forest beyond, and, after plodding wearily for an hour or more, found myself, as nearly as I could guess, on the banks of a brook that descends to the town of Horn. The gardener seemed at fault, yet insisted on leading me contrary to my instinct of the proper course. We had not gone far, however, when a mass of rock, rising like a square tower above the wooded ridge to the eastward, signaled our destination; and my discomfited guide turned about silently, and made towards it, I following, through thickets and across swamps, until we reached the highway.

The Extern Rocks (*Externsteine*) have a double interest for the traveller. They consist of five detached masses of gray sandstone, one hundred and twenty-five feet in height, irregularly square in form, and with diameters varying from thirty to fifty feet. They are planted on a grassy slope, across the mouth of a glen opening from the mountains. Only a few tough shrubs hang from the crevices in their sides, but the birch-trees on the summits shoot high into the air and print their sprinkled leaves on the sky. The hills of the Teutoburger Forest are rounded and cliffless, and the same formation, it is said, does not reappear elsewhere.

In the base of the most northern of these rocks a chapel, thirty-six feet long, has been hewn — but when, or by whom, are matters of conjecture. Some very imaginative antiquaries insist that the Romans captured by Hermann were here sacrificed to the pagan gods; others find evidence that the place was once dedicated to the worship of Mithras (the sun); but the work must probably be ascribed to the early Teutonic Christians. The rocks are first mentioned in a document of the year 1093. On the outer wall of the chapel there is a tablet of sculpture, in high relief, sixteen feet by twelve, which is undoubtedly the earliest work of the kind in Germany. Its Byzantine character is not to be mistaken, and, judging by the early Christian sculptures and mosaics in Italy, it may be as old as the ninth or tenth century. The tablet is in three compartments, the lower one representing the Fall of Man, the centre the Descent from the Cross, while at the top the Almighty receives the soul of the Son in his arms, and holds forth the Banner of the Cross. Although mutilated, weather-beaten, and partly veiled in obscuring moss, the pathos of the sculpture makes itself felt through all the grotesqueness of its forms. Goethe, who saw it, says: "The head of the sinking Saviour leans against the countenance of the mother, and is gently supported by her hand — a beautiful, reverent touch of expression which we find in no other representation of the subject." The drapery also, though stiff, has yet the simplicity and dignity which we so rarely find in modern art.

Two of the rocks may be ascended by means of winding stairways cut in their sides. On the summit of the first there is a level platform, with a stone table in the centre — probably the work of the monks, to whom the place belonged in the Middle Ages. By climbing the central rock, and crossing a bridge to the next, one reaches a second chapel, eighteen feet in length, with a rock-altar at the further end. It is singular that there is no record of the origin of this remarkable work. We know that the spirit of the Teutonic mythology lived long after the introduction of Christianity, and the monks may have here found and appropriated one of its sacred places.

By the time I reached the town of Horn, a mile or so from the base of the mountains, I was too scorched and weary to go further afoot, and, while waiting dinner in the guests'-room of the inn, looked about for a means of conveyance. Three or four stout *Philister*, drinking beer at an adjoining table, were bound for Steinheim, which was on my way; and the landlord said, "An 'extra post' will be expensive, but these gentlemen might make room for you in their carriage."

They looked at each other and at me. "We are already *seven*," said one, "and must be squeezed as it is."

"By no means," I replied to the landlord; "get me an extra post."

Both vehicles were ready at the same time. In the meantime I had entered into conversation with one of the party, — a bright, cheerful young man, — and told him that I should be glad to have company on the way.

"Why did you engage an extra post?" they all exclaimed. "It is expensive! we are only *five*; you might have gone with us, — we could easily make room for you!"

Yet, while making these exclamations, they picked out the oldest and least companionable of their party, and bundled him into my "expensive" carriage! I never saw anything more coolly done. I had meant to have the agreeable, not the stupid member, but was caught, and could not help myself. However, I managed to extract a little amusement from my companion as we went along. He was a Detmolder, after confessing which he remarked, —

"Now I knew where *you* came from before you had spoken ten words."

"Indeed! Where, then?"

"Why, from Bielefeld!"

My laughter satisfied the old fellow that he had guessed correctly, and thenceforth he talked so much about Bielefeld that it finally became impossible to conceal my ignorance of the place. I set him down in Steinheim, dismissed the extra post, and, as the evening was so bright and balmy, determined to go another stage on foot. I had a letter to a young nobleman, whose estate lay near a village some four or five miles further on the road to Höxter. The small boy whom I took as guide was communicative; the scenery was of the sweetest pastoral character; the mellow light of sunset struck athwart the golden hills of harvest, the lines of alder hedge, and the meadows of winding streams, and I loitered along the road full of delight in the renewal of my old pedestrian freedom.

It was dusk when I reached the village. The one cottage inn did not promise much comfort; but the baron's castle was beyond, and I was too tired to go further. The landlord was a petty magistrate, evidently one of the pillars of the simple village society; and he talked well and intelligently, while his daughter cooked my supper. The bare rooms were clean and orderly, and the night was so warm that no harm was done when the huge globe of feathers under which I was expected to sleep rolled off the bed and lay upon the floor until morning.

Sending my letter to the castle, I presently received word that the young baron was absent from home, but that his mother would receive me. As I emerged from the shadows of the narrow village street into the breezeless, burning air of the morning, the whole estate lay full and fair in view — a thousand acres of the finest harvest land, lying in the lap of a bowl-shaped valley, beyond which rose a wooded mountain range. In the centre of the landscape a group of immemorial oaks and lindens hid the castle from view, but a broad and stately linden avenue connected it with the highway. There were scores of reapers in the fields, and their dwellings, with the barns and stables, almost formed a second village. The castle — a square mass of building, with a paved court-yard in the centre — was about three hundred years old; but it had risen upon the foundations of a much older edifice.

The baroness met me at the door with her two daughters, and ushered me into a spacious room, the ceiling of which, low and traversed by huge beams of oak, was supported by a massive pillar in the centre. The bare oaken floor was brightly polished; a gallery of ancestral portraits decked the walls, but the furniture was modern and luxurious. After a friendly scolding for not claiming the castle's hospitality the night before, one of the daughters brought refreshments, just as a *Burgfräulein* of the Middle Ages might have done, except that she did not taste the goblet of wine before offering it. The ladies then conducted me through a range of apartments, every one of which contained some picturesque record of the past. The old building was pervaded with a mellow atmosphere of age and use; although it was not the original seat of the family, their own ancestral heirlooms had adapted themselves to its physiognomy, and seemed to continue its traditions. Just enough of modern taste was visible to suggest home comforts and conveniences; all else seemed as old as the Thirty Years' War.

After inspecting the house, we issued upon the *pleasaunce* — a high bosky space resting on the outer wall of the castle, and looking down upon the old moat, still partially full of water. It was a labyrinth of shady paths, of arbors, with leaf-enframed windows opening towards the mountains, and of open, sunny spaces rich with flowers. The baroness called my attention to two splendid magnolia-trees, and a clump of the large Japanese *polygonum*. "This," she said, pointing to the latter, "was given to my husband by Dr. von Siebold, who brought it from Japan; the magnolias came from seeds planted forty years ago." They were the most northern specimens of the trees I had found upon the continent of Europe. But the oaks and lindens around the castle were more wonderful than these exotic growths. Each one was "a forest waving on a single stem."

The young baron was not expected to return before the evening, and I was obliged to continue my journey, though every feature of the place wooed me to stay. "But at least," urged the hostess, "you must visit my husband's twin brother, who is still living at the old *burg*. We were going to send for him to-day, and we will send you along." This was a lift on my way; and, moreover, it was a pleasure to meet a gentleman of whom I had heard so much — a thinker, a man of scientific culture, and a poet, yet unknown to the world in either of these characters.

The youngest daughter of the house made ready to accompany me, and presently a light open wagon, drawn by a span of ponies, came to the door After my yesterday's tramp in the forest it was a delightful change. The young lady possessed as much intelligence as refinement, and with her as a guide the rich scenery through which we passed assumed a softer life, a more gracious sentiment. From the ridge before us rose the lofty towers of a church attached to an extinct monastery, the massive buildings of which are now but half tenanted by some farmers; on the right a warm land of grain stretched away to the Teutoburger Forest; on the left, mountains clothed with beech and oak basked in the sun. We passed the monastery, crossed a wood, and dropped into a wild, lonely valley among the hills. Here the *Oldenburg*, as it is called, already towered above us, perched upon the bluff edge of a mountain cape. It was a single square mass of the brownest masonry, seventy or eighty feet high, with a huge, steep, and barn-like roof. It dominated alone over the beech woods; no other human habitation was in sight.

When we reached the summit, however, I found that the old building was no longer tenanted. Behind it lay a pond, around which were some buildings connected with the estate, and my fair guide led the way to the further door of a house in which the laboring people lived. She went to seek her uncle, while I waited in a room so plainly furnished that an American farmer would have apologized for it. Presently I was summoned up stairs, where the old baron caught me by both hands, and pressed me down into his own arm-chair before it was possible to say a word. His room was as simple as the first; but books and water-color drawings showed the tastes of its occupant.

It was truly the head of a poet upon which I looked. Deep-set, spiritual eyes shone under an expansive brow, over which fell some thin locks of silky gray hair; the nose was straight and fine, with delicate, sensitive nostrils, and there was a rare expression of sweetness and purity in the lines of the mouth. It needed no second glance to see that the old man was good and wise and noble and perfectly lovable. My impulse was to sit on a stool at his feet, as I have seen a young English poet sitting at the feet of good Barry Cornwall, and talk to him with my arms resting upon his knees. But he drew his chair close beside me, and took my hand from time to time, as he talked; so that it was not long before our thoughts ran together, and each anticipated the words of the other.

"Now tell me about my friend," said he. "We were inseparable as students, and as long as our paths lay near each other. They say that three are too many for friendship, but we twin-brothers only counted as one in the bond. We had but one heart and one mind, except in matters of science, and there it was curious to see how far apart we sometimes were. Ah, what rambles we had together, in Germany and on the Alps! I remember once we were merry in the Thüringian Forest, for there was wine enough and to spare; so we buried a bottle deep among the rocks. We had forgotten all about it when, a year or two afterwards, we happened all three to come back to the spot, and there we dug up the bottle, and drank what seemed to be the best wine in the world. I wonder if he remembers that I wrote a poem about it."

Then we walked out through the beech woods to a point of the mountain whence there was a view of the monastery across the wild valley. "It was but yesterday," said the old baron, "since I stood here with my brother — both little boys — and listened to the chimes of vesper. There were monks in the old building then. What is life, after all? I don't understand it. My brother was a part of myself. We had but one life; he married and his home was mine; his children are mine still. We were born together; three years ago he died, and I should have died at the same time. How is it that I live?"

He turned to me with tears in his eyes, and a sad, mysterious wonder in his voice. I could only shake my head, for he who could have answered the question would be able to solve all the enigmas of life. The man seemed to me like a semi-ghost, attached to the earth by only half the relation of other men. "I live here as you see," he continued; "but I am not lonely. All my life of seventy-three years I have been laying aside interest for this season. I have still my thoughts and questions, as well as my memories. I am part of the great design which I have always found in the world and in man, and I have learned enough to accept what I cannot fathom."

These were brave and wise words, and they led on to others, as we walked in the shadows of the beech woods, until summoned to dinner. The baron's niece superintended the meal, and a farmer's daughter waited at the table. I was forced to decline a kind invitation to return to the castle with the old man, and spend the night there — for I could take but a brief holiday in the Teutoburger Forest. Then they proposed taking me to the town of Höxter, on the Weser, whither I was bound; but while I was trying to dissuade the young lady from a further drive of ten miles, the sound of a horn suddenly broke the solitude of the woods. A post-carriage came in sight, drove to the door, and from it descended the *Kreisrichter* (District Judge), on a visit to the old baron. As I noticed that he intended remaining for the night, I proposed taking the carriage by which he had arrived, though I should have preferred making the journey on foot.

It was so arranged, and half an hour afterwards I took leave of the noble old man, with the promise — which all the battle-fields of Hermann and Wittekind would not have suggested to me — of some day returning to the Teutoburger Forest. Leaving the mountains behind me, I followed a road which slowly descended to the Weser through the fairest winding valleys, and before sunset reached Höxter. A mile further, at the bend of the river, is the ancient Abbey of Corvey, where, in the year 1515, the first six books of the Annals of Tacitus, up to that time lost, were discovered. The region which that great historian has alone described, thus preserved and gave back to the world a portion of his works.

HANNAH THURSTON

A STORY OF AMERICAN LIFE

BY

BAYARD TAYLOR

AUTHOR'S REVISED EDITION

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1862, by
G. P. PUTNAM,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

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TO GEORGE P. PUTNAM.

My Dear Friend:

When I decided to write a brief letter of Dedication for this book, and thus evade a Preface—since all that need be said to the reader can be said just as well, if not better, to the friend—I began to cast about in my mind for the particular individual willing to stand by my side in this new literary venture, deserving of all the fleeting compliment which possible success may give, and too secure, in the shelter of his own integrity, to be damaged by whatever condemnation may fall upon the author. While various cherished names arose, one after the other, the cab in which I rode and meditated passed down Regent Street into Waterloo Place, and my eyes fell upon that door, where, seventeen years ago, I entered for the first time one dreary March afternoon—entered as a timid, desponding stranger, and issued thence with the cheer and encouragement which I owed to your unexpected kindness. The

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I am aware how much is required for the construction of a good work of fiction—how much I venture in entering upon a field so different from those over which I have hitherto been ranging. It is, however, the result of no sudden whim, no ambition casually provoked. The plan of the following story has long been familiar to my mind. I perceived peculiarities of development in American life which have escaped the notice of novelists, yet which are strikingly adapted to the purposes of fiction, both in the originality and occasional grotesqueness of their external manifestation, and the deeper questions which lie beneath the surface. I do not, therefore, rest the interest of the book on its slender plot, but on the fidelity with which it represents certain types of character and phases of society. That in it which most resembles caricature is oftenest the transcript of actual fact, and there are none of the opinions uttered by the various characters which may not now and then be heard in almost any country community of the

Northern and Western States. Whether those opinions are to be commended or condemned, the personages of the story are alone responsible for them. I beg leave, once more, to protest against the popular superstition that an author must necessarily represent himself in one form or another. I am neither Mr. Woodbury, Mr. Waldo, nor Seth Wattles.

This is all I have to say. The intelligent reader will require no further explanation, and you no further assurance of how steadily and faithfully I am your friend,

BAYARD TAYLOR.

WOOD'S HOTEL, LONDON,
August, 1863.

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HANNAH THURSTON

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH WE ATTEND THE GREAT SEWING-UNION AT PTOLEMY

Never before had the little society of Ptolemy known so animated a season. For an inland town, the place could not at any time be called dull, and, indeed, impressed the stranger with a character of exuberant life, on being compared with other towns in the neighborhood. Mulligansville on the east, Anacreon on the north, and Atauga City on the west, all fierce rivals of nearly equal size, groaned over the ungodly cheerfulness of its population, and held up their hands whenever its name was mentioned. But, at the particular time whereof we write—November, 1852—the ordinarily mild flow of life in Ptolemy was unusually quickened by the formation of the great Sewing-Union. This was a new social phenomenon, which many persons looked upon as a long stride in the direction of the Millennium. If, however, you should desire an opposite view, you have but to mention the subject to any Mulligansvillain, any Anacreontic, or any Atauga citizen. The simple fact is, that the various sewing-circles of Ptolemy—three in number, and working for very different ends—had agreed to hold their meetings at the same time and place, and labor in company. It was a social arrangement which substituted one large gathering, all the more lively and interesting from its mixed constitution, in place of three small and somewhat monotonous circles. The plan was a very sensible one, and it must be said, to the credit of Ptolemy, that there are very few communities of equal size in the country where it could have been carried into effect.

First, the number of members being taken as the test of relative importance, there was the Ladies' Sewing-Circle, for raising a fund to assist in supporting a Mission at Jutnapore. It was drawn mainly from the congregation of the Rev. Lemuel Styles. Four spinsters connected with this circle had a direct interest in four children of the converted Telugu parents. There was a little brown Eliza Clancy, an Ann Parrott, and a Sophia Stevenson, in that distant Indian sheepfold; while the remaining spinster, Miss Ruhaney Goodwin, boasted of a (spiritual) son, to whom she had given the name of her deceased brother, Elisha. These ladies were pleasantly occupied in making three mousseline-de-laine frocks, an embroidered jacket, and four half-dozens of pocket handkerchiefs for their little Telugu children, and their withered bosoms were penetrated with a secret thrill of the lost maternal instinct, which they only dared to indulge in connection with such pious and charitable labors.

The second Circle was composed of ladies belonging to the Cimmerian church, who proposed getting up a village fair, the profits of which should go towards the repair of the Parsonage, now sadly dilapidated. Mrs. Waldo, the clergyman's wife, was at the head of this enterprise. Her ambition was limited to a new roof and some repairs in the plastering, and there was a good prospect that the Circle would succeed in raising the necessary sum. This, however, was chiefly owing to Mrs. Waldo's personal popularity. Ptolemy was too small a place, and the Cimmerians too insignificant a sect, for the Church, out of its own resources, to accomplish much for its shepherd.

Lastly, there was the Sewing-Circle for the Anti-Slavery

Fair, which was limited to five or six families. For the previous ten years, this little community, strong in the faith, had prepared and forwarded their annual contribution, not discouraged by the fact that the circulation of their beloved special organ did not increase at the Ptolemy Post-Office, nor that their petitions to Congress were always referred, and never acted upon. They had outlived the early persecution, and could no longer consider themselves martyrs. The epithets "Infidel!" "Fanatic!" and "Amalgamationist!" had been hurled at them until their enemies had ceased, out of sheer weariness, and they were a little surprised at finding that their importance diminished in proportion as their neighbors became tolerant. The most earnest and enthusiastic of the little band were Gulielma Thurston, a Quaker widow, and her daughter Hannah; Mrs. Merryfield, the wife of a neighboring farmer, and Seth Wattles, a tailor in the village. Notwithstanding the smallness of this circle, its members, with one exception, were bright, clear-minded, cheerful women, and as the suspicions of their infidelity had gradually been allayed (mainly by their aptness in Biblical quotation), no serious objection was made to their admittance into the Union.

The proposition to unite the Circles came originally, we believe, from Mrs. Waldo, whose sectarian bias always gave way before the social instincts of her nature. The difficulty of carrying it into execution was much lessened by the fact that all the families were already acquainted, and that, fortunately, there was no important enmity existing between any two of them. Besides, there is a natural instinct in women which leads them to sew in flocks and enliven their labor by the discussion of patterns, stuffs, and prices. The Union, with from twenty-five to forty members in attendance, was found to be greatly more animated and attractive than either of the Circles, separately, had been. Whether more work was accomplished, is a doubtful question; but, if not, it made little difference in the end. The naked Telugus would not suffer from a scantier supply of clothing; the Cimmerians would charge outrageous prices for useless articles, in any case: nor would *The Slavery Annihilator* perish for want of support, if fewer pen-wipers, and book-marks, inscribed with appropriate texts, came from Ptolemy.

The Sewing-Union was therefore pronounced a great social success, and found especial favor in the eyes of the gentlemen, who were allowed to attend "after tea," with the understanding that they would contribute something to either of the three groups, according to their inclinations. Mrs. Waldo, by general acquiescence, exercised a matronly supervision over the company, putting down any rising controversy with a gentle pat of her full, soft hand, and preventing, with cheerful tyranny, the continual tendency of the gentlemen to interrupt the work of the unmarried ladies. She was the oleaginous solvent, in which the hard yelk of the Mission Fund, the vinegar of the Cimmerians, and the mustard of the Abolitionists lost their repellant qualities and blended into a smooth social compound. She had a very sweet, mellow, rounded voice, and a laugh as comforting to hear as the crackling of a wood-fire on the open hearth. Her greatest charm, however, was her complete unconsciousness of her true value. The people of Ptolemy, equally unconscious of this subduing and harmonizing quality which she possessed, and seeing their lionesses and lambs sewing peaceably together, congratulated themselves on their own millennial promise. Of course everybody was satisfied—even the clergymen in Mulligansville and Anacreon, who attacked the Union from their pulpits, secretly thankful for such a near example of falling from the stiff, narrow, and carefully-enclosed ways of grace.

It was the third meeting of the Union, and nearly all the members were present. Their session was held at the house of Mr. Hamilton Bue, Agent of the "Saratoga Mutual" for the town of Ptolemy, and one of the Directors of the Bank at Tiberius, the county-seat. Mrs. Hamilton Bue was interested in the contribution for the mission at Jutnapore, and the Rev Lemuel Styles, pastor of the principal church in the village had been specially invited to come "before tea," for the purpose of asking a blessing on the bountiful table of the hostess. The parlor, large as it was (for Ptolemy), had been somewhat overcrowded during the afternoon; therefore, anticipating a large arrival of gentlemen in the evening, Mrs. Bue had the tables transferred from the sitting-room to the kitchen, locked the hall door, and thus produced a suite of three apartments, counting the hall itself as one. The guests were admitted at the side-entrance, commonly used by the family. Two or three additional lamps had been borrowed, and the general aspect of things was so bright and cheerful that Mr. Styles whispered to Mrs. Hamilton Bue: "Really, I am afraid this looks a little like levity."

"But it's trying to the eyes to sew with a dim light," said she; "and we want to do a good deal for The Fund this evening."

"Ah! *that*, indeed!" he ejaculated, smiling blandly as he contemplated Miss Eliza Clancy and Miss Ann Parrott, who were comparing the dresses for their little brown namesakes.

"I think it looks better to be gored," said the former.

"Well—I don't know but what it does, with that figure," remarked Miss Parrott, "but my Ann's a slim, growing girl, and when you've tucks—and I'm making two of 'em—it seems better to *pleat*."

"How will this do, Miss Eliza?" asked Mrs. Waldo, coming up at the moment with a heavy knitted snood of crimson wool, which she carefully adjusted over her own abundant black hair. The effect was good, it cannot be denied. The contrast of colors was so pleasing that the pattern of the snood became quite a subordinate affair.

"Upon my word, very pretty!" said the lady appealed to.

"Pity you haven't knit it for yourself, it suits you so well," Miss Parrott observed.

"I'd rather take it to stop the leak in my best bed-room," Mrs. Waldo gayly rejoined, stealing a furtive glance at her head in the mirror over the mantel-piece. "Oh, Miss Thurston, will you let us see your album-cover?"

Hannah Thurston had caught sight of a quiet nook in the hall, behind the staircase, and was on her way to secure possession of it. She had found the warmth of the sitting-room intolerable, and the noise of many tongues began to be distracting to her sensitive Quaker ear. She paused at once, and in answer to Mrs. Waldo's request unfolded an oblong piece of warm brown cloth, upon which a group of fern-leaves, embroidered with green silk, was growing into shape. The thready stems and frail, diminishing fronds were worked with an exquisite truth to nature.

"It is not much more than the outline, as yet," she remarked, as she displayed the embroidery before the eager eyes of Mrs. Waldo and the two spinsters.

The former, who possessed a natural though uncultivated sense of beauty, was greatly delighted. "Why it's perfectly lovely!" she exclaimed: "if I was younger, I'd get you to teach me how you do it. You must be sure and let me see the book when it's finished."

"I don't see why my Eliza couldn't make me one of the flowers around Jutnapore," said Miss Clancy. "I'll mention it in my next letter to Mrs Boerum—the missionary's wife, you know. It would be such a nice thing for me to remember her by."

Meanwhile the gentlemen began to drop in. Mr. Merryfield arrived, in company with the Hon. Zeno Harder, member of the Legislature for Atauga county. Then followed the Rev. Mr. Waldo, a small, brisk man, with gray eyes, a short nose, set out from his face at a sharper angle than is usual with noses and a mouth in which the Lord had placed a set of teeth belonging to a man of twice his size—for which reason his lips could not entirely close over them. His face thus received an expression of perpetual hunger. The air of isolation, common to clergymen of those small and insignificant sects which seem to exist by sheer force of obstinacy, was not very perceptible in him. It had been neutralized, if not suppressed, by the force of a strong animal temperament. On *that* side of his nature, there was no isolation.

A number of young fellows—bashful hobbledehoys, or over-assured men of two or three and twenty, with rigorously fashionable shirt-collars—now made their appearance and distributed themselves through Mrs. Hamilton Bue's rooms. In the rising noise of conversation the more timid ventured to use their tongues, and the company soon became so animated that all of Mrs. Waldo's authority was necessary, to prevent the younger ladies from neglecting their tasks. The Cimmerians, as a point of etiquette, were installed in the parlor, which also accommodated a number of the workers for the Mission Fund, the remainder being gathered in the sitting-room, where Mr. Styles and Mr. Waldo carried on an exceedingly guarded and decorous conversation. Hannah Thurston had secured her coveted nook behind the staircase in the hall, where she was joined by Mrs. Merryfield and Miss Sophia Stevenson. Mrs. Waldo, also, kept a chair at the same table, for the purpose of watching the expanding fern-leaves in the intervals of her commandership. Seth Wattles tilted his chair in a corner, eager for an opportunity to usurp the conversation.

Seth was an awkward, ungainly person, whose clothes were a continual satire on his professional skill. The first impression which the man made, was the want of compact form. His clay seemed to have been modelled by a bungling apprentice, and imperfectly baked afterwards. The face was long and lumpy in outline, without a proper coherence between the features—the forehead being sloping and contracted at the temples, the skull running backwards in a high, narrow ridge. Thick hair, of a faded brown color, parted a little on one side, was brushed behind his ears, where it hung in stiff half-curls upon a broad, falling shirt-collar, which revealed his neck down to the crest of the breast-bone. His eyes were opaque gray, prominent, and devoid of expression. His nose was long and coarsely constructed, with blunt end and thick nostrils, and his lips, though short, of that peculiar, shapeless formation, which prevents a clear line of division between them. Heavy, and of a pale purplish-red color, they seemed to run together at the inner edges. His hands were large and hanging, and all his joints apparently knobby and loose. His skin had that appearance of oily clamminess which belongs to such an organization. Men of this character seem to be made of sticks and putty. There is no nerve, no elasticity, no keen, alert, impressible life in any part of their bodies.

Leaving the ladies of the Fund to hear Mrs. Boerum's last letter describing the condition of her school at Jutnapore, and the Cimmerians to consult about the arrangements for their Fair, we will join this group in the hall. Mrs. Waldo had just taken her seat for the seventh time, saying: "Well, I never shall get any thing done, at this rate!"—when her attention was arrested by hearing Hannah Thurston say, in answer to some remark of Mrs. Merryfield:

"It is too cheerful a place, not to be the home of cheerful and agreeable people."

"Oh, you are speaking of Lakeside, are you not?" she asked.

"Yes, they say it's sold," said Mrs. Merryfield; "have you heard of it?"

"I believe Mr. Waldo mentioned it at dinner. It's a Mr. Woodbury, or some such name. And rich. He was related, in some way, to the Dennisons. He's expected immediately. I'm glad of it, for I want to put him under contribution. Oh, how beautiful! Did you first copy the pattern from the leaves, Hannah, or do you keep it in your head?"

"Woodbury? Related to the Dennisons?" mused Mrs. Merryfield. "Bless me! It can't be little Maxwell—Max. we always called him, that used to be there summers—well, nigh twenty years ago, at least. But you were not here then, Mrs. Waldo—nor you, neither, Hannah. I heard afterwards that he went to Calcutty I remember him very well—a smart, curly-headed youngster, but knowed nothing about farming. Him and my poor Absalom"—here she smothered a rising sigh—"used to be a good deal with other."

An unusual stir in the sitting-room interrupted the conversation.

There were exclamations—noises of moving chairs—indistinct phrases—and presently the strong voice of the Hon. Zeno Harder was heard: "Very happy to make your acquaintance, Sir—*very* happy!" Mrs. Waldo slipped to the door and peeped in, telegraphing her observations in whispers to the little party behind the stairs. "There's Mr. Hammond—the lawyer, you know, from Tiberius, and another gentleman—a stranger. Tall and sunburnt, with a moustache—but I like his looks. Ah!" Here she darted back to her seat. "Would you believe it?—the very man we were talking about—Mr. Woodbury!"

In accordance with the usages of Ptolemy society, the new-comers were taken in charge by the host, and formally introduced to every person present. In a few minutes the round of the sitting-room was completed and the party entered the hall. Miss Thurston, looking up with a natural curiosity, encountered a pair of earnest brown eyes, which happened, at the moment, to rest mechanically upon her. Mr. Hamilton Bue advanced and performed his office. The stranger bowed with easy self-possession and a genial air, which asserted his determination to enjoy the society. Mrs. Waldo, who was no respecter of persons—in fact, she often declared that she would not be afraid of Daniel Webster—cordially gave him her hand, exclaiming: "We were this minute talking of you, Mr. Woodbury! And I wished you were here, that I might levy a contribution for our Sewing-Circle. But you're going to be a neighbor, and so I'll ask it in earnest, next time."

"Why not now?" said the gentleman, taking out his purse. "First thoughts are often best, and you know the proverb about short settlements. Pray accept this, as a token that you do not consider me a stranger."

"Oh, thank you!" she cried, as she took the bank-note; "but" (hesitatingly) "is this a donation to *our* Society, or must I divide it with the others?" The peculiar tone in which the question was put rendered but one answer possible. No *man* could have uttered it with such artful emphasis.

The constitution of the Sewing-Union was explained, and Mr. Woodbury purchased a universal popularity by equal contributions to the three Circles. Had he been less impulsive—less kindly inclined to create, at once, a warm atmosphere around his future home—he would not have given so much. The consequences of his generosity were not long in exhibiting themselves. Two days afterwards, the Seventh-Day Baptists, at Atauga City, waited on him for a subscription towards the building of their new church; and even the ladies of Mulligansville so far conquered their antipathy to the Ptolemy district, as to apply for aid to the Mission at Pulo-Bizam, in the Ladrone Islands, which was a subject of their especial care.

The introduction of a new element into a society so purely local as that of Ptolemy, is generally felt as a constraint. Where the stranger is a man of evident cultivation, whose superiority, in various respects, is instinctively felt, but would be indignantly disclaimed if any one dared to assert it, there is, especially, a covert fear of his judgment. His eye and ear are supposed to be intensely alert and critical: conversation becomes subdued and formal at his approach: the romping youths and maidens subside into decorous and tedious common-places, until the first chill of his presence is overcome. Mr. Woodbury had tact enough to perceive and dissipate this impression. His habitual manners were slightly touched with reserve, but no man could unbend more easily and gracefully. To the few who remembered him as "Little Max."—among them Mrs. Merryfield—he manifested the cordial warmth of an old friend, and laughed with a delight which came from the heart, at their mention of certain boyish mishaps which marked his summers at Lakeside. The laborers for the Mission Fund were rejoiced to learn that, though he had never been at Jutnapore, yet he had once seen Mr. Boerum, on that gentleman's arrival at Calcutta. ("What a pity he did'nt go to Jutnapore! He might have told me about my Eliza," remarked Miss Clancy, aside.) In short, the ice between Mr. Woodbury and the rest of the company was broken so quickly that even the formation of the first thin crust was scarcely perceived. His introduction to Ptolemy society was—in the social technology of Boston—"a success."

Again the clacking of tongues rose high and shrill, lessening only for a few minutes after the distribution of wedges of molasses-cake, offered by Mrs. Hamilton Bue's black-mitted hands. Mr. Hamilton Bue followed in her wake with a jingling tray, covered with glasses of lemonade, which the ladies sipped delicately. The four spinsters, observing that Mrs. Lemuel Styles drank but the half of her glass, replaced theirs also half-filled, though it went to their hearts to do so. The needles now stood at ease, no longer marching, with even stitch, over their parade-grounds of silk, or cotton, or mousseline-de-laine. One straggler after another fell out of the ranks, until it was finally declared that "we have done enough for this evening." Then came singing, commencing with "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," in which half the company joined. Miss Sophia Stevenson, who had a good voice, with—it must be admitted—an occasional tendency to sharps, led the hymn; but the parts were unequally distributed, which Mr. Woodbury perceiving, he struck in with a rich baritone voice. This acquisition was immediately noticed, and, at the conclusion of the hymn, Mrs. Waldo requested that he would favor them with a solo.

"I prefer to listen," he answered. "I know none but the old, old songs, which you all have heard. But you are welcome to one of them, if you will first let me hear something newer and fresher." Unconsciously, he had hit the custom of Ptolemy, never to sing until somebody else has first sung, to encourage you. The difficulty is, to find the encourager.

Mrs. Waldo seized upon Seth Wattles, who, nothing loth, commenced in a gritty bass voice:

> "Why-ee dooz the why-eet man follah mee pawth,
> Like the ha-ound on the ty-eeger's tra-hack?
> Dooz the flu-hush on my da-hark cheek waken his wrawth—
> Dooz he co-hovet the bow a-hat mee ba-hack?"

"What in the world is the song about?" whispered Mr. Woodbury.

"It's the Lament of the Indian Hunter," said Mrs. Waldo. "He always sings it. Now comes the chorus: it's queer: listen!"

Thereupon, from the cavernous throat of the singer, issued a series of howls in the minor key, something in this wise:

"Yo-HO—yo-ho! Yo-HO-O—yo-ho-ho-*ho*-ho!"

"After this," thought Woodbury, "they can bear to hear an old song, though a thousand times repeated." And being again pressed, he gave simply, without any attempt at brilliancy of execution: "The Harp of Tara."

There was profound silence, as his voice, strung with true masculine fibre, rang through the rooms. Generally, the least intellectual persons sing with the truest and most touching expression, because voice and intellect are rarely combined: but Maxwell Woodbury's fine organ had not been given to him at the expense of his brain. It was a lucky chance of nature. His hearers did not really know how admirably he interpreted that sigh of the Irish heart, but they were pleased, and not niggardly in their expressions of delight.

More songs were called for, and refused. There was the usual coaxing, and a shocking prevalence of hoarseness, combined with sudden loss of memory. One young lady commenced with "Isle" (which she pronounced *eye-heel*) "of Beauty," but broke down at the end of the first verse, and all the cries of: "*Do* go on!" "It's *so* pretty!" could not encour age her to resume. Finally some one, spying Hannah Thurston, who had folded up her embroidery and was sitting in a shaded corner, cried out:

"Oh, Miss Thurston! Give us that song you sang the last time—that one about the mountains, you know."

Miss Thurston started, as if aroused out of a profound revery, while a flitting blush, delicate and transient as the shadow of a rose tossed upon marble, visited her face. She had felt and followed, word by word and tone by tone, the glorious Irish lay. The tragic pathos of the concluding lines—

"For freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives!"

—thrilled and shook her with its despairing solemnity. What a depth of betrayed trust, of baffled aspiration, it revealed! Some dormant sentiment in her own heart leapt up and answered it, with that quick inner pang, which would be a cry were it expressed in sound. Yet was the despair which the melody suggested of a diviner texture than joy. It was that sadness of the imaginative nature which is half triumph, because the same illumination which reveals the hopelessness of its desires reveals also their beauty and their divinity.

The request addressed to her was a shock which recalled her to herself. It was so warmly seconded that refusal would have been ungracious, and a true social instinct told her that her revery, though involuntary, was out of place. She profited by the little delay which ensued in order to secure silence—for in our country communities silence always *precedes* the song—to recover her full self-possession. There was no tremor in her voice, which soared, with the words, into a still, clear ether, in which the pictures of the song stood out pure, distinct, and sublime. It was one of those lyrics of Mrs. Hemans, which suggest the trumpet at woman's lips—shorn of its rough battle-snarl, its fierce notes tenderly fled, but a trumpet still. She sang, with the bride of the Alpine hunter:

"Thy heart is in the upper world,
And where the chamois bound;
Thy heart is where the mountain-fir
Shakes with the torrent's sound:
And where the snow-peaks gleam like stars
In the stillness of the air,
And where the lawine's voice is heard,—
Hunter, thy heart is there!"

It was rather musical declamation, than singing. Her voice, pure, sweet, and strong, distinctly indicated the melody, instead of giving it positively, beyond the possibility of a mistaken semitone. It was a ringing chant of that "upper world" of the glaciers, where every cry or call is followed by a musical echo,—where every sound betrays the thin air and the boundless space. Hannah Thurston sang it with a vision of Alpine scenery in her brain. She saw, gleaming in the paler sunshine, beneath the black-blue heaven, the sharp horns of frosted silver, the hanging ledges of short summer grass, the tumbled masses of gray rock, and the dust of snow from falling avalanches. Hence, he who had once seen these things in their reality, saw them again while listening to her. She knew not, however, her own dramatic power: it was enough that she gave pleasure.

Maxwell Woodbury's eyes brightened, as the bleak and lofty landscapes of the Bernese Oberland rose before him. Over the dark fir-woods and the blue ice-caverns of the Rosenlaui glacier, he saw the jagged pyramid of the Wetterhorn, toppling in the morning sky; and involuntarily asked himself what was the magic which had started that half-forgotten picture from the chambers of his memory. How should this pale, quiet girl who, in a musical sense, was no singer, and who had assuredly never seen the Alps, have caught the voice which haunts their desolate glory? But these were questions which came afterwards. The concluding verse, expressing only the patience and humility of love in the valley, blurred the sharp crystal of the first impression and brought him back to the Sewing-Union without a rude shock of transition. He cordially thanked the singer—an act rather unusual in Ptolemy at that time, and hence a grateful surprise to Hannah Thurston, to whom his words conveyed a more earnest meaning than was demanded by mere formal courtesy.

By this time the assembled company had become very genial and unconstrained. The Rev. Lemuel Styles had entirely forgotten the levity of Mrs. Bue's illumination, and even indulged in good-humored badinage (of a perfectly mild and proper character) with Mrs. Waldo. The others were gathered into little groups, cheerfully chatting—the young gentlemen and ladies apart from the married people. Scandal was sugar-coated, in order to hide its true character. love put on a bitter and prickly outside, to avoid the observation of others: all the innocent disguises of Society were in as full operation as in the ripened atmosphere of great cities.

The nearest approach to a discord was in a somewhat heated discussion on the subject of Slavery, which grew up between Seth Wattles and the Hon. Zeno Harder. The latter was vehement in his denunciation of the Abolitionists, to which the former replied by quoting the Declaration of Independence. The two voices—either of them alike unpleasant to a sensitive ear—finally became loud enough to attract the attention of Mrs. Waldo, who had a keen scent for opportunities for the exercise of her authority.

"Come, come!" she cried, placing one hand on Seth's shoulder, while she threatened the Honorable Zeno with the other 'this is forbidden ground. The Sewing-Union would never hold together, if we allowed such things. Besides, what's the use? You two would talk together all night, I'll warrant, and be no nearer agreeing in the morning."

"No," cried Seth, "because your party politicians ignore the questions of humanity!"

"And your fanatical abstractionists never look at any thing in a practical way!" rejoined the Honorable Zeno.

"And both are deficient in a sense of propriety—I shall have to say, if you don't stop," was Mrs. Waldo's ready comment.

This little episode had attracted a few spectators, who were so evidently on Mrs. Waldo's side, that "the Judge," as the Hon. Zeno was familiarly called, at once saw the politic course, and rising magnificently, exclaimed: "Although we don't *advocate* Women's Rights, we *yield* to woman's authority." Then, bowing with corpulent condescension, he passed away. Seth Wattles, having no longer an opponent, was condemned to silence.

In the mean time, it had been whispered among the company that the next meeting of the Union would be held at the Merryfield farm-house, a mile and a half from Ptolemy. This had been arranged by the prominent ladies, after a good deal of consultation. Mr. Merryfield still belonged to the congregation of the Rev. Lemuel Styles, although not in very good repute. His farm-house was large and spacious, and he was an excellent "provider," especially for his guests. Moreover, he was the only one of the small clan of Abolitionists, who could conveniently entertain the Union,—so that in him were discharged all the social obligations which the remaining members could fairly exact. The four spinsters, indeed, had exchanged patient glances, as much as to say: "This is a cross which we must needs bear." Mr. Merryfield, be it known, had refused to contribute to Foreign Missions, on the ground that we had already too many black heathen at home. The younger persons, nevertheless, were very well satisfied, and thus the millennial advance of Ptolemy was not interrupted.

The more staid guests had now taken leave, and there was presently a general movement of departure. The ladies put on their bonnets and shawls in the best bedroom up-stairs, and the gentlemen picked out their respective hats and coats from the miscellaneous heap on the kitchen settee. The hall-door was unlocked to facilitate egress, and lively groups lingered on the stairs, in the doorway, and on the piazza. The gentlemen dodged about to secure their coveted privilege of escort: now and then a happy young pair slipped away in the belief that they were unnoticed: there were calls of "Do come and see us, now!"—last eager whispers of gossip, a great deal of superfluous female kissing, and the final remarks to Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Bue: "Good-bye! we've had a *nice* time!"—as the company filtered away.

When the last guest had disappeared, Mr. Hamilton Bue carefully closed and locked the doors, and then remarked to his wife, who was engaged in putting out the extra lamps: "Well, Martha, I think we've done very well, though I say it that shouldn't. Mr. Styles liked your tea, and the cake must have been pretty good, judging from the way they stowed it out of sight."

"Yes," said Mrs. Bue; "I was afraid at one time, there wouldn't be enough to go round. It's well I made up my mind, at the last minute, to bake five instead of four. Molasses is so high."

"Oh, what's the odds of two shillings more or less," her husband consolingly remarked, "when you've got to make a regular spread? Besides, I guess I'll clear expenses, by persuading Woodbury to insure his house in our concern. Dennisons always took the Etna."

CHAPTER II.

MR. WOODBURY'S INTRODUCTION TO LAKESIDE.

On the very day when the Sewing-Union met in Ptolemy there was an unusual commotion at Lakeside. Only four or five days had elapsed since the secluded little household had been startled by the news that the old place was finally sold, and now a short note had arrived from Mr. Hammond, of Tiberius, who was the agent for the estate, stating that the new owner would probably make his appearance in the course of the day.

The first thing that suggested itself to the distracted mind of Mrs. Fortitude Babb, the housekeeper, was immediately to summon old Melinda, a negro woman, whose specialty was house-cleaning. Had there been sufficient time, Mrs. Babb would have scoured the entire dwelling, from garret to cellar. A stranger, indeed, would have remarked no appearance of disorder, or want of proper cleanliness, anywhere: but the tall housekeeper, propping her hands upon her hips, exclaimed, in despair: "Whatever shall I do? There's hardly time to have the rooms swep', let alone washin' the wood-work. Then, ag'in, I dunno which o' the two bed-rooms he'd like best. Why couldn't Mr. Hammond hold him back, till things was decent? And the libery's been shet up, this ever so long; and there's bakin' to do—squinch tarts, and sich likes—and you must kill two chickens, Arbutus, right away!"

"Don't be worried, Mother Forty," replied Arbutus Wilson, the stout young man whom Mrs. Babb addressed, "things a'n't lookin' so bad, after all. Max.—well, Mr. Woodbury, I must say now, though it'll go rather queer, at first—was always easy satisfied, when he was here afore."

"I reckon you think people doesn't change in twenty year. There's no tellin' what sort of a man he's got to be. But here comes Melindy. I guess I'll open the libery and let it air, while she fixes the bedrooms."

Mrs. Babb's nervousness had a deeper cause than the condition of the Lakeside mansion. So many years had elapsed since she first came to the place as housekeeper, that it seemed to have become her own property as surely as that of the Dennison family. The death of Mrs. Dennison, eight months before, recalled her to the consciousness of her uncertain tenure. Now, since the estate was finally sold and the new owner about to arrive, a few days, in all probability, would determine whether her right was to be confirmed or herself turned adrift upon the world. Although her recollections of Maxwell Woodbury, whose last visit to Lakeside occurred during the first year of her reign, were as kindly as was consistent with her rigid nature, she awaited his arrival with a mixture of jealousy and dread. True, he was somewhat nearer to her than those relatives of Mrs. Dennison who had inherited the property at her death, for the latter Mrs. Babb had never seen, while him she had both gently scolded and severely petted: but she felt that the removal of Arbutus Wilson and herself from the place would be a shameful piece of injustice, and the fact that such removal was possible indicated something wrong in the world.

Arbutus, who was a hardy, healthy, strapping fellow, of eight-and-twenty, was her step-step-son, if there can be such a relation. His father, who died shortly after his birth, was one of those uneducated, ignorant men, whose ears are yet quick to catch and retain any word of grandiloquent sound. Nothing delighted him so much as to hear the Biblical genealogies read. He had somewhere picked up the word *arbutus*, the sound of which so pleased him that he at once conferred it upon his baby, utterly unconscious of its meaning. A year or two after his death, the widow Wilson married Jason Babb, an honest, meek-natured carpenter, who proved a good father to the little Arbutus. She, however, was carried away by a malignant fever, in the first year of her second marriage. The widower, who both mourned and missed her, cherished her child with a conscientious fidelity, and it was quite as much from a sense of duty towards the boy, as from an inclination of the heart, that he married Miss Fortitude Winterbottom, a tall, staid, self-reliant creature, verging on spinsterhood.

The Fates, however, seemed determined to interfere with Jason Babb's connubial plans; but the next time it was upon himself, and not upon his wife, that the lot fell. Having no children of his own, by either wife, he besought Fortitude, with his latest breath, to be both father and mother to the doubly-orphaned little Bute Wilson. It must be admitted that Mrs. Babb faithfully performed her promise. The true feeling of parental tenderness had never been granted to her, and the sense of responsibility—*of ownership*—which came in its stead—was a very mild substitute; but it impressed the boy, at least, with a consciousness of care and protection, which satisfied his simple nature. Mrs. Dennison, with her kind voice, and gentle, resigned old face, seemed much more the mother, while Mrs. Babb, with her peremptory ways and strict idea of discipline, unconsciously assumed for him the attitude of a father. The latter had come to Lakeside at a time when Mr. Dennison's confirmed feebleness required his wife to devote herself wholly to his care. Mrs. Babb, therefore, took charge of the house, and Arbutus, at first a younger companion of Henry Dennison, afterwards an active farm-boy, finally developed into an excellent farmer, and had almost the exclusive management of the estate for some years before Mrs. Dennison's death.

Thus these two persons, with an Irish field-hand, had been the only occupants of Lakeside, during the summer and autumn. Arbutus, or Bute, as he was universally called in the neighborhood, was well-pleased with the news of Mr. Woodbury's purchase. He remembered him, indistinctly, as the "town-boy" who gave him his first top and taught him how to spin it, though the big fellow couldn't tell a thrush's egg from a robin's, and always said "tortoise" instead of "tortle." Bute thought they'd get along together somehow—or, if they didn't, *he* could do as well somewheres else, he reckoned. Nevertheless, he felt anxious that the owner should receive a satisfactory impression on his arrival, and busied himself, with Patrick's assistance, in "setting every thing to rights" about the barn and out-houses.

After all, there was scarcely need of such hurried preparation. Mr. Hammond and Woodbury, detained by some necessary formalities of the law, did not leave Tiberius until the afternoon of that day. The town being situated at the outlet of Atauga Lake, they took the little steamer to Atauga City, near its head, in preference to the long road over the hills. The boat, with a heavy load of freight, made slow progress, and it was dusk before they passed the point on the eastern shore, beyond which Lakeside is visible from the water. On reaching Ptolemy by the evening stage from Atauga City, Maxwell Woodbury found the new "Ptolemy House" so bright and cheerful, that he immediately proposed their remaining for the night, although within four miles of their destination.

"I have a fancy for approaching the old place by daylight," said he to his companion. "Here begins my familiar ground, and I should be sorry to lose the smallest test of memory. Besides, I am not sure what kind of quarters I should be able to offer you, on such short notice."

"Let us stay, then, by all means," said the lawyer. "I can appreciate feelings, although I am occupied entirely with *deeds*." Here he quietly chuckled, and was answered by a roar from the landlord, who came up in time to hear the remark.

"Ha! ha! Good, Mr. Hammond!" exclaimed the latter. "Very happy to entertain you, gentlemen. Mr. Woodbury can have the Bridal Chamber, if he likes. But you should go to the Great Sewing-Union, gentlemen. You will find all

Ptolemy there to-night. It's at Hamilton Bue's: you know him, Mr. Hammond—Director of the Bank."

The results of this advice have already been described. After breakfast, on the following morning, the two gentlemen set out for Lakeside in a light open carriage. It was one of the last days of the Indian summer, soft and hazy, with a foreboding of winter in the air. The hills, enclosing the head of the lake, and stretching away southwards, on opposite sides of the two valleys, which unite just behind Ptolemy, loomed through their blue veil with almost the majesty of mountain ranges. The green of the pine-forests on their crests, and of those ragged lines of the original woods which marked the courses of the descending ravines, was dimmed and robbed of its gloom. The meadows extending towards the lake were still fresh, and the great elms by the creek-side had not yet shed all of their tawny leaves. A moist, fragrant odor of decay pervaded the atmosphere, and the soft southwestern wind, occasionally stealing down the further valley, seemed to blow the sombre colors of the landscape into dying flickers of brightness.

As they crossed the stream to the eastward of the village, and drove along the base of the hills beyond, Woodbury exclaimed:

"You cannot possibly understand, Mr. Hammond, how refreshing to me are these signs of the coming winter, after nearly fifteen years of unbroken summer. I shall enjoy the change doubly here, among the scenes of the only country-life which I ever knew in America,—where I was really happiest, as a boy. I suppose," he added, laughing, "now that the business is over, I may confess to you how much I congratulate myself on having made the purchase."

"As if I did not notice how anxious you were to buy!" rejoined the lawyer. "You must be strongly attached to the old place, to take it on the strength of former associations. I wish it were nearer Tiberius, that we might have more of your society. Did you pass much of your youth here?"

"Only my summers, from the age of twelve to fifteen. My constitution was rather delicate when I was young, and Mrs. Dennison, who was a distant relative of my father, and sometimes visited us in New York, persuaded him to let me try the air of Lakeside. Henry was about my own age, and we soon became great friends. The place was a second home to me, thenceforth, until my father's death. Even after I went to Calcutta, I continued to correspond with Henry, but my last letter from Lakeside was written by his mother, after his body was brought home from Mexico."

"Yes," said Mr. Hammond, "the old lady fairly broke down after that. Henry was a fine fellow and a promising officer, and I believe she would have borne his loss better, had he fallen in battle. But he lingered a long time in the hospital, and she was just beginning to hope for his recovery, when the news of his death came instead. But see! there is Roaring Brook. Do you hear the noise of the fall? How loud it is this morning!"

The hill, curving rapidly to the eastward, rose abruptly from the meadows in a succession of shelving terraces, the lowest of which was faced with a wall of dark rock, in horizontal strata, but almost concealed from view by the tall forest trees which grew at its base. The stream, issuing from a glen which descended from the lofty upland region to the eastward of the lake, poured itself headlong from the brink of the rocky steep, —a glittering silver thread in summer, a tawny banner of angry sound in the autumn rains. Seen through the hazy air, its narrow white column seemed to stand motionless between the pines, and its mellowed thunder to roll from some region beyond the hills.

Woodbury, who had been looking steadily across the meadows to the north, cried out: "It is the same—it has not yet run itself dry! Now we shall see Lakeside; but no—yet I certainly used to see the house from this point. Ah! twenty years! I had forgotten that trees cannot stand still; that ash, or whatever it is, has quite filled up the gap. I am afraid I shall find greater changes than this."

His eyes mechanically fell, as the wheels rumbled suddenly on the plank bridge over Roaring Brook. Mr. Hammond looked up, gave the horse a skilful dash of the whip and shot past the trees which lined the stream. "Look and see!" he presently said.

The old place, so familiar to Woodbury, and now his own property, lay before him. There was the heavy white house, with its broad verandah, looking southward from the last low shelf of the hills, which rose behind it on their westward sweep back to the lake. The high-road to Anacreon and thence to Tiberius, up the eastern shore, turned to the right and ascended to the upland, through a long winding glen. A small grove of evergreens still further protected the house on its northwestern side, so that its position was unusually sunny and sheltered. The head of the lake, the meadows around Ptolemy and the branching valleys beyond, were all visible from the southern windows; and though the hills to the east somewhat obscured the sunrise, the evenings wore a double splendor—in the lake and in the sky.

"Poor Henry!" whispered Woodbury to himself, as Mr. Hammond alighted to open the gate into the private lane. The house had again disappeared from view, behind the rise of the broad knoll upon which it stood, and their approach was not visible until they had reached the upper level, with its stately avenue of sugar-maples, extending to the garden wall.

The place was really unchanged, to all appearance. Perhaps the clumps of lilac and snowball, along the northern wall were somewhat higher, and the apple-trees in the orchard behind the house more gnarled and mossy; but the house itself, the turfed space before it, the flagged walk leading to the door, the pyramids of yew and juniper, were the same as ever, and the old oaks at each corner seemed, twig for twig, to have stood still for twenty years. A few bunches of chrysanthemum, somewhat nipped by the frost, gave their sober autumnal coloring and wholesome bitter-sweet odor to the garden-alleys. The late purple asters were shrivelled and drooping, and the hollyhocks stood like desolate floral towers, tottering over the summer's ruin.

For the first time in twenty years, Woodbury felt the almost forgotten sensation of *home* steal through his heart. Quickly and silently he recognized each familiar object, and the far-off days of the past swept into the nearness of yesterday. His ear took no note of Mr. Hammond's rattling remarks: the latter was not precisely the man whose atmosphere lures forth the hidden fragrance of one's nature.

As they drove along the garden-wall, a strong figure appeared, approaching with eager strides. He glanced first at the horse and carriage. "Fairlamb's livery—the bay," was his mental remark. The next moment he stood at the gate, waiting for them to alight.

"How do you do, Mr. Hammond?" he cried. "You're late a-comin': we expected ye las' night. And is this really Mr. Maxwell, I mean Mr. Woodbury—well, I'd never ha knowed him. I s'pose you don't know me, nuther, Mr Max.?"

"God bless me! it must be little Bute!" exclaimed Woodbury, taking the honest fellow's hand. "Yes, I see it now—man instead of boy, but the same fellow still."

"Yes, indeed, that I *be!*" asserted the delighted Arbutus. He meant much more than the words indicated. Fully expressed, his thoughts would have run something in this wise: "I guess we can git on together, as well as when we was boys. If *you* ha'n't changed, *I* ha'n't. I'll do my dooty towards ye, and you won't be disapp'inted in me."

In the mean time, Mrs. Fortitude Babb had made her appearance, clad in the black bombazine which she had purchased for Jason's funeral, and was waiting, tall and rigid, but with considerable internal "flusteration" (as she would have expressed it), on the verandah. One mental eye was directed towards the new owner, and the other to the fowls in the kitchen, which she had cut up the evening before, for a fricassee, and which were thus rendered unfit for roasting. "Why, he's a perfick stranger!" "If there's only time to make a pie of 'em!" were the two thoughts which crossed each other in her brain.

"Mrs. Babb! there's no mistaking who *you* are!" exclaimed Woodbury, as he hastened with outstretched hand up the flagged walk.

The old housekeeper gave him her long, bony hand in return, and made an attempt at a courtesy, a thing which she had not done for so long that one of her knee-joints cracked with the effort. "Welcome, Sir!" said she, with becoming gravity. Woodbury thought she did not recognize him.

"Why, don't you remember Max.?" he asked.

"Yes, I recollex you as you was. And now I come to look, your eyes is jist the same. Dear, dear!" and in spite of herself two large tears slowly took their way down her lank cheeks. "If Miss Dennison and Henry could be here!" Then she wiped her eyes with her hand, rather than spoil the corner of her black silk apron. Stiffening her features the next moment, she turned away, exclaiming in a voice unnecessarily sharp: "Arbutus, why don't you put away the horse?"

The gentlemen entered the house. The hall-door had evidently not been recently used, for the lock grated with a sound of rust. The sitting-room on the left and the library beyond, were full of hazy sunshine and cheerful with the crackling of fires on the open hearth. Dust was nowhere to be seen, but the chairs stood as fixedly in their formal places as if screwed to the floor, and the old books seemed to be glued together in regular piles. None of the slight tokens of habitual occupation caught the eye—no pleasant irregularity of domestic life,—a newspaper tossed here, a glove there, a chair placed obliquely to a favorite window, or a work-stand or foot-stool drawn from its place. Mrs. Babb, it is true, with a desperate attempt at ornament, had gathered the most presentable of the chrysanthemums, with some sprigs of arbor-vitæ, and stuck them into an old glass flower-jar. Their pungent odor helped to conceal the faint musty smell which still lingered in the unused rooms.

"I think we will sit here, Mrs. Babb," said Woodbury, leading the way into the library. "It was always my favorite room," he added, turning to the lawyer, "and it has the finest view of the lake."

"I'm afeard that's all you'll have," the housekeeper grimly remarked. "Things is terrible upside-down: you come so onexpected. An empty house makes more bother than a full one. But you're here now, an' you'll have to take it sich as 't is."

Therewith she retired to the kitchen, where Bute soon joined her.

"Well, Mother Forty," he asked, "how do you like his looks? He's no more changed than I am, only on th' outside. I don't s'pose he knows more than ever about farmin', but he's only got to let me alone and things 'll go right."

"Looks is nothin'," the housekeeper answered. "Handsome is that handsome does, I say. Don't whistle till you're out o' the woods, Bute. Not but what I'd ruther have him here than some o' them people down to Po'keepsy, that never took no notice o' *her* while she lived."

"There's no mistake, then, about his havin' bought the farm?"

"I guess not, but I'll soon see."

She presently appeared in the library, with a pitcher of cider and two glasses on a tray, and a plate of her best "jumbles." "There's a few bottles o' Madary in the cellar," she said; "but you know I can't take nothin' without *your* leave, Mr. Hammond—leastways, onless it's all fixed."

Woodbury, however, quietly answered: "Thank you, we will leave the wine until dinner. You can give us a meal, I presume, Mrs. Babb?"

"'T wo'nt be what I'd like. I'd reckoned on a supper las' night, instid of a dinner to-day. Expect it 'll be pretty much pot-luck. However, I'll do what I can."

Mrs. Babb then returned to the kitchen, satisfied, at least, that Mr. Maxwell Woodbury was now really the master of Lakeside

CHAPTER III.

AN EVENING OF GOSSIP, IN WHICH WE LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT THE PERSONS ALREADY MENTIONED.

After a long absence in India, Woodbury had come home to find all his former associations broken, even the familiar landmarks of his boyish life destroyed. His only near relative was an older sister, married some years before his departure, and now a stately matron, who was just beginning to enjoy a new importance in society from the beauty of her daughters. There was a small corner in her heart, it is true, for the exiled brother. The floor was swept, there; the room aired, and sufficient fire kept burning on the hearth, to take off the chill: but it was the chamber of an occasional guest rather than of an habitual inmate. She was glad to see him back again, especially as his manners were thoroughly refined and his wealth was supposed to be large (indeed, common report greatly magnified it): she would have lamented his death, and have worn becoming mourning for him—would even have persuaded her husband to assist him, had he returned penniless. In short, Woodbury could not complain of his reception, and the absence of a more intimate relation—of a sweet, sympathetic bond, springing from kinship of heart as well as of blood, was all the more lightly felt because such bond had never previously existed.

In the dreams of home which haunted him in lonely hours, on the banks of the Hoogly or the breezy heights of Darjeeling, Lakeside always first arose, and repeated itself most frequently and distinctly. "Aunt Dennison," as he was accustomed to call her, took the place, in his affectionate memory of the lost mother whose features he could trace but dimly, far back in the faint consciousness of childhood. There seemed to be no other spot in the world to which he had a natural right to return. The friends whom he had left, in New York, as a young man of twenty-one, had become restless, impetuous men of business, from whose natures every element of calm had been shaken, while he had slowly and comfortably matured his manhood in the immemorial repose of Asia. The atmosphere of the city at first excited, then wearied him. The wish to visit Lakeside was increasing in his mind, when he was one day startled by seeing the property advertised for sale, and instantly determined to become the purchaser. A correspondence with Mr. Hammond ensued, and, as there was another competitor in the field, Woodbury's anxiety to secure the old place led him to close the negotiations before he had found time to see it again. Now, however, he had made arrangements to spend the greater part of the winter there, as much on account of the certain repose and seclusion which he craved, as from the physical necessity of that tonic which the dry cold of the inland offered to his languid tropical blood.

No disposal had yet been made of the stock and implements belonging to the farm, which had not been included in the purchase of the estate. Woodbury's object in buying the land had no reference to any definite plan of his future life. He had come back from India with a fortune which, though moderate, absolved him from the necessity of labor. He simply wished to have a home of his own—an ark of refuge to which he could at any time return—a sheltered spot where some portion of his life might strike root. His knowledge of farming was next to nothing. Yet the fields could not be allowed to relapse into wilderness, the house must have a housekeeper, and the necessity of continuing the present occupants in their respective functions was too apparent to be discussed. For the present, at least, Mrs. Babb and Arbutus were indispensable adherents of the property.

After dinner, Mr. Hammond paid them what was due from the estate. Bute turned the money over uneasily in his hand, grew red in the face, and avoided meeting the eye of the new owner. Mrs. Babb straightened her long spine, took out a buckskin purse, and, having put the money therein, began rubbing the steel clasp with the corner of her apron. Woodbury, then, with a few friendly words, expressed his pleasure at having found them in charge of Lakeside, and his desire that each should continue to serve him in the same capacity as before.

Mrs. Babb did not betray, by the twitch of a muscle, the relief she felt. On the contrary, she took credit to herself for accepting her good fortune. "There's them that would like to have me," said she. "Mrs. Dennison never havin' said nothin' ag'in my housekeepin', but the reverse; and I a'n't bound to stay, for want of a good home; but *somebody* must keep house for ye, and I'd hate to see things goin' to wrack, after keerin' for 'em, a matter o' twenty year. Well—I'll stay, I guess, and do my best, as I've always done it."

"*Et tu*, Bute?" said Mr. Hammond, whose small puns had gained him a reputation for wit, in Tiberius.

Bute understood the meaning, not the words. "I'm glad Mr. Max. wants me," he answered, eagerly. "I'd hate to leave the old place, though I'm able to get my livin' most anywheres. But it'd be like leavin' home—and jist now, with that two year old colt to break, and a couple o' steers that I'm goin' to yoke in the spring—it wouldn't seem natural, like. Mr. Max. and me was boys together here, and I guess we can hitch teams without kickin' over the traces."

After arranging for an inventory and appraisal of the live tock, farming implements, and the greater part of the furniture, which Woodbury decided to retain, Mr. Hammond took his departure. Mrs. Babb prepared her tea at the usual early hour. After some little hesitation, she took her seat at the table, but evaded participation in the meal. Mr. Woodbury sat much longer than she was accustomed to see, in the people of Ptolemy: he sipped his tea slowly, and actually accepted a fourth cup. Mrs. Babb's gratification reached its height when he began to praise her preserved quinces, but on his unthinkingly declaring them to be "better than ginger," her grimness returned.

"Better than ginger! I should think so!" was her mental exclamation.

Throwing himself into the old leather arm-chair before the library fire, Woodbury enjoyed the perfect stillness of the November evening. The wind had fallen, and the light of a half-moon lay upon the landscape. The vague illumination, the shadowy outlines of the distant hills, and that sense of isolation from the world which now returned upon him, gratefully brought back the half-obliterated moods of his Indian life. He almost expected to hear the soft whish of the punka above his head, and to find, suddenly, the "hookah-burdar" at his elbow. A cheerful hickory-fed flame replaced the one, and a ripe Havana cigar the other; but his repose was not destined to be left undisturbed. "The world" is not so easy to escape. Even there, in Ptolemy, it existed, and two of its special agents (self-created) already knocked at the door of Lakeside.

The housekeeper ushered Mr. Hamilton Bue and the Hon. Zeno Harder into the library. The latter, as Member of the Legislature, considered that this call was due, as, in some sort, an official welcome to his district. Besides, his next aim was the State Senate, and the favor of a new resident, whose wealth would give him influence, could not be secured too soon. Mr. Bue, as the host of the previous evening, enjoyed an advantage over the agent of the "Etna," which he was not slow to use. His politeness was composed of equal parts of curiosity and the "Saratoga Mutual."

"We thought, Sir," said the Hon. Zeno, entering, "that your first evening here might be a little lonesome, and you'd be glad to have company for an hour or so."

The Member was a coarse, obese man, with heavy chops, thick, flat lips, small eyes, bald crown, and a voice which had been made harsh and aggressive in its tone by much vigorous oratory in the open air. The lines of his figure were rounded, it is true, but it was the lumpy roundness of a potato rather than the swelling, opulent curves of well-padded muscle Mr Hamilton Bue, in contrast to him, seemed to be made angles. His face and hands had that lean dryness which suggests a body similarly constructed, and makes us thankful for the invention of clothing. He was a prim, precise business man, as the long thin nose and narrow lips indicated, with a trace of weakness in the retreating chin. Neither of these gentlemen possessed a particle of that grapy bloom of ripe manhood, which tells of generous blood in either cell of the double heart. In one the juice was dried up; in the other it had become thick and slightly rancid.

They were not the visitors whom Woodbury would have chosen, but the ostensible purpose of their call demanded acknowledgment. He therefore gave them a cordial welcome, and drew additional chairs in front of the fire. The Hon. Zeno, taking a cigar, elevated his feet upon the lower moulding of the wooden mantel-piece, spat in the fire, and remarked:

"You find Ptolemy changed, I dare say. Let me see—when were you here last? In '32? I must have been studying law in Tiberius at that time. Oh, it's scarcely the same place. So many went West after the smash in '37, and new people have come in—new people and new idees, I may say."

"We have certainly shared in the general progression of the country, even during my residence here," said Mr. Hamilton Bue, carefully assuming his official style. "Ten years ago, there were but thirty-seven names on the books of the Saratoga Mutual. Now we count a hundred and thirteen But there is a reason for it: the Company pays its loss punctually—most punctually."

Unconscious of this dexterous advertising, Woodbury answered the Hon. Zeno: "Since I am to be, for a while, a member of your community, I am interested in learning something more about it. What are the new ideas you mentioned, Mr. Harder?"

"Well, Sir,—I can't exactly say that Hunkerism is a new thing in politics. I'm a Barnburner, you must know, and since the split it seems like new parties, though *we* hold on to the old principles. Then there's the Temperance Reform—swep' every thing before it, at first, but slacking off just now The Abolitionists, it's hardly worth while to count—there's so few of them—but they make a mighty noise. Go for Non-Resistance, Women's Rights, and all other Isms. So, you see, compared to the old times, when 'twas only Whig and Democrat, the deestrict is pretty well stirred up."

Mr. Bue, uncertain as to the views of his host upon some of the subjects mentioned, and keeping a sharp eye to his own interests, here remarked in a mild, placable tone: "I don't know that it does any harm. People must have their own opinions, and there's no law to hinder it. In fact, frequent discussion is a means of intellectual improvement."

"But what's the use of discussing what's contrary to Scriptur' and Reason?" cried the Hon. Zeno, in his out-door voice. "*Our* party is for Free Soil, and you can't go further under the Constitution,—so, what's the use in talking? Non-Resistance might be Christian enough, if all men was saints; but we've got to take things as we find 'em. When you're hit, hit back, if you want to do any good in these times. As for Women's Rights, it's the biggest humbug of all. A pretty mess we should be in, if it could be carried out! Think of my wife taking the stump against Mrs. Blackford, and me and him doing the washing and cooking!"

"Who was the Abolitionist—for such I took him to be—with whom you were talking, last evening, at Mr. Bue's?" Woodbury asked.

"Wattles—a tailor in Ptolemy—one of the worst fanatics among 'em!" the irate Zeno replied. "Believes in all the

Isms, and thinks himself a great Reformer. It's disgusting to hear a man talk about Women's Rights, as he does. I don't mind it so much in Hannah Thurston; but the fact is, she's more of a man than the most of 'em.

"Hannah Thurston! Is not that the lady who sang—a pale, earnest-looking girl, in a gray dress?"

"I did'nt notice her dress," the Member answered. "She sings, though—not much voice, but what she has tells amazingly. Between ourselves, I'll admit that she's a first-rate speaker—that is, for a woman. I was tempted to have a round with her, at the last meeting they held; but then, you know, a woman always has you at a disadvantage. You daren't give it back to them as sharp as you get it."

"Do you really mean that she makes public harangues?" exclaimed Woodbury, who, in his long absence from home, had lost sight of many new developments in American society.

"Yes, and not bad ones, either, when you consider the subject. Her mother used to preach in Quaker Meetings, so it doesn't seem quite so strange as it might. Besides, she isn't married, and one can make some allowance. But when Sarah Merryfield gets up and talks of the tyranny of man, it's a little too much for me. I'd like to know, now, exactly what her meek lout of a husband thinks about it."

"Is Mrs. Waldo, also, an advocate of the new doctrine?"

"She? No indeed. She has her rights already: that is, all that a woman properly knows how to use. Though I don't like the Cimmerian doctrine—Mr. Waldo is pastor of the Cimmerians—yet I think she's a much better Christian than the Merryfields, who still hang on to our Church."

"What are the Cimmerians?" inquired Woodbury. "Are they so called from the darkness of their doctrines?"

The Hon. Zeno did not understand the classical allusion "They're followers of the Rev. Beza Cimmer," he said. "He was first a Seceder, I believe, but differed with them on the doctrine of Grace. Besides, they think that Baptism, to be saving, must be in exact imitation of that of the Saviour The preacher wears a hair garment, like John the Baptist, when he performs the ceremony, and the converts long, white robes. They pick out some creek for their Jordan, and do not allow outsiders to be present. They don't grow in numbers, and have but a very small congregation in Ptolemy. In fact, Mr. Waldo is considered rather shaky by some of the older members, who were converted by Cimmer himself. He don't hold very close communion."

A part of this explanation was incomprehensible to Woodbury, who was not yet familiar with the catch-words which fall so glibly from the mouths of country theologians. He detected the Member's disposition to harangue instead of converse—a tendency which could only be prevented by a frequent and dexterous change of subject. "Your church," he said:—"I take it for granted you refer to that of Mr. Styles,—seems to be in a flourishing condition."

"Yes," replied Mr. Hamilton Bue, "we have prospered under his ministry. Some have backslidden, it is true, but we have had encouraging seasons of revival. Our ladies are now very earnest in the work of assisting the Jutnapore Mission. Mrs. Boerum is from Syracuse, and a particular friend of Miss Eliza Clancy. I think Miss Eliza herself would have gone if she had been called in time. You know it requires a double call."

"A double call! Excuse me if I do not quite understand you," said the host.

"Why, of course, they must first be called to the *work;* and then, as they can't go alone among the heathen, they must afterwards depend on a personal call from some unmarried missionary. Now Miss Clancy is rather too old for that."

Woodbury could not repress a smile at this naïve statement, although it was made with entire gravity. "I have seen something of your missions in India," he at last remarked, "and believe that they are capable of accomplishing much good.

Still, you must not expect immediate returns. It is only the lowest caste that is now reached, and the Christianizing of India must come, eventually, from the highest."

Rather than discuss a subject of which he was ignorant, the Hon. Zeno started a new topic. "By the way, the next meeting of the Sewing Union will be at Merryfield's. Shall you attend, Mr. Woodbury?"

"Yes. They are among the few persons who have kept me in good remembrance, though they, too, from what you have said, must be greatly changed since I used to play with their son Absalom. I am very sorry to hear of his death."

"It *is* a pity," replied the Member, biting off the end of a fresh cigar. "Absalom was really a fine, promising fellow, but they spoiled him with their Isms. They were Grahamites for a year or two—lived on bran bread and turnips, boiled wheat and dried apples. Absalom took up that and the water-cure, and wanted to become a patent first-class reformer. Now, Temperance is a good thing—though I can't quite go the Maine Law—but water inside of you and outside of you, summer and winter alike, isn't temperance, according to my idee. He had a spell of pleurisy, one winter, and doctored himself for it. His lungs were broken up, after that, and he went off the very next fall. They set a great deal of store by him."

"Is it possible that such delusions are held by intelligent persons?" exclaimed Woodbury, shocked as well as surprised. "I hope these theories are not included in the general progress of which Mr. Bue spoke. But I have almost forgotten my duty as a host. The nights are getting cold, gentlemen, and perhaps you will take a glass of wine."

The Hon. Zeno's small eyes twinkled, and his lips twitched liquorously. "Well—I don't care if I do," said he.

Mr. Hamilton Bue was silent, and slightly embarrassed. He had found it necessary to join the Temperance Society, because the reform was a popular one. He always went with the current as soon as it became too strong to stem con veniently. But the temptation to indulge still lurked in his thin blood. It was evident that the Member, for his own sake, would not mention the circumstance, and Mr. Woodbury, in all probability, would never think of it again.

Some of Mrs. Babb's "Madary" presently twinkled like smoky topaz in the light of the wood-fire. Mr. Bue at first sipped hesitatingly, like a bather dipping his toes, with a shudder, into the waters of a cold river; but having once reached the bottom of the glass—so quickly, indeed, that it excited his own surprise—he made the next plunge with the boldness of a man accustomed to it.

"You will attend church, I presume, Mr. Woodbury?" said he. "Of course you have convictions."

"Certainly," Woodbury answered, without a clear idea of what was meant by the word—"very strong ones."

"Of course—it could not be otherwise. I shall be very glad if you will now and then accept a seat in my pew. Mr. Styles is a great authority on Galatians, and I am sure you will derive spiritual refreshment from his sermons."

Here the Hon. Zeno rose and commenced buttoning his coat, as a signal of departure. Growing confidential from his inner warmth, he placed one hand affectionately on Woodbury's shoulder, somewhat to the latter's disgust, and said: "Now you are one of us, Woodbury, you must take an active part in our political concerns. Great principles are at stake, Sir, and the country has need of men like you. Let me warn you against the Hunkers—their game is nearly played out I'll be most happy, Sir, to explain to you the condition of parties. You'll find me well posted up."

Mr. Bue took occasion to make a parting hint in the interest of the Saratoga Mutual. "If you wish to have your house insured, Mr. Woodbury," said he, "I shall be glad to send you our pamphlets. The Company is so well known, fortunately, that its name is a sufficient recommendation."

The owner of Lakeside stood on the verandah, watching his guests drive down the maple avenue. As the sound of their wheels sank below the brow of the hill, the muffled voice of Roaring Brook came softly to him, across the dark meadows. A part of Atauga Lake threw back the light of the descending moon. "Here," thought he, "is the commencement of a new existence. It is not the old, boyish life of which I dreamed, but something very different. I foresee that I shall have to accustom myself to many features of this society, which are not attractive—some of them even repugnant—and perhaps the only counterbalancing delight left to me will be the enjoyment of this lovely scenery, the peace of this secluded life. Will that be sufficient? Or will these oaks and pines at last pall upon my eye, like the palms and banyans of the East? No: one cannot be satisfied with external resources. I must study, with a liberal human interest, the characteristics of this little community, however strange or repellant they may seem; and certainly, after making friends among the fossilized Brahmins, there must be a few among my fellow-Christians and fellow-countrymen, whom I can heartily respect and love. Those long Indian years must be placed in a closed Past, and I must adapt myself to habits and associations, which have become more foreign than familiar to me."

CHAPTER IV.

AN INTERVIEW ON THE ROAD, AND A NEW HOUSEHOLD.

THE Indian Summer still held its ground, keeping back the winter's vanguard of frost and keen nor'westers. Day by day the smoky air became more densely blue and still, and the leaves, long since dead, hung upon the trees for want of a loosening wind. The hickory-nuts fell by their own weight, pattering here and there in the woods, in single smart raps, and giving out a vigorous balsamic odor, as their cleft rinds burst open. Only at night a gathering chill and a low moaning in the air gave the presage of an approaching change in the season.

On one of those warm forenoons which almost reproduce the languor and physical yearning of the opening Spring, Bute Wilson, mounted on Dick, the old farm-horse, jogged slowly along the road to Ptolemy, whistling "The Rose that All are Praising," a melody which he had learned at the singing-school. Bute was bound for the village, on a variety of errands, and carried a basket on his arm. Dick's deliberate gait seemed to be in harmony with the current of his thoughts. The horse understood his rider, and knew very well when to take his ease, and when to summon up the little life left in his stiff old legs. Horses are better interpreters of one's moods than the most of one's human friends.

Bute was a very good specimen of the American countryman. A little over the average height, and compacted of coarse, hardy fibre, he possessed, in spite of the common stock from which he had sprung, the air of independent self-respect which a laboring man can only acquire in a community where caste is practically ignored. His independence, however, had not degenerated into impudence: he knew his deficiencies of nature and education, and did not attempt to off-set them by a vulgar assertion of equality. He could sit at Mr. Woodbury's table (using the knife a little too freely) without embarrassment, and could take his dinner in the kitchen without being conscious of degradation. His horses, cattle, and crops occupied the first place in his mind—himself—no, another person had the second place—and his own personality gave him the least trouble. He was a general favorite in the neighborhood, and his position was, perhaps, more fortunate than he knew, though the knowledge of it would not have made him happier than he was. He was honestly respected by those below, and not looked down upon by those above him. This consideration was won by his thorough frankness, simplicity, and kindness of heart. His face was too broad and his nose too thick, to be called handsome; but there were fewer eyes into which men looked with more satisfaction than the pair of large blue-gray ones, divided by the nose aforesaid. His forehead was rather low, but open and smooth, and his yellow hair, curling a little at the ends, grew back from the temples with a sturdy set, as if determined that they should not be hidden. Add to these traits a voice mellow in spite of its volume—the cattle understood its every inflection—and it is easy to perceive that Bute was in especial favor with the opposite sex. From head to foot, Nature had written upon him: This man is a male.

Bute had climbed the rise beyond Roaring Brook, when his reveries, whatever they might have been, were interrupted by the sight of a woman, walking towards Ptolemy, a short distance in advance of him. Although no other person was near, to play the spy, he felt the blood creeping up to his ears, as he looked keenly and questioningly at the little figure, in its dark-blue merino dress, tripping forward with short, quick steps. Dick noticed the change in his master, and broke into a trot down the gentle slope. At the sound of hoofs, the figure turned, disclosing a bunch of brown ringlets and a saucy little nose, then drew to one side of the road and stopped.

"Good-morning, Miss Carrie!" cried Bute, as he drew rein, on approaching: "I thought it was you. Goin' to Ptolemy? So am I. Git up on the bank, and I'll take ye on behind me. Dick ll carry double—he's as quiet as a lamb. Here, I'll jerk off my coat for you to set on." And he had his right arm out of the sleeve before he had finished speaking.

"Ah!" cried the lady, affecting a mild scream; "No, indeed, Mr. Wilson! I am so afraid of horses. Besides, I don't think it would look right."

It suddenly occurred to Bute's mind, that, in order to ride as he had proposed, she would be obliged to clasp him with both arms. Heaving a sigh of regret, he drew on his coat and jumped off the horse.

"Well, if you won't ride with me, I'll walk with you, anyhow. How's your health, Miss Carrie?" offering his hand.

"Very well, I thank you, Mr. Wilson. How's Mrs. Babb? And I hear that Mr. Woodbury has come to live with you."

Miss Caroline Dilworth was too well satisfied at meeting with Bute, to decline his proffered company. She was on her way from the house of a neighboring farmer, where she had been spending a fortnight as seamstress, to the cottage of the widow Thurston, who lived on the edge of the village. The old lady's health was declining, and Miss Dilworth occasionally rendered a friendly assistance to the daughter. They were both always glad to see the lively, chattering creature, in spite of her manifold weaknesses and affectations. She was twenty-five years of age, at least, but assumed all the timidity and inexperience of a girl of sixteen, always wearing her hair in a mesh of natural ringlets which hung about her neck, and talking with a soft childish drawl, unless—which rarely happened—she was so very much in earnest as to forget herself. Her nose was piquantly *retroussé*, her mouth small and cherry-red, and her complexion fair (for she took great care of it); but her eyes inclined to pale-green rather than blue, and she had an affected habit of dropping the lids. Perhaps this was to conceal the unpleasant redness of their edges, for they were oftentimes so inflamed as to oblige her to suspend her occupation. Her ambition was, to become a teacher—a post for which she was not at all qualified. Hannah Thurston, however, had kindly offered to assist her in preparing herself for the coveted career.

What it was that attracted Bute Wilson to Miss Dilworth, he was unable to tell. Had the case been reversed, we should not wonder at it. Only this much was certain; her society was a torment to him, her absence a pain. He would have cut off his little finger for the privilege of just once lifting her in his strong arms, and planting a kiss square upon the provoking mouth, which, as if conscious of its surplus of sweetness, could say so many bitter things to him. Bute had never spoken to her of the feeling which she inspired in him. Why should he? She knew just how he felt, and he knew that she knew it. She played with him as he had many a time played with a big trout at the end of his line. Over and over again he had been on the point of giving her up, out of sheer worriment and exhaustion of soul, when a sudden look from those downcast eyes, a soft word, half whispered in a voice whose deliberate sweetness tingled through him, from heart to finger-ends, bound him faster than ever. Miss Dilworth little suspected how many rocks she had sledged to pieces, how many extra swaths she had mowed in June, and shocks of corn she had husked in October, through Bute Wilson's arm. If Mr. Woodbury were a cunning employer, he would take measures to prolong this condition of suspense.

On the present occasion, the affected little minx was unusually gracious towards her victim. She had a keen curiosity to gratify. "Now, Bute," said she, as they started together towards Ptolemy, Bute leading Dick by the bridle; "I want you to tell me all about this Mr. Woodbury. What kind of a man is he?"

"He's only been with us three or four days. To be sure, I knowed him as a boy, but that's long ago, and I *may* have to learn him over ag'in. It won't be a hard thing to do, though: he's a gentleman, if there ever was one. He's a man that'll always do what's right, if he knows how."

"I mean, Bute, how he looks. Tall or short? Is he handsome? Isn't he burnt very black, or is it worn off?"

"Not so many questions at once, Miss Carrie. He a'n't blacker 'n I'd be now, if I was complected like him. Tall, you might call him—nigh two inches more'n I am, and a reg'lar pictur' of a man, though a bit thinner than he'd ought to be. But I dunno whether *you'd* call him handsome: women has sich queer notions. Now, there's that Seth Wattles, that you think sich a beauty—"

"Bute Wilson! You know I don't think any such thing! It's Seth's *mind* that I admire. There's such a thing as moral and intellectual beauty, but that you don't understand."

"No, hang it!—nor don't want to, if *he*'s got it! I believe in a man's doin' what he purtends to do—keepin' his mind on his work, whatever it is. If Seth Wattles lays out to be a tailor, let him *be* one: if he wants to be a moral and intellectual beauty, he may try *that*, for all I keer—but he can't do both to once't. I wish he'd make better trowsus, or give up his business."

Miss Dilworth knew her own weakness, and carefully avoided entering into a discussion. She was vexed that one of the phrases she had caught from Hannah Thurston, and which she had frequently used with much effect, had rattled harmlessly against the hard mail of Bute's common sense. At another time she would have taken—or have seemed to take—offence, at his rough speech; but she had not yet heard enough of Mr. Woodbury.

"Well, never mind Seth," she said, "you've not finished telling me about your new *master*."

If she had intended to prick Bute with this word, she utterly failed. He quietly resumed the description: "Every man that I like is handsome to me; but I think any woman would admire to see Mr. Max. He's got big brown eyes, like them o' the doe Master Harry used to have, and a straight nose, like one o' the plaster heads in the libery. He wears a beard on his upper lip, but no whiskers, and his hair is brown, and sort o' curlin'. He's a man that knows what he's about, and can make up his mind in five minutes, and looks you straight in the face when he talks; and if he'd a hard thing to say (though he's said nothin' o' the kind to me), he'd say it without flinchin', a little worse to your face than what he'd say behind y'r back. But what *I* like best in him, is, that he knows how to mind his own business, without botherin' himself about other folks's. You wouldn't ketch *him* a pitchin' into me because I chaw tobacco, like Seth Wattles did, with all his moral and intellectual beauty."

"Oh, but, Bute, you know it's so unhealthy. I do wish you'd give it up."

"Unhealthy! Stuff and nonsense—look at me!" And, in deed Bute, stopping, straightening himself, throwing out his breast, and striking it with a hard fist until it rang like a muffled drum, presented a picture of lusty, virile strength, which few men in the neighborhood of Ptolemy could have matched. "Unhealthy!" he continued; "I s'pose you'd call *Seth* healthy, with his tallow face, and breast-bone caved in. Why, the woman that marries him can use his ribs for a wash-board, when she's lost her'n. Then there was Absalom Merryfield, you know, killed himself out and out, he was so keerful o' *his* health. I'd ruther have no health at all, a darned sight, than worry my life out, thinkin' on it. Not that I could'nt give up chawin' tobacco, or any thing else, if there was a good reason for it. What is it to you, Carrie, whether I chaw or not?"

Miss Dilworth very well understood Bute's meaning, but let it go without notice, as he knew she would. The truth is, she was not insensible to his many good qualities, but she was ambitious of higher game. She had not attended all the meetings held in Ptolemy, in favor of Temperance, Anti-Slavery and Women's Rights, without imbibing as much conceit as the basis of her small mind could support. The expressions which, from frequent repetition, she had caught and retained, were put to such constant use, that she at last fancied them half original, and sighed for a more important sphere than that of a sempstress, or even a teacher. She knew she could never become a speaker—she was sure of that—but might sh not be selected by some orator of Reform, as a kindred soul, to support him with her sympathy and appreciation? Thus far, however, her drooping lids had been lifted and her curls elaborately tangled, in vain. The eloquent disciples, not understanding these mute appeals, passed by on the other side.

She drew the conversation back to Mr. Woodbury, and kept it to that theme until she had ascertained all that Bute knew, or was willing to tell; for the latter had such a strong sense of propriety about matters of this kind, as might have inspired doubts of his being a native-born American. By this time they had reached the bridge over East Atauga Creek, whence it was but a short distance to the village.

"There is Friend Thurston's cottage, at last," said Miss Dilworth. "Have you seen Miss Hannah lately? But, of course, she can't visit Lakeside now."

"I'm sorry for it," Bute remarked. "She's a fine woman, in spite of her notions. But why can't she?"

"It would not be proper."

"Wouldn't it be proper for a man to visit us?"

"To be sure. How queer you talk, Bute!"

"Well—she says a woman should be allowed to do whatever a man does. If Women's Rights is worth talkin' about, t's worth carryin' out. But I guess Miss Hannah's more of a woman than she knows on. I like to hear her talk, mighty well, and she says a good many things that I can't answer, but they're ag'in nature, for all that. If she was married and had a family growin' up 'round her, she wouldn't want to be a lawyer or a preacher. Here we are, at the gate. Good-by, Miss Carrie!"

"Good-by, Bute!" said Miss Dilworth, mechanically, pausing at the gate to see him spring into the saddle and trot rapidly down the street. She was confounded, and a little angry, at the nonchalance with which he trêated her oracle. "I wish it had been Hannah Thurston, instead of me," she said to herself, with a spiteful toss of her head—"she has an answer ready for everybody."

The plot of ground in front of the cottage already wore its winter livery. The roses were converted into little obelisks of straw, the flower-beds were warmly covered, and only the clumps of arbor-vitæ and the solitary balsam-fir were allowed to display their hardy green. Miss Dilworth passed around the house to the kitchen entrance, for she knew the fondness of the inmates for warmth and sunshine, and the sitting-room which they habitually occupied looked southward, over the vegetable garden, to the meadows of the eastern valley. Every thing was scrupulously neat and ordered. The tops of vegetables left for seed and the dead stalks of summer flowers had been carefully removed from the garden. The walks had been swept by a broom, and the wood-shed, elsewhere more or less chaotic in its appearance, was here visited by the same implement. Its scattered chips seemed to have arranged themselves into harmonious forms, like the atoms of sand under the influence of musical tones.

In the kitchen a girl of thirteen—the only servant the house afforded—was watching the kettles and pans on the cooking-stove. This operation might have been carried on in the parlor just as well, so little appearance was there of the usual "slops" and litter of a kitchen. This was Friend Thurston's specialty as a housekeeper—her maxim was, that there should be no part of a house where a visitor might not be received. Her neighbors always spoke of her kitchen with an admiration wherein there was a slight mixture of despair.

The sitting-room, beyond, was made cheerful by windows opening to the south and east; but more so by the homely simplicity and comfort of its arrangement. Every object spoke of limited means, but nothing of pinched self-denial The motley-colored rag carpet was clean, thick, and warm; the chintz sofa was relieved by inviting cushions; the old-fashioned rocking-chair was so stuffed and padded as to remedy its stiffness; the windows were curtained, and a few brands were smouldering among white ashes in the grate. A shelf inside the southern window held some tea-roses in pots, mignionette, heliotrope, and scarlet verbenas. There were but three pictures—a head of Milton, an old wood-engraving of the cottage where George Fox was born, and a tolerable copy of the Madonna della Seggiola. On a stand in the corner were the favorite volumes of the old lady, very plainly bound, as was meet, in calf of a drab color—Job Scott's Works, Woolman's Journal, and William Penn's "No Cross, No Crown." A swinging book-shelf, suspended on the wall, contained a different collection, which evidently belonged to the daughter. Several volumes of Carlyle, Margaret Fuller, Shelley, Bettina von Arnim, De Staël's "Corinne," the "Record of Woman," Milton, George Sands' "Consuelo," Mrs. Child's "Letters from New York," Hugh Miller, and bound numbers of the "Liberty Bell," were among them. Had a certain drawer been opened, one would have found files of *The Slavery Annihilator*, Mrs. Swisshelm's *Saturday Visitor*, and the weekly edition of the *New-York Tribune*. A rude vase of birch bark, on a bracket, was filled with a mass of flowering grasses, exquisitely arranged with regard to their forms and colors, from pale green and golden-gray to the loveliest browns and purples. This object was a work of art, in its way, and shed a gleam of beauty over the plainness of the apartment.

Friend Gulielma Thurston, leaning back in the rocking chair had suffered her hands, with the knitting they held, to sink into her lap, and looked out upon the hazy valley. Her thin face, framed in the close Quaker cap, which barely allowed her gray hair to appear at the temples, wore a sweet, placid expression, though the sunken eyes and set lips told of physical suffering. The spotless book-muslin handkerchief, many-folded, covered her neck and breast, and a worsted apron was tied over her drab gown, rather from habit than use. As she basked in the balmy warmth of the day, her wasted fingers unconsciously clasped themselves in a manner that expressed patience and trust. These were the prominent qualities of her nature—the secret of her cheerfulness and the source of her courage.

Late married, she had lost her first child, and shortly after the birth of her daughter Hannah, her husband also. The latter was a stern, silent man, rigid in creed and in discipline, but with a concealed capacity for passion which she had not understood while she possessed him. Her mind first matured in the sorrow of his loss, and she became, from that natural need which is content with no narrower comfort, a speaker in the meetings of her sect. The property she inherited at her husband's death was very small, and she was obliged to labor beyond her strength, until the bequest of an unmarried brother relieved her from pressing want. Hannah, to whom she had managed to give a tolerably thorough education, obtained a situation as teacher, for which she proved so competent that a liberal offer from the Trustees of the Young Ladies' Seminary at Ptolemy induced both mother and daughter to remove thither. Her earnings, added to the carefully husbanded property, finally became sufficient to insure them a modest support, so that, when her mother's failing health obliged Hannah to give up her place, there was no serious anxiety for the future to interfere with her filial duty.

The daughter was seated at the eastern window, beside a small table, which was covered with gorgeously tinted autumn leaves. She was occupied in arranging them in wreaths and groups, on sheets of card-board, which were designed to form an album, and to wear, as binding, the embroidery of fern-leaves, upon which we first found her engaged. Such an album, contributed by her to the Anti-Slavery Fair, the previous year, had enriched the treasury of the Society by the sum of ten dollars, and the managers had begged a second donation of the same kind.

Catching a glimpse of Miss Dilworth through the window she rose to receive her. In stature, she was somewhat above the average height of women, though not noticeably tall, and a little too slender for beauty. Her hands were thin, but finely formed, and she carried them as if they were a conscious portion of herself, not an awkward attachment. Her face would have been a perfect oval, except that the forehead, instead of being low and softly rounded, was rather squarely developed in the reflective region, and the cheeks, though not thin, lacked the proper fulness of outline. Her hair was of a rich, dark-brown, black in shadow, and the delicate arches of the eye-brows were drawn with a clear, even pencil, above the earnest gray eyes, dark and deep under the shadow of their long lashes. The nose was faultless, and the lips, although no longer wearing their maidenly ripeness and bloom, were so pure in outline, so sweetly firm in their closing junction, so lovely in their varying play of expression, that the life of her face seemed to dwell in them alone. Her smile had a rare benignity and beauty. The paleness of her face, being, to some extent, a feature of her physical temperament, did not convey the impression of impaired health: a ruddy tint would not have harmonized with the spiritual and sensitive character of her countenance. No one would have dreamed of calling Hannah Thurston a beauty. In society nine men would have passed her without a thought; but the tenth would have stood still, and said: "Here is a woman 'to sit at a king's right hand, in thunder-storms,'" and would have carried her face in his memory forever.

The severest test of a woman is to play an exceptional part in the world. Her respect, her dignity, her virtue itself, become doubtful, if not mythical, in the eyes of men. In the small circle of Ptolemy, Hannah Thurston had subjected herself to this test, and it was no slight triumph for her, had she known it, that, while her views were received with either horror or contempt, while the names of her fellow priestesses or prophetesses were bandied about in utter disrespect, she was never personally ridiculed. No tongue dared to whisper an insinuation against either her sincerity or her purity. This, however, was partly owing to the circumstances of her life in the place. She had first achieved popularity as a teacher, and honor as a daughter. Among other things, it was generally reported and believed that she had declined an offer of marriage, advantageous in a worldly point of view, and the act was set down to her credit as wholly one of duty towards her mother.

In her plain brown dress, with linen collar and cuffs, the only ornament being a knot of blue ribbon at the throat, she also, appeared to be a Quakeress; yet, she had long since perceived that the external forms of the sect had become obsolete, and no longer considered herself bound by them. Some concession in dress, however, was still due for her mother's sake, beyond whose rapidly shortening span of life she could see no aim in her own, unless it were devoted to righting the wrongs of her sex. She had had her girlish dreams; but the next birthday was her thirtieth, and she had already crossed, in resolve, that deep gulf in a woman's life.

Miss Caroline Dilworth, in her blue dress, came as if dipped in the Indian Summer, with a beryl gleam in her eyes, as she darted into the sitting-room. She caught Hannah Thurston around the waist, and kissed her twice: she was never known to greet her female friends with less. Then, leaning gently over the rocking-chair, she took the old woman's hand.

"Take off thy bonnet, child," said the latter, "and push thy hair back, so that I can see thy face. I'm glad thee's come."

"Oh, Friend Thurston, I was so afraid I couldn't get away from Parkman's. It's a lonely place, you know, over the hill, and she's hard of hearing. Ah! I'm out of breath, yet"—and therewith heaving a sigh of relief, the little creature threw off her shawl and untied the strings of her bonnet.

Their life had so much in it that was grave and earnest—their conversation naturally turning to the past rather than the future—that the Thurstons always felt themselves cheered by Miss Dilworth's visits. She dropped her affectations in their presence, and became, for the time, a light-hearted, amiable, silly woman. She never arrived without a fresh budget of gossip, generally of slight importance, but made piquant by her rattling way of telling it.

"How thee does run on!" Friend Thurston would sometimes say, whereupon the sempstress would only toss her curls and run on all the more inveterately.

"Oh, I must tell you all about Lakeside and the new owner!" she exclaimed, as she settled herself into a chair.

Hannah Thurston could probably have told her more about Mr. Woodbury than she already knew; but it would have been unkind to cut short the eager narrative, and so Bute's report, with many additions and variations, was served out to them in chapters, during the afternoon.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH MR. WOODBURY HEARS A WOMAN SPEAK.

In his intercourse with the society of his new home, Woodbury found fewer distasteful circumstances to be overlooked, than he had at first feared. The novelty of the experience had its charm, and, as his mind recovered something of that active interest in men which he had almost unlearned, he was surprised to find how vital and absorbing his relations with them became. From the very earnestness of his views, however, he was reticent in the expression of them, and could with difficulty accustom himself to the discussion, in mixed society, of subjects which are usually only broached in the confidential intimacy of friends. Not merely "Fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute," but the privacy of individual faiths, doubts, and aspirations, became themes of discussion; even the shrinking sanctity of love was invaded, and the ability to converse fluently was taken by the community of Ptolemy as a sign of capacity to feel deeply on these subjects.

At the dinners and evening parties of the English, an intellectual as well as a social propriety is strictly observed, and the man who makes a habit of producing for general inspection, his religious convictions or his moral experiences, is speedily voted a bore. Maxwell Woodbury, whose long residence in Calcutta had fixed his habits, in this respect, was at first more amused than shocked, at the *abandon* with which spiritual intimacies were exchanged, in the society of Ptolemy. He soon learned, however, that much of this talk was merely a superficial sentimentalism, and that the true sanctities of the speakers' hearts were violated more in appearance than in fact. Nevertheless, he felt no inclination to take part in conversation of this character, and fell into the habit of assuming a mystical, paradoxical tone, whenever he was forcibly drawn into the discussion. Sometimes, indeed, he was tempted to take the opposite side of the views advocated, simply in order to extort more reckless and vehement utterances from their defenders. It is not surprising, therefore, that his lack of earnestness,—as it seemed to the others—was attributed by many to a stolid indifference to humanity. Seth Wattles even went so far as to say: "I should not wonder if he had made his money in the accursed opium traffic."

The two topics which, for him, possessed an intrinsically repellant character, happened to be those which were at that time most actively discussed: Spiritualism and Women's Rights. He had seen the slight-of-hand of the Indian jugglers, far more wonderful than any feats supernaturally performed in the presence of mediums, and the professed communications from the world of spirits struck him as being more inane twaddle than that which fell from the lips of the living believers. He had not lived thirty-six years without as much knowledge of woman as a single man may profitably acquire; and the better he knew the sex, the more tender and profound became his regard. To him, in his strength, however, the relation of protector was indispensable; the rudest blows of life must first fall upon his shield. The idea of an independent strength, existing side by side with his, yet without requiring its support, was unnatural and repulsive. Aunt Dennison, in her noble self-abnegation as wife and mother, was more queenly in his eyes, than Mary Wollstonecraft or Madame de Staël. It was difficult for him to believe how any truly refined and feminine woman could claim for her sex a share in the special occupations of man.

There is always a perverse fate which attracts one into the very situations he wishes to avoid. On the evening when the Sewing-Union met at Merryfield's, Woodbury happened to be drawn into a group which contained Mrs. Waldo, Hannah Thurston, and the host. The latter was speaking of a plan for a Female Medical College.

"It is the first step," said he, "and its success will overthrow the dynasty of ideas, under which woman has been crushed, as it were." The phrase: "dynasty of ideas," he had borrowed from a recent lecturer.

"Well", said Mrs. Waldo, musingly, "if it went no further I should not have much to say against it, for we know that women are the best nurses, and they *may* make tolerable doctors. But I should prefer that somebody else than myself made the beginning."

"You are right," remarked Woodbury; "it is not pleasant to think of a woman standing at a dissecting-table, with a scalpel in her hand, and a quarter of a subject before her."

Hannah Thurston shuddered inwardly, but at once took up the gauntlet. "Why not?" she asked. "Are not women capable of this, and more than this, for the sake of knowledge that will enable them to do good? Or is it because their minds are too weak to grapple with the mysteries of science?"

Woodbury, to avoid a discussion to which he was so strongly averse, assumed a gay, bantering tone. "In the presence of ladies," he said, smiling, and partly directing his words to Mrs. Waldo, "there is only one way of answering the latter question."

Hannah Thurston was of too earnest a nature to endure trifling—for such seemed his reply. Her gray eyes kindled with an emotion a very little milder than contempt. "So!" she exclaimed, "we must still endure the degradation of hollow compliment. We are still children, and our noise can be quieted with sugar-plums!"

"I beg your pardon, Miss Thurston!" Woodbury gravely answered. "My apparent disrespect was but a shift to avoid discussing a subject which I have never seriously considered, and which, I will only say, seems to me a matter of instinct rather than of argument. Besides," he added, "I believ

Mrs. Waldo, as our dictatress, prohibits debate on these occasions."

The lady referred to immediately came to his assistance. "I *do* prohibit it;" said she, with a magisterial wave of the hand; "and you cannot object to my authority, Hannah, since you have a chance to defend our sex, and cover with confusion all such incorrigible bachelors as Mr. Woodbury, on Thursday next. I'm sure he's a misanthrope, or—mis—what ever you call it."

"A misogynist?" Woodbury gayly suggested. "No, no, Mrs. Waldo. Do not you, as a clergyman's wife, know that there may be a devotional feeling so profound as to find the pale of any one sect too narrow?"

Hannah Thurston looked earnestly at the speaker. What did he mean?—was that also jest? she asked herself. She was unaccustomed to such mental self-possession. Most of the men she knew would have answered her with spirit, considering that to decline a challenge thrown down by a woman was equivalent to acknowledging the intellectual equality of the sexes—this being the assertion which they most strenuously resisted. Mr. Woodbury, however, had withdrawn as a matter of taste and courtesy. She had given him the opportunity of doing so, a little to her own discomfiture, and was conscious that her self-esteem was wounded by the result. She could not quite forgive him for this, though his manner, she felt, compelled respect. At the risk of having her silence misinterpreted, she made no reply.

Woodbury, who had not understood Mrs. Waldo's allusion, took an opportunity, later in the evening, to ask for an explanation.

"I thought you had heard," said she. "There is to be a meeting in favor of Women's Rights, on Thursday afternoon, at the Hall, in Ptolemy. Mr. Bemis, the great advocate of the reform, is to be there, and I believe they expect Bessie Stryker."

"Who is Bessie Stryker?"

"Mr. Woodbury! It's well you did not ask Hannah Thurston that question. You've been out of the country—I had forgotten that; but I should think you must have heard of her in Calcutta. She has travelled all over the country, lecturing on the subject, and has made such a name as a speaker that everybody goes to hear her. She is quite pretty, and wears the new Bloomer dress."

"Really, you excite my curiosity. I must attend this meeting, if only to show Miss Thurston that I am above the vulgar prejudice which I presume she imputes to me."

"Oh, no, Mr. Woodbury. Hannah Thurston is not unjust, whatever faults she may have. But you should know that she has a dislike—morbid, it seems to me—of the compliments which you men generally pay to us women. For my part, I see no harm in them."

"Both of you, at least, are candid," replied Woodbury, laughing, "and that trait, with me, covers a multitude of weaknesses."

Woodbury went to the meeting on the following Thursday, much as he would have attended a Brahminical festival in honor of the Goddess Unna-Purna. He felt no particular interest in the subject to be treated, except a curiosity to know how it could be rendered plausible to a semi-intelligent auditory. Of Ptolemy, privately and socially, he had seen something, but he had not yet mingled with Ptolemy in public.

"The Hall," as it was called (being the only one in the place), was a brick building, situated on the principal street. Its true name was Tumblety Hall, from the builder and owner, Mr. Jabez Tumblety, who had generously bestowed his name upon it in consideration of receiving ten per cent. on his investment, from the lease of it to phrenologists, the dancing school, Ethiopian Minstrels, exhibitors of laughing gas, lecturers on anatomy (the last lecture exclusively for gentlemen), jugglers, temperance meetings, caucuses of the Hunkers and Barnburners, and, on Sundays, to the Bethesdeans in the morning and the Spiritualists in the evening. Its internal aspect was rather shabby. The roughly-plastered walls offered too great a temptation for the pencils and charcoal of unfledged artists, when bored by a windy orator. Various grotesque heads, accompanied by names and dates, made up for the absence of frescoes, but the talent thus displayed did not seem to be appreciated, for under some of them was written, in a later hand: "he is a fool." The benches were of unpainted pine, with long back-rails, which, where they had not been split off by the weight of the leaning crowd, were jagged with whittled notches. Along the further end of the hall ran a platform, raised three feet above the floor, and containing a table, three arm-chairs, and two settees. The floor might have been swept, but had not recently been washed, to judge from the stains of tobacco-juice by which it was mottled.

When Woodbury entered, the seats were nearly all occupied, an audience of five hundred persons being in attendance. Most of them were evidently from the country; some, indeed, who were favorably inclined to the cause, had come from Mulligansville and Atauga City. All the loafers of Ptolemy were there, of course, and occupied good seats. The few members of the respectable, conservative, moneyed class, whose curiosity drew them in, lingered near the door, on the edges of the crowd, in order that they might leave whenever so disposed, without attracting attention to their presence.

Mr. Merryfield occupied the middle chair on the platform, with a heavy-faced, bald-templed, belligerent looking gentleman on his right, and a middle-aged lady in black silk, on his left. The settees were also occupied by persons of both sexes who were interested in the cause. Among them was Hannah Thurston.

A whispered consultation was carried on for some time among the party on the platform, the belligerent gentleman evidently having the most to say. Finally Mr. Merryfield arose, thumped upon the table, and after waiting a minute for the "*shs!*" to subside, announced: "The meeting will now come to order!"

The meeting being already in order, no effect was produced by this announcement.

"As we have assembled together, as it were," he continued, "principally to listen to the noble advocates of the glorious cause who are to appear before us, my friends suggest that—that there should be no—that we should dispense, as it were, with a regular organization, and proceed to listen to their voices. The only—I would suggest, if the meeting is willing, that we should appoint—that is, that a committee should be named, as it were, to draw up resolutions expressing their—our sense on the subject of Women's Rights. Perhaps," he added, turning around, "some one will make the motion."

"I move that a committee of six be appointed!" "I second the motion!" were heard, almost simultaneously.

"Those in favor of that motion will signify their assent by saying 'Aye!'" said Mr. Merryfield.

"Aye!" rang through the house with startling unanimity, all the boys expressing their enthusiastic assent.

"Contrary—'No!'"

Dead silence.

"The Ayes have it. Who shall the Committee be composed of."

"Both sexes must be represented. Three men and three women," said the belligerent gentleman, suddenly, half rising from his seat.

In a short time the members of the Committee were appointed, and, there being no further business on hand, Mr. Merryfield said: "I have now the pleasure, as it were, of introducing to the audience the noble advocate of Women's Rights, Isaiah Bemis, who—whose name is—is well known to you all as the champion of his—I mean, her—persecuted sex." Mr. Merryfield was so disconcerted by the half-suppressed laughter which followed this blunder, that the termination of his eulogium became still more confused "The name of Isaiah Bemis," he said, "does not need my condem—commendation. When Woman shall fill her true spere, it will shine—will be written among the martyrs of Reform, as it were, for Truth, crushed to Earth, rises up in spite of—of—though the heavens fall!"

Mr. Bemis, who was no other than the gentleman of belligerent aspect, already mentioned, at once arose, bowing gravely in answer to a slight, hesitating, uncertain sound of applause. The Ptolemy public had not listened for years to speakers of all kinds, and on all subjects, without acquiring some degree of critical perception. They both enjoyed and prided themselves on their acumen, and a new man, whatever his doctrines might be, was sure that he would find a full house to receive him. If he possessed either eloquence or humor, in any appreciable degree, he had no reason to complain of his reception. The class of hearers to which we refer did not consider themselves committed to the speaker's views by their manifestations of applause. Off the platform, there were not twenty advocates of Women's Rights in the whole audience, yet all were ready to hear Mr. Bemis, and to approve a good thing, if he should happen to say it.

A few minutes, however, satisfied them that he was not the kind of speaker they coveted. He took for his text that maxim of the Declaration of Independence, that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," first proved the absolute justice of the theory, and then exhibited the flagrant violation of it in the case of woman. She is equally obliged, with man, to submit to the laws, he said, but has no voice in making them; even those laws which control her property, her earnings, her children, her person itself, are enacted without consultation with her. She not only loses her name, but her individual privileges are curtailed, as if she belonged to an inferior order of beings. The character of his harangue was aggressive throughout. He referred as little as possible, to any inherent difference in the destinies of sex; men and women were simply human beings, and in Society, and Law, and Government, there should be no distinction made between them. There was a certain specious display of logic in his address; the faulty links were glozed over, so that his chain of argument appeared sound and strong, from end to end. Granting his premises, indeed, which he assumed with an air, as if they were beyond dispute—all the rest readily followed. Those who believed with him, not perceiving the defect in his basis, were charmed with the force and clearness of his views.

A crowd feels, not reasons, and the auditors, after an hour of this talk, began to manifest signs of weariness. Even Woodbury, to whom the whole scene was a study—or, rather, a *show*—only kept his place from a desire to hear the famous Bessie Stryker.

Mr. Bemis at last sat down, and some further whispering ensued. There was a slight hitch in the proceedings, it was evident. In a few minutes, Mr. Merryfield again arose. "My friends," said he; "I regret to be able to state that we are disappointed, as it were, in listening—in the arrival of Bessie Stryker. We expected her in the afternoon stage coming from Cephalonia, and was to have lectured there last night, but has arrived without her. But I hope, nevertheless, that you will—that it will be agreeable to you, as it were, to hear a few words from our friend, Hannah Thurston, who requires—whom you know already."

Hearty signs of approbation greeted this announcement. Thus appealed to, Hannah Thurston, who at first made a movement of hesitation, rose, quietly removed her bonnet, and walked forward to the table. Her face seemed a little paler than usual, but her step was firm, and the hand which she placed upon the table did not tremble. After a pause, as if to collect and isolate her mind from external impressions, she commenced speaking, in a voice so low that only its silver purity of tone enabled her to be heard. Yet the slight tremulousness it betrayed indicated no faltering of courage; it was simply a vibration of nerves rather tensely strung.

"I will not repeat," she began, "the arguments by which the eloquent speaker has illustrated the wrongs endured by woman, under all governments and all systems of law, whether despotic or republican. These are considerations which lie further from us; we are most concerned for those injuries which require an immediate remedy. When we have removed the social prejudices which keep our sex in a false position—when we have destroyed the faith of the people in the tyrannical traditions by which we are ruled—the chains of the law will break of themselves. As a beginning to that end, woman must claim an equal right to education, to employment, and reward. These are the first steps in our reform, to reach the sources of those evils which cause our greatest suffering. We can endure a little longer, to be deprived of the permission to vote and to rule, because the denial is chiefly an assault upon our intelligence; but we need now—at once—and, my friends, I am pleading for millions who cannot speak for themselves—we need an equal privilege with man, to work and to be justly paid. The distinction which is made, to our prejudice, renders us weak and helpless, compared with our brethren, to whom all fields are open, and who may claim the compensation which is justified by their labor, without incurring ridicule or contempt. They are even allowed to usurp branches which, if the popular ideas of woman's weakness, and man's chivalry towards her be true, should be left for us. Even admitting that our sphere is limited—that there are only a few things which we may properly do—is it generous, is it even just, that man, who has the whole range of life to choose from, should crowd us out from these few chances of earning our bread? Or to force us to perform the same labor for a smaller remuneration, because we are women? Could we not measure a yard of calico as rapidly, or choose a shade of zephyr as correctly as the elegant young men who stand behind the counter? With our more sensitive physical organization, might not all tasks requiring quickness, nicety of touch, and careful arrangement, be safely confided to our hands?"

At this point the audience, which had quite lost its air of weariness, broke into subdued but cordial applause. Hannah Thurston's voice, as she acquired possession of her subject, increased in strength, but at no time appeared to rise above a conversational tone. Her manner also, was simply conversational. The left hand slightly touched the table, as if she only wished to feel a support at hand, not use it; while she now and then, involuntarily, made a simple movement with the right. The impression she produced was that of a woman compelled by some powerful necessity or duty to appear before a public assembly, not of one who coveted and enjoyed the position. Woodbury was profoundly interested in the speaker, and in her words. Both were equally new to him.

"What we *now* ask, therefore, my friends," she continued, "is that the simple justice be meted out to us, which we feel that man—without adopting any of our views concerning the true position of woman—is bound to give. We ask that his boasted chivalry be put into practice, not merely in escorting us to concerts, or giving us his seat in a railroad-car, or serving us first at the table—or in all other ways by which the reputation of chivalry and gallantry towards our sex is earned at little cost; but in leaving open to us those places which he confesses we are fitted to fill—in paying us, as teachers, clerks, tailors, or operatives, the same wages for the same work which men do!"

This was so simply and fairly stated, that the audience again heartily approved. There was nothing, in fact, of the peculiar doctrines of Women's Rights in what she said—nothing to which they could not have individually assented, without compromising their position in regard to the main point. Mr. Bemis, however, drew down his heavy brows, and whispered to the chairman: "Very good, so far as it goes, but timidly stated. We must strike the evil at its root."

After dwelling for some time on this aspect of the question, and illustrating it by a number of examples, Hannah Thurston went a step further.

"But we deny," she said, "that Man has any natural right to prescribe the bounds within which Woman may labor and live. God alone has that right, and His laws govern both sexes with the same authority. Man has indeed assumed it, because he disbelieves in the intellectual equality of women. He has treated her as an older child, to whom a certain amount of freedom might be allowed, but whom it was not safe to release entirely from his guardianship. He has educated her in this belief, through all the ages that have gone by since the creation of the world. Now and then, women have arisen, it is true, to vindicate the equal authority of their sex, and have nobly won their places in history; but the growth of the truth has been slow—so slow, that to-day, in this enlightened maturity of the world, we must plead and prove all that which you should grant without our asking. It is humiliating that a woman is obliged to collect evidence to convince men of her equal intelligence. She, who is also included in the one word, Man! Placed side by side with him in Paradise—Mother of the Saviour who came to redeem his fallen race—first and holiests among the martyrs and saints! Young men! Think of your own mothers, and spare us this humiliation!"

These words, uttered with startling earnestness, produced a marked sensation in the audience. Perhaps it was a peculiarity springing from her Quaker descent, that the speaker's voice gradually assumed the character of a musical recitative, becoming a clear, tremulous chant, almost in monotone. This gave it a sad, appealing expression, which touched the emotional nature of the hearer, and clouded his judgment for the time being. After a pause, she continued in her ordinary tone:

" The pages of history do not prove the superiority of man. When we consider the position which he has forced woman to occupy, we should rather wonder that she has so often resisted his authority, and won possession of the empire which he had appropriated to himself. In the earliest ages he admitted her capacity to govern, a power so high and important in its nature, that we should be justified in claiming that it embraces all other capacities, and in resting our defence on that alone. Such women as Semiramis and Zenobia, Margaret of Denmark, and Elizabeth of England, Maria Theresa, and Catharine of Russia, are not the least—not second, even—among great rulers. Jael and Judith, and the Maid of Orleans stand no less high among the deliverers of nations, than Leonidas and William Tell. The first poet who sang may have been Homer, but the second was Sappho.* Even in the schools of Philosophy, the ancients had their Hypatia, and the scholars of the Middle Ages honored the learning of Olympia Morata. Men claim the field of scientific research as being exclusively their own; but the names of Caroline Herschel in England, and Maria Mitchell in America, prove that even here women cannot justly be excluded. Ah, my friends! when God calls a human being to be the discoverer of His eternal laws, or the illustrator of His eternal beauty, He does not stop to consider the question of sex! If you grant human intellect at all to Woman, you must grant the possibility of inspiration, of genius, of a life divinely selected as the instrument of some great and glorious work. Admitting this, you may safely throw open to us all avenues to knowledge. Hampered as Woman still is—circumscribed in her spheres of action and thought (for her false education permanently distorts her habits of mind)—she is yet, at present, far above the Saxon bondmen from whom the most of you are descended. You know that she has risen thus far, not only without injury to herself, but to *your* advantage: why check her progress, here? Nay, why check it any where? If Man's dominion be thereby limited, would his head be less uneasy, if the crown he claims were shared with another? Is not a friend better than a servant? If Marriage were a *partnership* for Woman, instead of a *clerkship*, the Head of the House would feel his burthen so much the lighter. If the physician's wife were competent to prepare his medicines, or the merchant's to keep his books, or the lawyer's to draw up a bond, the gain would be mutual. For Woman, to be a true helpmeet to Man, must know all that Man knows; and, even as she is co-heir with him of Heaven—receiving, not the legal 'Third part,' but *all* of its infinite blessedness,—so she should be co-proprietor of the Earth, equally armed to subdue its iniquities, and prepare it for a better future!"

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* Miss Thurston makes these statements on her own responsibility.

With these words, Hannah Thurston closed her address. As she quietly walked back to her seat and resumed her bonnet, there was a stir of satisfaction among the audience, terminating in a round of applause, which, however, she did not acknowledge in any way. Although, in no part of the discourse, had she touched the profounder aspects of the subject, especially the moral distinctions of sex, she had given utterance to many absolute truths, which were too intimately connected, in her mind, with the doctrine she had adopted, for her to perceive their real independence of it. Thus, most of her hearers, while compelled to agree with her in many respects, still felt themselves unconvinced in the main particular. She was not aware of her own inability to discuss the question freely, and ascribed to indifference or prejudice that reluctance among men, which really sprang from their generous consideration for her sex.

As for Woodbury, he had listened with an awakened interest in her views, which, for the time, drew his attention from the speaker's personality. Her first appearance had excited a singular feeling of compassion—partly for the trial which, he fancied, she must undergo, and partly for the mental delusion which was its cause. It was some time before he was reassured by her calmness and self-possession. At the close, he was surprised to discover in himself a lurking sensation of regret that she had not spoken at greater length. "I was wrong the other night," he thought. "This woman is in severe earnest, and would have been less offended if I had plumply declined her challenge, instead of evading it. I have yet something to learn from these people."

The Committee of Six now made their report. Seth Wattles, who was one of the number, and had assumed to himself the office of Chairman, read a string of Resolutions, setting forth, That: Whereas, this is an Age of Progress, and no reform should be overlooked in the Great Battle for the Right Therefore, Resolved—That we recognize in this movement for the Equal Rights of Woman a cause without the support of which no other cause can be permanently successful: and, Resolved, That we will in every way help forward the good work, by the Dissemination of Light and Information, tending to set forth the claims of Woman before the Community: also, Resolved, That we will circulate petitions to the State Legislature, for the investment of Woman with all civil and political rights: and, lastly, Resolved, That, we will use our best endeavors to increase the circulation of *The Monthly Hollyhock*, a journal devoted to the cause of Women's Rights.

Mr. Merryfield arose and inquired: "Shall the Report of the Committee be adopted?" He fortunately checked himself in time not to add: "as it were."

"I move its adoption!" "I second the motion!" were immediately heard from the platform.

"All who are in favor of adopting the Resolutions we have just heard read, will signify their assent by saying 'Aye!'"

A scattering, irregular fire of "Ayes" arose in reply. The boys felt that their sanction would be out of place on this occasion, with the exception of two or three, who hazarded their voices, in the belief that they would not be remarked, in the general vote. To their dismay, they launched themselves into an interval of silence, and their shrill pipes drew all eyes to their quarter of the house.

"Contrary,—'No!'"

The opponents of the movement, considering that this was not *their* meeting, refrained from voting.

"Before the meeting adjourns," said Mr. Merryfield, again rising, "I must—I take the liberty to hope, as it were, that the truths we have heard this day may spread—may sink deeply into our hearts. We expect to be able to announce, before long, a visit from Bessie Stryker, whose failure--whom we have missed from among our eleg—eloquent champions. But we trust she is elsewhere, and our loss is their gain. I thank the audience for your attendance—attention, I should say, and approbation of our glorious reform. As there is no further business before the meeting, and our friends from Mulligansville and Atauga City have some distance to return home, we will now adjourn in time to reach their destination."

At this hint the audience rose, and began to crowd out the narrow door-way and down the steep staircase. Woodbury, pushed and hustled along with the rest, was amused at the remarks of the crowd: "He?—oh, he's a gassy old fellow!" "Well, there's a good deal of truth in it!" "Bessie Stryker? I'd rather hear Hannah Thurston any day!" "He didn't half like it!" "She has a better right to say such things than he has!"—and various other exclamations, the aggregate of which led him to infer that the audience felt no particular interest in the subject of Women's Rights, but had a kindly personal feeling towards Hannah Thurston.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH LAKESIDE BECOMES LIVELY.

WINTER at last set in—the steady winter of Central New York, where the snow which falls at the beginning of December usually covers the ground until March. Ptolemy, at least, which lies upon the northern side of the watershed between the Susquehanna and the rivers which flow into Lake Ontario, has a much less variable winter temperature than the great valley, lying some thirty miles to the southward. Atauga Lake, in common with Cayuga and Seneca, never freezes, except across the shallows at its southern end; but its waters, so piercingly cold that they seem to cut the skin like the blade of a knife, have no power to soften the northern winds. The bottoms between Ptolemy and the lake, and also, in fact, the Eastern and Western Valleys, for some miles behind the village, are open to the North; and those sunny winter days which, in more sheltered localities, breathe away the snow, here barely succeed in softening it a little. On the hills it is even too deep for pleasure. As soon as a highway has been broken through the drifts, the heavy wood-sleds commence running, and very soon wear it into a succession of abrupt hollows, over which the light cutters go pitching like their nautical namesakes in a chopping sea.

Woodbury, in obedience to a promise exacted by his sister, went to New York for the holidays, and, as might have been anticipated, became entangled in a succession of social engagements, which detained him until the middle of January. He soon grew tired of acting as escort to his two pretty, but (it must be confessed, in strict confidence), shallow nieces, whose sole æsthetic taste was opera—and in opera, especially Verdi. After a dozen nights of "darling Bosio," and "delightful Beneventano," and "all the rest of them," he would have been glad to hear, as a change, even the "*Taza be-taza*" of the Hindoo nautch-girls. A season of eastern rains and muddy streets made the city insupportable, and—greatly to the wonder of his sister's family—he declined an invitation to the grand Fifth Avenue ball of Mrs. Luther Leathers, in order to return to the wilderness of Ptolemy.

Taking the New York and Erie express-train to the town of Miranda, he there chartered a two-horse cutter, with an Irish attachment, and set out early the next morning. He had never before approached Ptolemy from this side, and the journey had all the charm of a new region. It was a crisp, clear day, the blood of the horses was quickened by the frosty air, and the cutter slid rapidly and noiselessly over the well-beaten track. With a wolf-skin robe on his knees, Woodbury sat in luxurious warmth, and experienced a rare delight in breathing the keen, electric crystal of the atmosphere. It was many years since he had felt such an exquisite vigor of life within him—such a nimble play of the aroused blood—such lightness of heart, and hope, and courage! The snow-crystals sparkled in the sunshine, and the pure shoulders of the hills before him shone like silver against the naked blue of the sky. He sang aloud, one after another, the long-forgotten songs, until his moustache turned to ice and hung upon his mouth like the hasp of a padlock.

Rising out of the Southern valleys, he sped along, over the cold, rolling uplands of the watershed, and reached Mulligansville towards noon. Here the road turned westward, and a further drive of three miles brought him to the brink of the long descent to East Atauga Creek. At this point, a superb winter landscape was unfolded before him. Ptolemy, with its spires, its one compactly-built, ambitious street, its scattered houses and gardens, lay in the centre of the picture. On the white floor of the valley were drawn, with almost painful sharpness and distinctness, the outlines of farm-houses, and barns, fences, isolated trees, and the winding lines of elm and alder which marked the courses of the streams. Beyond the mouth of the further valley rose the long, cultivated sweep of the western hill, flecked with dull-purple patches of pine forest. Northward, across the white meadows and the fringe of trees along Roaring Brook, rose the sunny knoll of Lakeside, sheltered by the dark woods behind, while further, stretching far away between the steep shores, gleamed the hard, steel-blue sheet of the lake. The air was so intensely clear that the distance was indicated only by a difference in the hue of objects, not by their diminished distinctness.

"By Jove! this is glorious!" exclaimed Woodbury, scarcely conscious that he spoke.

"Shure, an' it's a fine place, Surr!" said the Irish driver, appropriating the exclamation.

Shortly after commencing the descent, a wreck was descried ahead. A remnant of aristocracy—or, at least, a fondness for aristocratic privilege—still lingers among our republican people, and is manifested in its most offensive form, by the drivers of heavy teams. No one ever knew a lime-wagon or a wood-sled to give an inch of the road to a lighter vehicle. In this case, a sled, on its way down, had forced an ascending cutter to turn out into a deep drift, and in attempting to regain the track both shafts of the latter had been snapped off. The sled pursued its way, regardless of the ruin, and the occupants of the cutter, a gentleman and lady, were holding a consultation over their misfortune, when Woodbury came in sight of them. As the gentleman leading his horse back into the drift to give room, turned his face towards the approaching cutter, Woodbury recognized, projecting between ear-lappets of fur, the curiously-planted nose, the insufficient lips, and the prominent teeth, which belonged to the Rev. Mr. Waldo. The recognition was mutual.

"My dear, it is Mr. Woodbury!" the latter joyfully cried, turning to the muffled lady. She instantly stood up in the cutter, threw back her veil, and hailed the approaching deliverer: "Help me, good Samaritan! The Levite has wrecked me, and the Priest has enough to do, to take care of himself!"

Woodbury stopped his team, sprang out, and took a survey of the case. "It is not to be mended," said he; "you must crowd yourselves in with me, and we will drive on slowly, leading the horse."

"But I have to attend a funeral at Mulligansville—the child of one of our members," said Mr. Waldo, "and there is no time to lose. My dear, you must go back with Mr. Woodbury. Perhaps he can take the harness and robes. I will ride on to Van Horn's, where I can borrow a saddle."

This arrangement was soon carried into effect. Mr. Waldo mounted the bare-backed steed, and went off up the hill, thumping his heels against the animal's sides. The broken shafts were placed in the cutter, which was left "to be called for," and Mrs. Waldo took her seat beside Woodbury. She had set out to attend the funeral, as a duty enjoined by her husband's office, and was not displeased to escape without damage to her conscience.

"I'm glad you've got back, Mr. Woodbury," she said, as they descended the hill. "We like to have our friends about us, in the winter, and I assure you, you've been missed."

"It is pleasant to feel that I have already a place among you," he answered. "What is the last piece of gossip? Is the Great Sewing-Union still in existence?"

"Not quite on the old foundation. *Our* fair has been held—by the bye, there I missed you. I fully depended on selling you a quantity of articles. The Anti-Slavery Fair is over, too; but they are still working for the Jutnapore Mission, as there is a chance of sending the articles direct to Madras, before long; and so the most of us still attend, and either assist them or take our own private sewing with us."

"Where do you next meet?"

"Ah, that's our principal trouble. We have exhausted all the available houses, besides going twice to Bue's and Wilkinson's. Our parsonage is so small—a mere pigeon-house—that it's out of the question. I wish I had some of your empty rooms at Lakeside. Now, there's an idea! Capital! Confess that my weak feminine brain is good at resorts!"

"What is it?" Woodbury asked.

"Can't you guess? *You* shall entertain the Sewing-Union one evening. We will meet at Lakeside: it is just the thing!"

"Are you serious, Mrs. Waldo? I could not, of course, be so ungracious as to refuse, provided there is no impropriety in compliance. What would Ptolemy say to the plan?"

"I'll take charge of that!" she cried. "Impropriety! Are you not a steady, respectable Member of Society, I should like to know? If there's any thing set down against you, we must go to Calcutta to find it. And we are sure there are no trapdoors at Lakeside, or walled-up skeletons, or Blue Beard chambers. Besides, this isn't Mulligansville or Anacreon, and it is not necessary to be so very straight-laced. Oh yes, it is the very thing. As for the domestic preparations, count on my help, if it is needed."

"I am afraid," he replied, "that Mrs. Babb would resent any interference with her authority. In fact," he added, laughing, "I am not certain that it is safe to decide, without first consulting her."

"There, now!" rejoined Mrs. Waldo. "Do you remember what I once told you? Yes, you bachelors, who boast of your independence of woman, are the only real slaves to the sex. No wife is such a tyrant as a housekeeper. Not but what Mrs. Babb is a very honest, conscientious, proper sort of a person,—but she don't make a home, Mr. Woodbury. You should get married."

"That is easily said, Mrs. Waldo," he replied, with a laugh which covered, like a luxuriant summer vine, the entrance to a sighing cavern,—"easily said, and might be easily done, if one were allowed to choose a wife for her domestic qualities valued at so much per month."

"Pshaw!" said she, with assumed contempt. "You are not a natural cynic, and have no right to be single, at your age, without a good reason."

"Perhaps there *is* a good reason, Mrs. Waldo. Few persons, I imagine, remain single from choice. I have lost the susceptibility of my younger days, but not the ideal of a true wedded life. I should not dare to take the only perfect woman in the world, unless I could be lover as well as husband. I sincerely wish my chances were better: but would you have me choose one of the shallow, showy creatures I have just been visiting, or one of your strong-minded orators, here in Ptolemy?"

Mrs. Waldo understood both the earnest tone of the speaker, and the veiled bitterness of his concluding words. She read his heart at a glance, thorough woman as she was, and honored him then, and forever thenceforth.

"You must not take my nonsense for more than it is worth, Mr. Woodbury," she answered softly. "Women at my age, when God denies them children, take to match-making, in the hope of fulfilling their mission by proxy. It is unselfish in us, at least. But, bless me! here we are, at the village. Remember, the Sewing-Union meets at Lakeside."

"As soon as the Autocrat Babb has spoken," said he, as he handed her out at the Cimmerian Parsonage, "I will send word, and then the matter will rest entirely in your hands."

"Mine? Oh, I am a female General Jackson—I take the responsibility!" she cried, gayly, as the cutter drove away.

Woodbury, welcomed at the gate of Lakeside by the cheery face of Bute Wilson, determined to broach the subject at once to the housekeeper. Mrs. Fortitude Babb was glad to see him again, but no expression thereof manifested itself in her countenance and words. Wiping her bony right-hand on her apron—she had been dusting the rooms, after sweeping—she took the one he offered, saying: "How's your health, Sir?" and then added: "I s'pose you've had a mighty fine time, while you was away?"

"Not so fine but that I'm glad to get home again," he answered. The word "home" satisfied Mrs. Babb's sense of justice. His sister, she was sure, was not the housekeeper she herself was, and it was only right that he should see and acknowledge the fact.

"I want your advice, Mrs. Babb," Woodbury continued. "The Sewing-Union propose to meet here, one evening. They have gone the round of all the large houses in Ptolemy, and there seems to be no other place left. Since I have settled in Lakeside, I must be neighborly, you know. Could we manage to entertain them?"

"Well—comin' so suddent, like, I don't hardly know what to think. Things has been quiet here for a long time:" the housekeeper grimly remarked, with a wheezy sigh.

"That is true," said Woodbury; "and of course you must have help."

"No!" she exclaimed, with energy, "I don't want no help—leastways only Melindy. The rooms must be put to rights—not but what they're as good as Mrs. Bue's any day; and there'll be supper for a matter o' twenty; and cakes and things. When is it to be?"

"Next Friday, I presume; but can you get along without more assistance?"

"'Taint every one that would do it," replied Mrs. Babb, "There's sich a settin' to rights, afterwards. But I can't have strange help mixin' in, and things goin' wrong, and me to have the credit of it. Melindy's used to my ways, and there's not many others that knows what housekeepin' is. *Sich* a mess as *some* people makes of it!"

Secretly, Mrs. Babb was well pleased at the opportunity of publicly displaying her abilities, but it was not in her nature to do any thing out of the regular course of her housekeeping, without having it understood that she was making a great sacrifice. She was not so unreasonable as to set herself up for an independent power, but she stoutly demanded and maintained the rights of a belligerent. This point having once been conceded, however, she exhibited a wonderful energy in making the necessary preparations.

Thanks to Mrs. Waldo, all Ptolemy soon knew of the arrangement, and, as the invitation was general, nearly everybody decided to accept it. Few persons had visited Lakeside since Mrs. Dennison's funeral, and there was some curiosity to know what changes had been made by the new owner. Besides, the sleighing was superb, and the moon nearly full. The ladies connected with the Sewing-Union were delighted with the prospect, and even Hannah Thurston, finding that her absence would be the only exception and might thus seem intentional, was constrained to accompany them. She had seen Woodbury but once since their rencontre at Merryfield's, and his presence was both unpleasant and embarrassing to her. But the Merryfields, who took a special pride in her abilities, cherished the hope that she would yet convert him to the true faith, and went to the trouble of driving to Ptolemy in order to furnish her with a conveyance.

Early in the afternoon the guests began to arrive. Bute, aided by his man Patrick, met them at the gate, and, after a hearty greeting (for he knew everybody), took the horses and cutters in charge. Woodbury, assuming the character of host according to Ptolemaic ideas, appeared at the door, with Mrs. Babb, rigid in black bombazine, three paces in his rear. The latter received the ladies with frigid courtesy, conducted them up-stairs to the best bedroom, and issued the command to each of them, in turn: "lay off your Things!" Their curiosity failed to detect any thing incomplete or unusual in the appointments of the chamber. The furniture was of the Dennison period, and Mrs. Fortitude had taken care that no fault should be found with the toilet arrangements. Miss Eliza Clancy had indeed whispered to Miss Ruhaney Goodwin: "Well, I think they might have some lavender, or bay-water, for us,"—but the latter immediately responded with a warning "*sh!*" and drew from her work-bag a small oiled silk package, which she unfolded, producing therefrom a diminutive bit of sponge, saturated with a mild extract of lemon verbena. "Here," she said, offering it to the other spinster, "I always take care to be pervided."

The spacious parlor at Lakeside gradually filled with workers for the Mission Fund. Mrs. Waldo was among the earliest arrivals, and took command, by right of her undisputed social talent. She became absolute mistress for the time, having, by skilful management, propitiated Mrs. Babb, and fastened her in her true place, at the outset, by adamantine chains of courtesy and assumed respect. She felt herself, therefore, in her true element, and distributed her subjects with such tact, picking up and giving into the right hands the threads of conversation, perceiving and suppressing petty jealousies in advance, and laughing away the awkwardness or timidity of others, that Woodbury could not help saying to himself: "What a queen of the *salons* this woman would have made!" It was a matter of conscience with her, as he perhaps did not know, that the occasion should be agreeable, not only to the company, but also to the host. She was responsible for its occurrence, and she felt that its success would open Lakeside to the use of Ptolemy society.

There was also little in the principal parlor to attract the attention of the guests. The floor was still covered by the old Brussels carpet, with its colossal bunches of flowers of impossible color and form,—the wonder of Ptolemy, when it was new. There were the same old-fashioned chairs, and deep sofas with chintz covers: and the portraits of Mrs. Dennison, and her son Henry, as a boy of twelve, with his hand upon the head of a Newfoundland dog, looked down from the walls. Woodbury had only added engravings of the Madonna di San Sisto and the Transfiguration, neither of which was greatly admired by the visitors. Mrs. Hamilton Bue, pausing a moment to inspect the former, said of the Holy Child: "Why, it looks just like my little Addy, when she's got her clothes off!"

In the sitting-room were Landseer's "Challenge" and Ary Scheffer's "Francesca da Rimini." Miss Ruhaney Goodwin turned suddenly away from the latter, with difficulty suppressing an exclamation. "Did you ever?" said she to Miss Eliza Clancy; "it isn't right to have such pictures hung up."

"Hush!" answered Miss Eliza, "it may be from Scripture."

Miss Ruhaney now contemplated the picture without hesitation. It was a proof before lettering. "What can it be, then?' she asked.

"Well—I shouldn't wonder if 'twas Jephthah and his daughter. They both look so sorrowful."

The Rev. Lemuel Styles and his wife presently arrived. They were both amiable, honest persons, who enjoyed their importance in the community, without seeming to assume it. The former was, perhaps, a little over-cautious lest he should forget the strict line of conduct which had been prescribed for him as a theological student. He felt that his duty properly required him to investigate Mr. Woodbury's religious views, before thus appearing to endorse them by his presence at Lakeside; but he had not courage to break the dignified reserve which the latter maintained, and was obliged to satisfy his conscience with the fact that Woodbury had twice attended his church. Between Mr. Waldo and himself there was now a very cordial relation. They had even cautiously discussed the differences between them, and had in this way learned, at least, to respect each other's sincerity.

The last of all the arrivals before tea was Mr. and Mrs. Merryfield, with Hannah Thurston. The latter came, as already mentioned, with great reluctance. She would rather have faced an unfriendly audience than the courteous and self-possessed host who came to the door to receive her. He oppressed her, not only with a sense of power, but of power controlled and directed by some cool faculty in the brain, which she felt she did not possess. In herself, whatever of intellectual force she recognized, was developed through the excitement of her feelings and sympathies. His personality, it seemed to her, was antagonistic to her own, and the knowledge gave her a singular sense of pain. She was woman enough not to tolerate a difference of this kind without a struggle.

"Thank you for coming, Miss Thurston," said Woodbury, as he frankly offered his hand. "I should not like any member of the Union to slight my first attempt to entertain it. I am glad to welcome you to Lakeside."

Hannah Thurston lifted her eyes to his with an effort that brought a fleeting flush to her face. But she met his gaze, steadily. "We owe thanks to you, Mr. Woodbury," said she, "that Lakeside still belongs to our Ptolemy community. I confess I should not like to see so pleasant a spot isolated, or —what the people of Ptolemy would consider much worse,' she added, smiling—"attached to Anacreon."

"Oh, no!" he answered, as he transferred her to the charge of Mrs. Babb. "I have become a thorough Ptolemaic, or a Ptolemystic, or whatever the proper term may be. I hurl defiance across the hill to Anacreon, and I turn my back on the south-east wind, when it blows from Mulligansville."

"Come, come! We won't be satirized;" said Mrs. Waldo, who was passing through the hall. "Hannah, you are just in time. There are five of the Mission Fund sitting together, and I want their ranks broken. Mr. Woodbury, there will be no more arrivals before tea; give me your assistance."

"Who is the tyrant now?" he asked.

"Woman, always, in one shape or other," she answered leading the way into the parlor.

After the very substantial tea which Mrs. Babb had prepared, and to which, it must be whispered, the guests did ample justice, there was a pause in the labors of the Union. The articles intended for the Jutnapore Mission were nearly completed, in fact, and Mrs. Waldo's exertions had promoted a genial flow of conversation, which did not require the aid of the suggestive needle. The guests gathered in groups, chatting at the windows, looking out on the gray, twilight landscape, or watching the approach of cutters from Ptolemy, as they emerged from the trees along Roaring Brook. Mr

Hamilton Bue and the Hon. Zeno Harder were the first to make their appearance, not much in advance, however, of the crowd of ambitious young gentlemen. Many of the latter were personally unknown to Woodbury, but this was not the least embarrassment to them. They gave him a rapid salutation, ince it was not to be avoided, and hurried in to secure advantageous positions among the ladies. Seth Wattles not only came, to enjoy a hospitality based, as he had hinted, on the "accursed opium traffic," but brought with him a stranger from Ptolemy, a Mr. Grindle, somewhat known as a lecturer on Temperance.

The rooms were soon filled and Woodbury was also obliged to throw open his library, into which the elderly gentlemen withdrew, with the exception of the Rev. Mr. Styles. Mr. Waldo relished a good story, even if the point was somewhat coarse, and the Hon. Zeno had an inexhaustible fund of such. Mr. Bue, notwithstanding he felt bound to utter an occasional mild protest, always managed to be on hand, and often, in his great innocence, suggested the very thing which he so evidently wished to avoid. If the conversation had been for some time rather serious and heavy, he would say: "Well, Mr. Harder, I am glad we shall have none of your wicked stories to-night"—a provocation to which the Hon. Zeno always responded by giving one.

Bute Wilson, after seeing that the horses were properly attended to, washed his hands, brushed his hair carefully, and put on his Sunday frock-coat. Miss Caroline Dilworth was one of the company, but he had been contented with an occasional glimpse of her through the window, until the arrival of Seth Wattles. The care of the fires in the grates, the lamps, and other arrangements of the evening, gave him sufficient opportunity to mix with the company, and watch both his sweetheart and his presumed rival, without appearing to do so. "Darn that blue-gilled baboon!" he muttered to himself; "I believe his liver's whiter than the milt of a herrin', an' if you'd cut his yaller skin, he'd bleed whey 'stid o' blood."

Seth Wattles, nevertheless, was really guiltless of any designs on the heart of the little seamstress. Like herself, he was ambitious of high game, and, in the dreams of his colossal conceit, looked forward with much confidence to the hour when Hannah Thurston should take his name, or he hers: he was prepared for either contingency. To this end he assumed a tender, languishing air, and talked of Love, and A Mission, and The Duality of The Soul, in a manner which, in a more cultivated society, would have rendered him intolerable. He had a habit of placing his hand on the arm or shoulder of the person with whom he was conversing, and there were in Ptolemy women silly enough to be pleased by these tokens of familiarity. Hannah Thurston, though entirely harmonizing with him as a reformer, and therefore friendly and forbearing in her intercourse, felt a natural repugnance towards him which she could not understand. Indeed, the fact gave her some uneasiness. "He is ugly," she thought; "and I am so weak as to dislike ugliness—it must be that:" which conclusion, acting on her sensitive principle of justice, led her to treat him sometimes with more than necessary kindness. Many persons, the Merryfields included, actually fancied that there was a growing attachment between them.

"Miss Carrie," whispered Bute, as he passed her in the hall, "Do you like your lemonade sweet? We're goin' to bring it in directly, and I'll git Mother Forty to make a nice glass of it, o' purpose for you."

"Thank you, Mr. Wilson: yes, if you please," answered the soft, childish drawl and the beryl-tinted eyes, that sent a thousand cork-screw tingles boring through and through him.

Bute privately put six lumps of sugar into one glass, which he marked for recognition; and then squeezed the last bitter drops of a dozen lemons into another.

The latter was for Seth Wattles.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE EVENING.

Woodbury had prudently left the preparations for the refreshment of his numerous guests in the hands of Mrs. Babb, who, aided by the sable Melinda, had produced an immense supply of her most admired pastry. By borrowing freezers from the confectioner in Ptolemy, and employing Patrick to do the heavy churning, she had also succeeded in furnishing very tolerable ices. The entertainment was considered to be—and, for country means, really was—sumptuous. Nevertheless, the housekeeper was profuse in her apologies, receiving the abundant praises of her guests with outward grimness and secret satisfaction.

"Try these crullers," she would say: "p'r'aps you'll find 'em better 'n the jumbles, though I'm afeard they a'n't hardly done enough. But you'll have to put up with sich as there is."

"Oh, Mrs. Babb!" exclaimed Mrs. Hamilton Bue, "don't say that! Nobody bakes as nice as you do. I wish you'd give me the receipt for the jumbles."

"You're welcome to it, if you like 'em, I'm sure. But it depends on the seasonin', and I don't never know if they're goin' to come out right."

"Mrs. Babb," said Woodbury, coming up at this moment, "will you please get a bottle of Sherry. The gentlemen, I see, have nothing but lemonade."

"I told Bute to git some for them as likes it."

"A-hm!" Mrs. Bue ejaculated, as the housekeeper departed to look after the wine; "I think, Mr. Woodbury, they don't take any thing more."

"Let me give them a chance, Mrs. Bue. Ah, here comes Bute, with the glasses. Shall I have the pleasure?" offering her one of the two which he had taken.

"Oh, dear me, no—not for any thing!" she exclaimed, looking a little frightened.

"Mr. Bue," said Woodbury, turning around to that gentleman, "as Mrs. Bue refuses to take a glass of wine with me you must be her substitute."

"Thank you, I'd—I'd rather not, *this* evening," said Mr. Bue, growing red in the face.

There was an embarrassing pause. Woodbury, looking around, perceived that Bute had already offered his tray to the other gentlemen, and that none of the glasses upon it had been taken. He was about to replace his own without drinking, when the Hon. Zeno Harder said: "Allow me the pleasure, Sir!" and helped himself. At the same moment the Rev. Mr. Waldo, in obedience to a glance from his wife, followed his example.

"I have not tasted wine for some years," said the latter, "but I have no objection to its rational use. I have always considered it sanctioned," he added, turning to Mr. Styles, "by the Miracle of Cana."

Mr. Styles slightly nodded, but said nothing.

"Your good health, Sir!" said the Hon. Zeno, as he emptied his glass.

"*Health?*" somebody echoed, in a loud, contemptuous whisper.

Woodbury bowed and drank. As he was replacing his glass, Mr. Grindle, who had been waiting for the consummation of the iniquity, suddenly stepped forward. Mr. Grindle was a thin, brown individual, with a long, twisted nose, and a voice which acquired additional shrillness from the fact of its appearing to proceed entirely from the said nose. He had occasionally lectured in Ptolemy, and was known,—by sight, at least,—to all the company. Woodbury, however, was quite ignorant of the man and every thing concerning him.

"I am surprised," exclaimed Mr. Grindle, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, "that a man who has any regard for his reputation will set such a pernicious example."

"To what do you refer?" asked Woodbury, uncertain whether it was he who was addressed.

"To *that!*" replied the warning prophet, pointing to the empty wine-glass—"the source of nine-tenths of all the sin and suffering in the world!"

"I think you would have some difficulty in finding Sherry enough to produce such a result,' Woodbury answered beginning to understand the man.

"Sherry, or Champagne, or Heidsick!" retorted Mr. Grindle, raising his voice: "it's all the same—all different forms of Rum, and different degrees of intemperance!"

Woodbury's brown eyes flashed a little, but he answered coolly and sternly: "As you say, Sir, there are various forms of intemperance, and I have too much respect for my guests to allow that any of them should be exhibited here. Mrs. Waldo," he continued, turning his back on the lecturer, and suddenly changing his tone, "did you not propose that we should have some music?"

"I have both persuaded and commanded," she replied, "but singers, I have found, are like a flock of sheep. They huddle together and hesitate, until some one takes the lead, and then they all follow, even if it's over your head. You must be bell-wether, after all."

"Any thing for harmony," he answered, gayly. "Ah! I have it—a good old song, with which none of our friends can find fault."

And he sang, in his mellow voice, with an amused air, which Mrs. Waldo understood and heartily enjoyed: "*Drink to me only with thine eyes.*"

Mr. Grindle, however, turned to Seth Wattles and said, sneeringly: "It's easy enough to shirk an argument you can't answer." A fortnight afterwards he exploited the incident in a lecture which he gave before the Sons of Temperance, at

Ptolemy. Commencing with the cheap groggeries, he gradually rose in his attacks until he reached the men of wealth and education. "There are some of these in our neighborhood," he said: "it is not necessary for me to mention names--men whom perhaps we might excuse for learning the habit of rum-drinking on foreign shores, where our blessed reform has not yet penetrated, if they did not bring it here with them, to corrupt and destroy our own citizens. Woe unto those men, say I! Better that an ocean of fire had rolled between those distant shores of delusion and debauchery and this redeemed land, so that they could not have returned! Better that they had perished under the maddening influence of the bowl that stingeth like an adder, before coming here to add fresh hecatombs to the Jaws of the Monster!" Of course, everybody in Ptolemy knew who was meant, and sympathizing friends soon carried the report to Lakeside.

The unpleasant episode was soon forgotten, or, from a natural sense of propriety, no longer commented upon. Even the strongest advocates of Temperance present felt mortified by Mr. Grindle's vulgarity. Hannah Thurston, among others, was greatly pained, yet, for the first time, admired Woodbury's coolness and self-possession, in the relief which it gave her. She wished for an opportunity to show him, by her manner, a respect which might in some degree counterbalance the recent rudeness, and such an opportunity soon occurred.

She was standing before the picture of Francesca da Rimini, lost in the contemplation of the wonderful grace and pathos of the floating figures, when Woodbury, approaching her, said:

"I am glad that you admire it, Miss Thurston. The picture is a great favorite with me."

"The subject is from Dante, is it not?" she asked; "that figure is he, I think."

Woodbury was agreeably surprised at her perception, especially as she did not say "*Dant*," which he might possibly have expected. He explained the engraving, and found that she recollected the story, having read Cary's translation.

"Since you are so fond of pictures, Miss Thurston," said he, "let me show you another favorite of mine. Here, in the library."

Taking a large portfolio from its rack, he opened it on the table, under a swinging lamp. There were views of Indian scenery—strange temples, rising amid plumy tufts of palm; elephants and tigers grappling in jungles of gigantic grass; pillared banians, with gray-bearded fakirs sitting in the shade, and long ghauts descending to the Ganges. The glimpses she caught, as he turned the leaves, took away her breath with sudden delight.

At last he found the plate he was seeking, and laid it before her. It was a tropical brake, a tangle of mimosa-trees, with their feathery fronds and balls of golden down, among which grew passion-flowers and other strange, luxuriant vines. In the midst of the cool, odorous darkness, stood a young Indian girl of wonderful beauty, with languishing, almond-shaped eyes, and some gorgeous unknown blossom drooping from her night-black hair. Her only garment, of plaited grass or rushes, was bound across the hips, leaving the lovely form bare in its unconscious purity. One hand, listlessly hanging among the mimosa leaves, which gradually folded up and bent away where she touched them, seemed to seek the head of a doe, thrust out from the foliage to meet it. At the bottom of the picture a fawn forced its way through the tangled greenery. The girl, in her dusky beauty, seemed a dryad of the sumptuous forest—the child of summer, and perfume, and rank, magnificent bloom.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Hannah Thurston, at once impressed by the sentiment of the picture: "It is like the scent of the tube rose."

"Ah, you comprehend it!" exclaimed Woodbury, surprised and pleased: "do you know the subject?"

"Not at all, but it scarcely needs an explanation."

"Have you ever heard of Kalidasa, the Hindoo poet?"

"I have not, I am sorry to say," she answered; "I have sometimes found references to the old Sanscrit literature in modern authors, but that is all I know about it."

"My own knowledge has been derived entirely from translations," said he, "and I confess that this picture was the cause of my acquaintance with Kalidasa. I never had patience to read their interminable epics. Shall I tell you the story of Sakontala, this lovely creature?"

"Certainly, if you will be so kind: it must be beautiful."

Woodbury then gave her a brief outline of the drama, to which she listened with the greatest eagerness and delight. At the close, he said:

"I am sorry I have not a copy of the translation to offer you. But, if you would like to read another work by the same poet, I think I have the '*Megha-Duta*,' or 'Cloud-Messenger,' somewhere in my library. It is quite as beautiful a poem, though not in the dramatic form. There are many characteristic allusions to Indian life, but none, I think, that you could not understand."

"Thank you, Mr. Woodbury. It is not often that I am able to make the acquaintance of a new author, and the pleasure is all the greater. I know very little of literature outside of the English language, and this seems like the discovery of a new world in the Past. India is so far-off and unreal."

"Not to me," he answered, with a smile. "We are creatures of habit to a greater extent than the most of us guess. If you could now be transplanted to India, in less than five years you would begin to imagine that you were born under the lotus-leaf, and that this life in Ptolemy had occurred only in the dreams of a tropical noonday."

"Oh, no, no!" said she, with earnestness. "We cannot so orget the duties imposed upon us—we cannot lose sight of ur share in the great work intrusted to our hands. Right, and Justice, and Conscience, are everywhere the same!"

"Certainly, as absolute principles. But our individual duties vary with every change in our lives, and our individual action is affected, in spite of ourselves, by the influences of the external world. Are you not—to take the simplest evidence of this fact—cheerful and hopeful on some days, desponding and irresolute on others, without conscious reason? And can you not imagine moods of Nature which would permanently color your own?"

Hannah Thurston felt that there was a germ of harsh, material truth in his words, beside which her aspirations lost somewhat of their glow. Again she was conscious of a painful, unwelcome sense of repulsion. "Is there no faith?" she asked herself; "are there no lofty human impulses, under this ripe intelligence?" The soft, liquid lustre faded out of her eyes, and the eager, animated expression of her face passed away like the sunshine from a cloud, leaving it cold and gray.

Woodbury, seeing Miss Eliza Clancy, in company with other ladies, entering the library, tied up the portfolio and replaced it in its rack. Mrs. Waldo, pressing forward at the same time, noticed upon the table a Chinese joss-stick, in its lackered boat. She was not a woman to disguise or restrain an ordinary curiosity.

"What in the world is this?" she asked, taking the boat in her hands. The other ladies clustered around, inspecting it from all sides, but unable to guess its use.

"Now," said Woodbury, laughing, "I have half a mind to torment you a little. You have all read the Arabian Nights? Well, this is an instrument of enchantment."

"Enchantment! Do the Indian jugglers use it?" asked Mrs. Waldo.

"*I* use it," said he. "This rod, as it appears to be, is made of a mysterious compound. It has been burned at one end, you see. When lighted, it is employed to communicate fire to another magical substance, through which the Past is recalled and the Future made clear."

Miss Clancy and the other spinsters opened their eyes wide, in wonderment. "Provoking! Tell us now!" cried Mrs. Waldo.

"It is just as I say," he answered. "See, when I light the end--thus—it burns with a very slow fire. This single piece would burn for nearly a whole day."

"But what is the other magical substance?" she asked.

"Here is a specimen," said he, taking the lid from a circular box of carved bamboo, and disclosing to their view some cigars.

The spinsters uttered a simultaneous exclamation. "Dreadful!" cried Mrs. Waldo, in affected horror. "Hannah, can you imagine such depravity?"

"I confess, it seems to me an unnatural taste," Hannah Thurston gravely answered; "but I presume Mr. Woodbury has some defence ready."

"Only this," said he, with an air between jest and earnest, "that the habit is very agreeable, and, since it produces a placid, equable tone of mind, highly favorable to reflection, might almost be included in the list of moral agencies."

"Would it not be more satisfactory," she asked, "if you could summon up the same condition of mind, from an earnest desire to attain the Truth, without the help of narcotic drugs?"

"Perhaps so," he replied; "but we are all weak vessels, as you know, Mrs. Waldo. I have never yet encountered such a thing as perfect harmony in the relations between body and mind. I doubt, even, if such harmony is possible, except at transient intervals. For my part, my temper is so violent and uncontrollable that the natural sedative qualities of my mind are insufficient."

Mrs. Waldo laughed heartily at this assertion, and the serious tone in which it was uttered. Hannah Thurston, to whom every fancied violation of the laws of nature was more or less an enormity, scarcely knew whether to be shocked or amused. She had determined to carefully guard herself against committing such an indiscretion as Mr. Grindle, but it was hard to be silent, when Duty demanded that she should bear a stern testimony against evil habits.

"You should be charitable, ladies," Woodbury continued, "towards some of our masculine habits, seeing that we do not interfere with yours."

"Bless me! what habits have we, I should like to know!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo.

"A multitude: I don't know the half of them. Crochet-work, and embroidery, and patterns, for instance. Tea is milder than tobacco, I grant, but your systems are more sensitive. Then, there are powders and perfumes; eau de Cologne, lavender, verbena, heliotrope, and what not—against all of which I have nothing to say, because their odors are nearly equal to that of a fine Havana cigar."

Miss Eliza Clancy and Miss Ruhaney Goodwin exchanged glances of horror. They were both too much embarrassed to reply.

"You understand our weaknesses," said Hannah Thurston, with a smile in which there was some bitterness.

"I do not call them weaknesses," he answered. "I should be glad if this feminine love of color and odor were more common among men. But there are curious differences of taste, in this respect. I have rarely experienced a more exquisite delight than in riding through the rose-fields of Ghazeepore, at the season for making attar: yet some persons cannot endure the smell of a rose. Musk, which is a favorite perfume with many, is to me disagreeable. There is, however, a physical explanation for this habit of mine, which, perhaps, you do not know."

"No," said she, still gravely, "I know nothing but that it seems to me unnecessary, and—if you will pardon me the word—pernicious."

"Certainly. It is so, in many cases. But some constitutions possess an overplus of active nervous life, which suggests the use of a slight artificial sedative. The peculiar fascination of smoking is not in the taste of the weed, but the sight of the smoke. It is the ear of corn which we hold out to entice into harness the skittish thoughts that are running loose. In the Orient, men accomplish the same result by a rosary, the beads of which they run through their fingers."

"Yes!" interrupted Mrs. Waldo: "My brother George, who was always at the head of his class, had a habit of twisting a lock of his hair while he was getting his lessons. It stuck out from the side of his head, like a horn. When mother had his hair cut, he went down to the foot, and he never got fairly up to head till the horn grew out again."

"A case in point," said Woodbury. "Now, you, ladies, have an exactly similar habit. Sewing, I have heard, is oftentimes this soothing agent, but knitting is the great feminine narcotic. In fact, women are more dependent on these slight helps to thought—these accompaniments to conversation—than men. There are few who can sit still and talk a whole evening, without having their hands employed. Can you not see some connecting link between our habits?"

The spinsters were silent. The speaker had, in fact, rather gone beyond their depth, with the exception of Mrs. Waldo, whose sympathy with him was so hearty and genial that she would have unhesitatingly accepted whatever sentiments he might have chosen to declare. Hannah Thurston was not a little perplexed. She scarcely knew whether he was entirely sincere, yet his views were so novel and unexpected that she did not feel prepared to answer them. Before this man's appearance in Ptolemy, her course had been chosen. She had taken up, weighed, and decided for herself the questions of life: a period of unpleasant doubt and hesitation had been solved by the acceptance of (to her) great and important theories of reform. Was a new and more difficult field of doubt to be opened now?—more difficult, because the distinctions of the sexes, which had been almost bridged over in her intercourse with reformers of kindred views, were suddenly separated by a new gulf, wider than the old.

Woodbury, noticing something of this perplexity in her countenance, continued in a lighter tone: "At least, Miss Thurston, I think you will agree with me that a physical habit, if you prefer to call it so, is not very important in comparison with those vices of character which are equally common and not so easy to eradicate. Is not the use of a 'narcotic drug' less objectionable than the systematic habit of avarice, or envy, or hypocrisy?"

"Yes, indeed!" said Mrs. Waldo, recollecting his generous donation to the Cimmerians, "and I, for one, will not prohibit the use of your magical ingredients."

"I cannot judge for you, Mr. Woodbury," said Hannah Thurston, feeling that some response was expected; "but have you no duty towards those who may be encouraged in the same habit, to their certain injury, by your example?"

"There, Miss Thurston, you touch a question rather too vague to enter practically into one's life. After accepting, in its fullest sense, the Christian obligation of duty towards our fellow-men, there must be a certain latitude allowed for individual tastes and likings. Else we should all be slaves to each other's idiosyncrasies, and one perverted or abnormal trait might suppress the healthy intellectual needs of an entire community. Must we cease to talk, for example, because there is scarcely a wholesome truth which, offered in a certain way, might not operate as poison to some peculiarly constituted mind? Would you cease to assert an earnest conviction from the knowledge that there were persons unfitted to receive it?"

"I do not think the analogy is quite correct," she answered, after a moment's pause, "because you cannot escape the recognition of a truth, when it has once found access to your mind. A habit, which you can take up or leave off at will, is a very different thing."

"Perhaps, then," said Woodbury, who perceived by the rising shade on Mrs. Waldo's smooth brow that it was time to end the discussion, "I had best plead guilty, at once, to being something of an Epicurean in my philosophy. I am still too much of an Oriental to be indifferent to slight material comforts."

"In consideration of your hospitality," interposed Mrs. Waldo, brightening up, "the Sewing Union will not judge you very severely. Is it not so, Miss Clancy?"

"Well—really—oh no, we are under obligations to Mr. Woodbury;" said the spinster, thus unexpectedly appealed to, and scarcely knowing how to reply.

"Our community have reason to congratulate themselves, Sir," here broke in the Hon. Zeno Harder, who had entered the library in time to hear the last words.

Woodbury bowed dryly and turned away.

Soon afterwards, the sound of sleigh-bells in front of the house announced the first departures. The company became thinner by slow degrees, however, for the young gentlemen and ladies had found the large parlor of Lakeside full of convenient nooks, which facilitated their habit of breaking into little groups, and were having such agreeable conversation that they would probably have remained until the small hours, but for the admonitions of the older folks. Among the earliest to leave were the Merryfields, taking with them Hannah Thurston and Miss Dilworth, greatly to Bute's regret. The latter, unable to detect any signs of peculiar intimacy between Seth Wattles and the little seamstress, became so undisguised in his fondness for her society as to attract, at last, Mrs. Babb's attention. The grim housekeeper had a vulture's beak for scenting prey of this kind. While she assisted Mrs. Styles to find her "Things," in the bedroom up-stairs, she steadfastly kept one eye on the snowy front yard, down which the Merryfield party were moving. Bute, as she anticipated, was hovering around the last and smallest of the hooded and cloaked females. He put out his arm two or three times, as if to steady her steps. They had nearly reached the cutter, where Patrick was holding the impatient horses, when she saw another male figure hurry down the walk. There was a sudden tangle among the dim forms, and one of them, she noticed, plunged full length into a bank of snow.

Mrs. Babb was so agitated by this tableau, that she suddenly threw up her hands, exclaiming: "Well, if that don't beat all!"

Mrs. Styles, carefully muffled for the journey home, had just turned to say good-night to the housekeeper, and stood petrified, unable to guess whether the exclamation was one of admiration or reproach. She slightly started back before the energy with which it was uttered.

"Well, to be sure, how I do forgit things!" said Mrs. Babb coming to her senses. "But you know, Ma'am, when you're not used to havin' company for a while, y'r head gits bothered. 'Pears to me I haven't been so flustered for years. You're sure, Ma'am, you're right warm. I hope you won't take no cold, goin' home."

The scene that transpired in front of the house was sufficiently amusing. Bute Wilson, as deputy-host, escorted Miss Dilworth to the cutter, and was delighted that the slippery path gave him at least one opportunity to catch her around the waist. Hearing rapid footsteps behind him, he recognized Seth Wattles hard upon his track, and, as the ungainly tailor approached, jostled him so dexterously that he was tumbled headlong into a pile of newly-shovelled snow.

"Ah! Who is it? Is he hurt?" exclaimed Miss Dilworth.

A smothered sound, very much resembling "Damn!" came from the fallen individual.

"Let me help you up," said Bute; "you pitched ag'in me like an ox. Why, Seth, is it you? You ha'n't tore your trowsus, nor nothin', have you?"

Seth, overwhelmed before the very eyes of Hannah Thurston, whom he was hastening to assist into the cutter, grumbled: "No, I'm not hurt." Meantime, Bute had said good-night to the party, and the cutter dashed away.

"Well, it's one comfort that you can always mend your own rips," the latter remarked, consolingly.

Finally, the last team departed, and the sound of the bell diminished into a faint, fairy sweetness, as if struck by th frosty arrows of the starlight from the crystals of the snow. Lakeside returned to more than its wonted silence and seclusion. Woodbury closed the door, walked into his library, lighted a cigar at the still burning piece of joss-stick, and threw himself into a chair before the fire. Now and then puffing a delicate, expanding ring of smoke from his lips, he watched it gradually break and dissolve, while reviewing, in his thoughts, the occurrences of the evening. They were not wholly agreeable, yet the least so—Mr. Grindle's rude attack,—was not to be dismissed from the mind like an ordinary piece of vulgarity. It was a type, he thought, of the manners which self-constituted teachers of morality must necessarily assume in a community where intellect is characterized by activity rather than development. Society, in its broader sense, is unknown to these people,—was his reflection. In the absence of cultivation, they are ruled by popular ideas: Reforms are marshalled in, as reserve corps, behind the ranks of Religion, and not even the white flag of a neutral is recognized in the grand crusade. "Join us and establish your respectability, or resist us and be cut down!" is the cry.

"Yet"—he mused further—"is it not something that, in a remote place like this, Ideas have vitality and power? Admitting that the channels in which they move are contracted, and often lead in false directions, must they not rest on a basis of honest, unselfish aspiration? The vices which spring from intolerance and vulgar egotism are not to be lightly pardoned, but, on the other hand, they do not corrupt and demoralize like those of the body. One must respect the source, while resisting the manifestation. How much in earnest that Quaker girl seemed! It was quite a serious lecture she gave me, about such a trifle as this" (puffing an immense blue ring into the air). "But it was worth taking it, to see how she enjoyed the Sakontala. She certainly possesses taste, and no doubt thinks better than she talks. By the by, I quite forgot to give her the translation of the *Megha-Duta*."

Springing up, Woodbury found the volume, after some search, and soon became absorbed, for the second time, in its pages.

"Bute," said Mrs. Babb, as she wiped the dishes, and carefully put away the odds and ends of the refreshments; "'Pears to me you was gallivantin' round that Carrline Dilwuth, more than's proper."

Bute, standing with legs spread out and back to the fire, answered, as he turned around to face it, whereby, if he blushed, the evidence was covered by the glow of the flame: "Well, she's a gay little creetur, and 'taint no harm."

"I dunno about that," sharply rejoined the housekeeper. "She's a cunnin', conceited chit, and 'll lead you by the nose. You're just fool enough to be captivated by a piece o' wax-work and curls. It makes me sick to look at 'em. Gals used to comb their hair when I was young. I don't want no sich a thing as *she* is, to dance at my buryin'."

"Oh, Mother Forty, don't you go off about it!" said Bute, deprecatingly. "I ain't married to her, nor likely to be."

"Married! I guess not! Time enough for that when *I*'m dead and gone. Me that brought you up, and to have somebody put over my head, and spendin' all your earnins on fine clothes, and then hankerin' after *my* money. But it's locked up, safe and tight, I can tell you that."

"I'm man-grown, I reckon," said Bute, stung into resistance by this attack, "and if I choose to git married, some day or other, I don't see who can hinder me. It's what everybody else does, and what you've done, yourself."

Bute strode off to bed, and the housekeeper, sitting down before the fire, indulged in the rare luxury of shedding several tears.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH MR. WOODBURY PAYS AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

On the following Monday, Woodbury having occasion to visit Ptolemy, took with him the volume of Kalidasa, intending to leave it at the cottage of the widow Thurston. The day was mild and sunny, and the appearance of the plank sidewalk so inviting to the feet, that he sent Bute forward to the Ptolemy House with the cutter, on alighting at the cottage gate.

The door of the dwelling, opening to the north, was protected by a small outer vestibule, into which he stepped, designing simply to leave the book, with his compliments, and perhaps a visiting-card—though the latter was not *de rigueur* in Ptolemy. There was no bell-pull; he knocked, gently at first, and then loudly, but no one answered. Turning the knob of the door he found it open, and entered a narrow little hall, in which there was a staircase leading to the upper story, and two doors on the left. Knocking again at the first of these, an answer presently came from the further room, and the summons, "Come in!" was repeated, in a clear though weak voice.

He no longer hesitated, but advanced into the sitting-room. Friend Thurston, sunning herself in her comfortable chair, looked around. A fleeting expression of surprise passed over her face, but the next moment she stretched out her hand, saying: "How does thee do?"

"My name is Woodbury," said he, as he took it respectfully "I——"

"I thought it must be thee," she interrupted. "Hannah described thy looks to me. Won't thee sit down?"

"I have only called to leave a book for your daughter, and will not disturb you."

"Thee won't disturb me. I feel all the better for a little talk now and then, and would be glad if thee could sit and chat awhile. Thee's just about the age my little Richard would have been if he had lived."

Thus kindly invited, Woodbury took a seat. His eye appreciated, at a glance, the plainness, the taste, and the cozy comfort of the apartment, betraying in every detail, the touches of a woman's hand. Friend Thurston's face attracted and interested him. In spite of her years, it still bore the traces of former beauty, and its settled calm of resignation recalled to his mind the expression he remembered on that of Mrs. Dennison. Her voice was unusually clear and sweet, and the deliberate evenness of her enunciation,—so different from the sharp, irregular tones of the Ptolemy ladies,—was most agreeable to his ear.

"Hannah's gone out," she resumed; "but I expect her back presently. It's kind of thee to bring the book for her. Thee bears no malice, I see, that she lectured thee a little. Thee must get used to that, if thee sees much of our people. We are called upon to bear testimony, in season and out of season, and especially towards men of influence, like thee, whose responsibilities are the greater."

"I am afraid you over-estimate my influence," Woodbury replied; "but I am glad you do not suppose that I could bear malice on account of a frank expression of opinion. Every man has his responsibilities, I am aware, but our ideas of duty sometimes differ."

"Thee's right there," said the old lady; "and perhaps we ought not to ask more than that the truth be sought for, in a sincere spirit. I don't think, from thy face, that there is much of stubborn worldly pride in thy nature, though thee belongs to the world, as we Friends say."

"I have found that a knowledge of the world cures one of unreasonable pride. The more I mingle with men, the more I find reflections of myself, which better enable me to estimate my own character."

"If thee but keeps the heart pure, the Holy Spirit may come to thee in the crowded places, even as The Saviour was caught up from the midst of His Disciples!" she exclaimed with fervor. Gazing on her steady, earnest eyes, Woodbury could not help thinking to himself: "The daughter comes legitimately by her traits."

"Can thee accustom thyself to such a quiet life as thee leads now?" she asked; and then gazing at him, continued, as if speaking to herself: "It is not a restless face. Ah, but that is not always a sign of a quiet heart. There are mysteries in man, past finding out, or only discovered when it is too late!"

"This life is not at all quiet," he answered, "compared with that which I have led for the past ten or twelve years. In a foreign country, and especially within the tropics, the novelty of the surroundings soon wears off, and one day is so exactly the repetition of another, that we almost lose our count of time. It seems to me, now, as if I were just awaking out of a long sleep. I have certainly thought more, and felt more, in these three months than in as many years abroad; for I had come to believe that the world was standing still, while now I see that it really moves, and I must move with it."

"I like to hear thee say that!" exclaimed the widow, turning suddenly towards him, with a bright, friendly interest in her face. "Men are so apt to be satisfied with their own opinions—at least, when they've reached thy age. Thee's over thirty, I should think?"

"Thirty six," Woodbury respectfully answered, "but I hope I shall never be so old as to suppose, like the counsellors of Job, that wisdom will die with me."

The widow understood his allusion, in the literal sense which he intended: not so another auditor. Hannah Thurston, who heard the last words as she entered the room, at once suspected a hidden sarcasm, aimed principally at herself. The indirect attacks to which she had been subjected,—especially from persons of her own sex,—had made her sensitive and suspicious. Her surprise at Woodbury's presence vanished in the spirit of angry antagonism which suddenly arose within her She took the hand he frankly offered, with a mechanical coldness strangely at variance with her flushed cheeks and earnest eyes.

"I'm glad thee's come, Hannah," said the old lady. "Friend Woodbury has been kind enough to bring thee a book, and I've been using an old woman's privilege, to make his acquaintance. He'll not take it amiss, I'm sure!"

Woodbury replied with a frank smile, which he knew she would understand. His manner towards the daughter, however, had a shade of formal deference. Something told him that his visit was not altogether welcome to her. "I found the translation of the *Megha-Duta*, Miss Thurston," he said, "and have called to leave it, on my way to the village. If it interests you, I shall make search for whatever other fragments of Indian literature I may have."

"I am very much obliged to you," she forced herself to say, inwardly resolving, that, whether interesting or not, this was the first and last book she would receive from the library of Lakeside.

"It is really kind of thee," interposed the widow; "Hannah finds few books here in Ptolemy that she cares to read, and we cannot afford to buy many. What was the work, Hannah, thee spoke of the other night?"

Thus appealed to, the daughter, after a moment's reluctance, answered: "I was reading to mother Carlyle's Essay on Goethe, and his reference to 'Wilhelm Meister' excited my curiosity. I believe Carlyle himself translated it, and therefore the translation must be nearly equal to the original."

"I read it some years ago, in Calcutta," said Woodbury, "but I only retain the general impression which it left upon my mind. It seemed to me, then, a singular medley of wis dom and weakness, of the tenderest imagination and the coarsest reality. But I have no copy, at present, by which to test the correctness of that impression. I am not a very critical reader, as you will soon discover, Miss Thurston. Do you like Carlyle?"

"I like his knowledge, his earnestness, and his clear insight into characters and events, though I cannot always adopt his conclusions. His thought, however, is strong and vital, and it refreshes and stimulates at the same time. I am afraid he spoils me for other authors."

"Is not that, in itself, an evidence of something false in his manner? That which is absolutely greatest or truest should not weaken our delight in the lower forms of excellence. Peculiarities of style, when not growing naturally out of the subject, seem to me like condiments, which disguise the natural flavor of the dish and unfit the palate to enjoy it. Have you ever put the thought, which Carlyle dresses in one of his solemn, involved, oracular sentences, into the Quaker garb of plain English?"

"No," said Hannah Thurston, somewhat startled. "I confess," she added, after a pause, "the idea of such an experiment is not agreeable to me. I cannot coldly dissect an author whom I so heartily admire."

Woodbury smiled very, very slightly, but her quick eye caught and retained his meaning. "Then I will not dissect him for you," he said; "though I think you would find a pleasure in the exercise of the critical faculty, to counterbalance the loss of an indiscriminate admiration. I speak for myself, however. I cannot be content until I ascertain the real value of a man and his works, though a hundred pleasant illusions are wrecked in the process. I am slow to acknowledge or worship greatness, since I have seen the stuff of which many idols are composed. The nearer an author seems to reflect my own views, the more suspicious I am, at first, of his influence upon me. A man who knows how to see, to think, and to judge, though he may possess but an average intellect, is able to get at all important truths himself, without taking them at second-hand."

There was no assumption of superiority—not the slightest trace of intellectual arrogance in Woodbury's manner. He spoke with the simple frankness of a man who was utterly unconscious that he was dealing crushing blows on the mental habits of his listener—not seeming to recognize, even, that they were different from his own. This calmness, so unlike the heat and zeal with which other men were accustomed to discuss questions with her, disconcerted and silenced Hannah Thurston. He never singled out any single assertion of hers as a subject of dispute, but left it to be quietly overwhelmed in the general drift of his words. It was a species of mental antagonism for which she was not prepared. To her mother, who judged men more or less by that compound of snow and fire who had been her husband, Woodbury's manner was exceedingly grateful. She perceived, as her daughter did not, the different mental complexion of the sexes; and moreover, she now recognized, in him, a man with courage enough to know the world without bitterness of heart.

"I thank thee," said she, as he rose to leave with an apology for the length of his stay; "I have enjoyed thy visit. Come again, some time, if thee finds it pleasant to do so. I see thee can take a friendly word in a friendly way, and thee may be sure that I won't judge thy intentions wrongly, where I am led to think differently."

"Thank you, Friend Thurston: it is only in differing, that we learn. I hope to see you again." He took the widow's offered hand, bowed to Hannah, and left the room.

"Mother!" exclaimed the latter, as she heard the outer door close behind him, "why did thee ask him to come again?"

"Why, Hannah! Thee surprises me. It is right to bear testimony, but we are not required to carry it so far as that. Has thee heard any thing against his character?"

"No, mother: he is said to be upright and honorable, but I do not like to be obliged to him for kindnesses, when he, no doubt, thinks my condemnation of his habits impertinent,—when, I know, he despises and sneers at my views!"

"Hannah," said the mother, gravely, "I think thee does him injustice. He is not the man to despise thee, or any one who thinks earnestly and labors faithfully, even in a cause he cannot appreciate. We two women, living alone here, or only seeing the men who are with us in sympathy, must not be too hasty to judge. Is thee not, in this way, committing the very fault of which thee accuses him?"

"Perhaps so," said Hannah: "I doubt whether I know what is true." She sank wearily into a chair. The volume Woodbury left behind, caught her eye. Taking it up, she turned over the leaves listlessly, but soon succumbed to the temptation and read—read until the fairy pictures of the Indian moonlight grew around her, as the Cloud sailed on, over jungle and pagoda, and the dance of maidens on the marble terraces.

Meanwhile, Woodbury having transacted his business and Bute Wilson his, the two were making preparations to return to Lakeside, when a plump figure, crossing the beaten snow-track in front of the Ptolemy House, approached them. Even before the thick green veil was thrown back, Woodbury recognized the fat hand which withdrew itself from a worn chinchilla muff, as the hand of Mrs. Waldo. Presently her round dark eyes shone full upon him, and he heard—what everybody in Ptolemy liked to hear—the subdued trumpet of her voice.

"Just in time to catch you!" she laughed. "How do you do, Bute? Will you call at the parsonage, Mr. Woodbury? No? Then I must give you my message in the open street Is anybody near? You must know it's a secret." After having said this in a loud tone, she lowered her voice: "Well, I don't mind Bute knowing it: Bute is not a leaky pitcher, I'm sure."

"I reckon Mr. Max knows that," said Arbutus, with a broad laugh dancing in his blue eyes.

"What is it? Another fair for the Cimmerians? Or is Miss Eliza Clancy engaged to a missionary?" asked Woodbury.

"Be silent, that you may hear. If it were not for my feet getting cold, I would be a quarter of an hour telling you. But I must hurry—there's Mrs. Bue coming out of her yard, and she scents a secret a mile off. Well—it's to be at Merryfield's on Saturday evening. You must be sure to come."

"What—the Sewing Union?"

"Bless me! I forgot. No—Dyce is to be there."

"Dyce?"

"Yes. They don't want it to be generally known, as so many would go out of mere curiosity. I must say, between us, that is *my* only reason. Neither you nor I have any faith in it; but Mrs. Merryfield says she will be glad if you can come."

"First tell me who Dyce is, and what is to be done," said Woodbury, not a little surprised. The expression thereof was instantly transferred to Mrs. Waldo's face.

"Well—to be sure, you're as ignorant as a foreigner. Bute knows, I'll be bound. Tell him, Bute, on the way home. Good-by! How do you do, Mrs. Bue? I was just telling Mr. Woodbury that the vessel for Madras"—and the remainder of the sentence was lost in the noise of the departing bells.

"Dyce is what they call a Mejum," explained Bute, as they dashed out on the Anacreon road: "Merryfields believe in it. I was there once't when they made the dinner-table jump like a wild colt Then there's sperut-raps, as they call 'em, but it's not o' much account what they say. One of 'em spoke to me, lettin' on to be my father. 'Arbutus,' says he (they spelt it out), 'I'm in the third spere, along with Jane.' Ha! ha! and my mother's name was Margaretta! But you'd better see it for yourself, Mr. Max. Seein' 's believin', they say, but you won't believe more'n you've a mind tó, after all."

CHAPTER IX.

SPIRITUAL AND OTHER RAPPINGS.

HAD the invitation to a spiritual *séance* been given by any one but Mrs. Waldo, Woodbury would probably have felt little inclination to attend. The Merryfields alone, with their ambitious sentiment and negative intellect, were beginning to be tiresome acquaintances, now that the revival of old memories was exhausted; but the warm heart and sound brain of that one woman made any society tolerable. His thoughts reverted to Hannah Thurston: would she be there? Of course: was his mental reply—yet she certainly could not share in the abominable delusion. Why not, after all? Her quick, eager intelligence, too proud and self-reliant to be restrained by traditional theories,—too unbalanced, from the want of contact with equal minds,—too easily moved by the mere utterance of attractive sentiment,—was it not, rather, the soil in which these delusions grew strong and dangerous? He would go and see.

Nevertheless, he was conscious of a feeling of reluctance, almost of shame at his own curiosity, as he left Lakeside. The night was overcast, with a raw, moaning wind in the tree-tops, and Bute was forced to drive slowly, feeling rather than seeing the beaten tracks. This employment, with the necessary remarks to the old horse Dick, fully occupied his attention. Finally, however, he broke silence with:

"I s'pose they'll have Absalom up to-night?"

"What! Do they go so far as that? Can they really believe it?" Woodbury asked.

"They jest *do*. They *want* to b'lieve it, and it comes easy

If brains was to be ground, between you and me, neither of 'em would bring much grist to the mill. I don't wonder at *her* so much, for she set a good deal of store by Absalom, and 't seems natural, you know, for women to have notions o' that kind."

"Are there many persons in Ptolemy who believe in such things?"

"Well—I don't hardly think there be. Leastways, they don't let on. There's Seth Wattles, o' course: he's fool enough for any thing; and I guess Lawyer Tanner. Ever sence Mr. Styles preached ag'in 'em, it a'n't considered jist respectable. Infidel-like, you know."

Woodbury laughed. "Well, Bute," said he, "we shall hardly find Mr. Waldo there to-night, if that is the case."

"He'll be there, Mr. Max, if *she* is. She'll bring him clear, no matter what folks says. Miss Waldo's a wife worth havin'—not but what he's got considerable grit, too. He's not strong at revivals, but he's a good hand at holdin' together all he gits."

As they drove up the lane to Merryfield's farm-house, all was dark and silent. The shutters were closed, and there was no appearance of other visitors having arrived. At the noise of the bells, however, the door opened, and the owner, after summoning his hired man from the kitchen, to assist Bute in taking charge of the horse, waited until Woodbury approached, in order to help him off with his overcoat. "They are all here that are likely to come," he announced in a whisper.

James Merryfield was a man of fifty, or a little more, in whom the desire to be a reformer had been excited long after he had reached his maturity as a simple, unpretending farmer. The fictitious character but imperfectly overlaid the natural one, giving him an uncertain, hesitating air. Indeed, with all his assertion and self-gratulation, he never could overcome a secret doubt of his ability to play the new part. But he was honest and sincerely conscientious, and a more prominent position than he would have assumed, of his own choice, was forced upon him by his friends. He possessed a comfortable property, and they were well aware of the advantage of being represented by men with bases.

His frame had been soundly developed, not over-worn, by labor in his own fields, yet he was awkward, almost shambling in his movements. His head was usually held on the left side, and a straight line dropped from the centre of his brow would not nearly have coincided with the axis of his nose. The large, irregular mouth expressed both the honesty and the weakness of the man. His voice, always nasal, rose into a shrill, declamatory monotone when he became excited—a key which he continually let drop, and again resumed, in disagreeable fluctuations. Thus Woodbury, while heartily respecting his character, found much of his society tiresome.

His wife, Sarah, who was six or seven years younger, was one of those women, who, without the power of thinking for themselves, have, nevertheless, a singular faculty for accepting the thoughts and conclusions of others. She was entirely dependent on two or three chosen leaders in the various "Reforms," without the slightest suspicion of her mental serfdom. Every new phase of their opinions she appropriated, and reproduced as triumphantly as if it had been an original discovery. She had, in fact, no intellectual quality except a tolerable fluency of speech. This, alone, gave her some consideration in her special circle, and kept her hesitating husband in the background. Both had been touched by the Hand of Progress, rather too late for their equilibrium. They had reached the transition state, it is true, but were doomed never to pass through it, and attain that repose which is as possible to shallow as to deep waters.

In person she was thin, but not tall, with a face expressive of passive amiability, slightly relieved by dyspepsia. The pale, unhealthy color of her skin, the dulness of her eyes, and the lustreless hue of her thin, reddish-brown hair, hinted at a system hopelessly disordered by dietetic experiments. Her children had all died young, with the exception of Absalom, who had barely reached manhood, when the care of his health, as Bute said, proved too great a burden to him.

Woodbury was ushered, not into the parlor, but into the room ordinarily occupied by the family. A single candle was burning on the table, dimly lighting the apartment. Mrs. Merryfield came forward to receive her guest, followed by Mrs. Waldo, who said, with unusual gravity: "You are in time—we were just about to commence."

Seated around the table were Hannah Thurston, Mr. Waldo, Seth Wattles, Tanner, the lawyer, and a cadaverous stranger, who could be no other than Mr. Dyce. A motion of his hand dissuaded the company from rising, and they gravely bowed to Woodbury without speaking. Mr. Dyce, after a rapid glance at the new-comer, fixed his eyes upon the table. He was a middle-aged man, broad-shouldered but spare, with long, dark hair, sunken cheeks, and eyes in which smouldered some powerful, uncanny magnetic force.

After Woodbury had taken his seat at the table, and Mr. Merryfield had closed the door, the medium spoke, in a low but strong voice:

"Take away the candle."

It was placed upon a small stand, in a corner of the room. "Shall I put it out?" asked the host.

Mr. Dyce shook his head.

Presently a succession of sharp, crackling raps was heard, as if made on the under surface of the table. They wandered about, now fainter, now stronger, for a few moments, and then approached Mrs. Merryfield.

"It's Absalom!" she cried, the yearning of a mother's heart overleaping the course of experiment. "What has he to say to-night?"

"Will the spirit communicate through the alphabet?" asked the medium.

Three raps—"Yes."

Lettered cards were laid upon the table, and the medium, commencing at A, touched them in succession until a rap an nounced the correct letter. This was written, and the process repeated until the entire communication was obtained.

"*I have been teaching my sisters. They are waiting for me on the steps of the temple. Good-night, mother!*"—was Absalom's message.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Seth Wattles. "The temple must mean the future life, and the steps are the successive spheres. Will any spirit communicate with me?"

The raps ceased. Mr. Dyce raised his head, looked around with his glow-worm eyes, and asked: "Does any one desire to speak with a relative or friend? Does any one feel impressed with the presence of a spirit?" His glance rested on Hannah Thurston.

"I would like to ask," said she, as the others remained silent, "whether the person whose name is in my mind, has any message for me."

After a pause, the medium shuddered, stretched out his hands upon the table, with the fingers rigidly crooked, lifted his head, and fixed his eyes on vacancy. His lips scarcely seemed to move, but a faint, feminine voice came from his throat.

"*I am in a distant sphere*," it said, "*engaged in the labors I began while on earth. I bear a new name, for the promise of that which I once had is fulfilled.*"

Hannah Thurston said nothing. She seemed to be pondering the meaning of what she had heard. Mrs. Waldo turned to Woodbury, with a face which so distinctly said to him, without words: "It's awful!" that he answered her, in a similar way: "Don't be afraid!"

"Will you ask a question, Mr. Woodbury?" said the host.

"I have no objection," he said, in a serious tone, "to select a name, as Miss Thurston has done, and let the answer test from what spirit it comes."

After a rapid glance at the speaker, the medium pushed pencil and paper across the table, saying: "Write the name, fold the paper so that no one can see it, and hold it in your hand." He then placed one elbow on the table, and covered his face with his hand, the fingers slightly separated.

Woodbury wrote—a long name, it seemed to be—and folded the paper as directed. Some wandering, uncertain raps followed. Communication by means of the alphabet was proposed to the spirit, without a response. After a sufficient pause to denote refusal, the raps commenced again.

Mr. Dyce shuddered several times, but no sound proceeded from his mouth. Suddenly turning towards Woodbury with set eyes, and pointing his finger, he exclaimed: "He is standing behind you!"

The others, startled, looked towards the point indicated, and even Woodbury involuntarily turned his head.

"I see him," continued the medium—"a dark man, not of our race. He wears a splendid head-dress, and ornaments of gold. His eyes are sad and his lips are closed: he is permitted to show his presence, but not to speak to you. Now he raises both hands to his forehead, and disappears."

"Who was it?" asked Mrs. Waldo, eagerly.

Woodbury silently unfolded the paper, and handed it to her. Even Mr. Dyce could not entirely conceal his curiosity to hear the name.

"What is this!" said she. "I can scarcely read it: Bab—Baboo Rugbutty Churn Chuckerbutty! It is certainly nobody's name!"

"It is the actual name of an acquaintance of mine, in Calcutta," Woodbury answered.

"A Hindoo!" exclaimed Mr. Dyce, with a triumphant air, "that accounts for his inability to use the alphabet."

"I do not see why it should," rejoined Woodbury, "unless he has forgotten his English since I left India."

"He *did* speak English, then?" several asked.

"Did, and still does, I presume. At least, he was not dead, three months ago," he answered, so quietly and gravely that none of the company (except, perhaps, the medium) supposed that a trick had been intended.

"Not dead!" some one exclaimed, in great amazement. "Why did you summon him?"

"Because I did not wish to evoke any friend or relative whom I have lost, and I had a curiosity to ascertain whether the spirits of the living could be summoned, as well as those of the dead."

There was a blank silence for a few moments. Only Bute, who had stolen into the room and taken a quiet seat in one corner, with his eyes wide open, gave an audible chuckle.

Mr. Dyce, who had concealed a malignant expression under his hand, now lifted a serene face, and said, in a solemn voice: "The *living*, as we call them, cannot usurp the powers and privileges of those who have entered on the spiritual life. The spirit, whose name was written, has either left the earth, or that of another, unconsciously present in the gentleman's mind, has presented itself."

The believers brightened up. How simple was the explanation! The mere act of writing the name of one Hindoo had recalled others to Mr. Woodbury's memory, and his thoughts must have dwelt, *en passant*,—probably without his being in the least aware of it, so rapid is mental action,—on some other Hindoo friend, long since engaged in climbing the successive spheres. In vain did he protest against having received even a flying visit from the recollection of any such person. Seth Wattles triumphantly asked: "Are you always aware of every thing that passes through your mind?"

Mrs Merryfield repeated a question she had heard the week before: "Can you always pick up the links by which you pass from one thought to another?"

Her husband modestly thrust in a suggestion: "Perhaps your friend Chuckerchurn is now among the spirits, as it were."

Mr. Dyce, who had been leaning forward, with his arms under the table, during these remarks, suddenly lifted his head, exclaiming: "He has come back!"—which produced a momentary silence. "Yes—I cannot refuse you!" he added, as if addressing the spirit, and then started violently from his seat, twisting his left arm as if it had received a severe blow. He drew up his coat-sleeve, which was broad and loose, then the sleeve of his shirt, and displayed a sallow arm, upon the skin of which were some red marks, somewhat resembling the letters "R. R." In a few moments, however, the marks faded away.

"His initials! Who can it be?" said Seth.

"Rammohun Roy!" said Hannah Thurston, betrayed, as it almost seemed, into a temporary belief in the reality of the visitation.

"I assure you," Woodbury answered, "that nothing was further from my thoughts than the name of Rammohun Roy, a person whom I never saw. If I wished to be convinced that these phenomena proceed from spirits, I should select some one who could give me satisfactory evidence of his identity."

"The skeptical will not believe, though one came from heaven to convince them," remarked the medium, in a hollow tone.

There was an awkward silence.

"My friends, do not disturb the atmosphere!" cried Mr. Merryfield; "I hope we shall have further manifestations."

A loud rap on the table near him seemed to be intended as a reply.

Mr. Dyce's hand, after a few nervous jerks, seized the pencil, and wrote rapidly on a sheet of paper. After completing the message and appending the signature to the bottom, he heaved a deep sigh and fell back in his chair.

Mr. Merryfield eagerly grasped the paper. "Ah!" said he, "it is my friend!" and read the following:

"*Be ye not weak of vision to perceive the coming triumph of Truth. Even though she creep like a tortoise in the race, while Error leaps like a hare, yet shall she first reach the goal*

The light from the spirit-world is only beginning to dawn upon the night of Earth. When the sun shall rise, only the owls and bats among men will be blind to its rays. Then the perfect day of Liberty shall fill the sky, and even the spheres of spirits be gladdened by reflections from the realm of mortals!

"BENJAMIN LUNDY."

In spite of certain inaccuracies in the spelling of this message, the reader's face brightened with satisfaction. "There!" he exclaimed—"there is a genuine test! No one but the spirit of Lundy, as it were, could have written those words."

"Why not?" asked Woodbury.

"Why—why—the foot of Hercules sticks out!" said Mr. Merryfield, falling, in his confusion, from the lofty strain. "You never knowed the sainted Lundy, the purest and most beautiful spirit of this age. Those are his very—yes, he would make the same expressions, as it were, if his voice could,—if he were still in the flesh."

Woodbury's eyes, mechanically, wandered to Mrs. Waldo and Hannah Thurston. The former preserved a grave face, but a smile, perceptible to him alone, lurked at the bottom of her eyes. The latter, too earnest in all things to disguise the expression of her most fleeting emotions, looked annoyed and uneasy. Woodbury determined to take no further part in the proceedings—a mental conclusion which Mr. Dyce was sufficiently clairvoyant to feel, and which relieved while it disconcerted him.

Various other spirits announced their presence, but their communications became somewhat incoherent, and the semi-believers present were not strengthened by the evening's experiments. Mr. Waldo, in answer to a mental question, received the following message:

"*I will not say that my mind dwelt too strongly on the symbols by which Faith is expressed, for through symbols the Truth was made clear to me. There are many paths, but they all have the same ending.*"

"There can be no doubt of that. Are you not satisfied?" asked Seth Wattles.

"Not quite. I had expected a different message from the spirit I selected," said Mr. Waldo.

"Was it not Beza Cimmer?"

"No!" was the astonished reply: "I was thinking of a school-mate and friend, who took passage for the West Indies in a vessel that was never heard of afterwards."

"We must not forget," said Mr. Dyce, "that our friends in the spirit-world still retain their independence. You may send for a neighbor to come and see you, and while you are waiting for him, another may unexpectedly step in. It is just so in our intercourse with spirits: we cannot control them. We cannot say to one: 'come!' and to another: 'go!' We must abide their pleasure, in faith and humility."

Mr. Waldo said nothing, and made no further attempt at conversation with his lost school-mate. Seth Wattles summoned, in succession, the spirits of Socrates, Touissant L'Ouverture, and Mrs. Hemans, but neither of them was inclined to communicate with him.

After a while, some one remarked: "Will they not more palpably manifest themselves?"

"We can try," said Mr. Dyce.

Mr. Merryfield thereupon took the solitary candle into an adjoining room. As the shutters were closed, the apartment was thus left in complete darkness. The guests kept their seats around the table, and it was specially enjoined upon them not to move. At the end of a few minutes rustling noises were heard, loud raps resounded on the table, which was several times violently lifted and let down, and blows were dealt at random by invisible hands. Those who were so fortunate as to be struck, communicated the news in a whisper to their neighbors. Presently, also, the little old-fashioned piano, standing on one side of the room, began to stir its rusty keys. After a few discordant attempts at chords, a single hand appeared to be endeavoring to play "*Days of*

Absence," the untuned keys making the melody still more dismal.

It was enough to set one's teeth on edge, but Mrs. Merryfield burst into tears. "Oh!" she cried, "it's Angelina herself! She was taking lessons, and had just got that far when she died."

The sounds ceased, and light was restored to the room. Mr. Dyce was leaning on the table, with his face in his hands. As he lifted his head, a large dark stain appeared under his right eye.

"Why, what has happened to you?" cried Merryfield. "Your eye is quite black!"

The medium, whose glance happened to fall upon his right hand, closed it so suddenly that the gesture would have attracted notice, if he had not skilfully merged it into one of his convulsive shudders. A rapid flush came to his face, and passed away, leaving it yellower than before.

"The unfriendly spirits are unusually active to-night," he finally answered: "They are perhaps encouraged by the presence of doubters or scoffers. I name no names. I received several severe blows while the light was removed, and feel exhausted by the struggles I have undergone. But it is nothing. The spirit of Paracelsus will visit me to-night, and remove the traces of this attack. Had the atmosphere been pure, it could not have occurred. But some who are here present are yet incapable of receiving the Truth, and their presence clouds the divine light through which the highest manifestations are made."

Woodbury was too much disgusted to answer. His eye fell upon Bute, who sat in the corner, with his large hand covering his mouth, and his face scarlet.

"I confess," said Mr. Waldo, turning to the medium, "that I am not convinced of the spiritual character of these phenomena. I do not profess to explain them, but neither can I explain much that I see in Nature, daily; and I do not perceive the necessity of referring them at once to supernatural causes.

By such an assumption, the spiritual world is degraded in our eyes, without, in my opinion, any increase of positive truth, even if the assumption were correct. A man who is really so blind as to disbelieve in the future life, would not be converted by any thing we have seen here to-night; while for us, who believe, the phenomena are unnecessary."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Dyce. "You do not appreciate the divine utterances from the world of spirits! You do not recognize the new and glorious Truths, the germs of a more perfect Creed!"

"I would prefer," the parson mildly answered, "not to hear the word 'divine' so applied. No: to be entirely frank, I see nothing new, or even true, in comparison with the old, Eternal Truth."

"But," interrupted Merryfield, desperately, seeing the bright assent on Hannah Thurston's face; "do you not believe in Progress? Have we, as it were, exhausted—are we at the end of truth?"

"Most certainly I believe in the forward march of our race. We are still children in wisdom, and have much to learn. But let me ask, my friend, do *you* not believe that the future life is an immeasurable advance upon this?"

"Yes," said Merryfield.

"Then," Mr. Waldo continued, "why is it that the professed communications from great minds, such as Socrates, Luther or the Apostles themselves, are below the expressions of even average human intellect?"

The believers stared at each other in dumb amazement. The coolness with which the parson took hold of and trampled upon their gems of superhuman wisdom, was like that of St. Boniface, when he laid the axe to the sacred Hessian oak. His hearers, like the Druids on that occasion, were passive, from the sheer impossibility of comprehending the sacrilege. Mr. Dyce shook his head and heaved a sigh of commiseration. Seth Wattles clasped his hands, lifted his eyes, and muttered in a hoarse voice: "The time will come." Mrs. Merryfield was unable to recall any phrase that applied to the case, but wiped her eyes for the third time since the mysterious performance on the piano.

Mrs. Waldo, however, looked at her husband with a smile which said to him: "I knew you could silence them whenever you choose to show your strength." Then, rising, she added aloud: "Now the atmosphere is certainly disturbed. Let us come back to our present existence, which, after all, is very good, when one has health, friends, and a contented spirit."

Mr. Merryfield whispered to his wife, who disappeared in the kitchen. "Don't go yet," he said to his guests, who had risen from the table; "we must warm you, before you start."

"Is it possible? whiskey-punch?" asked Woodbury, aside, of Mrs. Waldo.

"Hush! The very suggestion of such a thing would ruin you, if it were known," she replied.

At the end of a few minutes, Mrs. Merryfield reappeared, followed by a negro girl, who bore several steaming plates on a japanned tray. They proved to contain slices of mince-pie, *réchauffée*, and rather palatable, although heavy, in the absence of brandy. Mrs. Merryfield, during the day, had seriously thought of entertaining her guests with coffee; but as she was thoroughly convinced of the deleterious nature of the beverage, she decided that it would be no less criminal to furnish it to others than if she drank it herself. Consequently they received, instead, glasses of hot lemonade, which, by an association of ideas, almost convinced Woodbury, in spite of himself, that he was suffering under an attack of influenza.

Mr. Dyce, who adroitly managed to keep the left side of his face towards the candle, ate his portion with great relish. His spiritual office being ended for the day, he returned with avidity to the things of this world, and entered into a defence of animal food, addressed to Seth Wattles, who was inclined to be a Vegetarian. Indeed, the medium dropped hints unfavorable to the Temperance reform, which would have shocked some of his hearers, if he had not based them, like the most of his opinions, on spiritual communications.

As the guests were putting on their coats and cloaks in the hall, Woodbury overheard Mrs. Waldo, furtively saying to her spouse: "I am *so* glad you spoke your mind."

"I must thank you, also, Mr. Waldo," said Hannah Thurston. "One should not too willingly accept any thing so new and strange. For the sake of the truth we already possess, it is right to be cautious"

"And now it is my turn to thank *you*, Miss Thurston," rejoined Woodbury, gayly, as they went out into the cool night-air.

She understood him. For one instant her habitual antagonism asserted itself, but she conquered it by a strong effort. The night hid her face, and her voice was even-toned and sweet as ever, as she answered: "I am glad there is one point on which we can agree."

"Oh, there are a great many, I assure you," he exclaimed, with a lightness which, she knew not why, struck her unpleasantly: "If we could take away from your surplus of earnestness, to complete my lack of it, we should get on very well together."

"Can one be too much in earnest?" she asked.

"Decidedly. There are relative values in ethics, as in every thing else. You would not pull a pink with the same serious application of strength which you would use, to wind a bucket out of a well. But Mrs. Waldo waits: good-night!"

He lifted her into the cutter, the horses started, and she was off before she had fairly time to consider what he meant. But the words were too singular to be forgotten.

Bute now made his appearance, and Woodbury took his seat in the cutter beside him. Dick was another horse when his head was pointed towards home, and the bells danced to a lively measure as they passed up the valley in the face of the wind. The rising moon struggled through clouds, and but two or three stars were visible overhead. The night was weird and sad, and in its presence the trials and the indulgencies of daylight became indistinct dreams. Woodbury recalled, with a feeling of intense repugnance, the occurrences of the evening. "Better," he said to himself, "a home for the soul within the volcanic rings of yonder barren moon, with no more than the privacy it may command in this life, than to be placed on the fairest star of the universe, and be held at the beck and call of every mean mind that dares to juggle with sanctities."

Plunged in these meditations, he did not at first notice the short, half-suppressed spirts of laughter into which Bute occasionally broke. The latter, at last, unable to enjoy his fun alone, said:

"When you looked at me, Mr. Max., I thought I'd ha' bust. I never was so nigh givin' way in my life."

"What was it?" asked Woodbury.

"Well, you musn't say nothin'. *I* done it."

"You!"

"Yes, ha! ha! But he's no idee who it was."

"Did you strike him in the face, Bute?"

"Lord, no! *He* done all the strikin' there was done to-night. I fixed it better 'n that. You see I suspicioned they'd git Angeliny's spirut to playin' on the pyanna, like th' other time I was there. Thinks I, I've a notion how it's done, and if I'm right, it's easy to show it. So, afore comin' into the settin'-room, I jist went through the kitchen, and stood awhile on the hearth, to warm my feet, like. I run one arm up the chimbley, when nobody was lookin', and rubbed my hand full o' soft sut. Then I set in the corner, and held my arm behind me over the back o' the cheer, till the candle was took out. Now's the time, thinks I, and quick as wink I slips up to the pyanna—I knowed if they'd heerd me they'd think it was a spirut—and rubbed my sutty hand very quietly over the black keys. I didn't dare to bear on, but, thinks I, *some* 'll come off, and he 'll be sure to git it on *his* hands. Do you see it, Mr. Max.? When the light come back, there he was, solemn enough, with a black eye, ha! ha! I couldn't git a sight of his hand, though; he shet his fist and kep' it under the table."

Woodbury at first laughed heartily, but his amusement soon gave place to indignation at the swindle. "Why did you not expose the fellow?" he asked Bute.

"Oh, what's the use! Them that believes wouldn't believe any the less, if they'd seen him play the pyanna with their own eyes. I've no notion o' runnin' my head into a hornet's nest, and gittin' well stung, and no honey to show for my pains."

With which sage observation Bute drove up to the door of Lakeside.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH WE HEAR A DIVERTING STORY.

THE winter wore away, slowly to the inhabitants of Ptolemy, rapidly and agreeably to the owner of Lakeside, who drank life, activity, and cheerfulness from the steady cold. Every day, while the snow lasted, his cutter was to be seen on the roads. Dick proved entirely inadequate to his needs and was turned over to Bute's use, while the fastest horse out of Fairlamb's livery-stable in Ptolemy took his place. Woodbury's drives extended not only to Anacreon and the neighboring village of Nero Corners—a queer little place, stuck out of sight in a hollow of the upland,—but frequently as far as Tiberius, which, being situated on a branch of the New York Central, considered itself quite metropolitan. The inhabitants took especial delight in its two principal streets, wherein the houses were jammed together as compactly as possible, and huge brick blocks, with cornices and window-caps of cast-iron, started up pompously between one-story buildings of wood, saying to the country people, on market days: "Behold, a city!"

The farmers around Ptolemy, who believe that every man born in a large town, and ignorant of either farming or some mechanical employment, must necessarily be soft, weak, and effeminate in his nature—"spoiled," so far as true masculine grit is concerned—were not a little astonished at Woodbury's activity and powers of endurance. More than once some of them had met him, sheeted with snow and driving in the teeth of a furious north-eastern storm, yet singing merrily to himself as if he liked it all! It was noticed, too, that a vigorous red was driving away the tan of Indian summers from his cheeks that a listless, indifferent expression, which at first made them say "he has sleepy eyes," had vanished from those organs, as if a veil had been withdrawn, leaving them clear and keen, with a cheerful, wide-awake nature looking out. Thus, although his habitual repose of manner remained, it no longer impressed the people as something foreign and uncomfortable; and the general feeling towards him, in spite of the attacks of Mr. Grindle and the insinuations of Seth Wattles, was respectful and friendly. Bute, who was a confirmed favorite among the people, would suffer no word to be said against his master, and went so far as to take a respectable man by the throat, in the oyster-cellar under the Ptolemy House, for speaking of him as a "stuck-up aristocrat."

That part of a man's life which springs from his physical temperament seemed, in Woodbury's case, to have stood still during his sojourn abroad. After the tropical torpidity of his system had been shaken off, he went back ten years in the sudden refreshment of his sensations. The delicate cuticle of youth, penetrated with the finer nerves which acknowledge every touch of maturing existence as a pleasure, was partially restored. The sadness engendered by hard experience, the scorn which the encounter with human meanness and selfishness left behind, the half-contemptuous pity which the pride of shallow brains provoked—these were features of his nature, which, impressed while it was yet plastic, were now too firmly set to be erased; but they were overlaid for the time by the joyous rush of physical sensation. His manner lost that first gravity which suggested itself even in his most relaxed and playful moods; he became gay, brilliant, and bantering, and was the life of the circles in which he moved. As the owner of Lakeside, *all* circles, of course, were open to him; but he soon discovered the most congenial society and selected it, without regard to the distinctions which prevailed in Ptolemy. As no standard of merely social value was recognized, the little community was divided according to the wealth, or the religious views of its members; whence arose those jealousies and rivalries which the Great Sewing-Union had for a time suppressed. Woodbury soon perceived this fact, and determined, at the start, to preserve his social independence. Neither of the circles could complain of being neglected, yet neither could claim exclusive possession of him. He took tea twice in one week with the Rev. Lemuel Styles, and the heart of Miss Legrand, the clergyman's sister-in-law, began to be agitated by a vague hope; but, in a few days afterwards, he accompanied the Misses Smith (Seventh-day Baptists) on a sleighing party to Atauga City, and was seen, on the following Sunday, to enter the Cimmerian church.

Between the Waldos and himself, a sincere friendship had grown up. The parson and his wife possessed, in common with Woodbury, a basis of healthy common sense, which, in spite of the stubborn isolation of their sect, made them tolerant. They had no idea of turning life into a debating-school, and could hear adverse opinions incidentally dropped, in the course of conversation, without considering that each word was thrown down as a gage of combat. Hence, Woodbury found no pleasanter house than theirs, in all his rounds, and the frank way in which he occasionally claimed their scanty hospitality was so much like that of a brother, that the parson declared to his wife, it expressed his idea of Christian society. I am afraid I shall injure Mr. Waldo's reputation, but I am bound to state that Woodbury was the last man whom he would have attempted to secure, as a proselyte.

One evening in March, after the winter had begun to melt away on the long hill sweeping from the eastern valley around to Lakeside, a little party accidentally assembled in Mrs. Waldo's parlor. Since the proceeds of the Fair had enabled her to cover its walls with a cheap green paper, and to substitute a coarse carpet of the same color for the tattered thing which she had transferred to her bed-room, the apartment was vastly improved. The horse-hair sofa and chairs, it is true, had performed a great deal of service, but they were able to do it; the sheet-iron stove gave out a comfortable warmth; and the one treasure of the parsonage, a melodeon, which did the duty of an organ on Sundays, was in tolerable tune. Hannah Thurston contributed a vase of grasses, exquisitely arranged, which obliged Mrs. Waldo to buy a plaster bracket from an itinerant Italian. She could ill afford to spare the half-dollar which it cost—and, indeed, most of the women in her husband's congregation shook their heads and murmured: "Vanity, vanity!" when they saw it—but a little self-denial in her housekeeping, which no one else than herself ever knew, reconciled the deed to her conscience. Woodbury brought to her from New York an engraving of Ary Scheffer's "Christus Consolator," which not only gave her great delight, but was of service in a way she did not suspect. It hung opposite to the grasses, and thus thoroughly counterbalanced their presumed "vanity," in the eyes of Cimmerian visitors. Indeed, they were not sure but a moral effect was intended, and this uncertainty stopped the remarks which might otherwise have spread far and wide.

The party in Mrs. Waldo's parlor was assembled by accident, we have said; but not entirely so. Hannah Thurston had been invited to tea by the hostess, and Woodbury by Mr. Waldo, who had met him in the streets of Ptolemy. This coincidence was unintentional, although not unwelcome to the hosts, who, liking both their guests heartily, could not account for the evident prejudice of the one and the indifference of the other. Mrs. Waldo had long since given up, as insane, her first hope of seeing the two drawn together by mutual magnetism; all she now desired was to establish an *entente cordiale*, since the *entente d'amour* could never be. On this occasion, the parties behaved towards each other with such thorough courtesy and propriety, that, had Hannah Thurston been any other woman, Mrs. Waldo would have suspected the existence of an undying enmity.

After tea Mr. and Mrs. Merryfield made their appearance. They had come to Ptolemy to attend a lecture on Temperance by Abiram Stokes, a noted orator of the cause, who, however, failed to arrive. Seth Wattles presently followed, apparently by accident, but really by design. He had ascertained where Hannah intended to pass the evening, from the widow Thurston's little servant-maid, whom he waylaid as she was coming out of the grocery-store, and did not scruple to thrust himself upon the company. His self-complacency was a little disturbed by the sight of Woodbury, whose discomfiture, during the evening, he mentally resolved to accomplish.

His victim, however, was in an unusually cheerful mood, and every arrow which the indignant Seth shot, though feathered to the barb with insinuation, flew wide of the mark. Woodbury joined in denunciation of the opium traffic ; he trampled on the vices of pride, hypocrisy, and selfishness ; he abhorred intemperance, hated oppression, and glorified liberty. But he continually brought the conversation back to its key-note of playful humor, cordially seconded by Mrs. Waldo, whose only fault, in the eyes of her reforming friends, was that she had no taste for serious discussion. Seth, finally, having exhausted his quiver, began to declaim against the corrupting influence of cities.

"It is time that hackneyed superstition were given up," said Woodbury. "Everybody repeats, after poor old Cowper, 'God made the country and man made the town ;' therefore, one is divine, and the other—the opposite. As if God had no part in that human brain and those human affections, out of which spring Art, and Discovery, and the varied fabric of Society ! As if man had no part in making Nature attractive and enjoyable to us !"

"Cities are created by the selfishness of man," cried Seth, a little pompously.

"And farms, I suppose, are created entirely by benevolence !" retorted Woodbury, laughing. "You Reformers have the least cause to complain of cities. You got your Temperance from Baltimore, and your Abolition from Boston."

"That proves nothing : there was one just man even in

Sodom!" exclaimed Seth, determined not to be put down "But, of course, people who think *fashion* more important than *principle*, will always admire a city life."

"Yes, it is Fashion," added Mrs. Merryfield, who was unusually dyspeptic that evening—"it is Fashion that has impeded the cause of woman. Fashion is the fetters which chains her down as the slave of man. How can she know her rights, when she is educated, as a child, to believe that Dress is her Doom?"

"If you were familiar with cities, Mrs. Merryfield," said Woodbury, "you would find that they admit of the nearest approach to social independence. Fashion is just as rigid in Ptolemy as it is in New York; among the Hottentots or Digger Indians, far more so. Not only that, but Fashion is actually necessary to keep us from falling into chaos. Suppose there were no such thing, and you and Mr. Merryfield lived in tents, dressed in oriental costume, while Mr. Waldo preached in feathers and war-paint, to Miss Thurston, in a complete suit of steel armor, Mr. Wattles with Chinese pig-tail and fan, and myself in bag-wig, powder, and ruffles!"

The hearty laughter which followed this suggestion did not silence Seth. "It is not a subject for frivolity," he exclaimed; "you cannot deny that Fashion corrupts the heart and destroys all the better impulses of human nature."

"I do deny it," replied Woodbury, whose unusual patience was nearly exhausted. "All sweeping, undiscriminating assertions contain much that is both false and absurd, and yours is no exception. The foundation of character lies deeper than external customs. The honor of man, the virtue of woman, the pure humanity of both, is not affected by the cut or colors of their dress. If the race is so easily corrupted as one might infer from your assertions, how can you ever expect to succeed with your plans of reform?"

"I should not expect it," interposed Mrs. Merryfield, "if I had to depend on the women that worships the Moloch of fashion. Why, if I was the noblest and wisest of my sex, they'd turn up their noses at me, unless I lived in Fifth Avenue."

A sweet, serious smile, betraying that breath of dried roses which greets us as we open some forgotten volume of the past, stole over Woodbury's face. His voice, also, when he spoke, betrayed the change. Some memory, suddenly awakened, had banished the present controversy from his mind.

"It is strange," said he, slowly, addressing Mrs. Waldo, rather than the speaker, "how a new life, like mine in India, can make one forget what has gone before it. In this moment, a curious episode of my youth suddenly comes back to me, distinct as life, and I wonder how it could ever have been forgotten. Shall I give you a story in place of an argument, Mrs. Merryfield? Perhaps it may answer for both. But if you can't accept it in that light, you may have the last word."

"Pray tell us, by all means!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo.

Woodbury looked around. Hannah Thurston, meeting his questioning glance, silently nodded. Seth was sullen and gave no sign. Mrs. Merryfield answered, "I'd like to hear it, well enough, I'm sure," whereto her husband added: "So would I, as—as it were." Thus encouraged, Woodbury began:

"It happened after my father's death, and before I left New York for Calcutta. I was not quite twenty when he died, and his bankruptcy left me penniless, just at the time of life when such a condition is most painfully felt. In my case it was worse than usual, because so utterly unexpected, and my education had in no way prepared me to meet it. Every thing went: house, furniture, library, and even those domestic trifles which are hardest to part with. A few souvenirs of my mother were saved, and a friend of the family purchased and gave to me my father's watch. My brother-in-law was unable to help me, because he was greatly involved in the ruin. He sent my sister and their children to live in a cheap New Jersey village, while he undertook a journey to New Orleans, in the hope of retrieving his position by a lucky stroke of business. Thus, within a month after the funeral of my father, I found myself alone, poor, and homeless. It was in 1837, and the great financial crash was just beginning to thunder in men's ears. My father's friends were too much concerned about their own interests to care especially for mine. It was no single case of misfortune: there were examples equally hard, on all sides, very soon.

"Nevertheless, I was not suffered to become a vagabond. A subordinate clerkship was procured for me, at a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars a year I was ignorant of business, for my father had intended that I should study Law, after completing my collegiate course, and the character of my mind was not well adapted for commercial life. The salary, small as it was, fully equalled the value of my services, and I should have made it suffice to meet my wants, if I had received it punctually. But my employer so narrowly escaped ruin during the crisis that he was often unable to pay me, or my fellow-clerks, our monthly wages, and I, who had no little hoard to draw upon, like the others, sometimes suffered the most painful embarrassment. I have frequently, this winter, heard the praises of a vegetable diet. I have some right to give my opinion on the subject, as I tried the experiment for two months at a time, and must say that it totally failed.

"I was too proud to borrow money, at such times, and was, moreover, exceedingly sensitive lest my situation should become known. The boarding-house, where I first made my home, became uncomfortable, because I was not always ready with my money on Saturday morning. Besides, it was a cheap place, kept by an old woman with two sentimental daughters, who wore their hair in curls and always smelt of sassafras soap. There were various reasons which you will understand, without my telling you, why my residence there grew at last to be insufferable. I accidentally discovered that the owner of a corner grocery in the Bowery had a vacant room over his store, with a separate entrance from the cross-street, and that he could supply me, at a cheap rent, with the most necessary furniture. The bargain was soon made. The room and furniture cost me a dollar a week, and my food could be regulated according to my means. The common eating-houses supplied me, now and then, with a meal, but I oftenest bought my bread at the baker's, and filled my pitcher from the hydrant in the back-yard. I was also so far independent that I could choose my associates, and regulate my personal habits. I assure you that I never washed my face with sassafras soap."

Mrs. Waldo laughed heartily at this declaration, and Mrs. Merryfield innocently exclaimed: "Why, I'm sure it's very good for the skin."

"Meanwhile," Woodbury continued, "I still kept up intercourse with the circle in which my father moved, and which, at that time, would have been called 'fashionable.' Some families, it is true, felt a restraint towards me which I was too sensitive not to discover. The daughters had evidently been warned against too great a display of sympathy. On the other hand, I made new and delightful acquaintances, of equal social standing, by whom I was treated with a delicacy and a generous consideration which I shall never forget. In fact, whatever Christian respect I may exhibit, in my intercourse with others, I learned from those families. You may know what they were, Mr. Waldo, by imagining how you would treat me, now, if I should suddenly lose my property.

"I had been living in this manner for a year, or thereabouts, when the main incident of my story occurred. In the circle where I was most intimate, there were two or three wealthy bachelors, who had handsome residences in the neighborhood of Bleecker street (there was no Fifth Avenue then). These gentlemen had, in turn, given entertainments during the winter, and had taken such pains to make them agreeable to the young ladies, that they constituted a feature of the season. The company was small and select, on these occasions, two or three married pairs being present for the sake of propriety, but no society was ever more genial, joyous, and unconstrained in tone. At the last entertainment, our host finished by giving us a choice supper, to which we sat down in order to enjoy it thoroughly. I have had a prejudice against all ambulatory suppers since. There were songs and toasts, and fun of the purest and most sparkling quality. At last, one of the young ladies said, with a mock despair: 'So, this is the end of our bachelor evenings. What a pity! I am ready to wish that you other gentlemen had remained single, for our sakes. You know you cannot give us such delightful parties as this.'

"'Are there really no more bachelors?' exclaimed Miss Remington, a tall, beautiful girl, who sat opposite to me. 'Must we sing: Lochaber no more? But that will never do: some married man must retract his vow, for our sakes.'

"One of the latter, looking around the table, answered: Let us be certain, first, that we are at the end of the list. Belknap, Moulton, Parks—yes—but stop! there's Woodbury! too modest to speak for himself.'

"'Woodbury! Woodbury!' they all shouted, the young ladies insisting that I *should* and *must* entertain them in my turn. My heart came into my throat. I attempted to laugh off the idea as a jest, but they were too joyously excited to heed me. It was a cruel embarrassment, for none of the company even knew where I lived. My letters were always sent to the office of my employer. Moreover, I had but five dollars, and had made a resolution never to live in advance of my wages. What was I to do? The other guests, ignorant of my confusion, or not heeding it, were already talking of the entertainment as settled, and began to suggest the evening when it should take place. I was meditating, in a sort of desperation, whether I should not spring up and rush out of the house, when I caught Miss Remington's eye. I saw that she understood my embarrassment, and wanted to help me. Her look said 'Accept!'—a singular fancy darted through my mind, and I instantly regained my self-possession. I informed the company that I should be very happy to receive them, and that my entertainment should bear the same proportion to my means as that of our host. The invitations were given and accepted on the spot, and an evening selected from the following week.

"'But where is it to be?' asked one of the young ladies.

"'Oh, he will let you know in time,' said Miss Remington, who took occasion to whisper to me, before the company separated: 'Come to me first, and talk the matter over.'

"I called upon her the next evening, and frankly confided to her my situation and means. She was three or four years older than myself, and possessed so much natural judgment and good sense, in addition to her social experience, that I had the utmost confidence in her advice. A woman of less tact would have offered to assist me, and that would have been an end of the matter. She saw at once what was best to be done, and we very soon agreed upon the preparations. Every thing was to be kept secret from the rest of the company, whom she determined to mystify to her heart's content. She informed them that the entertainment would be unlike any thing they had ever seen; that the place was not to be divulged, but the guests were to assemble at her father's house on the appointed evening; and that they must so dress as to do the highest honor to my hospitality. The curiosity of all was greatly excited; the affair was whispered about, and others endeavored to join the party, but it was strictly confined to the original company.

"On my part I was not idle. Adjoining my chamber was a large room, in which the grocer kept some of his stores. This room I thoroughly cleaned, removing some of the articles, but retaining all the kegs and boxes. The grocer, an honest, amiable man, supposed that I was preparing a little festival for some of my relatives, and gave me the free use of his material. I arranged the kegs and boxes around the walls, and covered them with coarse wrapping-paper, to serve as seats. The largest box was stationed in a corner, with a keg on the top, as a post for the single musician I had engaged—an old Irish fiddler, whom I picked up in the street I went out towards Yorkville and brought home a bundle of cedar boughs, with which I decorated the walls, constructing a large green word—WELCOME—above the fireplace. I borrowed twelve empty bottles in which I placed as many tallow candles, and disposed them about the room, on extemporized brackets. For my own chamber, which was designed to answer as a dressing-room for the ladies, I made candlesticks out of the largest turnips I could find in the market. In fact, I purposely removed some little conveniences I possessed, and invented substitutes of the most grotesque kind. I became so much interested in my preparations, and in speculating upon the effect they would produce, that I finally grew as impatient as my guests for the evening to arrive.

"Nine o'clock was the hour appointed, and, punctually to the minute, five carriages turned out of the Bowery and drew up, one after another, at the side-door. I was at the entrance, in complete evening dress, with white gloves (washed), to receive my guests. I held a tray, upon which there were as many candles fixed in large turnips, as there were gentlemen in the party, and begged each one to take a light and follow me. The ladies, magnificently dressed in silks and laces, rustled up the narrow staircase, too much amazed to speak. As I threw open the door of my saloon, the fiddler, perched near the ceiling, struck up 'Hail to the Chief.' The effect, I assure you, was imposing. Miss Remington shook hands with me, heartily, exclaiming: 'Admirable! You could not have done better.' To be sure, there were some exclamations of surprise, and perhaps one or two blank faces—but only for a moment. The fun was seen immediately, and the evening commenced with that delightful social *abandon* in which other evenings generally end. The fiddler played a Scotch reel, and the couples took their places on the floor. Two of the older gentlemen were familiar with both the Scotch and Irish dances, and the younger ladies set about learning them with a spirit which charmed the old musician's heart. The superb silks floated about the room to the jolliest tunes, or rested, in the intervals, on the grocer's kegs, and once a string of pearls broke and rolled into the fireplace. After a while, the grocer's boy, in his shirt-sleeves, made his appearance with a large market-basket on his arm, containing a mixture of cakes, raisins, and almonds. He was in great demand, especially as I furnished no plates. It was then agreed to put the basket on a keg, as a permanent refreshment-table, and the boy brought in lemonade, in all kinds of drinking-vessels. I had taken some pains to have them all of different patterns. There were tin-cups, stoneware mugs, tea-cups, bowls, and even a cologne bottle. By this time all had fully entered into the spirit of the affair: I was not only at ease but jubilant. The old fiddler played incessantly. Miss Remington sang 'The Exile of Erin' to his accompaniment, and the old man cried: we had speeches, toasts, recitations: we revived old games: we told fortunes with cards (borrowed from the porter-house across the way): in short, there was no bound to the extent of our merriment, and no break in its flow.

"It occurred to some one, at last, to look at his watch.—'God bless me! it's three o'clock!' he cried. Three!—and six hours had already passed away! The ladies tore up my green word 'WELCOME,' to get sprigs of cedar as souvenirs of the evening: some even carried off the turnip-candlesticks. Miss Remington laughed in her sleeve at the latter. 'I know better than to do that,' she said to me; 'turnips have a habit of rotting.' It was unanimously voted that I had given them the best entertainment of the season; and I am sure, for my own part, that none had been so heartily enjoyed.

"The story, as you may suppose, soon became known; and it was only by sheer resolution that I escaped a social popularity which might have turned my head at that age. I was even asked to repeat the entertainment, so that others might have a chance to participate in it; but I knew that its whole success lay in the spontaneous inspiration which prompted, and the surprise which accompanied it. The incident, however, proved to be one of the influences to which I must attribute my subsequent good fortune."

"Pray, how was that?" asked Mr. Waldo.

"My employer heard, in some way or other, that I had given a splendid entertainment. Knowing my means, and fearing that I had fallen into reckless habits, he called me into his private office and very seriously asked for an explanation of my conduct. I related the circumstances, precisely as they had occurred. He easily ascertained that my story was true, and from that day forward took an increased interest in me, to which I must attribute, in part, my rapid advancement. Now, if there is any moral in all this, I think you can easily find it. If there is not, perhaps you have been diverted enough to pardon me for talking so much about myself."

"Why, it's delightful! I never heard any thing better!" cried Mrs. Waldo.

"It shows, though," interposed Mrs. Merryfield, "how inconsistent those fashionable women are. They can be courageous and independent for the sake of pleasure, but they'd be horrified at venturing so far for the sake of principle."

"You are hardly just," said Hannah Thurston, addressing the last speaker; "Mr. Woodbury's story *has* a moral, and I am very glad he has given it to us."

Seth Wattles had been interested and amused, in spite of himself, but he was not the man to acknowledge it. He was endeavoring to find some point at which he might carp, with a show of reason, when Miss Carrie Dilworth entered the room, and presently Bute Wilson, who had driven from Lakeside to take Woodbury home.

"Mr. Max.!" cried the latter, whose face had a flushed, strange expression, "Diamond won't stand alone, and I must go out and hold him till you're ready."

"I'll come at once, then," said Woodbury, and took leave of the company.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTAINING TWO DECLARATIONS, AND THE ANSWERS THERETO.

As Bute, on entering the village, passed the Widow Thurston's cottage, he noticed a dim little figure emerging from the gate. Although the night was dark, and the figure was so muffled as to present no distinct outline, Bute's eyes were particularly sharp. Like the sculptor, he saw the statue in the shapeless block. Whether it was owing to a short jerking swing in the gait, or an occasional sideward toss of what seemed to be the head, he probably did not reflect; but he immediately drew the rein on Diamond, and called out "Miss Carrie!"

"Ah!" proceeded from the figure, as it stopped, with a start; "who is it?"

Bute cautiously drove near the plank sidewalk, before answering. Then he said: "It's me."

"Oh, Bute," exclaimed Miss Dilworth, "how you frightened me! Where did you come from?"

"From home. I'm a-goin' to fetch Mr. Max., but there's no hurry. I say, Miss Carrie, wouldn't you like to take a little sleigh-ride? Where are you goin' to?"

"To Waldo's."

"Why, so am I! Jump in, and I'll take you along."

Miss Dilworth, nothing loath, stepped from the edge of the sidewalk into the cutter, and took her seat. Bute experienced a singular feeling of comfort, at having the soft little body wedged so closely beside him, with the same wolf-skin spread over their mutual knees. His heart being on the side next ner, it presently sent a tingling warmth over his whole frame; the sense of her presence impressed him with a vague physical delight, and he regretted that the cutter was not so narrow as to oblige him to take her upon his knees. It was less than half a mile to the parsonage—about two minutes, as Diamond trotted—and then the doors of heaven would close upon him.

"No! by Jimminy!" he suddenly exclaimed, turning around in the track, at the imminent risk of upsetting the cutter.

"What's the matter?" cried Miss Dilworth, a little alarmed at this unexpected manœuvre.

"It isn't half a drive for you, Carrie," Bute replied. "The sleddin's prime, and I'll jist take a circuit up the creek, and across into the South Road. We'll go it in half an hour, and there's plenty of time."

Miss Dilworth knew, better even than if he had tried to tell her, that Bute was proud and happy at having her beside him. Her vanity was agreeably ministered to; she enjoyed sleighing; and, moreover, where was the harm? She would not have objected, on a pinch, to be driven through Ptolemy by Arbutus Wilson, in broad daylight; and now it was too dark for either of them to be recognized. So she quietly submitted to what was, after all, not a hard fate.

As they sped along merrily over the bottoms of East Atauga Creek, past the lonely, whispering elms, and the lines of ghostly alders fringing the stream, where the air struck their faces with a damp cold, the young lady shuddered. She pressed a little more closely against Bute, as if to make sure of his presence, and said, in a low tone: "I should not like to be alone, here, at this hour."

Poor Bute felt that the suspense of his heart was no longer to be borne. She had played with him, and he had allowed himself to be played with, long enough. He would ask a serious question and demand a serious answer. His resolution was fixed, yet, now that the moment had arrived, his tongue seemed to become paralyzed. The words were in his mind, every one of them—he had said them over to himself, a hundred times—but there was a muzzle on his mouth which prevented their being put into sound. He looked at the panels of fence as they sped past, and thought, "so much more of the road has gone, and I have said nothing."

Miss Dilworth's voice was like a palpable hand stretched out to draw him from that quagmire of silence. "Oh, Carrie!" he exclaimed, "you needn't be alone, anywheres—leastways where there's any thing to skeer or hurt you."

She understood him, and resumed her usual tactics, half-accepting, half-defensive. "We can't help being alone sometimes, Bute," she answered, "and some are born to be alone always. Alone in spirit, you know; where there is no congenial nature."

"You're not one o' *them*, Carrie," said Bute, desperately. "You know you're not a genus. If you was, I shouldn't keer whether I had your good-will or not. But I want that, and more'n that, because I like you better than any thing in this world. I've hinted the same many a time, and you know it, and I don't want you to turn it off no longer."

The earnestness of his voice caused Miss Dilworth to tremble. There was a power in the man which she feared she could not withstand. Still he had made no definite proposal, and she was not bound to answer more than his words literally indicated.

"Why, of course I like you, Bute," said she; "everybody does. And you've always been so kind and obliging towards me."

"Like! I'd ruther you'd say *hate* than *like*. There's two kinds c' likin', and one of 'em's the kind that doesn't fit any body that comes along. Every man, Carrie, that's wuth his salt, must find a woman to work for, and when he's nigh onto thirty, as I am, he wants to see a youngster growin' up, to take his place when he gits old. Otherways, no matter how lucky he is, there's not much comfort to him in livin'. Now, I'm awful serious about this. I don't care whether we're congenial spirits, or not, but I want you, Carrie, for my wife. You may hunt far and wide, but you'll find nobody that'll keer for you as I will. Perhaps I don't talk quite as fine as some, but talkin's like the froth on the creek; maybe it's shallow, and maybe it's deep, you can't tell. The heart's the main thing, and, thank God, I'm right there. Carrie, this once, jist this once, don't trifle with me."

Bute's voice became soft and pleading, as he closed. Miss Dilworth was moved at last; he had struck through her affected sentimentalism, and touched the small bit of true womanly nature beneath it. But the impression was too sudden. She had not relinquished her ambitious yearnings; she knew and valued Bute's fidelity, and, precisely for that reason, she felt secure in seeming to decline it. She would have it in reserve, in any case, and meanwhile, he was too cheerful and lighthearted to suffer much pain from the delay. Had he taken her in his arms, had he stormed her with endearing words, had he uttered even one sentence of the hackneyed sentiment in which she delighted, it would have been impossible to resist. But he sat silently waiting for her answer, while the horse slowly climbed the hill over which they must pass to reach the South Road; and in that silence her vanity regained its strength.

"Carrie?" he said, at last.

"Bute?"

"You don't answer me."

"Oh, Bute!" said she, with a curious mixture of tenderness and coquetry, "I don't know how. I never thought you were more than half in earnest. And I'm not sure, after all, that we were meant for each other. I like you as well as I like anybody, but—"

Here she paused.

"But you won't have me, I s'pose?" said Bute, in a tone that was both bitter and sad.

"I don't quite mean that," she answered. "But a woman has so much at stake, you know. She must love more than a man, I've been told, before she can give up her name and her life to him. I don't know, Bute, whether I should do right to promise myself to you. I've never thought of it seriously Besides, you come upon me so sudden—you frightened me a little, and I really don't exactly know what my own mind is."

"Yes, I see," said Bute, in a stern voice.

They had reached the top of the hill, and the long descent to Ptolemy lay before them. Bute drew the reins and held the horse to his best speed. Some inner prop of his strong breast seemed to give way all at once. He took the thick end of his woollen scarf between his teeth and stifled the convulsive movements of his throat. Then a sensation of heat rushed through his brain, and the tears began to roll rapidly down his cheeks. He was grateful for the darkness which hid his face, for the bells which drowned his labored breathing, and for the descent which shortened the rest of the drive. He said nothing more, and Miss Dilworth, in spite of herself, was awed by his silence. By the time they had reached the parsonage he was tolerably calm, and the traces of his passion had disappeared from his face.

Miss Dilworth lingered while he was fastening the horse. She felt, it must be confessed, very uneasy, and not guiltless of what had happened. She knew not how to interpret Bute's sudden silence. It was probably anger, she thought, and she would therefore lay the first stone of a temple of reconciliation. She liked him too well to lose him wholly.

"Good-night, Bute!" she said, holding out her hand: "you are not angry with me, are you?"

"No," was his only answer, as he took her hand. There was no eager, tender pressure, as before, and the tone of his voice, to her ear, betrayed indifference, which was worse than anger.

After Woodbury had taken leave, there was a general movement of departure. The sempstress had come to spend a few days with Mrs. Waldo, and did not intend returning; it was rather late, and the Merryfields took the nearest road home, so that Hannah Thurston must have walked back, alone, to her mother's cottage, had not Seth Wattles been there to escort her. Seth foresaw this duty, and inwardly rejoiced thereat. The absence of Woodbury restored his equanimity of temper, and he was as amiably disposed as was possible to his incoherent nature. He was not keen enough to perceive the strong relief into which his shapeless mind was thrown by the symmetry and balance of the man whom he hated—that he lost ground, even in his own circle, not merely from the discomfiture of the moment, but far more from that unconscious comparison of the two which arose from permanent impressions. He was not aware of the powerful magnetism which social culture exercises, especially upon minds fitted, by their honest yearning after something better, to receive it themselves.

Seth was therefore, without reason, satisfied with himself as he left the house. He had dared, at least, to face this self-constituted lion, and had found the animal more disposed to gambol than to bite. He flattered himself that his earnestness contrasted favorably with the levity whereby Woodbury had parried questions so important to the human race. Drawing a long breath, as of great relief, he exclaimed:

"Life is real, life is earnest! We feel it, under this sky: here the frivolous chatter of Society is hushed."

Hannah Thurston took his proffered arm, conscious, as she did so, of a shudder of something very like repugnance. For the first time it struck her that she would rather hear the sparkling nothings of gay conversation than Seth's serious platitudes. She did not particularly desire his society, just now, and attempted to hasten her pace, under the pretext that the night was cold.

Seth, however, hung back. "We do not enjoy the night as we ought," said he. "It elevates and expands the soul. It is the time for kindred souls to hold communion."

"Scarcely out of doors, in winter, unless they are disembodied," remarked Miss Thurston.

Seth was somewhat taken aback. He had not expected so light a tone from so grave and earnest a nature. It was unusual with her, and reminded him, unpleasantly, of Woodbury's frivolity. But he summoned new courage, and continued:

"We can say things at night for which we have no courage in daylight. We are more sincere, somehow—less selfish, you know, and more affectionate."

"There ought to be no such difference," said she, mechanically, and again hastening her steps.

"I know there oughtn't. And I didn't mean that *I* wasn't as true as ever; but—but there are chosen times when our souls are uplifted and approach each other. This is such a time, Hannah. We seem to be nearer, and—and—"

He could get no farther. The other word in his mind was too bold to be used at the outset. Besides, having taken one step, he must allow her to take the next: it would make the crisis easier for both. But she only drew her cloak more closely around her, and said nothing.

"The influences of night and—other things," he resumed, "render us insensible to time and—temperature. There is one thing, at least, which defies the elements. Is there not?"

"What is it?" she asked.

"Can't you guess?"

"Benevolence, no doubt, or a duty so stern and sacred that life itself is subordinate to its performance."

"Yes, that's true—but I mean something else!" Seth exclaimed. "Something *I* feel, now, deep in my buzzum. Shall I unveil it to your gaze?"

"I have no right to ask or accept your confidence," she replied.

"Yes, you have. One kindred soul has the right to demand every thing of the other. I might have told you, long ago, but I waited so that you might find it out for yourself, without the necessity of words. Surely you must have seen it in my eyes, and heard it in my voice, because every thing powerful in us expresses itself somehow in spite of us. The deepest emotions, you know, are silent; but you understand my silence now, don't you?"

Hannah Thurston was more annoyed than surprised by this declaration. She saw that a clear understanding could not be avoided, and nerved herself to meet it. Her feeling of repugnance to the speaker increased with every word he uttered yet, if his passion were genuine (and she had no right to doubt that it was so), he was entitled at least to her respect and her pity. Still, he had spoken only in vague terms, and she could not answer the real question. Why? Did she not fully understand him? Was the shrinking sense of delicacy in her heart, which she was unable to overcome, a characteristic of sex, separating her nature, by an impassable gulf, from that of man?

"Please explain yourself clearly, Seth," she said, at last.

"Oh, don't your own heart explain it for you? Love don't want to be explained: it comes to us of itself. See here—we've been laboring together ever so long in the Path of Progress, and our souls are united in aspirations for the good of our fellow-men. All I want is, that we should now unite our lives in the great work. You know I believe in the equal rights of Woman, and would never think of subjecting you to the tyranny your sisters groan under. I have no objection to taking your name, if you want to make that sort of a protest against legal slavery. We'll both keep our independence, and show to the world the example of a true marriage. Somebody must begin, you know, as Charles Macky, the glorious poet of our cause, says in his Good Time Coming."

"Seth," said Hannah Thurston, with a sad, deliberate sweetness in her voice, "there is one thing, without which there should be no union between man and woman."

"What is that?" he asked.

"Love."

"How? I don't understand you. That is the very reason why——"

"You forget," she interrupted, "that love must be reciprocal. You have taken it for granted that I returned, in equal measure, the feelings you have expressed towards me. Where the fortune of a life is concerned, it is best to be frank, though frankness give pain. Seth, I do not, I never can, give you love. A coincidence of opinions, of hopes and aspirations, is not love. I believe that you have made this mistake in your own mind, and that you will, sooner or later, thank me for having revealed it to you. I have never suspected, in you, the existence of love in its holiest and profoundest meaning, nor have I given you reason to suppose that my sentiments towards you were other than those of friendly sympathy and good-will. I deeply regret it, if you have imagined otherwise. I cannot atone to you for the ruin of whatever hopes you may have cherished, but I can at least save you from disappointment in the future. I tell you now, therefore, once and forever, that, whatever may happen, however our fates may change, you and I can never, never be husband and wife."

Sweet and low as was her voice, an inexorable fate spoke in it. Seth felt, word by word, its fatal significance, as the condemned culprit feels the terrible phrases of his final sentence. He knew, instinctively, that it was vain to plead or expostulate. He must, perforce, accept his doom; but, in doing so, his injured self-esteem made a violent protest. It was the fretful anger of disappointment, rather than the unselfish sorrow of love. He could only account for the fact of his refusal by the supposition that her affections were elsewhere bestowed.

"I see how it is," said he, petulantly; "somebody else is in the way."

"Do not misunderstand me," she answered. "I, only, am responsible for your disappointment. You have no right to question me, and I might well allow your insinuation to pass without notice; but my silence may possibly mislead you, as it seems my ordinary friendly regard has done. I will, therefore, for my own sake no less than yours—for I desire, in so solemn a matter, to leave no ground for self-reproach—voluntarily say to you, that I know no man to whom I could surrender my life in the unquestioning sacrifice of love. I have long since renounced the idea of marriage. My habits of thought—the duties I have assumed—my lack of youth and beauty, perhaps" (and here the measured sweetness of her voice was interrupted for a moment), "will never attract to me the man, unselfish enough to be just to my sex, equally pure in his aspirations, equally tender in his affections, and wiser in the richness of his experience, whom my heart would demand, if it dared still longer to cherish a hopeless dream. I have not even enough of an ideal love remaining, to justify your jealousy. In my association with you for the advancement of mutual aims, as well as in our social intercourse, I have treated you with the kindly respect which was your due as a fellow-being, but I can never recognize in you that holy kinship of the heart, without which Love is a mockery and Marriage is worse than death!"

Seth felt it impossible to reply, although his self-esteem was cruelly wounded. She thought herself too good for him, then: that was it! Why, the very man she had described, as the ideal husband she would never meet—it was exactly himself! It was of no use, however, for him to say so. She had rejected him with a solemn decision, from which there was no appeal. He must, also, needs believe her other declaration, that she loved no one else. Her inordinate mental pride was the true explanation.

They had stopped, during the foregoing conversation. Hannah Thurston had dropped her hold on his arm, and stood, facing him, on the narrow sidewalk. The night was so dark that neither could distinctly see the other's face. A melancholy wind hummed in the leafless twigs of the elms above them, and went off to sough among a neighboring group of pines. Finding that Seth made no answer, Miss Thurston slowly resumed her homeward walk. He mechanically accompanied her. As they approached the widow's cottage, he heaved a long, hoarse sigh, and muttered:

"Well, there's another aspiration deceived. It seems there's no quality of human nature which we can depend upon."

"Do not let this disappointment make you unjust, Seth," she said, pausing, with her hand upon the gate. "You have deceived yourself, and it is far better to become reconciled to the truth at once. If I have ignorantly, in any way, assisted in the deception, I beg you to pardon me."

She turned to enter the cottage, but Seth still hesitated. "Hannah," he said at last, awkwardly: "You—you won't say any thing about this?"

She moved away from him with an instant revulsion of feeling. "What do you take me for?" she exclaimed. "Repeat that question to yourself, and perhaps it may explain to you why your nature and mine can never approach!" Without saying good-night, she entered the house, leaving Seth to wander back to his lodgings in a very uncomfortable frame of mind.

Hannah Thurston found the lighted lamp waiting for her in the warm sitting-room; her mother was already in bed. She took off her bonnet and cloak, and seated herself in the widow's rocking-chair. Tears of humiliation stood in her eyes. "He does not deserve," she said to herself, "that I should have opened my heart before him. I wanted to be just, for I thought that love, however imperfect or mistaken, was always at least delicate and reverent. I thought the advocacy of moral truth presupposed some nobility of soul—that a nature which accepted such truth could not be entirely low and mean. I have allowed a profane eye to look upon sanctities, and the very effort I made to be true and just impresses me with a sense of self-degradation. What must I do, to reconcile my instincts with the convictions of my mind? Had I not suppressed the exhibition of my natural repugnance to that man, I should have been spared the pain of this evening—spared the shrinking shudder which I must feel whenever the memory of it returns."

Gradually her self-examination went deeper, and she con fessed to herself that Seth's declaration of love was in itself her greatest humiliation. She had not told him the whole truth, though it had seemed to be so, when she spoke. She had *not* renounced the dream of her younger years. True, she had forcibly stifled it, trodden upon it with the feet of a stern resolution, hidden its ruins from sight in the remotest chamber of her heart—but now it arose again, strong in its immortal life. Oh, to think *who* should have wooed her under the stars, in far other words and with far other answers—the man whom every pulse of her being claimed and called upon, the man who never came! In his stead this creature, whose love seemed to leave a stain behind it—whose approach to her soul was that of an unclean footstep. Had it come to this? Was *he* the only man whom the withheld treasures of her heart attracted towards her? Did he, alone, suspect the splendor of passion which shone beneath the calmness and reserve of the presence she showed to the world?

It was a most bitter, most humiliating thought. With her head drooping wearily towards her breast, and her hands clasped in her lap, with unheeded tears streaming from her eyes, she sought refuge from this pain in that other pain of the imagined love that once seemed so near and lovely—lovelier now, as she saw it through the mist of a gathering despair. Thus she sat, once more the helpless captive of her dreams, while the lamp burned low and the room grew cold.

CHAPTER XII.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

The morning came, late and dark, with a dreary March rain, the commencement of that revolutionary anarchy in the weather, through which the despotism of Winter is over thrown, and the sweet republic of Spring established on the Earth. Even Woodbury, as he looked out on the writhing trees, the dripping roofs, and the fields of soggy, soaked snow, could not suppress a sigh of loneliness and yearning. Bute, whose disappointment, bitter though it was, failed to counteract the lulling warmth of the blankets after his ride home against the wind, and who had therefore slept soundly all night, awoke to a sense of hollowness and wretchedness which he had never experienced before. His duties about the barn attended to, and breakfast over, he returned to his bedroom to make his usual Sunday toilet. Mr. Woodbury had decided not to go to church, and Bute, therefore, had nothing but his own thoughts, or the newspapers, to entertain him through the day. Having washed his neck and breast, put on the clean shirt which Mrs. Babb took care to have ready for him, and combed his yellow locks, he took a good look at himself in the little mirror.

"I a'n't handsome, that's a fact," he thought to himself, "but nuther is she, for that matter. I've got good healthy blood in me, though, and if my face *is* sunburnt, it don't look like taller. I don't see why all the slab-sided, lantern-jawed, holler-breasted fellows should have no trouble o' gittin' wives, and me, of a darned sight better breed, though I do say it, to have sich bad luck! I can't stand it. I've got every thing here that a man could want, but 'ta'n't enough. O Lord! to think her children should have somebody else than me for a father!"

Bute groaned and threw himself on the bed, where he thrust both hands through his carefully combed hair. His strong masculine nature felt itself wronged, and the struggle was none the less severe, because it included no finer spiritual disappointment. He possessed only a true, honest, tender heart, as the guide to his instincts, and these, when baffled, suggested no revenge, such as might occur to a more reckless or more imaginative nature. His life had been blameless, heretofore, from the simple force of habit, and the pure atmosphere in which he lived. To confess the truth, he was not particularly shocked by the grosser experiences of some of his friends, but to adopt them himself involved a change so violent that he knew not where it might carry him. If the thought crossed his mind at all, it was dismissed without a moment's hospitality. He did not see, because he did not seek, any escape from the sore, weary, thirsty sensation which his disappointment left behind. The fibres of his nature, which were accustomed to give out a sharp, ringing, lusty twang to every touch of Life, were now muffled and deadened in tone: that was all.

It might have been some consolation to Bute, if he could have known that his presumed rival was equally unfortunate. In the case of the latter, however, there was less of the pang of blighted hopes than of the spiteful bitterness of wounded vanity. Seth Wattles was accustomed to look upon himself, and not without grounds of self-justification, as an unusual man. The son of a poor laborer, orphaned at an early age, and taken in charge by a tailor of Ptolemy, who brought him up to his own business, he owed his education mostly to a quick ear and a ready tongue. His brain, though shallow, was active, its propelling power being his personal conceit; but he was destitute of imagination, and hence his attempted flights of eloquence were often hopelessly confused and illogical. The pioneer orators of Abolition and Temperance, who visited Ptolemy, found in him a willing convert, and he was quick enough to see and to secure the social consideration which he had gained in the small community of "Reformers"—an advantage which the conservative society of the village denied to him. Indeed, the abuse to which he was occasionally subjected, was in itself flattering; for only men of importance, he thought, are thus persecuted. Among his associates, it was customary to judge men by no other standard than their views on the chosen reforms, and he, of course, stood among the highest. His cant, his presumption, his want of delicacy, were all overlooked, out of regard to an advocacy of "high moral truths," which was considered to be, and doubtless was, sincere.

Let us not, therefore, judge the disappointed tailor too harshly. His weaknesses, indeed, were a part of his mental constitution, and could, under no circumstances, have been wholly cured; but it was his own fault that they had so thoroughly usurped his nature.

Whatever spiritual disturbance he might have experienced, on awaking next morning to the realities of the world, the woman who rejected him was much more deeply and painfully troubled. Years had passed since her heart had known so profound an agitation. She felt that the repose which she had only won after many struggles, had deceived herself. It was a false calm. The smooth mirror, wherein the sunshine and the stars saw themselves by turns, was only smooth so long as the south-wind failed to blow. One warm breath, coming over the hills from some far-off, unknown region, broke into fragments the steady images of her life. With a strange conflict of feeling, in which there was some joy and much humiliation, she said to herself: "I am not yet the mistress of my fate."

She rose late, unrefreshed by her short, broken sleep, and uncheered by the dark, cold, and wet picture of the valley. It was one of those days when only a heart filled to the brim with unmingled happiness can take delight in life—when the simplest daily duties present themselves as weary tasks—when every string we touch is out of tune, and every work attempted is one discord the more. Descending to the sitting-room, she found her mother in the rocking-chair, before a brisk fire, while the little servant-girl was busy, preparing the table for breakfast—a work which Hannah herself usually performed.

"Thee's rather late, Hannah," said the widow. "I thought thee might be tired, and might as well sleep, while Jane set the table. She must learn it some time, thee knows."

"I'm obliged to thee, mother," the daughter replied. "I have not slept well, and have a little headache this morning. It is the weather, I think."

"Now thee mentions it, I see that thee's quite pale. Jane, put two spoonfuls of tea in the pot; or, stay, thee'd better bring it here and let me make it."

Hannah had yielded to the dietetic ideas of her friends, so far as to give up the use of tea and coffee—a step in which the widow was not able to follow her. A few months before, the former would have declined the proposal to break her habit of living, even on the plea of indisposition; she would have resisted the natural craving for a stimulant or a sedative as something morbid; but now she was too listless, too careless of such minor questions, to refuse. The unaccustomed beverage warmed and cheered her, and she rose from the table strengthened to resume her usual manner.

"I thought it would do thee good," said the widow, noting the effect, slight as it was, with the quick eye of a mother. "I'm afraid, Hannah, thee carries thy notions about diet a little too far."

"Perhaps thee's right, mother," was the answer. She had no inclination to commence a new discussion of one of the few subjects on which the two could not agree.

After the house had been put in order for the day, preparations made for the frugal dinner, and the servant-girl despatched to the Cimmerian Church, Hannah took her usual seat by the window, saying: "Shall I read to thee, mother?"

"If thee pleases."

There was no Quaker Meeting nearer than Tiberius, and hence it had been the widow's custom, on "First-Days," to read, or hear her daughter read, from the classics of the sect. To Hannah, also, in spite of her partial emancipation, there was a great charm in the sweet simplicity and sincerity of the early Friends, and she read the writings of Fox, Barclay, Elwood, and William Penn, with a sense of refreshment and peace. To these were added some other works of a similar character, which the more cultivated Quakers have indorsed as being inspired by the true spirit—Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, Madame Guyon, and Pascal. She now took the oft-read "No Cross, No Crown," of William Penn, the tone of which was always consoling to her; but this time its sweet, serious utterances seemed to have lost their effect. She gave the words in her pure, distinct voice, and strove to take them into her mind and make them her own: in vain! something interposed itself between her and the familiar meaning, and made the task mechanical. The widow felt, by a sympathetic presentiment, rather than from any external evidence which she could detect, that her daughter's mind was in some way disturbed; yet that respectful reserve which was habitual in this, as in most Quaker families, prevented her from prying into the nature of the trouble. If it was a serious concern, she thought to herself, Hannah would mention it voluntarily. There are spiritual anxieties and struggles, she knew, which must be solved in solitude. No one, not even a mother, should knock at the door of that chamber where the heart keeps its privacies, but patiently and silently wait until bidden to approach and enter.

Nevertheless, after dinner, when the household order was again restored, and Hannah, looking from the window upon the drenched landscape, unconsciously breathed a long, weary sigh, Friend Thurston felt moved to speak.

"Hannah," she said, gravely and softly, "thee seems to have something on thy mind to-day."

For a minute the daughter made no reply. Turning away from the window, she looked upon her mother's worn, pale face, almost spectral in the cloudy light, and then took her accustomed seat.

"Yes, mother," she answered, in a low voice, "and I ought to tell thee."

"If thee feels so, tell me then. It may lighten thy own burden, without making mine heavier."

"It is scarcely a burden, mother," said Hannah. "I know that I have done what is right, but I fear that I may have unconsciously brought it upon myself, when it might have been avoided." She then repeated the conversation which had taken place between Seth Wattles and herself, omitting only that secret, impassioned dream of her heart, a glimpse of which she had permitted to escape her. She did not dare to betray it a second time, and thus her own sense of humiliation was but half explained.

Friend Thurston waited quietly until the story was finished. "Thee did right, Hannah," she said, after a pause, "and I do not think thee can justly reproach thyself for having given him encouragement. He is a very vain and ignorant man, though well-meaning. It is not right to hold prejudice against any one, but I don't mind telling thee that my feeling towards him comes very near being that. Thee never could be happy, Hannah, with a husband whom thee did not respect: nay, I mean something more—whom thee did not feel was wiser and stronger than thyself."

A transient flush passed over the daughter's face, but she made no reply.

"Thee has a gift, I know," the widow continued, "and thee has learned much. There is a knowledge, though, that comes with experience of life, and though I feel my ignorance in many ways, compared to thy learning, there are some things which I am able to see more clearly than thee. It requires no book-learning to read the heart, and there is less difference in the hearts of women than thee may suppose. We cannot be wholly independent of the men: we need their help and companionship: we acknowledge their power even while we resist it. There are defects in us which we find supplied in them, as we supply theirs where marriage is perfect and holy. But we cannot know this, except through our own experience I have agreed with thee in most of thy views about the rights of our sex, but thee never can be entirely wise on this subject so long as thee remains single. No, Hannah, thee won't think hard of me for saying it, but thee does not yet truly know either woman or man. I have often quietly wished that thee had not set thy heart against marriage. The Lord seems to have intended a mate for every one, so that none of His children should be left alone, and thee should not shut thy eyes against the signs He gives.

"Mother!"

Even while uttering this exclamation, into which she was startled by the unexpected words of her mother, Hannah Thurston felt that she was betraying herself.

"Child! child! thy father's eyes—thee has his very look! I am concerned on thy account, Hannah. Perhaps I have been mistaken in thee, as I was mistaken in him. Oh, if I could have known him in time! I shall not be much longer with thee, my daughter, and if I tell thee how I failed in my duty it may help thee to perform thine, if—if my prayers for thy sake should be fulfilled."

The widow paused, agitated by the recollections which her own words evoked. The tears trickled down her pale cheeks, but she quietly wiped them away. Her countenance thus changed from its usual placid repose, Hannah was shocked to see how weak and wasted it had grown during the winter. The parting, which she did not dare to contemplate, might be nearer than she had anticipated.

"Do not say any thing that might give thee pain," she said.

"Give thyself no concern, child. It will bring me relief. I have often felt moved to tell thee, but there seemed to be no fitting time before now."

"Is it about my father?" Hannah asked.

"Yes, Hannah. I wish he could have lived long enough to leave his face in thy memory, but it was not to be. Thee often reminds me of him, especially when I feel that there is something in thy nature beyond my reach. I was past thy age when we were married, and he was no longer a young man. We had known each other for some years, but nothing passed between us that younger persons would have called love. I was sincerely drawn towards him, and it seemed right that my life should become a part of his. It came to me as a natural change. Richard was not a man of many words; he was considered grave and stern; and when he first looked upon me with only a gentle smile on his face, I knew that his heart had made choice of me. From that time, although it was long before he spoke his mind, I accustomed myself to think of him as my husband. This may seem strange to thee, and, indeed, I never confessed it to him. When we came to live together, and I found, from every circumstance of our daily life, how good and just he was, how strong and upright and rigid in the ways that seemed right to him, I leaned upon him as a helper and looked up to him as a guide. There was in my heart quite as much reverence as love An unkind word never passed between us. When I happened to be wrong in any thing, he knew how to turn my mind so gently and kindly that I was set right without knowing how. *He* was never wrong. Our married life was a season of perfect peace—yes, to me, because my own contentment made me careless, blind.

"I sometimes noticed that his eyes rested on me with a singular expression, and I wondered what was in his mind. There was something unsatisfied in his face, a look that asked for I knew not what, but more than the world contains. Once, when I said: 'Is any thing the matter, Richard?' he turned quickly away and answered sharply. After that, I said nothing, and I finally got accustomed to the look. I recollect when thy brother was born, he seemed like another man though there was no outward change. When he spoke to me his voice was trembly, and sounded strange to my ears; but my own weakness, I thought, might account for that. He would take the babe to the window, before its eyes could bear the light; would pick it up when asleep, and hold it so tightly as to make the poor thing cry; then he would put it down quickly and walk out of the room without saying a word. I noticed all this, as I lay, but it gave me no concern: I knew not but that all men found their first children so strange and curious. To a woman, her first babe seems more like something familiar that is brought back to her, than something entirely new that is added to her life.

"I scarcely know how to make clear to thy mind another change that came over thy father while our little Richard still lived. I never could be entirely certain, indeed, when it commenced, because I fancied these things were passing moods connected with his serious thoughts—he was a man much given to reflection—and did not dream that they concerned myself. Therein, our quiet, ordered life was a misfortune. One day was like another, and we both, I think, took things as they were, without inquiring whether our knowledge of each other's hearts might not be imperfect. Oh, a storm would have been better, Hannah—a storm which would have shown us the wall that had grown up between us, by shaking it down! But thee will see that from the end—thee will see it, without my telling thee. Richard seemed graver and sterner, I thought, but he was much occupied with business matters at that time. After our child was taken from us, I began to see that he was growing thinner and paler, and often felt very uneasy about him. His manner towards me made me shy and a little afraid, though I could pick out no word or act that was not kind and tender. When I ventured to ask him what was the matter, he only answered: 'Nothing that can be helped.' I knew after that, that all was not right, but my eyes were not opened to the truth."

Here Friend Thurston paused, as if to summon strength to continue her narrative. Her withered hands were trembling, and she clasped them together in her lap with a nervous energy which did not escape her daughter's eye. The latter had listened with breathless attention, waiting with mingled eagerness and dread for the dénouement, which she felt must be more or less tragic. Although her mother's agitation touched her own heart with sympathetic pain, she knew that the story had now gone too far to be left unfinished. She rose, brought a glass of water, and silently placed it on the little table beside her mother's chair. When she had resumed her seat, the latter continued:

"Within a year after our boy's death, thee was born. It was a great consolation to me then, although it has been a much greater one since. I hoped, too, that it would have made Richard a little more cheerful, but he was, if any thing, quieter than ever. I sometimes thought him indifferent both to me and the babe. I longed, in my weakness and my comfort, to lay my head upon his breast and rest a while there. It seemed a womanly fancy of mine, but oh, Hannah, if I had had the courage to say that much! Once he picked thee up, stood at the window for a long while, with thee in his arms, then gave thee back to me and went out of the room without saying a word. The bosom of thy little frock was damp, and I know now that he must have cried over thee.

"I had not recovered my full strength when I saw that he was really ailing. I began to be anxious and uneasy, though I scarcely knew why, for he still went about his business as usual. But one morning—it was the nineteenth of the Fifth month, I remember, and on Seventh-day—he started to go to the village, and came back to the house in half an hour, looking fearfully changed. His voice, though, was as steady as ever. 'I believe I am not well, Gulielma,' he said to me; 'perhaps I'd better lie down a while. Don't trouble thyself—

it will soon be over.' I made him undress and go to bed, for my anxiety gave me strength. Then I sent for the doctor, without telling Richard what I had done. It was evening when the doctor came; thee was rather fretful that day, and I had taken thee into another room, for fear Richard might be disturbed. I only noticed that the doctor stayed a long time, but they were old friends, I thought, and might like to talk. By the time I had put thee to sleep, he had left and Richard was alone. I went directly to him. 'What is thee to take?' I asked. 'Nothing,' he said, so quietly that I ought to have been relieved, but—I do not know how it was—I turned to him trembling like a leaf, and cried out: 'Richard, thee has not told me all!'

"'Yes, all, Gulielma,' said he, 'nothing will help: I must leave thee.' I stared at him a while, trying to stand still, while every thing in the room went spinning around me, until I saw nothing more. I was lying beside him on the bed when I came to myself. My hair was wet: he had picked me up, poured water on his handkerchief and bathed my face. When I opened my eyes, he was leaning over me, looking into my eyes with a look I cannot describe. He breathed hard and painfully, and his voice was husky. 'I have frightened thee, Gulielma,' said he; 'but—but can thee not resign thyself to lose me?' His look seemed to draw my very soul from me; I cried, with a loud and bitter cry, 'Richard, Richard, take me with thee!' and threw my arms around his neck. Oh, my child, how can I tell thee the rest? He put away my arms, he held me back, and gasped, as he looked at me with burning eyes: 'Take care what thee says, Gulielma; I am dying, and thee dare not deceive me; does thee love me as I love thee—more than life, more, the Lord pardon me, more than heaven?' For the first time, I knew that I did. If it was a sin, it has been expiated. I cannot remember what was said, after that. It was all clear between us, and he would allow no blame to rest on me; but he could not speak, except at intervals. He held my hand all night, pressing it faintly in his sleep. The next day he died.

"He had loved me thus all the time, Hannah, and it was the pride and the strength of his love which deceived me. He would not ask for a caress or a tender word, because he thought that a woman who loved would freely give it—nor would he offer one, so long as he suspected that the sacred expression of his heart might be only passively received. Ah, it was a sad doubt of me on his part, a sad blindness towards him on mine. When he began to suffer from disease of the heart, and knew that his life was measured, his self-torture increased. He purposely tried to subdue the mild, tempered affection which he supposed I felt for him, in order that his death might be a lighter grief to me. And I lived with him, day after day, never guessing that his stern, set manner was not his real self! I do not dare to think on the cross he must have borne: my own seems heavy, and my spirit sometimes grows weary under it, and is moved to complain. Then I remember that by bearing it cheerfully I am brought nearer to him, and the burden becomes light."

Hannah Thurston listened to the last words with her face buried in her hands, and her heart full of pity and self-reproach. What was the pang of her own fruitless dream, her baffled ideal, beside the sharp, inconsolable sorrow which consumed her mother's years? What availed her studies, her intellectual triumphs, her fancied comprehension of life, in comparison with that knowledge of the heart of man thus fearfully won? Humble, as when, a child, she listened to her mother's words as the accents of infallible wisdom, she now bowed down before the sanctity of that mother's experience.

The widow leaned back in her chair, with closed eyes, but with a happy serenity on her weary face. Hannah took her hand, and whispered, with a broken voice: "Thank thee, mother!" The weak old arms drew her gently down, and the pale lips kissed her own.

"Bless thee, my daughter. Now take thy book and let me rest a while."

Hannah took the book, but not to read.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH SPRING OPENS.

The rainy Sunday was the precursor of a thaw, which lasted for a fortnight, and stripped the landscapes of Ptolemy of every particle of snow, except such as found a lodgment in fence-corners, behind walls, or in shaded ravines. The wands of the willow clumps along the streams brightened to a vivid yellow, and the myriad twigs of low-lying thickets blushed purple with returning sap. Frozen nights and muddy days enough were yet in store; but with every week the sun gained confidence in his own alchemy, and the edge of the north-wind was blunted. Very slowly, indeed, a green shimmer crept up through the brown, dead grass; the fir-woods breathed a resinous breath of awaking; pale green eyes peeped from the buds of the garden-lilacs, and, finally, like a tender child, ignorant of danger, the crocus came forth full blown and shamed the cowardly hesitation of the great oaks and elms.

During this season, Woodbury's intercourse with the society of the village was mostly suspended. After the termination of the Great Sewing-Union, families fell back into their narrower circles, and rested for a time both from their social and their charitable labors. Even the itinerant prophets and philanthropists ceased their visits, leaving Ptolemy in its normal darkness. Only Mr. Dyce, it was whispered, had again made his appearance at the Merryfields', where his spiritual sessions were attended by a select circle of the initiated. Neither Woodbury nor Mr. Waldo had been again invited to attend.

All minor gossip, however, was lost sight of, in the interest occasioned by an event which occurred about this time. Miss Eliza Clancy, to the surprise of everybody, had at last received "a call." During a visit to Syracuse, she had made the acquaintance of the Rev. Jehiel Preeks, a widower who, having been driven away from Tristan d'Acunha after losing his wife there, had been commissioned by the A. B. C. F. M. to a new field of labor in the Telugu country. His station was to be Cuddapah, only a day's journey from Jutnapore. Miss Eliza displayed such an intimate knowledge of the latter mission, derived from Mrs. Boerum's letters, and such a vital concern in the spiritual welfare of the Telugus, that the Rev. Jehiel, at their third interview, asked her to share his labors. There were persons in Ptolemy so malicious as to declare that the proposal really came from Miss Eliza herself; but this is not for a moment to be believed. The missionary made a better choice than such persons were willing to admit. Although verging on forty, and ominously thin, Miss Clancy was sincere, active, and patient, and thought more of the heathen souls whom she might enlighten than of the honors of her new position. When she returned to Ptolemy as Mrs. Preeks, with her passage engaged to Madras in the very vessel which was to carry out the contributions of the Mission Fund, she was too thoroughly happy to be disturbed by the village gossip. The other ladies of the Fund—foremost among them her sister spinsters, Miss Ann Parrott and Miss Sophia Stevenson—immediately resumed work, in order to provide her with a generous outfit for the voyage. Early in April the parting took place, with mutual tears, and thenceforth the pious patronage of Ptolemy was transferred from Jutnapore and Mrs Boerum to Cuddapah and Mrs. Preeks.

The Hon. Zeno Harder occupied his seat in the Legislature, through the winter. Several times during the session Woodbury received the compliment of documents, one of them entitled: "Remarks of the Hon. Zeno Harder, of Atauga County, on the Mohawk and Adirondac Railroad Bill." Occasionally, also, the *Albany Cerberus* was sent to him with one of the leading editorials marked, by way of directing his attention to it. The Hon. Zeno looked upon Woodbury, who had been so long absent from the country as to have lost "the run" of politics, as fair prey. By securing him before the hostile party had a chance, he would gain two votes (one of them Bute's), and possibly more, besides a President of character and substance, for mass-meetings. Woodbury, however, was too shrewd, and the Member too clumsy in his diplomacy, for the success of this plan. The former, although foreseeing that he would be inevitably drawn to take sides, sooner or later, determined to preserve his independence as long as possible.

The churches in the village undertook their periodical "revivals," which absorbed the interest of the community while they lasted. It was not the usual season in Ptolemy for such agitations of the religious atmosphere, but the Methodist clergyman, a very zealous and impassioned speaker, having initiated the movement with great success, the other sects became alarmed lest he should sweep all the repentant sinners of the place into his own fold. As soon as they could obtain help from Tiberius, the Baptists followed, and the Rev. Lemuel Styles was constrained to do likewise. For a few days, the latter regained the ground he had lost, and seemed about to distance his competitors. Luckily for him, the Rev. Jehiel Preeks accompanied his wife on her farewell visit, and was immediately impressed into the service. His account of his sufferings at Tristan d'Acunha, embracing a description of the sickness and triumphant death of his first wife, melted the auditors to tears, and the exhortation which followed was like seed planted in well-ploughed ground. The material for conversion, drawn upon from so many different quarters, was soon exhausted, but the rival churches stoutly held out, until convinced that neither had any further advantage to gain over the other.

Mr. Waldo, of course, was not exempt from the general necessity, although conscious of the disadvantage under which he labored in representing so unimportant a sect. Its founder had been a man of marked character, whose strong, peculiar intellect, combined with his earnestness of heart, wrought powerfully upon those with whom he came in personal contact, but his views were not broad enough to meet the wants of a large class. After his death, many of his disciples, released from the influence of his personality, saw how slight a difference separated them from their brethren, and yearned to be included in a more extensive fold. Among these was Mr. Waldo, whose native good sense taught him that minor differences in interpretation and observances do not justify Christians in dividing their strength by a multitude of separate organizations. His congregation, however, was very slowly brought to view the matter in the same light, and he was too sincerely attached to its members to give up his charge of them while any prospect of success remained.

On this occasion, nevertheless—thanks to the zeal of some of his flock, rather than his own power of wielding the thunderbolts of Terror—Mr. Waldo gained three or four solitary fish out of the threescore who were hauled up from the deeps by the various nets. The Cimmerian rite of baptism had this advantage, that it was not performed in public, and its solemnity was not therefore disturbed by the presence of a crowd of curious spectators, such as are especially wont to be on hand when the water is cold. Mr. Waldo even disregarded the peculiar form of initiation which characterized his sect, affirming that it added no sanctity to the rite.

During the period of the revivals, there was a temporary suspension of the social life of Ptolemy. Even kindred families rarely assembled at tea except to discuss the absorbing topic and compare the results obtained by the various churches There was a great demand for Baxter's "Saint's Rest, Alleine's "Alarm," Young's "Night Thoughts," and Pollok's Course of Time," at the little bookstore. Two feathers disappeared from the Sunday bonnet of Mrs. Hamilton Bue, and the Misses Smith exchanged their red ribbons for slate-colored. Still, it was not the habit of the little place to be sombre; its gayety was never excessive, and hence its serious moods never assumed a penitential character, and soon wore off. In this respect it presented a strong contrast to Mulligansville and Anacreon, both of which communities retained a severe and mournful expression for a long time after their revivals had closed.

By this time the meadows were covered with young grass, the willows hung in folds of misty color, and a double row of daffodils bloomed in every garden. The spring ploughing and all the other various forms of farm labor commenced in the valleys, and on the warm, frostless hillsides. The roads were again dry and hard; the little steamer resumed its trips on the lake; and a new life not only stirred within the twin valleys, but poured into them from without.

As the uniformity of winter life at Lakeside gave way to the changes exacted by the season, Woodbury became dimly sensible that Mrs. Fortitude Babb, with all her virtues as a housekeeper, stood too prominently in the foreground of his home. Her raw, angular nature came so near him, day by day, as to be felt as a disturbing element. She looked upon her dominion as reassured to her, and serenely continued the exercise of her old privileges. While entertaining the profoundest respect, not unmixed with a moderate degree of affection, for her master, she resisted any attempt to interfere with the regular course of household procedure which she had long since established. He was still too ignorant, indeed, to dispute her authority with any success, in-doors; but when the gardening weather arrived, and she transferred her rule to the open air, his patience was sometimes severely tried.

He knew, from his boyish days, every square foot in the sunny plot of ground—the broad alley down the centre, with flower-beds on either side, producing pinks, sweet-williams, larkspurs, marigolds, and prince's-feathers, in their succession, the clumps of roses at regular intervals; the low trellis, to be overrun with nasturtiums and sweet-peas; the broad vegetable beds, divided by rows of currant and gooseberry bushes, and the crooked old quince-trees against the northern wall

There were they all, apparently unchanged; but, reverently as he looked upon them for the sake of the Past, he felt that if Lakeside was to be truly *his* home, its features must, to some extent, be moulded by his own taste. The old arrangements could not be retained, simply for the sake of the old associations; the place must breathe an atmosphere of life, not of death. In spite of the admirable situation of the house, its surroundings had been much neglected, and the trained eye of its master daily detected new capacities for beauty

Nothing of all this, however, suggested itself to the ossified brain of the housekeeper. In her eyes, Woodbury was but a tenant of Mrs. Dennison, and that lady would cry down from Paradise to forbid the position of her favorite plants and her trees from being changed. Hence, Mrs. Babb was almost petrified with astonishment, one warm morning, on Woodbury saying to her, as they stood in the garden:

"I shall extend the garden, so as to take in another half-acre. The ground must be first prepared, so it can scarcely be done this spring; but, at least, this first row of currants can be taken up and set beyond the second. The vegetables will then be partly hidden from sight, and these beds can be planted with flowers."

"O, the land!" exclaimed the housekeeper. "Did a body ever hear o' sich a thing! Where'll you get your currans for pies, I'd like to know? They won't bear a mite if you take 'em up now. Besides, where am I to plant peas and early beans, if you put flowers here?"

"There," said Woodbury, pointing to the other end of the garden.

"Why, I *had* 'em there last summer. Here, where these cabbages was, is the right place. To my thinkin', there's flowers enough, as it is. Not that I'd take any of 'em up: *she* was always fond of 'em, and she was satisfied with my fixin' of the garden. But there's them that thinks they knows better. 'T'an't any too big as it was, and if you take off all this here ground, we'll run out o' vegetables afore the summer's over. Then, I'll git the blame, all over the neighbor hood. People knows *I* 'tend to it."

"Mrs. Babb," said Woodbury, a little sternly, "I shall take care that your reputation does not suffer. It is my intention to engage an experienced gardener, who will take all this work off your hands, for the future. But the improvements I intend to make cannot be carried out immediately, and I must ask you to superintend the planting, this spring. You shall have sufficient ground for all the vegetables we need, and it can make little difference to you where they grow."

The housekeeper did not venture upon any further remonstrance, but her heart was filled with gall and bitterness. She could not deny to herself Woodbury's right to do what he pleased with his own, but such innovations struck her as being almost criminal. They opened the door to endless confusions, which it distressed her to contemplate, and the end whereof she could not foresee.

That evening, as Bute was shelling his seed-corn in the kitchen, he noticed that her thin lips were a little more tightly compressed than usual, while she plied her knitting-needles with an energy that betrayed a serious disturbance of mind. Bute gave himself no concern, however, well knowing that, whatever it was, he should hear it in good time.

Mrs. Babb sighed in her usual wheezy manner, drawing up and letting down her shoulders at the same time, and knit a few minutes longer, with her eyes fixed on the kitchen clock. At last she said: "Ah, yes, it's well she's gone."

Bute looked up, but as she was still inspecting the clock, he said nothing.

"I was afeard things couldn't stay as they was," she again remarked.

Bute picked up a fresh ear, and began grinding the butt-end with a cob, to loosen the grains.

"It's hard to see sich things a-comin' on, in a body's old days," groaned the housekeeper. This time her gaze was removed from the clock, and fell grimly upon her adopted son

"What's the matter, Mother Forty?" he asked.

"Matter, Bute? I should think you'd ha' seen it, if you was in the habit o' seein' furder than your nose. Things i goin' to wrack, fast enough. He will have his way, no matte how onreasonable it is."

"Well, why shouldn't he? But as for bein' unreasonable, I don't see it. He's gettin' the hang of farmin' matters amazin'ly, and is goin' to let me do what I've been wantin' to, these five year. Wait till we get the gewano, and phosphate, and drainin' and deep ploughin', and you won't see such another farm in the hull county."

"Yes, and the garden all tore to pieces," rejoined the housekeeper; "if she could come out of her grave next year, she won't know it ag'in. And me, that's tended to it this ever so long, to have a strange man, that nobody knows, stuck over my head!"

Bute bent his face over the ear of corn, to conceal a malicious smile. He knew that all the housekeeper wanted, was to "speak out her mind"—after which she would resign herself to the inevitable. He accordingly made no further reply, and commenced whistling, very softly, "Barbara Allen," a tune which of late seemed to harmonize with his mood.

Woodbury, on his part, was conscious of a restless stirring of the blood, for which his contact with the housekeeper was in the least degree responsible. Her figure, nevertheless, formed a hard, sharp, rocky background, against which was projected, in double sweetness from the contrast, the soft outlines of a younger form, glimmering indistinctly through a mist which concealed the face.

He did not deceive himself. He saw that his apparent independence was a belligerent condition, in which he could never find adequate peace; but not for this reason—not from any cool calculations of prudence—did he long to see the household of Lakeside governed by its legitimate mistress. If the long years of summer had made his heart apathetic or indifferent, it had not deadened his nature to the subtle magic of spring. A more delicate languor than that of the tropics crept over him in the balmy mornings; all sounds and odors of the season fostered it, and new images began to obtrude upon his sleeping as well as his waking dreams. He knew the symptoms, and rejoiced over the reappearance of the old disease. It was not now the fever of youth, ignorantly given up to its own illusions. He could count the accelerated pulsations, hold the visions steadily fast as they arose in his brain, and analyze while he enjoyed them. Love and Experience must now go hand in hand, and if an object presented itself, the latter must approve while the former embraced.

Reviewing, in his mind, the women whom he knew, there was not one, he confessed to himself, whom he would ever, probably, be able to love. His acquaintances in New York were bright, lively girls—the associates of his nieces—in some of whom, no doubt, there was a firm basis of noble feminine character. It could not be otherwise; yet the woman who must share his seclusion, finding in him, principally, her society, in his home her recreation, in his happiness her own, could scarcely be found in that circle. Coming back to Ptolemy, his survey was equally discouraging. He could never overlook a lack of intellectual culture in his wife. Who possessed that, unless, indeed, Hannah Thurston? She, he admitted, had both exquisite taste and a degree of culture remarkable for the opportunities she enjoyed; but a union with her would be a perpetual torment. She, with her morbid notions of right, seeing an unpardonable sin in every innocent personal habit! What little she had observed of his external life had evidently inspired her with a strong dislike of him; how could she bear to know him as he was—to look over the pages of his past life? *His* wife, he felt, must be allowed no illusions. If she could not find enough of truth and manliness in his heart to counterbalance past errors and present defects, she should find no admittance there.

In spite of these unavailing reviews, one important result was attained. He would no longer, as heretofore, shrink from the approach of love. From whatever quarter the guest might come, the door should be found open, and the word "Welcome," woven of the evergreen leaves of immortal longing, should greet the arrival.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONTAINING CONVERSATIONS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEY SEEM TO BE.

One balmy afternoon, when the dandelions were beginning to show their golden disks among the grass, Woodbury started on foot for Ptolemy, intending to take tea with the Waldos, whom he had not seen for a fortnight. Sauntering along the road, at the foot of the eastern hill, with the dark, pine-fringed rocks and the sparkling cascade on one hand, and the fresh, breathing meadows on the other, he found himself, at last, at the end of the lane leading to the Merryfield farm-house, and paused, attracted by the roseate blush of a Judas-tree in the garden. The comfortable building, with its barn and outhouses, seemed to bask in happy warmth and peace, half-hidden in a nest of fruit-trees just bursting into bloom. The fences around them had been newly whitewashed, and gleamed like snow against the leafing shrubbery. An invigorating smell of earth came from the freshly-ploughed field to the south. Every feature of the scene spoke of order, competence, and pastoral contentment and repose.

In such a mood, he forgot the occasional tedium of the farmer's talk, and the weak pretensions of his wife, and only remembered that he had not seen them for some time. Turning into the lane, he walked up to the house, where he was cordially received by Mr. Merryfield. "Come in," said the latter: "Sarah's looking over seeds, or something of the kind, with Miss Thurston, but she'll be down presently. You recollect Mr. Dyce?" The last words were spoken as they entered the room, where the medium, with his sallow, unwholesome face, sat at an open window, absorbed in the perusal of a thick pamphlet. He rose and saluted Woodbury, though by no means with cordiality.

"How delightful a home you have here, Mr. Merryfield," Woodbury said. "You need not wish to change places with any one. An independent American farmer, with his affairs in such complete order that the work almost goes on of itself, from year to year, seems to me the most fortunate of men."

"Well—yes—I ought to be satisfied," answered the host: "I sometimes wish for a wider spere, but I suppose it's best as it is."

"Oh, be sure of that!" exclaimed Woodbury: "neither is your sphere a narrow one, if it is rightly filled."

"Nothing is best as it is," growled Mr. Dyce, from the window, at the same time; "private property, family, isolated labor, are all wrong."

Woodbury turned to the speaker, with a sudden doubt of his sanity, but Mr. Merryfield was not in the least surprised.

"You know, Mr. Dyce," said he, "that I can't go that far. The human race may come to that in the course of time, as it were, but I'm too old to begin."

"Nobody is too old for the Truth," rejoined the medium, so insolently that Woodbury felt an itching desire to slap him in the face,—"especially, when it's already demonstrated. Here's the whole thing," he continued, giving the pamphlet a whack on the window-sill: "read it, and you'll find how much better off we are without those selfish institutions, marriage and the right to property."

"What is it?" asked Woodbury.

"It's the annual report of the Perfectionists. They have a community near Aqueanda, where their principles are put in practice. Every thing is in common: labor is so divided that no one feels the burden, yet all live comfortably. The children are brought up all together, and so the drudgery of a family is avoided. Besides, love is not slavery, but freedom, and the affections are true because they do not wear legal chains."

"Good God! Is this true?" exclaimed Woodbury, turning tc Mr. Merryfield.

"I believe it is," he answered. "I've read part of the report, and there are queer things in it. Even if the doctrine is right, I don't think mankind is fit for it yet. I shouldn't like even, to let everybody read that book: though, to be sure, we might be much more outspoken than we are."

"Read it," said Mr. Dyce, thrusting the pamphlet into Woodbury's hand. "It's unanswerable. If you are not blinded by the lies and hypocrisies of Society, you will see what the true life of Man should be. Society is the Fall, sir, and we can restore the original paradise of Adam whenever we choose to free ourselves from its tyranny."

"No doubt, provided we are naturally sinless, like Adam,' Woodbury could not help saying, as he took the pamphlet. He had no scruples in receiving and reading it, for he was not one of those delicate, effeminate minds, who are afraid to look on error lest they may be infected. His principles were so well-based that every shock only settled them the more firmly. He had never preferred ignorance to unpleasant knowledge, and all of the latter which he had gained had not touched the sound manliness of his nature.

"We are!" cried Mr. Dyce, in answer to his remark. "The doctrine of original sin is the basis of all the wrongs of society. It is false. Human nature is pure in all its instincts, and we distort it by our selfish laws. Our life is artificial and unnatural. If we had no rights of property we should have no theft: if we had no law of marriage we should have no licentiousness: if we had no Governments, we should have no war."

Mr. Merryfield did not seem able to answer these declarations, absurd as they were, and Woodbury kept silent, from self-respect. The former, however, was stronger in his instincts than in his powers of argument, and shrank, with a sense of painful repugnance, from a theory which he was unable to combat. Mr. Dyce's prolonged visit was beginning to be disagreeable to him. His ambition to be considered a prominent reformer was his weak side, and his freely-offered hospitality to the various apostles had given him a consideration which misled him. His kindness had thus frequently been imposed upon, but the secret fear of losing his place had prevented him, hitherto, from defending himself.

Mr. Dyce, on the other hand, was one of those men who are not easily shaken off. He led a desultory life, here and there, through New York and the New England States, presiding at spiritual sessions in the houses of the believers, among whom he had acquired a certain amount of reputation as a medium. Sometimes his performances were held in public (admittance ten cents), in the smaller towns, and he earned enough in this way to pay his necessary expenses. When he discovered a believing family, in good circumstances, especially where the table was well supplied, he would pitch his tent, for days, or weeks, as circumstances favored. Such an oasis in the desert of existence he had found at Mr. Merryfield's, and the discomfort of the meek host at his prolonged stay, which would have been sufficiently palpable to a man of the least delicacy of feeling, was either unnoticed by him, or contemptuously ignored.

Woodbury read the man at a glance, and received, also, a faint suspicion of Mr. Merryfield's impatience at his stay; but he, himself, had little patience with the latter's absurdities, and was quite content that he should endure the punishment he had invoked.

Putting the pamphlet in his pocket, and turning to Mr. Dyce, he said: "I shall read this, if only to find out the point at which Progress becomes Reaction—where Moral Reform shakes hands with Depravity."

The medium's sallow face grew livid, at the firm coolness with which these words were spoken. He half-started from his seat, but sank back again, and turning his head to the window, gave a contemptuous snort from his thin nostrils.

"There is mischief in that man," thought Woodbury.

Mr. Merryfield, in spite of his trepidation—for he was a thorough physical coward, and the moral courage on which he plumed himself was a sham article, principally composed of vanity—nevertheless felt a sense of relief from Woodbury's composed, indifferent air. Here, at least, was one man who could meet the vampire unconcernedly, and drive, if need be, a stake through his gorged carcass. For once, he regretted that he did not possess a similar quality. It was almost resistance, he was aware, and the man capable of it might probably be guilty of the crime (as he considered it) of using physical force; but he dimly recognized it in a refreshing element of strength. He did not feel quite so helpless as usual in Woodbury's presence, after that.

Still, he dreaded a continuance of the conversation. "Will you come, as it were"—said he; "that is, would you like"——

Woodbury, who had turned his back upon Mr. Dyce, after speaking, suddenly interrupted him with: "How do you do, Mrs. Merryfield?"

The mistress of the house, passing through the hall, had paused at the open door. Behind her came Hannah Thurston, in her bonnet, with a satchel on her arm.

After the greetings were over, Mrs. Merryfield said: "We were going into the garden."

"Pray, allow me to accompany you," said Woodbury.

"Oh, yes, if you care about flowers and things."

The garden was laid out on the usual plan: a central alley, bordered with flower-beds, vegetables beyond, and currants planted along the fence. It lay open to the sun, sheltered by a spur of the eastern ridge, and by the orchard to the left of the house. In one corner stood a Judas-tree, every spray thickly hung with the vivid rose-colored blossoms. The flowers were farther advanced than at Lakeside, for the situation was much lower and warmer, and there had been no late frosts. The hyacinths reared their blue and pink pagodas, filling the walk with their opulent breath; the thick green buds of the tulips began to show points of crimson, and the cushiony masses of mountain-pink fell over the boarded edges of the beds.

Mrs. Merryfield had but small knowledge of floriculture. Her beds were well kept, however, but from habit, rather than taste. "My pineys won't do well, this year, I don't think," said she: "this joon-dispray rose is too near them. Here's plenty of larkspurs and coreopsisses coming up, Hannah; don't you want some?"

"Thank you, my garden is wild with them," Miss Thurston answered, "but I will take a few plants of the flame-colored marigold, if you have them to spare."

"Oh, that's trash; take them all, if you like."

"Miss Thurston," said Woodbury, suddenly, "would you like to have some bulbs of gladeolus and tiger-lily? I have just received a quantity from Rochester."

"Very much indeed: you are very kind," she said. "How magnificent they are, in color!" The next moment, she was vexed at herself for having accepted the offer, and said no more.

Mrs. Merryfield, having found the marigolds, took up a number and placed them in a basket, adding various other plants of which she had a superfluity. As they left the garden, Woodbury quietly took the basket, saying: "I am walking to Ptolemy also, Miss Thurston."

It was impossible to decline his company, though the undefinable sense of unrest with which his presence always affected her, made the prospect of the walk far from agreeable. Side by side they passed down the lane, and had nearly gained the highway, when Woodbury broke the silence by saying:

"What do you think of Mr. Dyce?"

Hannah Thurston was a little startled by the unexpected question. "I have scarcely formed an opinion," she answered: "it may not be just to decide from impressions only. If I did so, the decision would not be favorable to him."

"You are right!" he exclaimed, with energy. "Do not speak to him again! I beg pardon," he added, apologetically

"I did not mean to be dictatorial; but the man is thoroughly false and bad."

"Do you know any thing of him?" she asked.

"Only what I have myself observed. I have learned to trust my instincts, because I find that what we call instinct is only a rapid and subtle faculty of observation. A man can never completely disguise himself, and we therefore see him most truly at the first glance, before his powers of deception can be exercised upon us."

"It may be true," she said, as if speaking to herself, "but one's prejudices are so arbitrary. How can we know that we are right, in yielding to them?"

For a moment, a sharp retort hovered on Woodbury's tongue. How can we know, he might have said, that we are right in accepting views, the extreme character of which is self-evident? How can we, occupying an exceptional place, dare to pronounce rigid, unmitigated judgment on all the rest of mankind? But the balmy spring day toned him to gentleness. The old enchantment of female presence stole over him, as when it surrounded each fair face with a nimbus, to the narcotized vision of youth. One glance at his companion swept away the harsh words. A tender gleam of color flushed her cheeks, and the lines of her perfect lips were touched with a pensive softness. Her eyes, fixed at the moment on the hill beyond the farther valley, were almost as soft as a violet in hue He had never before seen her in the strong test of sunshine, and remarked that for a face like hers it was no disenchantment. She might be narrow and bigoted, he felt, but she was nevertheless true, earnest, and pure.

"We are *not* required to exhibit our prejudices," he said "In Society, disagreeable persons are still individuals, and have certain claims upon us. But, after all the latitude we are required to grant, a basis of character must be exacted. Do you think a man consciously false and depraved should be tolerated on account of a coincidence in opinions?"

"Certainly not," she replied.

Woodbury then related the incident of the piano. He began to feel a friendly pity for the girl walking beside him. Her intense earnestness, he saw, and her ignorance of the true nature of men, were likely to betray her, as in the present case, into associations, the thought of which made him shudder. He would at least save her from this, and therefore told the story, with an uncomfortable sense, all the while, of the pamphlet in his pocket.

Hannah Thurston was unfeignedly shocked at the deception of Mr. Dyce. "I am glad you have told me this," said she, "for I wanted a justification for avoiding him. Have you mentioned it to the Merryfields?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"In the first place, you know that they are too infatuated with the spiritual delusion to believe it. He would have an explanation ready, as he had that night. Moreover, it would cost Bute, who gave me the details in confidence, the loss of two friends. For his sake let it still be confidential."

She met his deep brown eyes, and bowed in reply. He plucked the stalk of a dandelion, as they went along, pinched off the flower, split the lower end, and putting it into his mouth, blew a tiny note, as from a fairy trumpet. His manner was so serious that Hannah Thurston looked away lest he should see her smile.

"You are laughing, I know," said he, taking the stalk from his mouth, "and no wonder. I suddenly recollected having blown these horns, as a boy. It is enough to make one boyish, to see spring again, for the first time in fifteen years. I wonder if the willow switches are too dry. Henry Denison and I used to make very tolerable flutes of them, but we never could get more than four or five notes."

"Then you value your early associations?" she asked.

"Beyond all others of my life, I think. Is it not pleasant, to look back to a period when every thing was good, when all men and women were infinitely wise and benevolent, when life took care of itself and the future was whatever you chose to make it? Now, when I know the world—know it, Miss Thurston"—and his voice was grave and sad—"to be far worse than you, or any other pure woman suspects, and still keep my faith in the Good that shall one day be triumphant, I can smile at my young ignorance, but there is still a glory around it. Do you know Wordsworth's Ode?"

"Yes—'the light that never was on sea or land.'"

"Never—until after it has gone by. We look back and see it. Why, do you know that I looked on Mrs. Merryfield as a Greek must have looked on the Delphian Pythoness?"

Hannah Thurston laughed, and then suddenly checked herself. She could not see one of her co-workers in the Great Cause ridiculed, even by intimation. The chord he had touched ceased to vibrate. The ease with which he recovered from a deeper tone and established conversation again in mental shallows, annoyed her all the more, that it gratified some latent instinct of her own mind. She distrusted the influence which, in spite of herself, Woodbury exercised upon her.

"I see your eyes wander off to the hills," he said, after an interval of silence. "They are very lovely to-day. In this spring haze the West Ridge appears to be as high as the Jura. How it melts into the air, far up the valley! The effect of mountains, I think, depends more on atmosphere than on their actual height. You could imagine this valley to be one of the lower entrances to the Alps. By the way, Miss Thurston, this must have given you a suggestion of them. How did you manage to get such a correct picture in your mind?"

She turned her surprised face full towards him. The dreamy expression which softened its outline, and hovered in the luminous depth of her eyes, did not escape him.

"Oh, I know it," he added, laughing. "What was the song you sang at Mr. Bue's? Something about an Alpine hunter: it made me think I was standing on the Schei deck, watching the avalanches tumbling down from the Jungfrau."

"You have been in Switzerland, Mr. Woodbury!" she exclaimed, with animation.

"Yes, on my way from England to India."

He described to her his Swiss tour, inspired to prolong the narrative by the eager interest she exhibited. The landscapes of the higher Alps stood clear in his memory, and he had the faculty of translating them distinctly into words. Commencing with the valley of the Reuss, he took her with him over the passes of the Furca and the Grimsel, and had only reached the falls of the Aar, when the gate of the Widow Thurston's cottage shut down upon the Alpine trail.

"We will finish the trip another time," said Woodbury, as he opened the gate for her.

"How much I thank you! I seem to have been in Switzerland, myself. I think I shall be able to sing the song better, from knowing its scenery."

She offered him her hand, which he pressed cordially. "I should like to call upon your mother again," he said.

"She will be very glad to see you."

As he walked down the street towards the Cimmerian parsonage, his thoughts ran somewhat in this wise: "How much natural poetry and enthusiasm that girl has in her nature! It is refreshing to describe any thing to her, she is so absorbed in receiving it. What a splendid creature she might have become, under other circumstances! But here she is hopelessly warped and distorted. Nature intended her for a woman and a wife, and the *rôle* of a man and an apostle is a monstrous perversion. I do not know whether she most attracts me through what she might have been, or repels me through what she is. She suggests the woman I am seeking, only to show me how vain the search must be. I am afraid I shall have to give it up."

Pursuing these reflections, he was about passing the parsonage without recognizing it, when a cheery voice rang out to him from the open door:

"Have you lost the way, Mr. Woodbury?"

"'Not lost, but gone before,'" said he, as he turned back to the gate.

"What profanity!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo, though she laughed at the same time. "Come in: our serious season is over. I suppose I ought to keep a melancholy face, for two weeks longer, to encourage the new converts, but what is one to do, when one's nature is dead against it?"

"Ah, Mrs. Waldo," replied Woodbury, "if you suffered under your faith, instead of rejoicing in it, I should doubt your Christianity. I look upon myself as one of your converts."

"I am afraid you are given to backsliding."

"Only for the pleasure of being reconverted," said he; "but come—be my mother-confessoress. I am in great doubt and perplexity."

"And you come to a woman for help? Delightful!"

"Even so. Do you remember what you said to me, when I picked you up out of the wreck, last winter? But I see you do not. Mrs. Fortitude Babb is a tyrant."

Mrs. Waldo was not deceived by this mock lamentation. He would not first have felt the tyranny now, she knew, unless a stronger feeling made it irksome.

"Ah ha! you have found it out," she said. "Well—you know the remedy."

"Yes, I know it; but what I do not know is—the woman who should take her place."

"Don't you?" said Mrs. Waldo, with a sigh, "then, of course, I do not."

"I walked from Merryfield's, this afternoon, with Hannah Thurston," he presently remarked.

"Well?" she asked eagerly.

"What a perversion of a fine woman! I lose my temper when I think of it. I came very near being rude to her."

"*You* rude?" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo, "then she must have provoked you beyond endurance."

"Not by any thing she said, but simply by what she is."

"What, pray?"

"A 'strong-minded woman.' Heaven keep me from all such! I have will enough for two, and my household shall never have more than one head."

"That's sound doctrine," said Mr. Waldo, hearing the last words as he entered the room.

CHAPTER XV.

WHICH COMES NEAR BEING TRAGIC.

In the beginning of June, the Merryfields received additional guests. Among their acquaintances in New York city were Mr. and Mrs. Whitlow, whom they had met during the Annual Convention of the Anti-Slavery Society. Mr. Whitlow was a prosperous grocer, who had profited by selling "free sugar" at two cents a pound more than the product of slave labor, although the former was an inferior article. He was very bitter in his condemnation of the Manchester manufacturers, on account of their consumption of cotton. The Merryfields had been present at a tea-party given by him to Mr. Wendell Phillips, and the circumstance was not forgotten by their hosts. When the latter shut up their house in the respectable upper part of Mercer street, in order to make a summer trip to Lake Superior by way of Niagara, they determined to claim a return for their hospitality. Tea in Mercer street was equivalent, in their eyes, to a week's entertainment at Ptolemy. If not, they could invite the Merryfields again, at the next Convention, which would certainly balance the account.

Accordingly, one fine evening, the stage from Atauga City brought to Ptolemy, and a carriage from Fairlamb's livery-stable forwarded to the Merryfield farm, Mr. and Mrs. Whitow, and their two daughters, Mary Wollstonecraft Whitlow, aged thirteen, and Phillis Wheatley Whitlow, aged nine—together with four trunks. The good-natured host was overwhelmed with this large and unexpected visit, and feebly ndeavored to obtain a signal from his wife as to whether they could be conveniently accommodated, during the bustle of arrival.

"If I had knowed, as it were, that you were coming," said he.

"Oh, we thought we would take you by surprise: it's so much pleasanter," exclaimed Mrs. Whitlow, a tall, gaunt woman, who displayed a pair of large feet as she clambered down from the carriage. She thereupon saluted Mrs. Merryfield with a kiss which sounded like the splitting of a dry chip.

Mary Wollstonecraft and Phillis Wheatley scampered off around the house and into the garden as soon as they touched ground. They amused themselves at first by pulling up the early radishes, to see how long their roots were, but after a while were attracted by the tulips, and returned to the house with handfuls of the finest.

"Where did you get those?" said their mother; "I am afraid they have taken too many," she added, turning towards Mrs. Merryfield, "but the dear children are *so* fond of flowers. I think it elevates them and helps to form their character. The Beautiful and the Good, you know, are one and the same."

"Yes, but it ought to be directed," replied Mrs. Merryfield, without exactly knowing what she was saying. She saw, in imagination, her garden stripped bare, and was meditating how she could prevent it. Her husband put a padlock on the gate next morning, and in the course of the forenoon Phillis Wheatley was discovered hanging by her frock from the paling.

There was no help for it. The Whitlows had come to stay, and they stayed. Mr. Dyce was obliged to give up his occupancy of the best bedroom, and take a small chamber under the roof. Merryfield hoped, but in vain, that this new discomfort would drive him away. The new-comers were acquaintances of his, and although not spiritualists, yet they were very free to discuss the peculiar doctrines of the Aqueanda community.

Day by day, Mrs. Merryfield saw her choice hams and her cherished fowls disappearing before the onslaught of her guests. Her reserve of jams and marmalades was so drawn upon that she foresaw its exhaustion before the summer's fruit could enable her to replenish it. Mary Wollstonecraft and Phillis Wheatley were especially destructive, in this respect, and very frankly raised a clamor for "preserves," when there happened to be none on the table. Their mother mildly tolerated this infraction of good behavior on their part.

"They make themselves at home," she would remark, turning to the hostess with an amiable smile. "I think we should allow some liberty to the dietetic instincts of children. Alcott says, you know, that 'like feeds like—the unclean spirit licks carnage and blood from his trencher.'"

"Gracious me!" exclaimed Mrs. Merryfield, shuddering.

"Yes: and in the scale of Correspondences saccharine substances are connected with gentleness of heart. I rejoice to see this development in the dear children. Do you preserve with free sugar?"

"No," replied the hostess, with a faint salmon-colored blush, "we can't get it in Ptolemy. I should like to bear testimony in this way, if it was possible, but there are so few in this neighborhood who are interested in the cause of Humanity, that we cannot do as much as we desire."

"Why don't you apply to me?" said Mr. Whitlow. "Nothing easier than to buy two or three barrels at a time, and have it sent by rail. It will cost you no more than this"—putting a spoonful of quince jelly into his mouth—"which is stained with the blood of the slave." He said nothing, however, about the quality of the sugar, which was a very coarse, brown article, purporting to come from Port-au-Prince.

Fortunately, Mr. Merryfield's corn had been planted before the arrival of his guests. Otherwise, there would have been a serious interference with his farming operations. Every pleasant afternoon, the Whitlows laid claim to his carriage and horses, and, accepting the services of Mr. Dyce as coachman, drove up and down the valleys, and even to the summits of the hills, to obtain the best views. The very freedom with which they appropriated to their use and comfort all the appliances which the farm furnished, imposed upon their kind-hearted hosts. In the eyes of the latter, claims so openly made involved the existence of a right of some kind, though precisely what the right was, they could not clearly understand.

When Mrs. Whitlow, therefore, whose devotion to "Nature" was one of her expressed characteristics, proposed a pic-nic for the following Saturday afternoon, it was accepted without demur, as one of the ordinances of Destiny. The weather had suddenly grown warm, and the deciduous trees burst into splendid foliage, the luxuriant leaves of summer still wearing the fresh green of spring-time. All the lower portion of the valley, and its cleft branches beyond Ptolemy, from rim to rim of the enclosing hills, hummed and stirred with an overplus of life. The woods were loud with birds; a tiny overture of insect horns and drums, in the meadows, preluded the drama of their ephemeral life; the canes of maize shot the brown fields with points of shining green, and the wheat began to roll in shallow ripples under the winds of the lake. Mrs. Whitlow's proposal was well-timed, in a land where the beautiful festival of Pentecost is unknown, and it did the Merryfields no harm that they were forced, against their habit, to celebrate the opening season.

Not more than a mile from the farm-house there was a spot admirably adapted for the purpose. It was a favorite resort, during the summer, of the young gentlemen and ladies of Ptolemy, and sometimes, even, had been honored by the visit of a party from Tiberius. Roaring Brook, which had its rise some miles distant, among the hollows of the upland, issued from a long glen which cleft East Atauga Hill at the point where it bent away from the head of the lake, to make its wider sweep around to the cape beyond Lakeside. At this point there was a slightly shelving terrace, a quarter of a mile in breadth, thrust out like the corner of a pedestal upon which the hill had formerly rested. The stream, after lending a part of its strength to drive a saw-mill at the mouth of the glen, passed swiftly across the terrace, twisting its way through broken, rocky ground, to the farther edge, whence it tumbled in a cataract to the valley. The wall of rock was crowned with a thick growth of pine, cedar, maple, and aspen trees, and the stream, for the last hundred yards of its course, slid through deep, cool shadows, to flash all the more dazzlingly into the sunshine of its fall. From the brink there were lovely views of the valley and lake; and even within the grove, as far as a flat rock, which served as a table for the gay parties, penetrated glimpses of the airy distance.

The other members of the little band of "Reformers" in Ptolemy were invited to take part in the pic-nic. The Whitlows desired and expected this, and would have considered themselves slighted, had the invitations been omitted. Mrs. Waldo was included, at the request of Hannah Thurston, who knew her need of recreation and her enjoyment of it. Besides, she was sure that Mr. Dyce would be there, and suspected the presence of Seth Wattles, and she felt the advantage of being accompanied by a brave and sensible friend. Mr. Waldo was obliged to attend a meeting of the Trustees of the Cimmerian Church, and so the two women, taking possession of his phlegmatic horse and superannuated gig, started early in the afternoon for the appointed spot. Before reaching the gate to the farm-house, they overtook Seth Wattles and Mr. Tanner, on foot, the latter carrying his flute in his hand. He was celebrated throughout the neighborhood for his performance of "*Love Not*" and "*The Pirate's Serenade*," on that instrument.

The spot was reached by following the highway, past the foot of Roaring Brook cataract, and then taking a side-road which led across the embaying curve of the valley and, ascended to the saw-mill at the mouth of the glen. Some of the party had gone directly across the fields from the Merryfield farm-house, as there was one point in the rocky front of the terrace where an ascent was practicable without danger. Thus they nearly all met in the grove at the same time.

The day was warm and still, oppressively sultry in the sunshine, but there, under the trees and beside the mossy rocks, the swift brook seemed to bring a fresh atmosphere with it, out of the heart of the hills. A light wind, imperceptible elsewhere, softly rustled among the aspen-leaves, and sighed off from the outer pine-boughs into the silence of the air. The stream, swollen by late rains, yet cleansed of their stain, ran deep and strong, curving like bent glass over the worn rocks in its bed, with a suppressed noise, as if hoarding its shout for the leap from the cliff. The shade was sprinkled with patches of intense golden light, where the sun leaked through, and the spirit of the place seemed to say, in every feature, "I wait for color and life." Both were soon given. The Whitlow children, in pink frocks, scampered here and there; Mrs. Waldo's knot of crimson ribbon took its place, like a fiery tropical blossom, among the green; Mrs. Merryfield hung her orange-colored crape shawl on a bough; and even Seth's ungainly figure derived some consistency from a cravat of sky-blue satin, the ends of which hung over his breast. Mr. Tanner screwed together the pieces of his flute, wet his lips several times with his tongue, and played, loud and shrill, the "Macgregor's Gathering."

> "The moon's on the lake and the mist's on the brae,"

sang Hannah Thurston to herself, as she stood on the edge of the stream, a little distance from the others. The smell of the moss, and of the woolly tufts of unrolling ferns, powerfully excited and warmed her imagination. She was never heard to say, in such a spot, like many young ladies, "How romantic!" but her eyes seemed to grow larger and darker, her pale cheek glowed without an increase of color, and her voice was thrilled with an indescribable mixture of firmness and sweetness. This was her first true enjoyment of the summer. The anxiety oo casioned by her mother's failing health, the reawakening of dreams she had once conquered, the painful sense of incompleteness in her own aspirations, and the growing knowledge of unworthiness in others, which revealed more clearly her spiritual isolation, were all forgotten. She bathed her soul in the splendor of summer, and whatever pain remained was not distinguishable from that which always dwells in the heart of joy.

As she reached the line:

> "O'er the peak of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,"

a coarse bass voice behind her joined in the song. She turned and beheld Seth Wattles and Dyce, seated on a rock. They had been listening, and might have heard her to the end, had not the former been too anxious to display his accomplishments. Her repugnance to both the men had unconsciously increased, and she could no longer resist the impulse which prompted her to avoid them. Mary Wollstonecraft was fortunately at hand, in the act of chewing fern-stems, and Hannah Thurston, unacquainted with the young lady's "dietetic instincts," seized her arm in some alarm and conducted her to her mother.

"Let go!" cried the girl; "mamma lets me eat what I please."

"But, my dear," mildly expostulated the mother, "these are strange plants, and they might not agree with you."

"I don't care; they're good," was the amiable reply.

"Would you not rather have a cake?" said Mrs. Waldo, coming to the rescue. "I have some in my basket, and will bring you one, if you will not put those stems in your mouth."

"I was playing cow, but I'll stop if you'll bring me two."

Mrs. Waldo took her way towards the old gig, which was left, with the other vehicles, at the edge of the grove. As she emerged from the shade, and looked up towards the saw-mill, where the sawyer, in his shirt-sleeves, was tilting about over a pile of scantling, she saw a horseman coming down the glen road. Something in his appearance caused her to stop and scan him more closely. At the same instant he perceived her, turned his horse out of the road, and cantered lightly up to the grove.

"You here!" he exclaimed; "is it a camp-meeting?"

"You there, Mr. Woodbury! Where have *you* been? Are you to monopolize all the secular enjoyments? No; it is a pic-nic, small, but select, though I say it."

"Ah! who are here?" he asked, leaning forward on his horse and peering into the shade—"My God!"

Mrs. Waldo, watching his countenance with merry eyes, saw a flush of horror, quick as lightning, pass over it. With one bound he was off the horse, which sprang away startled, and trotted back towards the road. The next instant she saw him plunge headlong into the stream.

Phillis Wheatley, in whom the climbing propensity was at its height, had caught sight of a bunch of wild scarlet columbine, near the top of a rock, around which the stream turned. Scrambling up the sloping side, she reached down for the flowers, which were still inaccessible, yet so near as to be tantalizing. She then lay down on her face, and, stretching her arm, seized the bunch, at which she jerked with all her force. The roots, grappling fast in the crevices of the rock, did not give way as she expected. On the contrary, the resistance of the plant destroyed her own balance, and she whirled over into the water.

Woodbury saw her dangerous position on the rock, at the very moment the catastrophe occurred. With an instant intuition, he perceived that the nearest point of the stream was a bend a little below; a few bounds brought him to the bank, in time to plunge in and catch the pink frock as it was swept down the swift current. He had no time to think or calculate chances. The stream, although not more than four or five feet deep and twenty in breadth, bore him along with such force that he found it impossible to gain his feet. At the last turn where the current sheered toward the opposite bank, a shrub hung over the water. His eye caught it, and, half springing up as he dashed along, he seized it with one hand. The momentary support enabled him to resist the current sufficiently to get his feet on the bottom, but they could gain no hold on the slippery rock. As he slipped and caught alternately, in a desperate struggle, Phillis, struggling blindly with him, managed to get her arms around his neck. Thin as they were, they seemed to have the muscular power of snakes, and, in his hampered condition, he found it impossible to loosen her hold. The branch of the shrub gave way, and the resistless current once more bore them down.

Mrs. Waldo's fearful shriek rang through the grove, and startled the light-hearted company from their discussion of the evils of Society. Every one felt that something dreadful had happened, and rushed towards the sound in helpless and uncertain terror. She was already on the bank of the stream, her hair torn by the branches through which she had plunged, and her face deadly pale, as she pointed to the water, gasping, "Help!" One glance told the whole story. Mrs. Whitlow covered her face and dropped on the ground. Merryfield and the father ran down the bank, stretching out their hands with a faint hope of catching the two as the current brought them along. Hannah Thurston looked around in a desperate search for some means of help, and caught sight of a board which had been placed across two low rocks, for a seat. "The board—quick!" she cried, to Seth and Dyce, who stood as if paralyzed—"at the head of the fall!" Mechanically, but as rapidly as possible, they obeyed her.

Woodbury, after letting go his hold of the shrub, turned his face with the stream, to spy, in advance, some new point of escape. He saw, a hundred feet ahead, the sharp edge of silver where the sun played on the top of the fall: the sudden turns of the stream were all behind him, and it now curved gradually to the right, slightly widening as it approached the brink. His perceptions, acting with the rapidity of lightning, told him that he must either gain the left bank before making half the remaining distance, or keep in the middle of the current, and trust to the chance of grasping a rock which rose a little above the water, a few feet in advance of the fall. He was an experienced swimmer, but a few strokes convinced him that the first plan would not succeed. Before reaching the rock the water grew deeper, and the current whirled in strong eddies, which would give him some little power to direct his course. In a second they seethed around him, and though the bottom fell away from under his feet, he felt a sudden support from the back water from the rock. One tremendous effort and he reached it.

To the agonized spectators on the bank, the scene was terrible. Unable to avert their eyes from the two lives sweeping like a flash to destruction—feeling, instinctively, that there was no instantaneous power of action which could save—they uttered low, incoherent cries, too benumbed to speak or think. Only Seth and Dyce, who had conveyed the board to the head of the fall, were hurriedly endeavoring to thrust it out over the water. In their excitement they had placed it too low to reach the rock.

"Bring it further up!" shouted Mr. Whitlow.

Seth, nervously attempting to slide it up the bank, allowed the outer end to drop into the current. It was instantly twisted out of his hands and whirled over the fall.

Woodbury had gained a firm hold of the rock, but the water was up to his shoulders, the conflicting currents tugged him this way and that, and he was unable to clasp his charge securely. Her arms were still tight about his neck, but if her strength should give way, their situation would become critical. He saw the effort made for their rescue, and its failure.

"Another board!" he shouted.

Seth and Dyce darted through the grove in search of one, while Merryfield, more practical, made off with his utmost speed for the saw-mill. Hannah Thurston, in spite of her relief at the escape, recognized the danger which still impended. A single glance showed her the difficulty under which Wood bury labored, and a sickening anxiety again overcame her To stand still was impossible; but what could she do? On a stump near her lay a fragment of board about four feet in length. The distance from the bank to the rock was at least twelve. Another glance at the rapid current, and an idea, which, it seemed to her afterwards, some passing angel must have let fall, flashed through her brain. Snatching her silk summer-shawl from the bough where it hung, she tied one end of it tightly around the middle of the board, drawing it to a firm knot on the edge. Mrs. Waldo was no less quick in comprehending what she intended. By the time the knot was tied, her own and Mrs. Merryfield's shawls were brought and quickly fastened, one to another. By this means a length considerably greater than the breadth of the stream was obtained.

"One thing more," said Hannah Thurston, breathlessly, as she took the scarf from her neck. Knotting one end and drawing the other through, so as to form a running noose, she fastened it to her shawl, near the board. Her plan came to her in a complete form, and hence there was no delay in putting it into execution. Taking her stand on a point of the bank, some feet above the rock where Woodbury clung, she gathered the shawls in loose links and held the board ready to throw. Woodbury, whose position was such that he could see her movements without risking his hold, now called to her:

"As far as you can throw!"

Mrs. Waldo had followed to the bank, and stood behind Hannah Thurston, grasping a handful of her dress, lest she, too, should lose her balance. But excitement gave Hannah firmness of nerve, when other women trembled. She flung the board with a steady hand, throwing the weight of the shawls, as much as possible, with it. It fell beyond the centre of the current, whirled around once or twice upon an eddy, and was sheering back towards the bank again, when Woodbury, whispering to Phillis, "Hold fast, darling!" put out one hand and caught it. With some difficulty, and with more risk to himself than the two anxious women on the bank were aware of, he drew the wet, sticky slip-noose of the scarf over Phillis's head and one arm, bringing it under her elbow before he could loosen her hold upon his neck. Thrusting the board under this arm, it was an easier task to disengage the other.

"Wind the end of the shawl around that sapling beside you!" he called to Hannah Thurston. "One of you go below to meet her."

Mrs. Waldo was on the spot before his words were finished.

"Now, hold fast, my little girl, and you will be safe in a minute. Ready!" he cried.

Phillis obeyed, rather through blind trust in him, than from her consciousness of what was going on. The poor creature was chilled and exhausted, half strangled by the water she had swallowed, and wild with terror. Her arms having once been loosened, she clasped them again around the board in a last convulsive effort of strength. Woodbury let go the frail raft, which, impelled by the dragging weight of the shawls, darted at once half-way across the stream. Then it began to move more slowly, and the force of the current seemed to ingulf it. For a moment the water rushed over the child's head, but her dress was already within reach of Mrs. Waldo's hand, and she was drawn upon the bank, gasping and nearly insensible. Mrs. Merryfield picked her up and carried her to the mother, who still lay upon the ground, with her face in her hands.

Woodbury, relieved of his burden, now held his position with less difficulty. The coldness of the water, not yet tempered by the few days of summer, nevertheless, began to benumb him, and he was obliged to struggle against a growing exhaustion. Hannah Thurston, as soon as the child was rescued, drew in the board, examined the knots of the shawls and gathered them together for another throw; but at the same instant Mr. Merryfield, out of breath and unable to speak, appeared with a plank on his shoulder. With the aid of the others, the end was secured between two trees, and it was then run out above the water, a little below the rock, where the stream was shallower. Woodbury cautiously slid down gained a firm foothold, and slowly crossed, walking sidewise, supported by the plank. As he neared the bank, he stretched out his left hand, which was grasped by Merryfield, who drew so tremendously that he almost lost his footing at the last moment. As he felt the dry earth under him, a singular numbness fell upon him. He saw, as in a dream, Mrs. Waldo and Hannah Thurston; the former streaming with grateful tears, the latter pale and glad, with a moist light in her eyes. He sat down upon the nearest rock, chilled to the bone; his lips were blue and his teeth chattered.

"It is cold bathing," said he: "have you any wine?"

"We do not use intoxicating beverages," said Mr. Whitlow, who could not forget, even in his gratitude for his daughter's rescue, the necessity of bearing testimony against popular vices.

Mrs. Waldo, however, hastily left the company. Mr. Merryfield took off his coat, and having removed Woodbury's with some little trouble, substituted it. The dry warmth began to revive him. "Where is my new acquaintance?" he asked.

Mrs. Whitlow, after an hysterical outburst of alternate laughter and tears, had wrapped Phillis Wheatley in the only remaining dry shawl and given her a saucer of marmalade; but the child was still too much frightened to eat. Her father brought her in his arms and set her down before Woodbury. "There, Phillis," said he, and his voice trembled a little, "you must thank the gentleman for saving your life."

"Thank you for saving my life!" said Phillis, in a rueful voice.

"Not me," said Woodbury, rising slowly and wearily, and turning towards Hannah, "but Miss Thurston. Your coolness and presence of mind saved both of us."

He took her hand. His fingers were as cold as ice, yet a warmth she never before felt streamed from them through her whole frame.

Mrs. Waldo suddenly made her appearance, as breathless as before Mr. Merryfield had been, with the plank on his shoulder. She carried in her hand a tumbler full of a yellowish liquid.

"There," she panted, "drink it. Thankful am I that there are still sinners in the world. The sawyer had a black jug. It's poisonous stuff, I know—leads to the gates of death, and all that—but I thanked God when I saw it."

"Good Samaritan!" exclaimed Woodbury fervently, as he drank. It was, in truth, the vilest form of whiskey, but it steadied his teeth and thawed his frozen blood.

"Now for my horse and a gallop home!" he said.

"Where is the horse?" they asked.

"I'll get him," exclaimed Seth, with alacrity.

"Hadn't you better go up to Jones's, as it were," said Merryfield "He's stopped the saw-mill, and run to the house to get a fire kindled. You can dry yourself first, and Sarah can make you some tea or coffee."

Jones made his appearance at almost the same instant. "I ketched y'r horse, Mr. Maxwood," said he, running the names together in his excitement. "He's all right. Come up t' th' house: Mary Jane's made a rousin' fire, and you kin dry y'rself."

"Thank you, my friends," Woodbury answered. "Your whiskey has done me great service, Mr. Jones, and what I now want more than any thing else is a little lively motion. Will you please lend Mr. Merryfield one of your coats, since he has kindly given me his? I shall ride over and see you to-morrow; but now let me get to my horse as soon as possible."

He put his hand on the sawyer's shoulder, to steady himself, for his steps were still tottering, and was turning away, when he perceived his wet coat, spread out on a rock. Picking it up, he took a note-book and some pulpy letters from the breast-pocket. After examining the latter, he crushed them in his hand, and tossed them into the stream. He then felt the deep side-pockets: in one there was a wet handkerchief, but on reaching the other he dropped the coat.

"There, Mr. Dyce," said he, "you will find your pamphlet. I had it in my pocket, intending to leave it with Mr. Merryfield this afternoon. It is pretty thoroughly soaked by this time, but all the waters of Roaring Brook could not wash it clean."

Nodding a cheerful good-by to Mrs. Waldo, a respectful one to Hannah Thurston, and giving Phillis a kiss which left her staring at him in open-mouthed astonishment, he left the company. The sawyer, with a rough tenderness, insisted on keeping his arm around Woodbury's waist, and on reaching the mill produced the black jug, from which it was impossible to escape without a mild libation. Woodbury repaid it the next day with a bottle of smoky "Islay," the remembrance of which made Jones's mouth water for years afterwards.

The pic-nic, of course, was at an end. Without unpacking the refreshments, the party made immediate preparations to return. The fire Mrs. Jones had kindled was employed to dry Phillis and the shawls, while the gentlemen harnessed the horses. Mr. Merryfield went about in the sawyer's Sunday coat, which had been first made for his wedding, sixteen years before. It was blue, with brass buttons, a high rolling collar, very short waist, and tails of extraordinary length. No one laughed, however, except Mary Wollstonecraft.

In spite of the accident, which left an awed and subdued impression upon all minds, the ride home was very animated. Each was anxious to describe his or her feelings, but Mrs. Whitlow was tacitly allowed to play the chief part.

"You were all running here and there," said she, "and the movement was some relief. What *I* suffered, no tongue can describe. But I am reconciled to it now. I see in it a mysterious sign that Phillis Wheatley is to have an important mission in the world, and my duty is to prepare her for it."

Fortunately, no injury resulted to the girl thus mysteriously commissioned, from the manner in which it was done. She was obliged, very much against her will, to lie down for the rest of the day; but the next morning she was discovered in the stable, pulling the tail-feathers out of an old cock she had caught.

On Monday, the Wintlows took their departure for Niagara, greatly to the relief of their hosts. As they do not appear again in the course of this history, we may hope that the remainder of their journey was agreeable.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCERNING AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY TO TIBERIUS.

Two days after the departure of the Whitlows, Mr. Dyce, during breakfast, announced his intention of leaving Ptolemy. "I have promised to visit the Community," said he, "and it is now a pleasant time to be there. Could you lend me your horse and carriage as far as Tiberius, Merryfield?"

"Not to-day, I guess," said the farmer; "I must go to Mulligansville this afternoon, to see about buying another cow, and Henry has the hill-field to hoe. You could take Jinny and the carriage, but how would I get them back again?"

"I will go," said his wife, with an unusual eagerness. "I must go there soon, any way. I've things to buy, you know, James, and there's Mrs. Nevins that I've been owing a visit to, this ever so long."

"Well, if you want to, Sarah," he answered, "I've nothing against it. Are you sure it won't be too much for you? You know you've been having extra work, and you're not strong."

Mrs. Merryfield drew up the corners of her mouth, and gave a spasmodic sob. "Yes, I know I am the weaker vessel," she wailed, "and my own judgment don't pass for any thing."

"Sarah, Sarah, don't be foolish!" said her husband; "you know I never interfere unreasonably with your ways. You can do as you please. I spoke for your own good, and you needn't cry about it."

He rose with an impatient air, and left the table. He could not but admit to himself, sometimes, that the happiness of his married life had not increased in proportion to his progress in the knowledge of Reform. When he looked back and recalled the lively, rosy young woman, with her first nuptial bashfulness and air of dependence on her husband fresh about her, whom he had brought to the farm-house twenty-five years before, when they lived in utter ignorance of dietetic laws and solemn duties towards the Human Race, he could not repress a feeling of pain. The sallow, fretful woman, who now considered her years of confiding love as a period of servitude, which she strove to balance by claiming more than an equal share in the direction of the household, was another (and less agreeable) creature, in comparison with her former self. Of late, she had grown more than usually irritable and unsatisfied, and, although he had kindly ascribed the fact to housekeeping perplexities, his patience was sorely tried. There was no remedy but endurance, so far as he could see. It was impossible, now, to change his convictions in regard to woman's rights, and he was too sincere to allow the practice of his life to be inconsistent with them.

When he returned at noon from a distant field, where he had been engaged all the morning, he was surprised to find the carriage still at home, although his man Henry was engaged in greasing the hubs of the wheels. "Why, Sarah," said he, as he sat down to dinner, "I thought you would have been off."

"I couldn't get ready," she answered, rather sullenly. "But I need not come back to-night. It will be better for Jinny, anyhow."

Mr. Dyce was unusually talkative on the subject of the Community, the charms of which he painted in the liveliest colors. His host was tired of the subject, but listened with an air of tolerance, as he was so soon to get rid of the speaker.

Bidding the latter good-by, immediately after dinner, he saddled his horse and rode to Mulligansville. The new cow met his requirements, and a bargain was soon concluded. She was to be brought to the farm next day, when the price agreed upon would be paid. Mr. Merryfield had adopted the sensible rule of defraying all such expenses as they arose. Hence his crops were never mortgaged in advance, and by waiting until they could be sold to the best advantage, he prospered from year to year.

When he reached home again, it was nearly four o'clock Putting up his horse, he entered the house and went directly to the old-fashioned mixture of book-case, writing-desk, and chest of drawers, which stood in a corner of the sitting-room. He must make a note of the purchase, and, since he was alone, might as well spend an hour, he thought, in looking over his papers and making his calculations for the summer.

He was very methodical in his business arrangements, and the desk was in such perfect order that he always knew the exact place of each particular paper. This was one of the points of controversy with his wife, which he never yielded: he insisted that she should not open the desk in his absence. This time, however, as he seated himself, drew out the supports for the lid, and let it down upon them, his exact eye showed him that something had been disturbed. The papers in one of the pigeon-holes projected a little further than usual, and the corners were not square as they should be. Besides, the pile appeared to be diminished in height. He knew every paper the pigeon-hole contained, took them out and ran rapidly through them. One was missing!—an envelope, containing bonds of the New York Central Railroad, to the amount of three thousand dollars, the private property of his wife. It was the investment of a sum which she had inherited at her father's death, made in her own name, and the interest of which she had always received for her separate use.

He leaned back in his chair, thunderstruck at the discovery Could one of the servants have taken the envelope? Impossible. Dyce?—how should he know where to find it? Evidently, nothing else had been touched. Had his wife, perhaps, taken it with her, to draw the semi-annual interest at Tiberius? It was not yet due. Mechanically, hardly conscious of what he suspected or feared, he arose and went up-stairs. In the bedroom which Dyce had last occupied, every thing was in order He passed into his own, opening closets and wardrobes, expecting either to find or miss something which might enlighten him. In his wife's wardrobe three pegs, upon which dresses had hung, were empty. He jerked open, in haste, the drawers of her bureau: many things had apparently been removed. Closing them again, he raised his head, and a little note, sticking among the bristles of the hair-brush, which lay on its back in front of the looking-glass, caught his eye. He seized it, unfolded it with shaking hands, put on his spectacles and read. There were but two lines:

"Send to Tiberius for the carriage. I am going to the Community."

It was a hard blow for the poor man. The idea of conjugal infidelity on the part of his wife was simply incredible, and no suspicion of that nature entered his mind. It was a deliberate case of desertion, and the abstraction of the bonds indicated that it was meant to be final. What her motives were, he could only guess at in a confused way; but he knew that she would never, of her own accord, have determined upon a course so mad and ruinous. Many things were suddenly clear to him. The evil influence of Dyce, strengthened by his assumed power, as a medium, of bringing her children near to her; the magnetic strength, morbid though it was, of the man's words and presence; the daily opportunities of establishing some intangible authority over the wife, during her husband's absence, until she became, finally, the ignorant slave of his will—all this, or the possibility of it, presented itself to Merryfield's mind in a rush of dim and tangled impressions. He had neither the time nor the power to unravel them, but he felt that there was truth at the core. Following this conviction came the determination to save her—yes! save her at once. There was no time to be lost. Tiberius was eighteen miles distant, and they could not yet have arrived there. He must follow instantly, and overtake them, if possible, before the departure of the train from the west.

Why was he delaying there? The ten minutes that he had been standing, motionless, in the centre of the room, with the note in his hand, his eyes mechanically reading the two lines over and over, until the first terrible chaos of his feelings subsided, had lengthened themselves into hours. Breaking the spell at last, he drew a long breath, which resolved itself into a groan, and lifted his head. The little looking-glass on the bureau was before him: moving a step nearer, he examined his own face with a pitiful curiosity. It looked old and haggard; the corners of his mouth were rigidly drawn and tightened, and the pinched nostrils twitched in spite of himself, but his eyes were hard and dry.

"It don't make much difference in my looks, after all," he said to himself, with a melancholy laugh; and the next instant the eyes overflowed.

After this brief outbreak, he recovered some strength and steadiness, and rapidly arranged in his mind what was first to be done. Taking off his work-day clothes, he put on a better suit, and descended the stairs. Calling to the servant-girl in the kitchen, he informed her, in a voice which he strove to make natural and unconcerned, that he was suddenly obliged to visit Tiberius on business, but would return the next day, with his wife. He left directions with her for Henry, the field-hand, regarding the morrow's work, then resaddled his horse and rode rapidly to Ptolemy.

On the way, his thoughts involuntarily went in advance, and he endeavored to prefigure the meeting with his wife. It was impossible for him, however, to decide what course he should pursue in case she should persist in her determination. It was not enough to overtake her; he must be armed at all points to subdue and reclaim her. She had a stubborn power of resistance with which he was well acquainted; and, moreover, Dyce would be ready enough to assist her. He foreboded his own helplessness in such a case, though the right was on his side and the flagrant wrong on hers.

"It's my own fault," he groaned, bitterly; "I've given way to her so long that I've lost my rightful influence over her."

One means of help suggested itself to his mind, and was immediately accepted. Leaving his horse at the livery stable, and ordering a fast, fresh animal and a light buggy to be sent to the Cimmerian Parsonage, he proceeded thither on foot.

Mr. Waldo was in his "study," which was one corner of his wife's sitting-room. He was engaged in an epistolary controversy with a clergyman of the Free-will Baptists, occasionally reading aloud a paragraph as he wrote. His wife, busily at work in remaking an old dress, listened and commended. They were both startled by the entrance of Mr. Merryfield, whose agitation was apparent in his face, and still more so in his voice, as he greeted them.

"What has happened?" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo.

"I don't hardly know, as yet," he stammered. "I want your help, Mr. Waldo. Come with me—I'm going to Tiberius. My wife"—— Here he paused, blushing with utter shame for *her*.

"Would you rather speak to my husband alone?" said Mrs. Waldo, rising from her seat.

"No, you must hear the rest, now," he answered. "You're a good woman, Mrs. Waldo—good and true, and perhaps you, too, can help. Sarah wants to leave me, and I must bring her back—I *must*, this night."

He then told them, briefly and brokenly, his painful story. Amazement and pity filled the hearts of the two good people, who felt his misfortune almost as keenly as if it were their own. Mrs. Waldo commenced making the few preparations necessary for her husband's departure, even before his consent was uttered. When the team was announced as ready, she took Mr. Merryfield's hand and bade him God-speed, with tears in her eyes. The poor man was too much moved to reply. Then, catching her husband's arm, as he was issuing from the room, she whispered earnestly, "No harshness—I know her: she must be coaxed and persuaded."

"I wish it were you who were going, my good wife," said Mr. Waldo, kissing her; "*you* would make no mistake. But be sure that I will act tenderly and carefully."

They drove away. She watched them turn the next corner, and went into the house powerfully excited by such a sudden and singular catastrophe. Her quick, intuitive mind, and her knowledge of Mrs. Merryfield's weak points, enabled her to comprehend the action more correctly than the husband himself. This very knowledge was the source of her greatest anxiety; for she saw that the success of the journey hung by a hair. Having already committed herself, Mrs. Merryfield, she foresaw, would not give up her plan from the discovery of it, merely. She was not the woman to fall at her husband's feet, repentant, at the first sight of him, and meekly return to her forsaken home. The utmost tact would be required—tact of a kind, of which, with all her respect for the sex, she felt that a man was not capable.

The more she pondered on the matter, the more restless and anxious she grew. Her husband's last words remained in her ears: "*You* would make no mistake." That was not certain, but she would make none, she knew, which could not at once be rectified. An inner voice continually said to her, "Go!" Her unrest became at last insupportable; she went to the stable, and harnessed their horse to the old gig with her own hands. Then taking her shawl, and thrusting some refreshments into a basket—for she would not delay even long enough to make a cup of tea—she clambered into the creaking vehicle, and drove off.

Mrs. Waldo, however, like many good women whose moral courage is equal to any emergency, was in some respects a ridiculous coward. Even in company with her husband, she never passed along the country roads, at night, without an incessant sensation of fear, which had no positive shape, and therefore could not be battled against. It was now six o'clock, and the darkness would be upon her long before she could reach Tiberius. The thought of making the journey alone, was dreadful; if the suspended fate of the Merryfields was to be decided by her alone, she would have been almost ready to hesitate. There was but one person in Ptolemy to whom she dared tell the story, and who was equally authorized with herself, to go—that person was Hannah Thurston.

All these thoughts passed through her mind, and her resolution was taken, while she was harnessing the horse. She drove at once to the Widow Thurston's cottage, and was fortunate enough to find her and her daughter at their early tea Summoning them into the next room, out of ear-shot of the little servant, she communicated the story and her request in the fewest possible words. She left them no time to recover from the news. "Don't stop to consider, Hannah," she said, "we can talk on the way. There is not a moment to lose."

Miss Thurston hesitated, overcome by a painful perplexity. The matter had been confided to her, without the knowledge of the principal actors, and she was not sure that her unexpected appearance before them would lead to good. Besides, Mrs. Merryfield's act was utterly abhorrent to all her womanly instincts, and her virgin nature shrank from an approach to it, even in the way of help. She stood irresolute.

The widow saw what was passing in her mind. "I know how thee feels, Hannah," said she, "and I would not advise thee, if thy way were not clear to my mind. I feel that it is right for thee to go. The Saviour took the hand of the fallen woman, and thee may surely take Sarah's hand to save her, maybe, from falling. Now, when thy gift may be of service—now is the time to use it freely. Something tells me that thy help will not be altogether in vain."

"I will go, mother," the daughter replied. "Thy judgment is safer than mine."

In five minutes more the two women were on their way. The loveliest evening sunshine streamed across the valley, brightening the meadows and meadow-trees, and the long, curving sweep of the eastern hill. The vernal grass, which, in its flowering season, has a sweeter breath than the roses of Gulistan, was cut in many places, and lay in balmy windrows. The air was still and warm, and dragon-flies, emitting blue and emerald gleams from their long wings, hovered in zigzag lines along the brooksides. Now and then a thrush fluted from the alder-thickets, or an oriole flashed like a lighted brand through the shadows of the elms. The broad valley basked in the lazy enjoyment of its opulent summer hues; and what ever sounds arose from its bosom, they all possessed a tone of passive content or active joy. But the travellers felt nothing of all this beauty: that repose of the spiritual nature, in which the features of the external world are truly recognized, had been rudely disturbed.

They passed the Merryfield farm-house. How sadly at variance with its sunny air of peace was the tragic secret of its owners, which the two women carried with them! The huge weeping willow trailed its hanging masses of twigs against the gable, and here and there a rose-tree thrust its arm through the white garden paling and waved a bunch of crimson, as if to say: "Come in and see how we are blooming!" Towards the barn, the field-hand was letting down bars for the waiting cows, and the servant-girl issued from the kitchen-door with her tin milk-kettle, as they gazed. What a mockery it all seemed!

A little further, and the cataract thundered on their right. All below the rocky wall lay in shadow, but the trees on its crest were still touched by the sun, and thin wreaths of spray, whirling upward, were suddenly converted into dust of gold. Hannah Thurston looked up at the silent grove, and shuddered as she recalled the picture she had last seen there. The brook could never again wear to her its former aspect of wayward, impetuous jubilation. Under its green crystal and glassy slides lurked an element of terror, of pitiless cruelty. Yet even the minutes of agonizing suspense she had there endured were already softened in her memory, and seemed less terrible than the similar trial which awaited her.

Near the entrance to Lakeside they met Bute Wilson, with a yoke of oxen. He recognized the old gig, and with a loud "Haw, Buck,—come hither!" drew his team off the road."

"Takin' a drive, are ye? How d'you do, Mrs. Waldo—Miss Hannah?"

"Good-evening, Bute!" said Mrs. Waldo. "How is Mr Woodbury? I hope he has not suffered from being so long in the water."

"Bless you, no! Mr. Max. is as sound as a roach. He rid over to Tiberius this afternoon. I say, wasn't it lucky that jist *he* should ha' come along at the right time?" Bute's face glowed with pride and delight.

"It was Providential: good-by!"

Slowly climbing the long ravine, through dark woods, it was after sunset when they reached the level of the upland. The village of Anacreon soon came in sight, and they drove rapidly through, not wishing to be recognized. Beyond this point the road was broad, straight, and firm, and they could make better progress. A low arch of orange light lingered in the west, but overhead the larger stars came out, one after another. Belts of warm air enveloped them on the heights, but the dusky hollows were steeped in grateful coolness, and every tree by the roadside gave out its own peculiar odor. The ripe, antique breath of the oak, the honeyed bitter of the tulip-tree, and the perfect balsam of the hickory, were breathed upon them in turn. A few insects still chirped among the clover, and the unmated frogs serenaded, by fits, their reluctant sweethearts. At one of the farm-houses they passed, a girl, seated in the porch, was singing:

"We have lived and loved together,
Through many changing years."

Every circumstance seemed to conspire, by involuntary contrast, to force the difficult and painful task they had undertaken more distinctly upon their minds. After Mrs. Waldo had imparted all she knew, with her own conjectures of the causes of the desertion, both women were silent for a long time, feeling, perhaps, that it was impossible to arrange, in advance, any plan of action. They must trust to the suggestions which the coming interview would supply.

"I cannot understand it," said Hannah Thurston, at last. "After so many years of married life—after having children born to them, and lost, uniting them by the more sacred bond of sorrow—how is it possible? They certainly loved each other: what has become of her love?"

"She has it somewhere, yet, you may be sure," said Mrs. Waldo. "She is weak and foolish, but she does not mean to be criminal. Dyce is a dangerous man, and he has led her to the step. No other man she knows could have done it."

"Can she love him?"

"Probably not. But a strong, unscrupulous man who knows our sex, Hannah, has a vast power which most women do not understand. He picks up a hundred little threads of weakness, each of which is apparently insignificant, and twists them into a chain. He surprises us at times when our judgment is clouded, his superior reason runs in advance of our thoughts—and we don't think very hard, you know—and will surely bind us hand and foot, unless some new personality comes in to interrupt him. We women are governed by personal influences—there is no use in denying the fact. And men, of course, have the strongest."

"I have sometimes feared as much," said Hannah Thurston, sadly, "but is it not owing to a false education? Are not women trained to consider themselves inferior, and thus dependent? Do not the daughters learn the lesson of their mothers, and the fathers impress the opposite lesson on their sons?"

"I know what you mean, and you are partly right. But that is not all. There are superior women whom we look up o— look up to you, Hannah, who are, intellectually, so far above me—but they never impress us with the same sense of wer, of protecting capacity, that we feel in the presence of almost any man. It is something I cannot explain—a sort of physical magnetism, I suppose. I respect men: I like them because they are men, I am not ashamed to confess: and I am not humiliated as a woman, by acknowledging the difference"

"Habit and tradition!" Hannah Thurston exclaimed.

"I know you *will* think so, Hannah, and I am not able to answer you. When I hear you speak, sometimes, every word you say seems just and true, but my instincts, as a woman, remain the same. Your life has been very different from mine, and perhaps you have taken, without knowing it, a sort of warlike position towards men, and have wilfully resisted their natural influence over you. For your sake, I have often longed—and you must pardon me, if I ought not to say such a thing—that some man, in every respect worthy of you, should come to know you as you are, and love you, and make you his wife."

"Don't—don't speak of that," she whispered.

"I couldn't help it, to-night, dear," Mrs. Waldo soothingly replied. "I have been thinking as I came along, what cause I have to thank God for having given me a good and faithful husband. *I* should never have been happy as a single woman, and for that reason, no doubt, your life seems imperfect to me. But we cannot always judge the hearts of others by our own."

By this time the glimmering arch of summer twilight had settled behind the hills, and only the stars lighted them on their way. The road stretched before them like a dusky band, between the shapeless darkness of woods and fields, on either side. Indistinct murmurs of leaves and rustlings among the grass began to be heard, and at every sound Mrs. Waldo started nervously.

"Was there ever such a coward as I am!" she exclaimed, in a low voice. "If you were not with me, I should go wild with fear. Do you suppose any man in the world is so timid?"

"There, again, I cannot judge," Miss Thurston answered. "I only know that I am never alarmed at night, and that this journey would be a perfect enjoyment, if we were not going on such an unfortunate errand."

"I always knew you were an exception among women. Your nerves are like a man's, but mine are altogether feminine, and I can't help myself."

The horse stopped at a toll-gate. They were only two miles from Tiberius, and the road descended the greater part of the way. Mrs. Waldo recovered her courage, for the houses were now more thickly scattered, and the drive would soon be at an end. The old horse, too, had by this time recognized the extent of his task, and determined to get through with it. They rattled rapidly onwards, and from the next rise saw the lights of the town, twinkling around the foot of Atauga Lake.

As they reached the suburban belt, where every square, flat-roofed, chocolate-colored villa stood proudly in the centre of its own square plot of ground, Hannah Thurston asked:

"Where shall we go?"

"Bless me, I never thought of that. But I think my husband generally stops at 'The Eagle,' and we can at least leave the horse there. Then we must try to find him and—the others. I think our best plan would be to go to the railroad station."

The gardens and villas gradually merged into the irregular, crowded buildings which lined the principal street. Many stores were open, the side-walks were lively with people, transparencies gleamed before ice-cream saloons, and gas-lamps burned brilliantly at the corners.

"What time is it?" asked Mrs. Waldo.

Hannah Thurston looked at her watch. "A quarter past nine."

"We have made good time," said her companion; "Heaven grant that we are not too late!"

CHAPTER XVII.

WHICH SOLVES THE PRECEDING ONE.

Mrs. Merryfield, on forsaking her home, had not anticipated the possibility of an immediate pursuit. She supposed, of course, that her husband would first discover her intention the next morning, when he would have occasion to use the hair-brush. He would then, sooner or later, she believed, follow her to the Community, where the sight of a Perfect Society, of an Eden replanted on the Earth, would not only convince him of the wisdom of her act, but compel him to imitate it. If their convictions had been reversed, and *he* had desired to try the new social arrangement, could he not have done so with impunity, regardless of her opposition? Then, their rights being equal, why should she consult his pleasure?

Thus she reasoned, or, rather, Dyce reasoned for her. She was a very weak and foolish woman, afflicted with that worst of temperaments which is at the same time peevish and stubborn, and did not at all appreciate the gravity of the step she had taken. An inner voice, indeed, told her that its secrecy was unjustifiable—that she should openly and boldly declare her intention to her husband; but her base friend easily persuaded her that it was better to draw him after her when she had reached the Community, and settle the difference there. His own eyes would then convince him of her wisdom: opposition would be impossible, with the evidence before him. She would thus spare herself a long and perhaps fruitless encounter of opinions, which, owing to the finer organization of her spiritual nature, she ought to avoid. Such differences, he said, disturbed the atmosphere in which spirits most readily approached and communicated with her. In the pure and harmonious life of the Community, she might perhaps attain to the condition of a medium, and be always surrounded by angelic company.

The afternoon was hot and they drove slowly, so that even before they reached Tiberius, the two parties of pursuers were on the way. Just as they entered the town, Mr. Woodbury passed the carriage on horseback. Glancing at its occupants, he recognized Mrs. Merryfield, bowed, and reined in his horse as if to speak, but seeing Dyce, his cordial expression became suddenly grave, and he rode on. This encounter troubled Mrs. Merryfield. A secret uneasiness had been growing upon her during the latter part of the way, and Woodbury's look inspired her with a vague fear. She involuntarily hoped that she might not meet him again, or any one she knew, before leaving Tiberius. She would not even visit Mrs. Nevins, as she had proposed. Moreover, Woodbury would probably put up at the hotel which she and her husband usually visited. Another must be selected, and she accordingly directed Dyce to drive through the town to a tavern on its northern side, not far from the railroad station.

At half-past eight in the evening her husband and Mr. Waldo alighted in front of "The Eagle." As the former was giving orders about the horse to the attendant ostler, Woodbury came down the steps and immediately recognized the new arrivals.

"What!" he exclaimed, "is all Ptolemy coming to Tiberius to-day? Your wife has the start of you, Mr. Merryfield: I passed her this evening"——

A violent grasp on his arm interrupted him. "Where is he? Have they left?" the husband hoarsely asked.

The light from the corner-lamp fell full upon his face. Its expression of pain and anxiety was unmistakable, and a presentiment of the incredible truth shot through Woodbury's mind.

"Hush, my friend!" said Mr. Waldo. "Control yourself while we register our names, and then we will go to work. It is fortunate that you have betrayed yourself to Mr. Woodbury instead of some one else. Come with us!" he added, turning to the latter; "you must now know the rest. We can trust every thing to your honor."

They entered the office of the hotel. Merryfield, after drinking a large tumbler of ice-water, recovered some degree of composure. Mr. Waldo ascertained from the landlord that the next train for the east would leave at midnight, the previous train having left at five o'clock. Woodbury, seeing the necessity of a private understanding, invited them both to his room, where the whole affair was explained to him, and he was able to assure them, by recalling the hour of his own arrival, that Dyce and Mrs. Merryfield must be still in the town.

"We have three hours," said he, "and they must be found in half the time. There must not be a meeting at the station. Have you no idea, Mr. Merryfield, where your wife would go?"

"She spoke of visiting Mrs. Nevins, as it were," he replied.

"Then it is quite unlikely that she is there," said Woodbury. "But we must first settle the point. Let us go at once: where is the house?"

Merryfield led the way, much supported and encouraged by Woodbury's prompt, energetic manner. He had now less dread of the inevitable encounter with Dyce.

A walk of ten minutes brought them to the Nevins mansion. It was a small villa, with a Grecian portico, seated in a diminutive garden. There was a light in the front room. Mr. Waldo was unacquainted with the inmates, and afraid to allow Merryfield to enter the house alone. There was a moment of perplexity.

"I have it," said Woodbury, suddenly. "Move on a little, and wait for me." He boldly entered the garden and stepped upon the Grecian portico. The windows had muslin curtains across their lower half, but he easily looked over them into the room. A middle-aged woman, in a rocking-chair, was knitting some worsted stuff with a pair of wooden needles.

On the other side of the lamp, with his back to her, sat a man, absorbed in a newspaper. A boy of ten years old lay asleep on the carpet. Noting all this at a glance, Woodbury knocked at the door. A rustling of the newspaper followed, footsteps entered the hall, and the outer door was opened.

Woodbury assumed a natural air of embarrassed disappointment. "I am afraid," said he, "that I have made a mistake. Does Mr. Israel Thompson live here?"

"Israel Thompson? I don't know any such person. There's James Thompson, lives further down the street, on the other side."

"Thank you. I will inquire of him. I am a stranger here," and he rejoined his friends. "Now," said he, "to save time, Mr. Waldo, you and I must visit the other hotels, dividing them between us. Mr. Merryfield had better not take any part in the search. Let him wait for us on the corner opposite 'The Eagle.' We can make our separate rounds in twenty minutes, and I am sure we shall have discovered them by that time."

An enumeration of the hotels was made, and the two gentlemen divided them in such a manner as to economize time in making their rounds. They then set out in different directions, leaving Merryfield to walk back alone to the rendezvous. Hitherto, the motion and excitement of the pursuit had kept him up, but now he began to feel exhausted and desponding. He had not eaten since noon, and experienced all the weakness without the sensation of hunger. A powerful desire for an artificial stimulant came over him, and, for a moment, he halted before the red light of a drinking-saloon, wondering whether there was any one inside who could recognize him. The door opened, and an atmosphere of rank smoke, tobacco-soaked sawdust, and pungent whiskey gushed out; oaths and fragments of obscene talk met his ears, and he hurried away in disgust. At "The Eagle" he fortified himself again with ice-water, and then took his stand on the opposite corner, screened from the lamp-light by an awning-post.

The late storekeepers up and down the street were putting up their shutters, but the ice-cream transparencies still shone brightly, and the number of visitors rather increased than diminished. From a neighboring house came the sound of a piano, and presently a loud, girlish voice which sang: "I dreamt that I dwe-helt in ma-harble halls." What business, he thought, had people to be eating ice-cream and singing songs? It was an insulting levity. How long a time his friends had been absent! A terrible fear came over him—what if he should not find his wife? At night—no, he dared not think of it. He looked down the crossing streets, in all four directions, as far as his eye could pierce, and inspected the approaching figures. Now he was sure he recognized Woodbury's commanding form; now the brisk gait of the short clergyman. But they came nearer and resolved themselves into strangers. Then he commenced again, striving to keep an equal watch on all the streets. The appointed time was past, and they did not come! A cold sweat began to gather on his forehead, and he was ready to despair. All at once, Mr Waldo appeared, close at hand, and hurried up to him, breathless.

"I have finished my list," said he.

"Have you found them?"

"No, but——what does this mean!" cried the clergyman, starting. "That is my horse, certainly—and the old gig! Can my wife"——

He did not finish the sentence, but sprang into the street and called. The horse turned his head from a sudden jerk of the lines, and in a moment was drawn up beside the pavement.

"How glad I am we have met you! I *could not* stay at home, indeed. You will let us help, will you not? Are we in time?" cried Mrs. Waldo, apology, entreaty, and anxiety all mingling in her voice.

"With God's favor, we are still in time," her husband answered.

"I thank you for coming—you and Hannah, both," Merryfield sadly added, "but I'm afraid it's no use."

"Cheer up," said the clergyman, "Mr. Woodbury will be here in a moment."

"He is here already," said Woodbury, joining them at the instant. "I have"—— He paused, recognizing the gig and its occupants, and looked inquiringly at Mr. Waldo.

"They know it," answered the latter, "and for that reason they have come."

"Brave women! We may need their help. I have found the persons we are looking for—at the Beaver House, in the second-story parlor, waiting for the midnight train."

"Then drive on, wife," said Mr. Waldo; "you can put up the horse there. You are known at the Eagle, and we had better avoid curiosity. Follow us: Mr. Woodbury will lead the way."

They passed up the street, attracting no notice, as the connection between the movements of the women in the gig, and the three men on the sidewalk, was not apparent. In a short time they reached the Beaver House, a second-rate hotel, with a deserted air, on a quiet street, and near the middle of the block. Two or three loafers were in the office, half sliding out of the short arm-chairs as they lounged, and lazily talking. Woodbury called the landlord to the door, gave the horse into his charge, and engaged a private room until midnight. There was one, he had already ascertained, adjoining the parlor on the second story. He offered liberal pay, provided no later visitors were thrust upon them, and the landlord was very willing to make the arrangement. It was not often that he received so much patronage in one evening.

After a hurried consultation, in whispers, they entered the house. The landlord preceded them up-stairs with a lamp, and ushered them into the appointed room. It was a small oblong chamber, the floor decorated with a coarse but very gaudy carpet, and the furniture covered with shiny hair-cloth, very cold, and stiff, and slippery. There was a circular table of mahogany, upon which lay a Bible, and the Odd-Fellow's

Annual, bound in red. Beside it was a huge spittoon of brown stone-ware. Folding-doors connected with the adjoining parlor, and the wood-work, originally of unseasoned pine, gotten up without expense but regardless of durability, was so warped and sprung that these doors would not properly close. Privacy, so far as conversation was concerned, was impossible. In fact, no sooner had the landlord departed, and the noise of entrance subsided a little, than Dyce's voice was distinctly heard:

"You should overcome your restlessness. All pioneers in great works have their moments of doubt, but they are caused by the attacks of evil spirits."

Merryfield arose in great agitation. Perhaps he would have spoken, but Mr. Waldo lifted his hand to command silence, beckoned to his wife, and the three left the room. At the door the clergyman turned and whispered to Woodbury and Hannah Thurston: "You may not be needed: wait until I summon you."

The next instant he knocked on the door of the parlor. Dyce's voice replied: "Come in." He entered first, followed by his wife, and, last of all, the injured husband. Dyce and Mrs. Merryfield were seated side by side, on a sofa. Both, as by an involuntary impulse, rose to their feet. The latter turned very pale; her knees trembled under her, and she sank down again upon her seat. Dyce, however, remained standing, and, after the first surprise was over, regained his brazen effrontery.

Merryfield was the first to speak. "Sarah," he cried, "What does this mean?"

She turned her head towards the window, and made no answer.

"Mrs. Merryfield," said Mr. Waldo, gravely, yet with no harshness in his tone, "we have come, as your friends, believing that you have taken this step hastily, and without considering what its consequences would be. We do not think you appreciate its solemn importance, both for time and for eternity. It is not yet too late to undo what you have done, and we are ready to help you, in all kindness and tenderness."

"I want nothing more than my rights," said Mrs. Merryfield, in a hard, stubborn voice, without turning her head.

"I will never interfere with your just rights, as a woman, a wife, and an immortal soul," the clergyman replied. "But you have not alone rights to receive: you have duties to perform. You have bound yourself to your husband in holy marriage; you cannot desert him, whose faith to you has never been broken, who now stands ready to pardon your present fault, as he has pardoned all your past ones, without incurring a greater sin than infidelity to him. Your married relation includes both the moral laws by which society is bound, and the Divine laws by which we are saved."

"The usual cant of theologians!" interrupted Dyce, with a sneer. "Mrs. Merryfield owes nothing to the selfish and artificial machinery which is called Society. Marriage is a part of the machinery, and just as selfish as the rest. She claims equal rights with her husband, and is doing no more than he would do, if he possessed all of her convictions."

"I would never do it!" cried Merryfield,—"not for all the Communities in the world! Sarah, I've been faithful to you, in every thought, since you first agreed to be my wife. If I've done you wrong in any way, tell me!"

"I only want my rights," she repeated, still looking away.

"If you really think you are deprived of them," said Mr. Waldo, "come home with us, and you shall be fairly heard and fairly judged. I promise you, as an impartial friend, that no advantage shall be taken of your mistake: you shall be treated as if it had not occurred. Have you reflected how this act will be interpreted, in the eyes of the world? Can you bear, no matter how innocent you may be, to be followed, through all the rest of your life, by the silent suspicion, if not the open reproach, of the worst shame that can happen to woman? Suppose you reach your Community. These experiments have often been tried, and they have always failed.

You might hide yourself for a while from the judgment of the world, but if the association should break to pieces—what then? Does the possession of some right which you fancy is withheld, compensate you for incurring this fearful risk—nay, for enduring this fearful certainty?"

"What do you know about it?" Dyce roughly exclaimed. "You, a petrified fossil of the false Society! What right have you to judge for her? She acts from motives which your narrow mind cannot comprehend. She is a disciple of the Truth, and is not afraid to show it in her life. If she lived only for the sake of appearances, like the rest of you, she might still be a Vegetable!"

Mrs. Merryfield, who had colored suddenly and violently, as the clergyman spoke, and had turned her face towards him, for a moment, with an agitation which she could not conceal, now lifted her head a little, and mechanically rocked on her lap a travelling-satchel, which she had grasped with both hands. She felt her own inability to defend herself, and recovered a little courage at hearing it done so fiercely by her companion.

Mr. Waldo, without noticing the latter, turned to her again. "I will not even condemn the motives which lead you to this step," said he, "but I must show you its inevitable consequences. Only the rarest natures, the most gifted intellects, may seem to disregard the ruling habits and ideas of mankind, because God has specially appointed them to some great work. You know, Mrs. Merryfield, as well as I do, that you are not one of such. The world will make no exception in your favor. It cannot put our kindly and tolerant construction upon your motives: it will be pitiless and inflexible, and its verdict will crush you to the dust."

"Sarah," said her husband, more in pity than in reproach, "do stop and think what you are doing! What Mr. Waldo says is true: you will bring upon yourself more than you can bear, or I can bear for you. *I* don't charge you with any thing wrong; *I* don't believe you would be guilty of—of—I can't say it—but I couldn't hold up my head, as—as it were, and defend you by a single word."

"Oh, no! of course *you* couldn't!" Dyce broke in again, with an insufferable impudence. "*You* know, as well as I do, —or Mr. Waldo, for that matter,—what *men* are. Don't brag to me about your morality, and purity, and all that sort of humbug: what's fit for one sex is fit for the other. Men, *you* know, have a natural monopoly in the indulgence of passion: it's allowed to them, but woman is damned by the very suspicion. You know, both of you, that any man would as lief be thought wicked as chaste—that women are poor, ignorant fools"——

One of the folding-doors which communicated with the adjoining room was suddenly torn open, and Woodbury appeared. His brown eyes, flashing indignant fire, were fixed upon Dyce. The sallow face of the latter grew livid with mingled emotions of rage and fear. With three strides, Woodbury was before him.

"Stop!" he cried, "you have been allowed to say too much already. If *you*," he added, turning to the others, "have patience with this beast, I have not."

"Ah! he thinks he's among his Sepoys," Dyce began, but was arrested by a strong hand upon his collar. Woodbury's face was pale, but calm, and his lips parted in a smile, the expression of which struck terror to the heart of the medium.

"Now, leave!" said he, in a low, stern voice, "leave, or I hurl you through that window!" Relinquishing his grasp on the collar, he opened the door leading to the staircase, and waited. For a moment, the eyes of the two men met, and in that moment each took the measure of the other. Dyce's figure seemed to contract; his breast narrowed, his shoulders fell, and his knees approached each other. He walked slowly and awkwardly to the end of the sofa, picked up his valise, and shuffled out of the room without saying a word. Woodbury followed him to the door, and said, before he closed it.

"Recollect, *you* leave here by the midnight train." None of those who heard it had any doubt that the command would be obeyed.

Mr. Merryfield experienced an unbounded sensation of relief on Dyce's departure; but his wife was only frightened, not conquered. Although pale and trembling, she stubbornly held out, her attitude expressing her collective defiance of the company. She avoided directly addressing or meeting the eyes of any one in particular. For a few moments there was silence in the room, and she took advantage of it to forestall the appeals which she knew would be made, by saying:

"Well, now you've got me all to yourselves, I suppose you'll try to bully me out of my rights."

"We have no intention to meddle with any of your rights, as a wife," Mr. Waldo answered. "You must settle that question with your husband. But does not your heart tell you that he has rights, as well? And what has he done to justify you in deserting him?"

"He needn't be deserted," she said; "he can come after me."

"Never!" exclaimed her husband. "If you leave me now, and in this way, Sarah, you will not see me again until you voluntarily come back to me. And think, if you go to that place, what you must then seem to me! I've defended you, Sarah, and will defend you against all the world; but if you go on, you'll take the power of doing it away from me. Whether you deserve shame, or not, it'll come to you—and it'll come to me, just the same."

The deluded wife could make no reply. The consequences of her step, if persisted in, were beginning to dawn upon her mind, but, having defended it on the ground of her equal rights as a woman, a pitiful vanity prevented her from yielding. It was necessary, therefore, to attack her from another quarter. Hannah Thurston felt that the moment had arrived when she might venture to speak, and went gently forward to the sofa.

"Sarah," she said, "I think you feel that I am your friend. Will you not believe me, then, when I say to you that we have all followed you, prompted only by the pity and distress which we feel for your sake and your husband's? We beg you not to leave us, your true friends, and go among strangers. Listen to us calmly, and if we convince you that you are mistaken, the admission should not be difficult."

"You, too, Hannah!" cried Mrs. Merryfield. "You, that taught me what my rights were! Will you confess, first, that *you* are mistaken?"

An expression of pain passed over Hannah Thurston's face. "I never meant to claim more than natural justice for woman," said she, "but I may have been unhappy in my advocacy of it. I may even," turning towards Mrs. Waldo, "have seemed to assume a hostile position towards man. If so, it was a mistake. If what I have said has prompted you to this step, I will take my share of humiliation. But we will not talk of that now. Blame me, Sarah, if you like, so you do not forget the tenderness you cannot wholly have lost, for him whose life is a part of yours, here and hereafter. Think of the children who are waiting for you in the other life—waiting for *both* parents, Sarah."

The stubborn resistance of the wife began to give way. Tears came to her eyes, and she shook as if a mighty struggle had commenced in her heart. "It was for them," she murmured, in a broken voice, "that I was going. He said they would be nearer to me."

"Can they be nearer to you when you are parted from their father? Was it only your heart that was wrung at their loss? If all other bonds were broken between you, the equal share in the beings of those Immortals should bind you in life and death! Pardon me for renewing your sorrow, but I must invoke the purer spirit that is born of trial. If your mutual watches over their cradles cannot bring back the memory of your married love, I must ask you to remember who held your hand beside their coffins, whose arm supported you in the lonely nights!"

The husband could endure no more. Lifting his face from his hands, he cried: "It was me, Sarah. And now, if you leave me, there will be no one to talk with me about Absalom, and Angelina, and our dear little Robert. Don't you mind how I used to dance him on my knee, as—as it were, and tell him he should have a horse when he was big? He had such pretty hair; you always said he'd make a handsome man, Sarah: but now they're all gone. There's only us two, now as it were, and we can't—no, we daren't part. We won't part, will we?"

Mrs. Waldo made a quiet sign, and they stole gently from the room. As he closed the door, Woodbury saw the conquered and penitent wife look up with streaming eyes, sobbing convulsively, and stretch out her arms. The next instant, Mrs. Waldo had half embraced him, in the rush of her pent-up gratitude.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, striving to subdue her voice, "how grand it was that you put down that—that *man*. I never believed in non-resistance, and now I know that I am right."

Hannah Thurston said nothing, but her face was radiant with a tranquil light. She could not allow the doubts which had arisen in her mind—the disturbing influences which had, of late, beset her, to cloud the happy ending of such a painful day. A whispered conversation was carried on between Woodbury and the Waldos, so as not to disturb the low voices in the next room; but at the end of ten minutes the door opened and Merryfield appeared.

"We will go home to-night, as it were," said he. "The moon rises about this time, and the night is warm."

"Then we will all go!" was Mrs. Waldo's decision. "The carriages will keep together—husband, you must drive one of them, alone—and I shall not be so much alarmed. It is better so: curious folks will not see that we have been absent, and need not know."

Woodbury whispered to her: "I shall wait until the train leaves."

"Will you follow, afterwards?"

"Yes—but no: my intention to stay all night is known, and I ought properly to remain, unless you need my escort."

"Stay," said Hannah Thurston.

The vehicles left the two hotels with the same persons who had arrived in them—Dyce excepted. Outside of Tiberius they halted, and Merryfield joined his wife. The two women followed, and Mr. Waldo, alone, acted as rear-guard. Thus, in the silent night, over the moonlit hills, and through the rustling darkness of the woods, they went homewards.

Vague suspicions of *something* haunted the community of Ptolemy for a while, but nothing was ever discovered or betrayed which could give them a definite form. And yet, of the five persons to whom the truth was known, three were women.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ONE OF THE SUMMER DIVERSIONS OF PTOLEMY.

Ten days after the journey to Tiberius, the highways in both valleys, and those descending from the hills on either side, were unusually thronged. Country carriages, buggies of all fashions, and light open carts, rapidly succeeded each other, all directing their course towards the village. They did not halt there, however, but passed through, and, climbing the gentle acclivity of the southern hill, halted at a grove, nearly a mile distant. Here the Annual Temperance Convention of Atauga County was to be held. The cause had been languishing for the past year or two; many young men had become careless of their pledges, and the local societies were beginning to fall to pieces, because the members had heard all that was to be said on the subject, and had done all that could conveniently be done. The plan of procuring State legislation in their favor rendered it necessary to rekindle, in some measure, the fires of zeal—if so warm an expression can be applied to so sober a cause—and one of the most prominent speakers on Temperance, Mr. Abiram Stokes, was called upon to brush up his well-used images and illustrations for a new campaign.

It was announced, by means of large placards, posted in all the village stores, post-offices, and blacksmiths' shops, far and wide, that not only he, but Mr. Grindle and several other well-known speakers were to address the Convention. Strange as it may seem, the same placard was conspicuously displayed in the bar-room of the Ptolemy House, the landlord candidly declaring that he would be glad if such a convention were held every week, as it brought him a great deal of custom. The friends of the cause were called upon for a special effort; the day was carefully arranged to come at the end of haying, yet before the wheat-harvest had fairly commenced; moreover, it was Saturday, and the moon was nearly full. The weather favored the undertaking, and by noon the line of the roads could be distinguished, at some distance, by the dust which arose from the strings of vehicles.

The principal members of the local societies—especially those of Atauga City, Anacreon, Nero Corners, Mulligansville, and New Pekin—came in heavy lumber-wagons, decorated with boughs of spruce and cedar, carrying with them their banners, whenever they had any. With some difficulty, a sufficient sum was raised to pay for the services of the Ptolemy Cornet Band, in performing, as the placard stated, "melodies appropriate to the occasion." What those melodies were, it was not very easy to determine, and the managing committee of the Ptolemy Society had a special meeting on the subject, the night before. A wag suggested "The Meeting of the Waters," which was at once accepted with delight. "Bonny Doon" found favor, as it "minded" the hearers of a Scottish brook. "The Campbells are Comin'" was also on the list, until some one remembered that the landlord of the Ptolemy House bore the name of that clan. "A wet sheet and a flowing sea" hinted too strongly at "half-seas over," and all the familiar Irish airs were unfortunately associated with ideas of wakes and Donnybrook Fairs. After much painful cogitation, the "Old Oaken Bucket," "Allan Water," "Zurich's Waters," and "The Haunted Spring" were discovered; but the band was not able to play more than half of them. Its most successful performance, we are bound to confess, was the air of "Landlord, fill the flowing bowl," which the leader could not resist giving once or twice during the day, to the great scandal of those votaries of the cause who had once been accustomed to sing it in character.

The grove was a beautiful piece of oak and hickory timber sloping towards the north, and entirely clear of underbrush. It covered about four acres of ground, and was neither so dense nor fell so rapidly as to shut out a lovely glimpse of the valley and the distant, dark-blue sheet of the lake, between the boles. It was pervaded with a grateful smell, from the trampled grass and breathing leaves; and wherever a beam of sunshine pierced the boughs, it seemed to single out some bit of gay color, in shawl, or ribbon, or parasol, to play upon and utilize its brightness. At the bottom of the grove, against two of the largest trees, a rough platform was erected, in front of which, rising and radiating amphitheatrically, were plank benches, capable of seating a thousand persons. Those who came from a distance were first on hand, and took their places long before the proceedings commenced. Near the main entrance, venders of refreshments had erected their stands, and displayed to the thronging visitors a tempting variety of indigestible substances. There was weak lemonade, in tin buckets, with huge lumps of ice glittering defiantly at the sun; scores of wired bottles, filled with a sarsaparilla mixture, which popped out in a rush of brown suds; ice-cream, the cream being eggs beaten up with water, and flavored with lemon sirup; piles of dark, leathery ginger-cakes, and rows of glass jars full of candy-sticks; while the more enterprising dealers exhibited pies cut into squares, hard-boiled eggs, and even what they called coffee.

Far down the sides of the main road to Ptolemy the vehicles were ranged, and even inside the adjoining fields—the owner of which, being a friend to the cause, had opened his bars to the multitude. Many of the farmers from a distance brought their own oats with them, and unharnessed and fed their horses in the fence-corners, before joining the crowd in the grove. Then, accompanied by their tidy wives, who, meanwhile, examined the contents of the dinner-baskets and saw that every thing was in order, they approached the meeting with satisfied and mildly exhilarated spirits, occasionally stopping to greet an acquaintance or a relative. The daughters had already preceded them, with their usual independence, well knowing the impatience of the young men, and hoping that the most agreeable of the latter would discover them before the meeting was called to order. This was the real charm of the occasion, to old as well as young. The American needs a serious pretext for his recreation. He does not, in fact, recognize its necessity, and would have none at all, did not Nature, with benevolent cunning, occasionally furnish him with diversion under the disguise of duty.

As the banners of the local societies arrived, they were set up in conspicuous positions, on and around the speaker's platform. That of Tiberius was placed in the centre. It was of blue silk, with a gold fringe, and an immense geyser-like fountain in its field, under which were the words: "Ho! every one that thirsteth!" On the right was the banner of Ptolemy—a brilliant rainbow, on a white ground, with the warning: "Look not upon the Wine when it is Red." What connection there was between this sentence and the rainbow was not apparent, unless the latter was meant to represent a watery deluge. The banner of Anacreon, on the left, held forth a dancing female, in a crimson dress. One foot was thrown far out behind her, and she was violently pitching forward; yet, in this uncomfortable position, she succeeded in pouring a thick stream of water from a ewer of blue china into the open mouth of a fat child, who wore a very scanty dress. The inscription was: "The Fountain of Youth." The most ingenious device, however, was that from Nero Corners. This little community, too poor or too economical to own a temperance banner, took a political one, which they had used in the campaign of the previous year. Upon it were the names of the candidates for President and Vice-President: "PIERCE and KING." A very little alteration turned the word "Pierce" into "Prince," and the word "WATER" being prefixed, the inscription became: "Water,—Prince and King." Those from other neighborhoods, who were not in the secret, greatly admired the simplicity and force of the expression.

Woodbury, who was early upon the ground, was much interested in the scene. Between two and three thousand persons were present, but an order and decorum prevailed, which would be miraculous 'n lands where the individual is not permitted to grow up self-ruled, or swayed only by the example of his fellows, and self-reliant. No servant of the law was present to guard against disorder, because each man was his own policeman. Even some tipsy rowdies, who came out from Ptolemy towards the close of the afternoon, were sobered by the atmosphere of the place, and had no courage to make their intended interruptions. The effect of such meetings, Woodbury confessed to himself, could not be otherwise than good; the reform was necessary among a people whose excitable temperament naturally led them to excesses, and perhaps it was only one extreme which could counteract the other. There was still too little repose, too little mental balance among them, to halt upon the golden middle-ground of truth

The band occupied the platform for some time after he arrived, and its performances gave intense satisfaction to the people. The clear tones of the horns and clarionets pealed triumphantly through the shade, and an occasional slip in an instrument was unnoticed in the hum of voices. Gradually, the hearers were lifted a little out of the material sphere in which they habitually moved, and were refreshed accordingly. They were made capable, at least, of appreciating some sentiment and imagination in the speakers, and words were now heard with delight, which, in their common moods, would have been vacant sound. They touched, in spite of themselves, that upper atmosphere of poetry which hangs over all human life—where the cold marsh-fogs in which we walk become the rosy cloud-islands of the dawn!

At two o'clock, the band vacated the platform, and the Convention was called to order. After an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Lemuel Styles, a temperance song was sung by a large chorus of the younger members. It was a parody on Hoffman's charming anacreontic: "Sparkling and Bright," the words of which were singularly transformed. Instead of:

> "As the bubbles that swim on the beaker's brim,
> And break on the lips at meeting,"

the refrain terminated with:

> "There's nothing so good for the youthful blood,
> Or so sweet as the sparkling water!"

—in the style of a medicinal prescription. Poor Hoffman! Noble heart and fine mind, untimely darkened! He was at least spared this desecration; or perhaps, with the gay humor with which even that darkness is still cheered, he would have parodied the parody to death.

The Annual Report was then read. It was of great length, being mainly a furious appeal to voters. The trick of basing a political issue upon a personal habit was an innovation in the science of government, which the natural instincts of the people were too enlightened to accept without question. The County Committee, foreseeing this difficulty, adopted the usual tactics of party, and strove to create a headlong tide of sympathy which would overbear all hesitancy as to the wisdom of the movement, or the dangerous precedent which it introduced into popular legislation. "Vote for the Temperance Candidates," they cried, in the Report, "and you vote for morality, and virtue, and religion! Vote against them, and you vote for disease, and misery, and crime! Vote for them, and you vote reason to the frantic brain, clearness to the bleared eye, steadiness to the trembling hand, joy to the heart of the forsaken wife, and bread to the mouths of the famishing children! Vote against them, and you vote to fill our poor-houses and penitentiaries—to tighten the diabolical hold of the rumseller on his struggling victim—to lead our young men into temptation, and bring ruin on our beloved land! Yes, you would vote to fill the drunkard's bottle; you would vote oaths and obscenity into his speech; you would vote curses to his wife, blows to his children, the shoes off their feet, the shirts off their backs, the beds from under them, and the roofs from over their heads."

The Report was adopted with tremendous unanimity, and the faces of the members of the Committee beamed with satisfaction. The political movement might be considered as successfully inaugurated. This was the main object of the Convention, and the waiting orators now saw that they had a clear and pleasant field before them. Woodbury, who was leaning against a tree, near the end of a plank upon which his friends the Waldos were seated, listened with an involuntary sensation of pain and regret. The very character of the Report strengthened him in the conviction that the vice to be cured had its origin in a radical defect of the national temperament, which no legislation could reach.

Mrs. Waldo looked up at him, inquiringly. He shook his head. "It is a false movement," said he; "good works are not accomplished by violence."

"But sometimes by threatening it," she answered, with a meaning smile.

He was about to reply, when the President announced that Byron Baxter, of the Anacreon Seminary, would recite a poem, after which the meeting would be addressed by Mr. Abiram Stokes.

Byron Baxter, who was an overgrown, knock-kneed youth of nineteen, with long hair, parted in the middle, advanced to the front of the platform, bowed, and then suddenly started back, with both hands extended before him, in an attitude of horror. In a loud voice, he commenced to recite:

"Oh, take the maddening bowl away!
  Remove the poisonous cup!
My soul is sick; its burning ray
  Hath drunk my spirit up.

"Take, take it from my loathing lip
  Ere madness fires my brain:
Oh, take it hence, nor let me sip
  Its liquid death again!"

As the young man had evidently never tasted any thing stronger than molasses-and-water, the expression of his abhorrence was somewhat artificial. Nevertheless, a shudder ran through the audience at the vehemence of his declamation, and he was greeted with a round of applause, at the close.

The orator of the day, Mr. Abiram Stokes, then made his appearance. He was a man of forty-five, with a large, handsome head, and an imposing presence. His hair and eyes were dark, and his complexion slightly tinted with olive. This trait, with his small hands and showy teeth, seemed to indicate a mixture of Spanish blood. He had a way of throwing his head forward, so as to let a large lock of his hair fall over his forehead with a picturesque effect, and then tossing it back to its place with a reverse motion. His voice was full and sonorous; although, to a practised ear, its pathos, in passages intended for effect, was more dramatic than real. Few of his present auditors, however, were able to discriminate in this respect; the young ladies, especially, were in raptures. It was rumored that his early life had been very wild and dissipated, and he was looked upon as one of the most conspicuous brands which had been snatched from the burning. This rumor preceded him wherever he went, created a personal interest for him, in advance, and added to the effect of his oratory.

His style of speaking, nevertheless, was showy and specious. He took no wide range, touched but slightly on the practical features of the subject, and indulged sparingly in anecdotes and illustrations. None of the latter professed to be drawn from his personal experience: his hearers might make whatever inference they pleased, he knew the value of mystery too well, to enlighten them further. He was greatest in apostrophes to Water, to Reform, to Woman, to any thing that permitted him, according to his own expression, "to soar." This feature of his orations was usually very effective, the first time he was heard. He was in the habit of introducing some of his favorite passages on every occasion. Woodbury, who was not aware of this trick, was agreeably surprised at the natural warmth and eloquence of the speaker's language.

His peroration ran something in this wise: "This, the purest and most beneficent of the Virtues, comes not to achieve her victory in battles and convulsions. Soft as the dews of heaven, her white feet are beautiful upon the mountains, bringing glad tidings of great joy! Blessed are we that she has chosen her abode among us, and that she has selected us to do her work! No other part of the world was fitted to receive her. She never could have been produced by the mouldering despotisms of Europe, where the instincts of Freedom are stifled by wine and debauchery; the Old World is too benighted to behold her face. Here only—here on the virgin bosom of a new Continent—here, in the glorious effulgence of the setting sun—here only could she be born! She is the child of the West—Temperance—and before her face the demon Alcohol flees to his caverns and hides himself among the bones of his victims, while Peace sits at her right hand and Plenty at her left!"

"Beautiful!" "splendid!" was whispered through the audience, as the speaker took his seat. Miss Carrie Dilworth wiped her eyes with a very small batiste handkerchief, and sighed as she reflected that this man, her beau-idèal (which she understood to mean an ideal beau), would never know what an appreciative helpmeet she would have made him.

"Oh, Hannah!" she whispered, leaning forward, to Miss Thurston, who was seated on the next plank, "did you ever hear any thing so beautiful?"

"I thought it fine, the first time I heard it," Hannah replied, with a lack of enthusiasm which quite astounded the little sempstress. She began to fear she had made a mistake, when the sight of Miss Ruhaney Goodwin, equally in tears, (and no wonder, for her brother Elisha had been a miserable drunkard), somewhat revived her confidence.

"Flashy, but not bad of its kind," said Woodbury, in reply to Mrs. Waldo's question.

"Are you not ashamed? It's magnificent. And he's such a handsome man!" she exclaimed. "But I see, you are determined not to admire any of them; you've not forgotten

Grindle's attack. Or else you're a pess— what's the name of it? Mr. Waldo explained the word to me yesterday—pess"—

"Oh, a pessimist? Not at all, Mrs. Waldo. On the contrary, I am almost an optimist."

"Well, that's just as bad—though I am not sure I know what it is Oh, there's Grindle going to speak. Now you'll catch it!"

She shook her hand menacingly, and Woodbury, much amused and not a little curious to hear the speaker, resumed his position against the tree.

Mr. Grindle, who carried on a moderate lumber business in Atauga City, neglected no opportunity of making himself heard in public. He was a man of shallow faculties, but profound conceit of himself, and would have preferred, at any time, to be abused rather than ignored. His naturally fluent speech had been cultivated by the practice of years, but as he was neither an earnest thinker nor a close reasoner, and, moreover, known to be unscrupulous in the statement of facts, the consideration which he enjoyed as a speaker would soon have become exhausted, but for the boldness and indecency of his personal attacks, whereby he replenished that element of hot water in which he rejoiced. Mr. Campbell, the landlord of the Ptolemy House, had several times threatened him with personal chastisement, and he only escaped by avoiding an encounter until the landlord's wrath had a little cooled. He was so accustomed to insulting epithets that they never produced the slightest impression upon him.

He had spoken nearly half an hour, airing a quantity of statistics, which he had mostly committed to memory—where that failed, he supplied the figures from his imagination—when he perceived that the audience, after having tasted the spiced meats of Mr. Abiram Stokes, seemed to find the plain food he offered them rather insipid. But he had still the resource of personality, which he knew, from long experience, is always entertaining, whether or not the hearers approve of it. The transition was easily made. "Looking at this terrible array of facts," said he, "how can any man, who is worthy the name of a human being, *dare* to oppose the doctrines of Temperance? How dare any man suppose that his own miserable personal indulgences are of more consequence than the moral salvation of his fellow-creatures? Yet there are such men—not poor, ignorant, deluded creatures, who know no better and are entitled to some allowances—but men who are rich, who appear to be educated, and who claim to be highly moral and respectable. What are we to think of those men?"

Mrs. Waldo glanced up at Woodbury with a look which said: "Now it's coming!"

"Let it come!" his look replied.

"They think, perhaps," the speaker continued, "that there are different laws of morality for different climates—that they can bring here among us the detestable practices of heathen races, which we are trying to root out! I tell such, they had better go back, and let their unhappy slaves hand them the hookah, filled with its intoxicating draught, or steady their tottering steps when the fumes of sherbet have mounted to their brains!"

Many persons in the assembly knew who was meant, and as Woodbury's position made him easily distinguished, they watched him with curiosity as the speaker proceeded. He leaned against the tree, with his arms folded, and an amused half-smile on his face, until the foregoing climax was reached, when, to the astonishment of the spectators, he burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

Mr. Grindle, too, had discovered his victim, and occasionally darted a side look at him, calculating how far he might carry the attack with safety to himself. Woodbury's sudden and violent merriment encouraged while it disconcerted him: there was, at least, nothing to be feared, and he might go on.

"Yes, I repeat it," he continued; "whatever name may be given to the beverage, we are not to be cheated. Such men may drink their sherbet, or their Heidsick; they may call their drinks by *respectable* names, and the demon of Alcohol laughs as he claims them for his own. St. Paul says 'the Prince of Darkness is a gentleman:' beware, beware, my friends, lest the accursed poison, which is harmless to you under its *vulgar* names, should beguile you with an *aristocratic* title!"

"Will the speaker allow me to make a remark?"

Woodbury, controlling his laughter with some difficulty, straightened himself from his leaning position against the tree, and, yielding to the impulse of the moment, spoke. His voice, not loud, but very clear, was distinctly heard all over the crowd, and there was a general rustling sound, as hundreds of heads turned towards him. Mr. Grindle involuntarily paused in his speech, but made no reply.

"I will only interrupt the proceedings for a moment," Woodbury resumed, in a cool, steady tone, amidst the perfect silence of the multitude—"in order to make an explanation. I will not wrong the speaker by supposing that his words have a personal application to myself; because that would be charging him with advocating truth by means of falsehood, and defending morality by the weapons of ignorance and insult. But I know the lands of which he speaks and the habits of their people. So far from drunkenness being a 'detestable heathen habit' of theirs, it is really we who should go to them to learn temperance. I must confess, also, my great surprise at hearing the speaker's violent denunciation of the use of sherbet, after seeing that it is openly sold, to-day, in this grove—after having, with my own eyes, observed the speaker, himself, drink a large glass of it with evident satisfaction."

There was a sudden movement, mixed here and there with laughter, among the audience. Mr. Grindle cried out, in a hoarse, excited voice: "The charge is false! I never use intoxicating beverages!"

"I made no such charge," said Woodbury, calmly, "but it may interest the audience to know that sherbet is simply the Arabic name for lemonade."

The laughter was universal, Mr. Grindle excepted.

"The speaker, also," he continued, 'mentioned the intoxi cating beverage of the hookah. As the hookah is a pipe, in which the smoke of the tobacco passes through water before reaching the mouth, it may be considered a less dangerous beverage than the clay-pipe of the Irish laborer. I beg pardon of the meeting for my interruption."

The laughter was renewed, more heartily than before, and for a minute after Woodbury ceased the tumult was so great that Mr. Grindle could not be heard. To add to the confusion, the leader of the Ptolemy band, taking the noise as a sign that the Convention had adjourned, struck up "Malbrook," which air, unfortunately, was known in the neighborhood by the less classical title of "We won't go home till morning."

The other members of the Committee, on the platform, privately begged Mr. Grindle to take his seat and allow them to introduce a new orator; but he persisted in speaking for another quarter of an hour, to show that he was not discomfited. The greater portion of the audience, nevertheless, secretly rejoiced at the lesson he had received, and the remainder of his speech was not heard with much attention. Woodbury, to escape the curious gaze of the multitude, took a narrow and uncomfortable seat on the end of the plank, beside Mrs. Waldo. He was thenceforth, very much against his will, an object of great respect to the rowdies of Ptolemy, who identified him with the opposite cause.

There was another song, commencing:

"The wine that all are praising
Is not the drink for me,
But there's a spring in yonder glen,
Whose waters flow for Temperance men," etc.,

which was likewise sung in chorus. Then succeeded other speakers, of less note, to a gradually diminishing circle of hearers. The farmers and their wives strayed off to gossip with acquaintances on the edges of the grove; baskets of provisions were opened and the contents shared, and the stalls of cake and sarsaparilla suds experienced a reflux of custom. As the young men were not Lord Byrons, the young ladies did not scruple to eat in their presence, and flirtations were carried on with a chicken-bone in one hand and a piece of bread in the other. The sun threw softer and slanter lights over the beautiful picture of the valley, and, gradually creeping below the boughs, shot into the faces of those who were still seated in front of the platform. It was time to close the performances of the day, and they were accordingly terminated with a third song, the refrain of which was:

> "Oh, for the cause is rolling on, rolling on, rolling on,
> Over the darkened land."

Woodbury and the Waldos, to avoid the dust of the road, walked back to Ptolemy by a pleasant path across the fields. Ere long they overtook Hannah Thurston and Miss Dilworth. Mr. Grindle was, of course, the theme of conversation.

"Wasn't he rightly served, Hannah?" Mrs. Waldo exclaimed, with enthusiasm. Woodbury was fast assuming heroic proportions, in her mind.

"I think Mr. Woodbury was entirely justifiable in his interruption," Miss Thurston answered, "and yet I almost wish that it had not occurred."

"So do I!" Woodbury exclaimed.

"Well—you two are queer people!" was Mrs. Waldo's amazed remark.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH THERE IS BOTH ATTRACTION AND REPULSION.

Hannah Thurston's remark remained in Woodbury's ears long after it was uttered. His momentary triumph over, he began to regret having obeyed the impulse of the moment. Mr. Grindle's discomfiture had been too cheaply purchased; he was game of a sort too small and mean for a man of refined instincts to notice even by a look. His own interruption, cool and careless as he felt it to have been, nevertheless betrayed an acknowledgment that he had understood the speaker's insinuation; and, by a natural inference, that he was sufficiently sensitive to repel it. Mr. Grindle was acute enough to make this inference, and it was a great consolation to him, in his own overthrow, to think that he had stung his adversary.

Woodbury, however, forgot his self-blame in the grateful surprise of hearing its echo from Miss Thurston's lips. Her remark betrayed a delicacy of perception which he had not expected—more than this, indeed, it betrayed a consideration for his character as a gentleman, which she could not have felt, had she not, in imagination, placed herself in his stead. He knew that a refined nature must be born so; it can only be partially imitated by assiduous social study; and his previous intercourse with Miss Thurston had not prepared him to find her instincts so true. He looked at her, as she walked beside him, with a renewed feeling of interest. Her slender figure moved along the grassy path with a free, elastic step. She wore a dress of plain white muslin, with wide sleeves, and a knot of pearl-colored ribbon at the throat. Her parasol, and the trimming of her hat, were of the same quiet color; the only ornament she wore was a cluster of little pink flowers in the latter. The excitement of the occasion, or the act of walking, had brought a soft tinge to her usually pale cheek, and as her eyes dropped to avoid the level light of the sun, Woodbury noticed how long and dark were the lashes that fringed her lids. "At eighteen she must have been lovely,' he said to himself, "but, even then, her expression could scarcely have been more virginly pure and sweet, than now."

He turned away, repressing a sigh. How one delusion could spoil a noble woman!

Before descending the last slope to the village, they paused, involuntarily, to contemplate the evening landscape. The sun was just dipping behind the western hill, and a portion of Ptolemy lay in shadow, while the light, streaming through the gap made by a lateral glen, poured its dusty gold over the distant elms of Roaring Brook, and caused the mansion of Lakeside to sparkle like a star against its background of firs. Far down the lake flashed the sail of a pleasure-boat, and the sinking western shore melted into a vapory purple along the dim horizon. The strains of the band still reached them from the grove, but softened to the airy, fluctuating sweetness of an Æolian harp.

"Our lines are cast in pleasant places," said Mr. Waldo, looking from hill to hill with a cheerful content on his face.

"Every part of the earth has its moments of beauty, I think," Woodbury replied: "but Ptolemy is certainly a favored spot. If the people only knew it. I wonder whether happiness is not a faculty, or a peculiarity of temperament, quite independent of the conditions of one's life?"

"That depends on what you call happiness," Mrs. Waldo rejoined. "Come, now, let us each define it, and see how we shall agree. *My* idea is, it's in making the best of every thing."

"No, it's finding a congenial spirit!" cried Miss Carrie.

"You forget the assurance of Grace," said the clergyman.

"Fairly caught, Mrs. Waldo! You are no better than I you confess yourself an optimist!" Woodbury merrily exclaimed. "So far, you are right—but, unfortunately, there are some things we cannot make the best of."

"We can always do our duty, for it is proportioned to our power," said Hannah Thurston.

"If we know exactly what it is."

"Why should we not know?" she asked, turning quickly towards him.

"Because the simple desire to know is not enough, although I trust God gives us some credit for it. How much of Truth is there, that we imperfectly grasp! How much is there, also, that we shrink from knowing!"

"Shrink from Truth!"

"Yes, since we are human, and our nearest likeness to God is a compassionate tenderness for our fellow-men. Does not the knowledge of a vice in a dear friend give us pain? Do we not cling, most desperately, to our own cherished opinions, at the moment when we begin to suspect they are untenable? No: we are not strong enough, nor stony-hearted enough, to do without illusions."

"Yet you would convince me of mine!" Hannah Thurston exclaimed, with a shade of bitterness in the tone of her voice. The next moment she felt a pang of self-rebuke at having spoken, and the color rose to her face. The application she had made of his words was uncalled-for. He must not thus be met. He was so impregnable in his calmness, and in the conclusions drawn from his ripe experience of life! Her own faith tottered whenever their minds came in contact, yet if she gave up it, how could she be certain, any longer, what was Truth? He was not a hard materialist; he possessed fancy, and feeling, and innate reverence; but his approach seemed to chill her enthusiasm and benumb the free action of her mind.

"Oh, no!" he answered, with kindly seriousness, "I would not consciously destroy a single innocent illusion. There are even forms of Error which are only rendered worse by antagonism. I have no idea of assailing all views that do not har monize with my own. I am but one among many millions, and my aim is to understand Life, not forcibly change its character."

Walking a little in advance of the others, as they spoke, the conversation was interrupted by their arrival in Ptolemy. Woodbury declined an invitation to take tea with the Waldos, and drove home with Bute, in the splendor of sunset. The latter took advantage of the first opportunity to describe to Mrs. Fortitude Babb the confusion which his master had inflicted on Mr. Grindle.

"And sarved him right, too," said she, with a grim satisfaction. "To think o' *him* turnin' up his nose at *her* best Sherry, and callin' it pizon!"

She could not refrain from expressing her approbation to Woodbury, as she prepared his tea. Her manner, however, made it seem very much like a reproof. "I've heerd, Sir," she remarked, with a rigid face, "that you've been speakin'. I s'pose you'll be goin' to the Legislatur', next."

Woodbury smiled. "Ill news travels fast," he said.

"'T'a'n't ill, as I can see. *She* wouldn't ha' thought so, nuther. Though, to be sure, sich fellers didn't come here, in *her* time."

"He will not come again, Mrs. Babb."

"I'd like to see him try it!" With which words Mrs. Babb slapped down the lid of the teapot, into which she had been looking, with a sound like the discharge of a pocket-pistol.

Woodbury went into the library, wheeled his arm-chair to the open window, lighted a cigar, and watched the risen moon brighten against the yielding twilight. The figure of Hannah Thurston, in her white dress, with the pearl-colored ribbon at her throat, with the long lashes falling over her dark-gray eyes, the flush on her cheek, and the earnest sweetness of her lips, rose before him through the rings of smoke, in the luminous dusk of the evening. A persistent fate seemed to throw them together, only to show him how near they might have been, how far apart they really were. When he recalled her courage and self-possession during the scene in the grove above the cataract, and the still greater courage which led her to Tiberius, daring reproach in order to rescue a deluded creature from impending ruin, he confessed to himself that for no other living woman did he feel equal respect. He bowed down in reverence before that highest purity which is unconscious of what it ventures, and an anxious interest arose in his heart as he recognized the dangers into which it might lead her. He felt that she was capable of understanding him; that she possessed the finer instincts which constituted what was best in his own nature; that she yielded him, also, a certain respect: but it was equally evident that her mind was unnecessarily alert and suspicious in his presence. She assumed a constant attitude of defence, when no attack was intended. He seemed to exercise an unconscious repellant force towards her, the secret of which he suspected must be found in herself—in the tenacity with which she held to her peculiar views, and a feminine impatience of contrary opinions.

But, as he mused, his fancies still came back to that one picture—the pure Madonna face, with its downcast eyes, touched with the mellow glory of the sunset. A noiseless breath of the night brought to his window the creamy odor of the locust blossoms, and lured forth the Persian dreams of the roses. The moonlight silver on the leaves—the pearly obscurity of the sky—the uncertain murmurs of the air—combined to steep his senses in a sweet, semi-voluptuous trance. He was too truly and completely man not to know what was lacking to his life. He was accustomed to control passion because he had learned its symptoms, but this return of the fever of youth was now welcome, with all its pain.

Towards midnight, he started suddenly and closed the window. "My God!" he exclaimed, aloud; "she in my arms! her lips on mine! What was I thinking of? Pshaw—a strong-minded woman! Well - the very strongest-minded of them all is still very far from being a man." With which consoling excuse for the absurdity of his thoughts, he went to bed.

The next morning he spent an hour in a careful inspection of the library, and, after hesitating between a ponderous translation of the "*Maha-bharata*" and Lane's "Arabian Nights," finally replaced them both, and took down Jean Paul's "Siebenkäs" and "Walt and Vult." After the early Sunday dinner, he put the volumes into his pockets, and, mounting his horse, rode to Ptolemy.

Hannah Thurston had brought a chair into the open air, and seated herself on the shady side of the cottage. The afternoon was semi-clouded and mildly breezy, and she evidently found the shifting play of sun and shade upon the eastern hill better reading than the book in her hand, for the latter was closed. She recognized Woodbury as he came into the street a little distance below, and watched the motion of his horse's legs under the boughs of the balsam-firs, which hid the rider from sight. To her surprise, the horse stopped, opposite the cottage-door: she rose, laid down her book, and went forward to meet her visitor, who, by this time, had entered the gate.

After a frank and unembarrassed greeting, she said: "My mother is asleep, and her health is so frail that I am very careful not to disturb her rest. Will you take a seat, here, in the shade?"

She then withdrew for a moment, in order to bring a second chair. In the mean time, Woodbury had picked up her book · it was Bettine's Correspondence with Günderode. "I am glad," said he, looking up at her approach, "that I was not wrong in my selection."

She answered his look with an expression of surprise.

"I am going away, in a few days, for a summer excursion,' he added, by way of explanation, taking the books from hi pockets, "and in looking over my library this morning I found two works, which, it occurred to me, you might like to read. The sight of this volume convinces me that I have judged correctly: they are also translations from the German."

Hannah Thurston's eyes brightened as she took the books and looked at their title-pages. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "I thank you very much! I have long wished to see these works Lydia Maria Child speaks very highly of them."

"Who is Lydia Maria Child?"

She looked at him, almost in dismay. "Have you never read her 'Letters from New York?'" she asked. "I do not suppose you are a subscriber to the *Slavery Annihilator* which she edits, but these letters have been collected and published."

"Are they doctrinal?"

"Perhaps you would call them so. She has a generous sympathy with all Progress; yet her letters are mostly descriptive. I would offer them to you, if I were sure that you would read them willingly—not as a task thrust upon you."

"You would oblige me," said Woodbury, cordially. "I am not unwilling to hear new views, especially when they are eloquently presented. Anna Maria Child, I presume, is an advocate of Woman's Rights?"

"You will, at least, find very little of such advocacy in her letters."

"And if I should?" he asked. "Do not confound me, Miss Thurston, with the multitude who stand in hostile opposition to your theory. I am very willing that it should be freely discussed, because attention may thereby be drawn to many real wrongs. Besides, in the long run, the practice of the human race is sensible and just, and nothing can be permanently adopted which is not very near the truth."

"'*Real* wrongs!'" she repeated; "yes, I suppose our wrongs are generally considered imaginary. It is a convenient way of disposing of them."

"Is that charge entirely fair?"

She colored slightly. Is the man's nature flint or iron, she thought, that his mind is so equably clear and cold? Would not antagonism rouse him into warmth, imparting an answering warmth to her thoughts, which his unimpassioned manner chilled to death? Then she remembered his contagious gayety during the walk to Ptolemy, his terrible indignation in the inn at Tiberius, and felt that she had done him wrong.

"I ask your pardon," she answered, presently. "I did not mean to apply the charge to you, Mr. Woodbury. I was thinking of the prejudices we are obliged to encounter. We present what we feel to be serious truths in relation to our sex, and they are thrown aside with a contemptuous indifference, which wounds us more than the harshest opposition, because it implies a disbelief in our capacity to think for ourselves. You must know that the word 'feminine,' applied to a man, is the greatest reproach—that the phrase 'a woman's idea' is never uttered but as a condemnation."

"I have not looked at the subject from your point of view," said Woodbury, with an expressed respect in his manner, "but I am willing to believe that you have reason to feel aggrieved. You must remember, however, that the reproach is not all on one side. You women are just as ready to condemn masculine habits and ideas in your own sex. Among children a molly-coddle is no worse than a tomboy. The fact, after all, does not originate in any natural hostility or contempt, on either side, but simply from an instinctive knowledge of the distinctions of sex, in temperament, in habits, and in mind."

"In mind?" Hannah Thurston asked, with unusual calmness. "Then you think that minds, too, are male and female?"

"That there are general distinctions, certainly. The exact boundaries between them, however, are not so easily to be defined. But there is a radical difference in the texture, and hence in the action of the two. Do you not always instinctively feel, in reading a book, whether the author is a man or a woman? Can you name any important work which might have been written, indifferently, by either?"

Miss Thurston reflected a while, and then suggested: "Mrs. Somerville's 'Physical Geography?'"

"Fairly answered," said Woodbury, smiling. "I will not reject the instance. I will even admit that a woman might write a treatise on algebraic equations, in which there should be no sign of her sex. Still, this would not affect the main fact, which I think you will recognize upon reflection. I admit the greatness of the immortal women of History. Nay, more: I claim that men are not only willing, without the least touch of jealousy, to acknowledge genius in Woman, but are always the first to recognize and respect it. What female poet has selected for her subject that 'whitest lily on the shield of France,' the Maid of Orleans? But Schiller and Southey have not forgotten her. How rare it is, to see one of these famous women eulogized by a woman! The principal advocate of your cause—what is her name?—Bessie Stryker, would be treated with more fairness and consideration by men than by those of her own sex who are opposed to her views."

"Yes, that is it," she answered, sadly; "we are dependent on men, and fear to offend them."

"This much, at least, seems to be true," said he, "that a sense of reliance on the one hand and protection on the other constitutes a firmer and tenderer form of union than if the natures were evenly balanced. It is not a question of superiority, but of radical and necessary difference of nature. Woman is toc finely organized for the hard, coarse business of the world, and it is for her own sake that man desires to save her from it. He stands between her and human nature in the rough."

"But could she not refine it by her presence?"

"Never—never!" exclaimed Woodbury. "On the contrary, it would drag her down to unutterable depths. If woman had the right of suffrage there would be less swearing among the rowdies at the polls, the first time they voted, but at the end of five years both sexes would swear together That is"—he added, seeing the shocked expression of Hannah Thurston's face,—"supposing them to be equally implicated in the present machinery of politics. The first time a female candidate went into a bar-room to canvass for votes, she would see the inmates on their best behavior; but this could not last long. She would soon either be driven from the field, or brought down to the same level. Nay, she would go below it, for the rudest woman would be injured by associations through which the most refined man might pass unharmed."

The tone of grave conviction in his words produced a strong though painful impression upon his hearer. She had heard very nearly the same things said, in debate, but they were always met and apparently overcome by the millennial assurances of her friends—by their firm belief in the possible perfection of human nature, an illusion which she was too ready to accept. A share in all the special avocations of Man, she had believed, would result in *his* elevation, not in the debasement of Woman.

"I should not expect a sudden change," she said, at last, "but might not men be gradually redeemed from their low tastes and habits? Might not each sex learn from the other only what is best and noblest in it? It would be very sad if all hope for the future must be taken away from us."

"All hope? No!" said Woodbury, rising from his seat. "The human race is improving, and will continue to improve Better hope too much than not at all. But between the natures of the sexes there is a gulf as wide as all time. The laws by which each is governed are not altogether arbitrary; they have grown, age after age, out of that difference in mental and moral development of which I spoke, and which—pardon me—you seem to overlook. Whatever is, is not always right, but you may be sure there is no permanent and universal relation founded on error. You would banish profanity, excesses, brute force from among men, would you not? Have you ever reflected that these things are distorted forms of that energy which has conquered the world? Mountains are not torn down, rivers bridged, wildernesses subdued, cities built, states founded, and eternal dikes raised against barbarism, by the eaters of vegetables and the drinkers of water! Every man who is worth the name possesses something of the coarse, original fibre of the race: he lacks, by a wise provision of Providence, that finer protecting instinct which holds woman back from the rude, material aspects of human nature. He knows and recognizes as inevitable facts, many things, of which she does not even suspect the existence. Therefore, Miss Thurston, when you apply to men the aspirations of progress which you have formed as a woman, you must expect to be disappointed. Pardon me for speaking so plainly, in opposition to views which I know you must cherish with some tenderness. I have, at least, not been guilty of the offence which you charged upon my sex."

"No," she answered, "you have been frank, Mr. Woodbury, and I know that you are sincere. But may not your views be still somewhat colored by the old prejudice?"

She blushed, the moment after she spoke. She had endeavored to moderate her expressions, yet her words sounded harsh and offensive.

But Woodbury smiled as he answered: "If it be so, why should old prejudices be worse than new ones? A prejudice is a weed that shoots up over night. It don't take two years to blossom, like this foxglove."

He broke off one of the long purple bells, and stuck it in the button-hole of his coat.

"I like what slowly matures, and lasts long," said he.

Hannah Thurston repeated some words of thanks for the books, as he gave her his hand. From the shade of the fir she watched him mount and ride into the village. "He will probably take tea with the Waldos," she thought: "I shall stay at home."

She resumed her seat, mechanically taking up the volumes he had left, but did not open them. His words still lingered in her mind, with a strange, disturbing effect. She felt that he exercised an influence over her which she was not able satisfactorily to analyze. The calmness of his utterance, the ripeness of his opinions, the fairness of his judgment, attracted her: she knew no man who compelled an equal respect: yet there seemed to be very little in common between them. She never met him without a painful doubt of herself being awakened, which lasted long after his departure. She determined again and again, to avoid these mental encounters, but some secret force irresistibly led her to speak. She felt, in her inmost soul, the first lifting of a current, which, if it rose, would carry her, she knew not where. A weird, dangerous power in his nature seemed to strike at the very props on which her life rested. With a sensation, almost of despair, she whispered to herself: "I will see him no more."

Woodbury, riding down the street, shook his head, and thought, as he unnecessarily pricked his horse with the spur; "I fear she is incorrigible."

CHAPTER XX.

IN WHICH SETH WATTLES IS AGAIN DISAPPOINTED.

After their return from Tiberius the life of the Merryfields was unusually quiet and subdued. The imprudent wife, released from the fatal influence which had enthralled her, gradually came to see her action in its proper light, and to understand the consequences she had so happily escaped. She comprehended, also, that there was a point beyond which her husband could not be forced, but within which she was secure of his indulgent love. Something of the tenderness of their early married life returned to her in those days; she forgot her habit of complaint; suspended, out of very shame, her jealous demand for her "rights;" and was almost the busy, contented, motherly creature she had been to James Merryfield before either of them learned that they were invested with important spiritual missions.

He, also, reflected much upon what had happened. He perceived the manner in which his wife's perverted views had grown out of the belief they had mutually accepted. The possible abuses of this belief became evident to him, yet his mind was unable to detect its inherent error. It rested on a few broad, specious propositions, which, having accepted, he was obliged to retain, with all their consequences. He had neither sufficient intellectual culture nor experience of life to understand that the discrepancy between the ideal reform and its practical realization arose, not so much from the truths asserted as from the truths omitted or concealed. Thus, the former serenity of his views became painfully clouded and disturbed, and there were times when he felt that he doubted what he knew must be true. It was better, he said to himself, that he should cease, for a while, to speculate on the subject; but his thoughts continually returned to it in spite of himself. He greatly felt the need of help in this extremity, yet an unconquerable shyness prevented him from applying to either of the two persons—Woodbury or Mr. Waldo—who were capable of giving it. Towards his wife he was entirely kind and considerate. After the first day or two, the subject of the journey to Tiberius was tacitly dropped, and even the question of Woman's Rights was avoided as much as possible.

While he read aloud the "*Annihilator*" in the evening, and Mrs. Merryfield knit or sewed as she listened, the servant-girl and the field-hand exchanged their opinions in the kitchen. They had detected, the first day, the change in the demeanor of the husband and wife. "They've been havin' a row, and no mistake," said Henry, "and I guess he's got the best of it."

"No sich a thing," replied Ann, indignantly. "Him, indeed! It's as plain as my hand that he's awfully cut up, and she's took pity on him."

"Why, she's as cowed as can be!"

"And he's like a dog with his tail between his legs."

There was a half-earnest courtship going on between the two, and each, of course, was interested in maintaining the honor of the sex. It was a prolonged battle, renewed from day to day with re-enforcements drawn from observations made at meal-times, or in the field or kitchen. Most persons who attempt to conceal any strong emotion are like ostriches with their heads in the sand: the dullest and stupidest of mankind will feel, if not see, that something is the matter. If, to a man who knows the world, the most finished result of hypocrisy often fails of its effect, the natural insight of those who do not think at all is scarcely less sure and true. The highest art that ever a Jesuit attained could not blind a ship's crew or a company of soldiers.

It was fortunate for the Merryfields, that, while their dependents felt the change, the truth was beyond their suspicions

Towards the few who knew it, there was of course no necessity for disguise, and hence, after a solitude of ten days upon the farm, Mr. Merryfield experienced a sense of relief and satisfaction, as, gleaning the scattered wheat with a hay-rake in a field adjoining the road, he perceived Hannah Thurston approaching from Ptolemy. Hitching his horse to the fence, he climbed over into the road to meet her. It was a warm afternoon, and he was in his shirt-sleeves, with unbuttoned waistcoat; but, in the country, conventionalities have not reached the point of the ridiculous, and neither he nor his visitor was aware of the least impropriety. The farmers, in fact, would rather show their own brawny arms and bare breasts than see the bosoms of their daughters exposed to the public gaze by a fashionable ball-dress.

"I'm glad you've come, Hannah," said he, as he gave her his hard hand. "It seems a long time since I seen you before. We've been quite alone ever since then."

"I should have come to see you sooner, but for mother's illness," she replied. "I hope you are both well and—happy." Her look asked more than her words.

"Yes," said he, understanding the question in her mind, "Sarah's got over her delusion, I guess. Not a hard word has passed between us. We don't talk of it any more. But, Hannah, I'm in trouble about the principle of the thing. I can't make it square in my mind, as it were. There seems to be a contradiction, somewhere, between principles and working them out. You've thought more about the matter than I have: can you make things straight?"

The struggle in Hannah Thurston's own mind enabled her to comprehend his incoherent questions. She scarcely knew how to answer him, yet would fain say something to soothe and comfort him in his perplexity. After a pause, she answered:

"I fear, James, that I have over-estimated my own wisdom—that we have all been too hasty in drawing conclusions from abstract reasoning. We have, perhaps, been presumptuous in taking it for granted that we, alone, possessed a truth which the world at large is too blind to see—or, admitting that all is true which we believe, that we are too hasty in endeavoring to fulfil it in our lives, before the needful preparation is made. You know that the field must be properly ploughed and harrowed, before you sow the grain. It may be that we are so impatient as to commence sowing before we have ploughed."

This illustration, drawn from his own business, gave Merryfield great comfort. "That must be it!" he exclaimed. "I don't quite understand how, but I feel that what you say must be true, nevertheless."

"Then," she continued, encouraged by the effect of her words; "I have sometimes thought that we may be too strict in applying what we know to be absolute, eternal truths, to a life which is finite, probationary, and liable to be affected by a thousand influences over which we have no control. For instance, you may analyze your soil, and the stimulants you apply to it—measure your grain, and estimate the exact yield you ought to receive—but you cannot measure the heat and moisture, the wind and hail, and the destructive insects which the summer may bring; and, therefore, you who sow according to agricultural laws may lose your crop, while another, who disregards them, shall reap an abundant harvest. Yet the truth of the laws you observed remains the same."

"What would you do, then, to be sure that you are right?" the farmer asked, as he opened the gate leading into his lane.

"To continue the comparison, I should say, act as a prudent husbandman. Believe in the laws which govern the growth and increase of the seed, yet regulate your tillage according to the season. The crop is the main thing, and, though it sounds like heresy, the farmer may be right who prefers a good harvest secured in defiance of rules to a scanty one with the observance of them. But I had better drop the figure before I make a blunder."

"Not a bit of it!" he cried. "You've cheered me up mightily. There's sense in what you say; queer that it didnt come into my mind before. I'm not sure that I can work my own case so's to square with it—but I'll hold on to the idee."

As they reached the garden, Hannah Thurston plucked a white rosebud which had thrust itself through the paling, and fastened it to the bosom of her dress. Mr. Merryfield immediately gathered six of the largest and reddest cabbage-roses, and presented them with a friendly air.

"There," said he, "stick *them* on! That white thing don't show at all. It's a pity the pineys are all gone."

Mrs. Merryfield, sitting on the shaded portico, rose and met her visitor at the gate. The women kissed each other, as usual, though with a shade of constraint on the part of the former. The farmer, judging it best to leave them alone for a little while, went back to finish his gleaning.

After they were comfortably seated on the portico, and Hannah Thurston had laid aside her bonnet, there was an awkward pause. Mrs. Merryfield anticipated an attack, than which nothing was further from her visitor's thought.

"How quiet and pleasant it is here!" the latter finally said "It is quite a relief to me to get away from the village."

"People are differently constituted," answered Mrs. Merryfield, with a slight defiance in her manner: "I like society, and there's not much life on a farm."

"You have enjoyed it so long, perhaps, that you now scarcely appreciate it properly. A few weeks in our little cottage would satisfy you which is best."

"I must be satisfied, as it is;" Mrs. Merryfield replied. "We women have limited missions, I suppose."

She intended herewith to indicate that, although she had desisted from her purpose, she did not confess that it had been wrong. She had sacrificed her own desires, and the fact should be set down to her credit. With Mr. Waldo she would have been candidly penitent—more so, perhaps, than she had yet allowed her husband to perceive—but towards one of her own sex, especially a champion of social reform, her only feeling was a stubborn determination to vindicate her action as far as possible. Hannah Thurston detected the under-current of her thought, and strove to avoid an encounter with it.

"Yes," said she; "I suspect there are few persons of average ambition who find a sphere broad enough to content them. But our merits, you know, are not measured by that. You may be able to accomplish more good, here, in your quiet circle of neighbors, than in some more conspicuous place."

"*I* should be the judge of that," rejoined Mrs. Merryfield, tartly. Then, feeling that she had been a little too quick, she added, with mournful meekness: "But I suppose some lights are meant to be hid, otherways there wouldn't be bushels."

As she spoke, a light which did not mean to be hid, whatever the accumulation of bushels, approached from the lane. It was Seth Wattles, gracefully attired in a baggy blouse of gray linen, over which, in front, hung the ends of a huge purple silk cravat. He carried a roll of paper in one hand, and his head was elevated with a sense of more than usual importance. The expression of his shapeless mouth became almost triumphant as he perceived Hannah Thurston. She returned his greeting with a calmness and self-possession which he mistook for a returning interest in himself.

By the time the usual common-places had been exchanged, Merryfield had returned to the house. Seth, therefore, hastened to communicate the nature of his errand. "I have been working out an idea," said he, "which, I think, meets the wants of the world. It can be improved, no doubt,—I don't say that it's perfect—but the fundamental basis is right, I'm sure."

"What is it?" asked Merryfield, not very eagerly.

"A Plan for the Reorganization of Society, by which we can lighten the burden of labor, and avoid the necessity of Governments, with all their abuses. It is something like Fourier's plan of Phalansteries, only that don't seem adapted to this country. And it's too great a change, all at once. My plan can be applied immediately, because it begins on a smaller scale. I'm sure it will work, if I can only get it started. A dozen persons are enough to begin with."

"Well, how would you begin?" asked the farmer.

"Take any farm of ordinary size—yours for instance—and make of it a small community, who shall represent all the necessary branches of labor. With the aid of machinery, it will be entirely independent of outside help. You want a small steam engine, or even a horse-power, to thresh, grind, saw, churn turn, and hammer. Then, one of the men must be a blacksmith and wheelwright, one a tailor, and another a shoe and harness maker. Flax and sheep will furnish the material for clothing, maple and Chinese cane will give sugar, and there will really be little or nothing to buy. I assume, of course, that we all discard an artificial diet, and live on the simplest substances. Any little illness can be cured by hydropathy, but that would only be necessary in the beginning, for diseases would soon vanish from such a community. The labor of the women must also be divided: one will have charge of the garden, another of the dairy, another of the kitchen, and so on. When any branch of work becomes monotonous, there can be changes made, so that, in the end, each one will understand all the different departments. Don't you see?"

"Yes, I see," said Merryfield.

"I was sure you would. Just consider what an advantage over the present system! There need not be a dollar of outlay: you can take the houses as they are. Nothing would be bought, and all the produce of the farm, beyond what the community required for its support, would be clear gain. In a few years, this would amount to a fund large enough to hire all the necessary labor, and the members could then devote the rest of their lives to intellectual cultivation. My plan is diplomatic—that's the word. It will reform men, in spite of themselves, by appealing to two of their strongest passions—acquisitiveness and love of ease. They would get into a higher moral atmosphere before they knew it."

"I dare say," Merryfield remarked, as he crossed one leg over the other, and then put it down again, restlessly. "And who is to have the general direction of affairs?"

"Oh, there I apply the republican principle!" Seth exclaimed. "It will be decided by vote, after discussion, in which all take part, women as well as men. Here is my plan for the day. Each takes his or her turn, week about, to rise before sunrise, make the fires, and ring a bell to rouse the others. After a cold plunge-bath, one hour's labor, and then breakfast, accompanied by cheerful conversation. Then work until noon, when dinner is prepared. An hour's rest, and labor again, when necessary. I calculate, however, that six hours a day will generally be sufficient. Supper at sunset, followed by discussion and settlement of plans for the next day. Singing in chorus, half an hour; dancing, one hour, and conversation on moral subjects until eleven o'clock, when the bell rings for rest. You see, the plan combines every thing; labor, recreation, society, and mental improvement. As soon as we have established a few communities, we can send messengers between them, and will not be obliged to support the Government through the Post-Office. Now, I want you to begin the reform."

"Me!" exclaimed Merryfield, with a start.

"Yes, it's the very thing. You have two hundred acres, and a house big enough for a dozen. I think we can raise the community in a little while. We can call it 'Merryfield,' or, if you choose, in Latin—Tanner says it's Campus Gaudius, or something of the kind. It will soon be known, far and wide, and we must have a name to distinguish it. I have no doubt the Whitlows would be willing to join us; Mrs. Whitlow could take the dairy, and Miss Thurston the garden. He's been in the grocery-line: he could make sugar, until he got acquainted with other kinds of work."

"Dairy, indeed!" interrupted Mrs. Merryfield. "Yes, she'd like to skim cream and drink it by the tumbler-full, no doubt. A delightful community it would be, with the cows in *her* charge, somebody else in the bedrooms, and me seeing to the kitchen!'

"Before I'd agree to it, I'd see all the communities——"

Mr. Merryfield's exclamation terminated with a stronger word than his wife had heard him utter for years. He jumped from his seat, as he spoke, and strode up and down the portico. Hannah Thurston, in spite of a temporary shock at the unexpected profanity, felt that her respect for James Merryfield had undergone a slight increase. She was a little surprised at herself, that it should be so. As for Seth Wattles, he was completely taken aback. He had surmised that his plan might meet with some technical objections, but he was certain that it would be received with sympathy, and that he should finally persuade the farmer to accept it. Had the latter offered him a glass of whiskey, or drawn a bowie-knife from his sleeve, he could not have been more astounded. He sat, with open mouth and staring eyes, not knowing what to say.

"Look here, Seth," said Merryfield, pausing in his walk; "neither you nor me a'n't a-going to reform the world. A good many things a'n't right, I know, and as far as talking goes, we can speak our mind about 'em. But when it comes to fixing them yourself, I reckon you want a little longer apprenticeship first. I sha'n't try it at my age. Make as pretty a machine as you like, on paper, but don't think you'll set it up in my house. There's no inside works to it, and it won't go."

"Why—why," Seth stammered, "I always thought you were in favor of Social Reform."

"So I am—but I want, first, to see how it's to be done I'll tell you what to do. Neither you nor Tanner are married, and have no risk to run. Take a couple more with you, and set up a household: do your cooking, washing, sweeping, and bed-making, by turns, and if you hold together six months, and say you're satisfied, I'll have some faith in your plan."

"And get Mrs. Whitlow to be one of your Community," added Mrs. Merryfield, "or the experiment won't be worth much. Let her take care of your *dairy*, and Mary Wollstonecraft and Phillis Wheatley tend to your garden. Send me word when you're ready, and I'll come and see how you get on!"

"I don't need to work, as it is, more than's healthy for me," her husband continued, "and I don't want Sarah to, neither. I can manage my farm without any trouble, and I've no notion of taking ten green hands to bother me, and then have to divide my profits with them. Show me a plan that'll give me something more than I have, instead of taking away the most of it."

"Why, the society, the intellectual cultivation," Seth remarked, but in a hopeless voice.

"I don't know as I've much to learn from either you or Tanner. As for Whitlows, all I can say is, I've tried 'em. But what do you think of it, Hannah?"

"Very much as you do. I, for one, am certainly not ready to try any such experiment," Miss Thurston replied. "I still think that the family relation is natural, true, and necessary, yet I do not wonder that those who have never known it should desire something better than the life of a boarding-house. I know what that is."

"Seth," said Merryfield, recovering from his excitement, which, he now saw, was quite incomprehensible to the disappointed tailor, "there's one conclusion I've come to, and I'd advise you to turn it over in your own mind. You and me may be right in our idees of what's wrong and what ought to be changed, but we're not the men to set things right. I'm not Garrison, nor yet Wendell Phillips, nor you a— what's his name?—that Frenchman?—oh, Furrier, and neither of *them*'s done any thing yet but talk and write. We're only firemen on the train, as it were, and if we try to drive the engine, we may just run every thing to smash."

The trying experience through which Merryfield had passed, was not without its good results. There was a shade more of firmness in his manner, of directness in his speech. The mere *sentiment* of the reform, which had always hung about him awkwardly, and sometimes even ludicrously, seemed to have quite disappeared; and though his views had not changed—at least, not consciously so—they passed through a layer of reawakened practical sense somewhere between the organs of thought and speech, and thus assumed a different coloring. He was evidently recovering from that very prevalent disorder—an actual paralysis of the reasoning faculties, which the victim persists in considering as their highest state of activity

Seth had no spirit to press any further advocacy of his sublime scheme. He merely heaved a sigh of coarse texture, and remarked, in a desponding tone: "There's not much satisfaction in seeing the Right, unless you can help to fulfil it. I may not have more than one talent, but I did not expect you to offer me a napkin to tie it up in."

This was the best thing Seth ever said. It surprised himself, and he repeated it so often afterwards, that the figure became as inevitable a part of his speeches, as the famous two horsemen, in a certain author's novels.

Merryfield, seeing how completely he was vanquished, became the kind host again and invited him to stay for tea. Then, harnessing one of his farm-horses, he drove into Ptolemy for his semi-weekly mail, taking Hannah Thurston with him. As they were about leaving, Mrs. Merryfield suddenly appeared at the gate, with a huge bunch of her garden flowers, and a basket of raspberries, for the Widow Thurston. She was, in reality, very grateful for the visit. It had dissipated a secret anxiety which had begun to trouble her during the previous two or three days.

"Who knows"—she said to herself, sitting on the portico in the twilight, while a breeze from the lake shook the woodbines on the lattice, and bathed her in their soothing balm—"who knows but there are Mrs. Whitlows, or worse, *there*, too!"

CHAPTER XXI.

WITH AN ENTIRE CHANGE OF SCENE.

After leaving Lakeside, Maxwell Woodbury first directed his course to Niagara, to refresh himself with its inexhaustible beauty, before proceeding to the great lakes of the Northwest. His intention was, to spend six or eight weeks amid the bracing atmosphere and inspiring scenery of the Northern frontier, both as a necessary change from his quiet life on the farm, and in order to avoid the occasional intense heat of the Atauga Valley. From Niagara he proceeded to Detroit and Mackinaw, where, enchanted by the bold shores, the wild woods, and the marvellous crystal of the water, he remained for ten days. A change of the weather to rain and cold obliged him to turn his back on the attractions of Lake Superior and retrace his steps to Niagara. Thence, loitering down the northern shore of Ontario, shooting the rapids of the Thousand Isles, or delaying at the picturesque French settlements on the Lower St. Lawrence, he reached Quebec in time to take one of the steamboats to the Saguenay.

At first, the superb panorama over which the queenly city is enthroned—the broad, undulating shores, dotted with the cottages of the *habitans*—the green and golden fields of the Isle d'Orleans, basking in the sun—the tremulous silver veil of the cataract of Montmorency, fluttering down the dark rocks, and the blue ranges of the distant Laurentian mountains—absorbed all the new keenness of his faculties. Standing on the prow of the hurricane-deck, he inhaled the life of a breeze at once resinous from interminable forests of larch and fir, and sharp with the salt of the ocean, as he watched the grander sweep of the slowly separating shores. Except a flock of Quebeckers on their way to Murray Bay and Rivière du Loup, there were but few passengers on board. A professor from a college in New Hampshire, rigid in his severe propriety, looked through his gold-rimmed spectacles, and meditated on the probable geology of the headland of Les Eboulemens; two Georgians, who smoked incessantly, and betrayed in their accent that of the negro children with whom they had played, commented, with unnecessary loudness, on the miserable appearance of the Canadian "peasants;" a newly-married pair from Cincinnati sat apart from the rest, dissolved in tender sentiment; and a tall, stately lady, of middle age, at the stern of the boat, acted at the same time as mother, guide, and companion to two very pretty children—a girl of fourteen and a boy of twelve.

As the steamboat halted at Murray Bay to land a number of passengers, Woodbury found time to bestow some notice on his fellow-travellers. His attention was at once drawn to the lady and children. The plain, practical manner in which they were dressed for the journey denoted refinement and cultivation. The Cincinnati bride swept the deck with a gorgeous purple silk; but this lady wore a coarse, serviceable gray cloak over her travelling-dress of brown linen, and a hat of gray straw, without ornament. Her head was turned towards the shore, and Woodbury could not see her face; but the sound of her voice, as she spoke to the children, took familiar hold of his ear. He had certainly heard that voice before; but where, and when? The boat at last backed away from the pier, and she turned her head. Her face was a long oval, with regular and noble features, the brow still smooth and serene, the dark eyes soft and bright, but the hair prematurely gray on the temples. Her look had that cheerful calmness which is the maturity of a gay, sparkling temperament of youth, and which simply reserves, not loses, its fire.

Woodbury involuntarily struck his hand upon his forehead, with a sudden effort of memory. Perhaps noticing this action, the lady looked towards him and their eyes met. Hers, too, betrayed surprise and semi-recognition. He stepped instantly forward.

"I beg pardon," said he, "if I am mistaken, but I feel sure that I have once known you as Miss Julia Remington. Am I not right?"

"That was my name fifteen years ago," she answered, slowly. "Why cannot I recall yours? I remember your face."

"Do you not remember having done me the honor to attend a soirée which I gave, at the corner of Bowery and —— street?"

"Mr. Woodbury!" she exclaimed, holding out both her hands. "how glad I am to see you again! Who could have dreamed that two old friends should come from Calcutta and St. Louis to meet at the mouth of the Saguenay?"

"St. Louis!"

"Yes, St. Louis has been my home for the last ten years. But you must know my present name—Blake: wife of Andrew Blake, and mother of Josephine and George, besides two younger ones, waiting for me at Saratoga. Come here, Josey; come, George—this is Mr. Woodbury, whom I used to know many, many years ago in New York. You must be good friends with him, and perhaps he will tell you of the wonderful ball he once gave."

Woodbury laughed, and cordially greeted the children, who came to him with modest respect, but without embarrassment. Long before the boat had reached Rivière du Loup, the old friendship was sweetly re-established, and two new members introduced into its circle.

Mrs. Blake had been spending some weeks at Saratoga, partly with her husband and partly alone, while he attended to some necessary business in New York and Philadelphia. This business had obliged him to give up his projected trip to the Saguenay, and it was arranged that his wife should make it in company with the two oldest children, the youngest being left, meanwhile, in the care of a faithful servant.

Woodbury had always held Miss Remington in grateful remembrance, and it was a great pleasure to him to meet her thus unexpectedly. He found her changed in outward appearance, but soon perceived that her admirable common sense, her faithful, sturdily independent womanhood, were still, as formerly, the basis of her nature. She was one of those rare women who are at the same time as clear and correct as possible in their perceptions, penetrating all the disguises and illusions of life, yet unerringly pure and true in instinct and feeling. Such are almost the only women with whom thoroughly developed and cultivated men can form those intimate and permanent friendships, in which both heart and brain find the sweetest repose, without the necessity of posting a single guard on any of the avenues which lead to danger. Few women, and still fewer men, understand a friendship of this kind, and those who possess it must brave suspicion and misunderstanding at every turn.

The relation between Woodbury and Miss Remington had never, of course, attained this intimacy, but they now instinctively recognized its possibility. Both had drunk of the cup of knowledge since their parting, and they met again on a more frank and confidential footing than they had previously known. Mrs. Blake was so unconsciously correct in her impulses that she never weighed and doubted, before obeying them. The wand of her spirit never bent except where the hidden stream was both pure and strong.

That evening, as the boat halted at Rivière du Loup for the night, they walked the hurricane-deck in the long Northern twilight, and talked of the Past. Many characters had faded away from the sight of both; others had either fallen from their early promise, or soared surprisingly far above it; but all, with their attendant loves, and jealousies, and hates, stood out sharp and clear in the memory of the speakers. Mrs. Blake, then, in answer to Woodbury's inquiries, gave him a rapid sketch of her own life.

"I am quite satisfied," she said at the close. "My husband is not exactly the *preux chevalier* I used to imagine, as a girl, but he is a true gentleman"—

"You never could have married him, if he were not," Woodbury interrupted.

—"a true gentleman, and an excellent man of business, which is as necessary in this age as knighthood was in those famous Middle ones. Our married life has been entirely happy from the start, because we mutually put aside our illusions, and made charitable allowances for each other. We did not attempt to cushion the sharp angles, but courageously clashed them together until they were beaten into roundness."

She broke into a pleasant, quiet laugh, and then went on: "I want you to know my husband. You are very different, but there are points of contact which, I think, would attract both. You have in common, at least, a clear, intelligent faculty of judgment, which is a pretty sure sign of freemasonry between man and man. I don't like Carlyle as an author, yet I indorse, heart and soul, his denunciation of shams. But here I am at the end of my history: now tell me yours."

She listened with earnest, sympathetic interest to Woodbury's narrative, and the closing portion, which related to his life at Lakeside, evidently aroused her attention more than all the lazy, uneventful tropical years he had spent in Calcutta. When he had finished the outlines, she turned suddenly towards him and asked: "Is there nothing more?"

"What should there be?" he asked in return, with a smile which showed that he understood her question.

"What should be, is not, I know," said she; "I saw that much, at once. You will allow me to take a liberty which I am sure cannot *now* give pain: *she* is not the cause of it, I hope?"

She looked him full in the face, and felt relieved as she detected no trace of a pang which her words might have called up. The expression of his lips softened rather to pity as he answered: "She has long ceased to have any part in my life, and she has now very little in my thoughts. When I saw her again, last winter, there was not a single fibre of my heart disturbed. I will confess this much, however—another face, a more hopeless memory, long ago displaced hers. Both are gone, and I am now trying to find a third."

His tone was apparently light and indifferent, but to Mrs Blake's true ear it betrayed both weariness and longing. "You cannot be deceived the third time," she said, consolingly.

"I was not deceived the second time," he answered, "but I will not tell you the story, just now. It is as completely at an end as if it had never happened. Can you help me to another trial?"

She shook her head. "It is strange that so few of the best men and women discover each other. Nature must be opposed to the concentration of qualities, and continually striving to reconcile the extremes; I cannot account for it in any other way. You are still young; but do not carelessly depend on your youth; you are not aware how rapidly a man's habits become ossified, at your age. Marriage involves certain mutual sacrifices, under the most favorable circumstances. Don't trust too long to your own strength."

"Ah, but where is the girl with your clear sense, Mrs. Blake?" asked Woodbury, pausing in his walk. "*My* wife must be strong enough to know her husband as he was and is. The deceits which so many men habitually practise, disgust me. Who would hear my confession, and then absolve me by love?"

"Who? Almost every woman that loves! No: I will make no exceptions, because the woman who would not do so, does not really love. Men are cowards, because they fancy that women are, and so each sex cheats itself through want of faith in the other. Is that a recent misgiving of yours?"

"You are a dangerous friend, Mrs. Blake. Your husband, I suspect, is forced to be candid, out of sheer despair at the possibility of concealing any thing from you. Yes, you have interpreted my thought correctly. I spoke with reference to one particular person, whom I am very far from loving, or even desiring to love, but whose individuality somewhat interests me. A woman's ideal of man, I am afraid, rises in proportion to her intellectual culture. From the same cause, she is not so dependent on her emotions, and therefore more calculating and exacting. Is it not so?"

"No, it is not so!" replied Mrs. Blake, with energy. "Recollect, we are not speaking of the sham women."

"She does not belong to that class," said Woodbury. "She is, in many respects, a rare and noble character; she possesses natural qualities of mind which place her far above the average of women; she is pure as a saint, bold and brave, and yet thoroughly feminine in all respects save one—but that one exceptional feature neutralizes all the others."

"What is it?"

"She is strong-minded."

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake, "do you mean a second Bessie Stryker?"

"Something of the kind—so far as I know. She is one of the two or three really intelligent women in Ptolemy—but with the most singularly exaggerated sense of duty. Some persons would have censured me more considerately for forgery or murder than she did for smoking a cigar. I discussed the subject of Women's Rights with her, the last thing before leaving home, and found her as intolerant as the rankest Conservative. What a life such a woman would lead one! Yet, I confess she provokes me, because, but for that one fault, she would be worth winning. It is vexatious to see a fine creature so spoiled."

"With all her fanaticism, she seems to have made a strong impression on you."

"Yes, I do not deny it," Woodbury candidly replied. "How could it be otherwise? In the first place, she is still something of a phenomenon to me, and therefore stimulates my curiosity. Secondly, she is far above all the other girls of Ptolemy, both in intellect and in natural refinement. She makes the others so tame that, while I could not possibly love her, she prevents me from loving any of them. What am I to do?"

"A difficult case, upon my word. If I knew the characters, I might assist you to a solution. The only random suggestion I can make is this: if the strong-minded woman should come to love you, in spite of her strength, it will make short work of her theories of women's rights. Our instincts are stronger than our ideas, and the brains of some of us run wild only because our hearts are unsatisfied. I should probably have been making speeches through the country, in a Bloomer dress, by this time, if I had not met with my good Andrew. You need not laugh: I am quite serious. And I can give you one drop of comfort, before you leave the confessional: I see that your feelings are fresh and healthy, without a shade of cynicism: as we say in the West, the latch-string of your heart has not been pulled in, and I predict that somebody will yet open the door. Good-night!"

Giving his hand a hearty honest pressure of sympathy, Mrs. Blake went to her state-room. Woodbury leaned over the stern-railing, and gazed upon the sprinkles of reflected starlight in the bosom of the St. Lawrence. The waves lapped on the stones of the wharf with a low, liquid murmur, and a boatman, floating upwards with the tide, sang at a distance: "*Jamais je ne t'oublierai.*" Woodbury mechanically caught the melody and sang the words after him, till boat and voice faded together out of sight and hearing. It refreshed rather than disturbed him that the eye of a true woman had looked upon his heart. "Whatever may be the end," he said to himself, "she shall know the whole truth, one day. When we suspect that a seed of passion may have been dropped in our natures, we must quietly wait until we feel that it has put forth roots. I did not tell her the whole truth. I am not sure but that I may love that girl, with all her mistaken views. Her face follows me, and calls me back. If each of us could but find the other's real self, then—why, then"——

He did not follow the thought further. The old pang arose, the old hunger of the heart came over him, and brought with it those sacred yearnings for the tenderer ties which follow marriage, and which man, scarcely less than woman, craves. The red lights of two cigars came down the long pier, side by side: it was the Georgians, returning from a visit to the village. The New Hampshire Professor approached him, and politely remarked: "It is singular that the Old Red Sandstone reappears in this locality."

"Very singular," answered Woodbury. "Good-night, Sir!" and went to bed.

The next morning the steamer crossed to Tadoussac, and entered the pitch-brown waters of the savage, the sublime, the mysterious Saguenay. The wonderful scenery of this river, or rather fiord, made the deepest impression on the new-made friends. It completely banished from their minds the conversation of the previous evening. Who could speak or even think of love, or the tender sorrow that accompanies the memory of betrayed hopes, in the presence of this stern and tremendous reality. Out of water which seemed thick and sullen as the stagnant Styx, but broke into a myriad beads of dusky amber behind the steamer's paddles, leaped now and then a white porpoise, weird and solitary as the ghost of a murdered fish. On either side rose the headlands of naked granite, walls a thousand feet in height, cold, inaccessible, terrible; and even where, split apart by some fore-world convulsion, they revealed glimpses up into the wilderness behind, no cheating vapor, no haze of dreams, softened the distant picture, but the gloomy green of the fir-forests darkened into indigo blue, and stood hard and cold against the gray sky. After leaving L'Anse à l'Eau, all signs of human life ceased. No boat floated on the black glass; no fisher's hut crouched in the sheltered coves; no settler's axe had cut away a single feather from the ragged plumage of the hills.

But as they reached the awful cliffs of Trinity and Eternity, rising straight as plummet falls from their bases, a thousand eet below the surface, to their crests, fifteen hundred feet ir the air, a wind blew out of the north, tearing and rolling away the gray covering of the sky, and allowing sudden floods of sunshine to rush down through the blue gaps. The hearts of the travellers were lifted, as by the sound of trumpets. Far back from between the two colossal portals of rock, like the double propylæ of some Theban temple, ran a long, deep gorge of the wilderness, down which the coming sunshine rolled like a dazzling inundation, drowning the forests in splendor, pouring in silent cataracts over the granite walls, and painting the black bosom of the Saguenay with the blue of heaven. It was a sudden opening of the Gates of the North, and a greeting from the strong Genius who sat enthroned beyond the hills,—not in slumber and dreams, like his languid sister of the South, cooling her dusky nakedness in the deepest shade, but with the sun smiting his unflinching eyes, with his broad, hairy breast open to the wind, with the best blood of the world beating loud and strong in his heart, and the seed of empires in his virile loins!

Woodbury was not one of your "gushing" characters, who cry out "Splendid!" "Glorious!" on the slightest provocation. When most deeply moved by the grander aspects of Nature. he rarely spoke; but he had an involuntary habit of singing softly to himself, at such times. So he did now, quite unconsciously, and had got as far as:

"Thy heart is in the upper world,
And where the chamois bound;
Thy heart is where the mountain fir
Shakes to the torrent's sound;"

—when he suddenly checked himself and turned away with a laugh and a light blush of self-embarrassment. He had been picturing to himself the intense delight which Hannah Thurston would have felt in the scene before him.

Meanwhile the boat sped on, and soon reached the end of the voyage at Ha-ha Bay. Mrs. Blake and her children were delighted with their journey, to which the meeting with

Woodbury had given such an additional charm. As they descended the Saguenay in the afternoon, their eyes grew accustomed to the vast scale of the scenery; loftier and grander arose the walls of granite, and more wild and awful yawned the gorges behind them. The St. Lawrence now opened in front with the freedom of the sea, and in the crimson light of a superb sunset they returned to Rivière du Loup.

The companionship was not dropped after they had reached Quebec. Woodbury accompanied them to the Falls of the Montmorency and the Chaudière; to the Plains of Abraham and the quaint French villages on the shores; and their evenings were invariably spent on Durham Terrace, to enjoy, over and over again, the matchless view. It was arranged that they should return to Saratoga together, by way of Champlain and Lake George; and a few more days found them there, awaiting the arrival of Mr. Blake.

He came at last; and his wife had not incorrectly judged, in supposing that there were some points of mutual attraction between the two men. The Western merchant, though a shrewd and prudent man of business, was well educated, had a natural taste for art (he had just purchased two pictures by Church and Kensett), and was familiar with the literature of the day. He was one of those fortunate men who are capable of heartily enjoying such things, without the slightest ambition to produce them. He neither complained of his own vocation, nor did he lightly esteem it. He was not made for idle indulgence, and was sufficiently prosperous to allow himself proper recreation. His temperament, therefore, was healthy, cheerful, and stimulating to those with whom he came in contact He was by no means handsome, and had a short abrupt manner of speaking, which Woodbury's repose of manner threw into greater distinctness. His wife, however, knew his true value, as he knew hers, and their mutual confidence was absolute.

Woodbury strongly urged them to spend a few days with him at Lakeside, on their return journey to St. Louis. In addition to the pleasure he derived from their society, he had a secret desire that Mrs. Blake should see Hannah Thurston—a curiosity to know the impression which the two women would make on each other. What deeper motive lurked behind this, he did not question.

The discussion of the proposal reminded him that he had not heard from Lakeside since his departure. He immediately wrote to Arbutus Wilson, announcing his speedy return, and asking for news of the farming operations. Six days afterwards an answer came, not from Arbutus, but from Mr Waldo—an answer of a nature so unexpected, that he left Saratoga the same night.

CHAPTER XXII.

IN WHICH TROUBLE COMES TO LAKESIDE.

AFTER Woodbury had left Lakeside for his summer tour, Mrs. Fortitude Babb resumed her ancient authority. "Now," she said to Bute, as they sat down to supper on the day of his departure, "now we'll have a quiet time of it. A body'll know what to do without waitin' to be told whether it's jist to other people's likin's."

"Why, Mother Forty," said Bute, "Mr. Max. is as quiet a man as you'll find anywhere."

"Much you know about him, Bute. He lets you go on farmin' in y'r own way, pretty much; but look at my gard'n—tore all to pieces! The curran' bushes away at t'other end—half a mile off, if you want to git a few pies—and the kersanthums stuck into the yard in big bunches, among the grass! What would *she* say, if she could see it? And the little room for bed-clo'es, all cleaned out, and a big bathin' tub in the corner, and to be filled up every night. Thank the Lord, he can't find nothin' to say ag'in my cookin'. If he was to come pokin' his nose into the kitchen every day, I dunno *what* I'd do!"

"It's his own garden," said Bute, sturdily. "He's paid for it, and he's got a right to do what he pleases with it. *I* would, if 't'was mine."

"Oh yes, *you!* You're gittin' mighty independent, seems to me. I 'xpect nothin' else but you'll go off some day with that reedic'lous thing with the curls."

"Mother Forty!" said Bute, rising suddenly from the table, "don't you mention her name ag'in. I don't want to see her any more, nor I don't want to hear of her!"

He strode out of the house with a fiery face. Mrs. Babb sat, as if thunderstruck. Little by little, however, a presentiment of the truth crept through her stiff brain: she drew her thin lips firmly together and nodded her head. The sense of relief which she first felt, on Bute's account, was soon lost, nevertheless, in an angry feeling toward Miss Carrie Dilworth. Utterly unaware of her own inconsistency, she asked herself what the little fool meant by turning up her nose at such a fine young fellow as Arbutus—the very pick of the farmers about Ptolemy, though she, Fortitude Babb, said it! Where would she find a man so well-built and sound, so honest and good-hearted? Everybody liked him; there were plenty of girls that would jump at the chance of having him for a husband—but no, he was not good enough for *her*. Ugh! the nasty, pert, stuck-up little hussy! That comes o' wearin' your hair like an Injun! But Arbutus mustn't mind; there's as good fish in the sea as ever was ketched, and better too. 'Twas reasonable, after all, that he should marry some time; a man's a man, though you brought him up yourself; and the best way is to take hold and help, when you can't hinder it.

Thereupon, she set her wits to work to discover the right kind of a wife for her step-step-son. It was a perplexing subject: one girl was slatternly, another was unhealthy, a third was too old, a fourth had disagreeable relatives, a fifth was as poor as Job's turkey. Where was the compound of youth, health, tidiness, thrift, and, most important of all, the proper respect for Mrs. Babb's faculties? "I'll find her yet!" she said to herself, as she sat at her knitting, in the drowsy summer afternoons. Meanwhile, her manner towards Bute grew kinder and more considerate—a change for which he was not in the least grateful. He interpreted it as the expression of her satisfaction with the disappointment under which he still smarted. He became moody and silent, and before many days had elapsed Mrs. Babb was forced to confess to herself that

Lakeside was lonely and uncomfortable without the presence of Mr. Woodbury.

As for Bute, though he felt that he was irritable and heavy, compared with his usual cheerful mood, there was more the matter with him than he supposed. The experience through which he had passed disturbed the quiet course of his blood. Like a mechanism, the action of which is even and perfectly balanced at a certain rate of speed, but tends to inevitable confusion when the speed is increased, his physical balance was sadly disarranged by the excitement of his emotional nature and the sudden shock which followed it. Days of feverish activity, during which he did the work of two men without finding the comfort of healthy fatigue, were followed by days of weariness and apathy, when the strength seemed to be gone from his arm, and the good-will to labor from his heart. His sleep was either restless and broken, or so unnaturally profound that he arose from it with a stunned, heavy head.

Among the summer's work which Mr. Woodbury had ordered, after wheat-harvest, was the draining of a swampy field which sloped towards Roaring Brook. An Irish ditcher had been engaged to work upon it, but Bute, finding that much more must be done than had been estimated, and restless almost to nervousness, assisted with his own hands. Day after day, with his legs bare to the thighs, he stood in the oozy muck, plying pick and shovel under the burning sun. Night after night, he went to bed with a curiously numb and deadened feeling, varied only by nervous starts and thrills, as if the bed were suddenly sinking under him.

One morning, he did not get up at the usual hour. Mrs. Babb went on with her labors for breakfast, expecting every moment to see him come down and wash his face at the pump outside the kitchen-door. The bacon was fried, the coffee was boiled, and still he did not appear. She opened the door of the kitchen staircase, and called in her shrillest tones, one, two, three times, until finally an answer reached her from the bedroom. Five minutes afterwards, Bute blundered down the steps, and, seeing the table ready, took his accustomed seat.

"Well, Arbutus, you *have* slep', sure enough. I s'pose you was tired from yisterday, though," said Mrs. Babb, as she transferred the bacon from the frying-pan to a queensware dish. Hearing no answer, she turned around. "Gracious alive!" she exclaimed, "are you a-goin' to set down to breakfast without washin' or combin' your hair? I do believe you're asleep yit."

Bute said nothing, but looked at her with a silly smile which seemed to confirm her words.

"Arbutus!" she cried out, "wake up! You don't know what you're about. Dash some water on your face, child; if I ever saw the like!" and she took hold of his shoulder with one of her bony hands.

He twisted it petulantly out of her grasp. "I'm tired, Mike," he said: "if the swamp wasn't so wet, I'd like to lay down and sleep a spell."

The rigid joints of Mrs. Babb's knees seemed to give way suddenly. She dropped into the chair beside him, lifted his face in both her trembling hands, and looked into his eyes. There was no recognition in them, and their wild, wandering glance froze her blood. His cheeks burned like fire, and his head dropped heavily, the next moment, on his shoulder. "This tussock'll do," he murmured, and relapsed into unconsciousness.

Mrs. Babb shoved her chair nearer, and allowed his head to rest on her shoulder, while she recovered her strength. There was no one else in the house. Patrick, the field-hand, was at the barn, and was accustomed to be called to his breakfast. Once she attempted to do this, hoping that her voice might reach him, but it was such an unnatural, dismal croak, that she gave up in despair. Bute started and flung one arm around her neck with a convulsive strength which almost strangled her. After that, she did not dare to move or speak. The coffee-pot boiled over, and the scent of the scorched liquid filled the kitchen; the fat in the frying-pan, which she had thought-lessly set on the stove again, on seeing Bute, slowly dried to a crisp, and she knew that the bottom of the pan would be ruined. These minor troubles strangely thrust themselves athwart the one great, overwhelming trouble of her heart, and confused her thoughts. Bute was deathly sick, and stark, staring mad, was the only fact which she could realize; and with her left hand, which was free, she gradually and stealthily removed his knife, fork, and plate, and pushed back the table-cloth as far as she could reach. Then she sat rigidly as before, listening to the heavy, irregular breathing of the invalid, and scorched by his burning head.

Half an hour passed before Patrick's craving stomach obliged him to disregard the usual call. Perhaps, he finally thought, he had not heard it, and he then betook himself at once to the house. The noise he made in opening the kitchen-door, startled Bute, who clinched his right fist and brought it down on the table.

"Holy mother!" exclaimed Patrick, as he saw the singular group.

Mrs. Babb turned her head with difficulty, and shook it as a sign of caution, looking at him with wide, suffering eyes, from which the tears now first flowed, when she saw that help and sympathy had come to her at last.

"God preserve us! och, an' he isn't dead?" whispered Patrick, advancing a step nearer, and ready to burst into a loud wail.

"He's sick! he's crazy!" Mrs. Babb breathed hoarsely, in reply: "help me to git him to bed!"

The Irishman supported Bute by the shoulders, while Mrs Babb gently and cautiously relieved herself from his choking arm. Without Pat's help it is difficult to say what she would have done. Tender as a woman, and gifted with all the whimsical cunning of his race, he humored Bute's delirious fancies to the utmost, soothing instead of resisting or irritating him, and with infinite patience and difficulty succeeded in getting him back into his bedroom. Here Mrs. Babb remade his bed, put ting on fresh sheets and pillows, and the two undressed and laid him in it. The first thing she then did was to cut off his long yellow locks close to the head, and apply a wet cloth; beyond that, which she had heard was always used in such cases, she did not dare to go.

The next thing was, to procure medical assistance. There were no other persons about the house, and both of them together, it seemed probable, would scarcely be able to manage the patient, if a violent paroxysm should come on. Mrs. Babb insisted on remaining by him; but Patrick, who had seen similar attacks of fever, would not consent to this. He swore by all the saints that she would find Bute safely in bed on her return. She need not go farther than black Melinda's cabin, he said; it was not over three-quarters of a mile. She could send Melinda for the doctor, and for Misther Merryfield too—that 'ud be better; and then come directly back, herself.

Mrs. Babb gave way to these representations, and hurried forth on her errand. Her stiff old joints cracked with the violence of her motion; she was agitated by remorse as well as anxiety. She had been a little hard on the lad; what if he should die without forgiving her, and should go straight to heaven (as of course he would) and tell his own mother and Jason Babb, who was so fond of him? In that case, Jason would certainly be angry with her, and perhaps would not allow her to sit beside him on the steps of the Golden City, when her time came. Fortunately, she found old Melinda at home, and despatched her with the injunction to "go down to Merryfield's as hard as you can scoot, and tell him to ride for the doctor, and then you come directly back to the house." Melinda at once strode away, with her eyes fixed before her, muttering fragments of camp-meeting hymns.

When Mrs. Babb returned, she found Bute still in bed, panting from evident exhaustion. The wet cloth was on his head and the bed-clothes were straight. Patrick turned away his face from the light, and said: "Sure, an' he's been as quiet as a lamb"—an assertion which was disproved the next day b the multitude of indigo blotches, the marks of terrible blows, which appeared on his own face, breast, and arms. What happened while they were alone, Patrick always avoided telling, except to the priest. To his mind, there was a sanctity about delirium, the secrets of which it would be criminal to betray

In two or three hours more the physician arrived, accompanied by Merryfield. The former pronounced Bute to be laboring under a very dangerous attack of congestive fever, of a typhoid character. He bled him sufficiently to reduce the excitement of the brain, prescribed the usual medicines, a little increased in quantity, and recommended great care and exactness in administering them. When he descended the stairs, the housekeeper stole after him, and grasped his arm as he entered the hall.

"Doctor," she asked, in her stern manner, "I jist want to know the truth. Is he goin' to git over it, or isn't he?"

"The chances are about even, Mrs. Babb," the physician replied. "I will not disguise from you the fact that it's a very serious case. If his constitution were not so fine, I should feel almost like giving him up. I will only say this: if we can keep him for a week, without growing much worse, we shall get the upper hand of the fever. It depends on his nurses, even more than on me."

"*I'll* nuss him!" Mrs. Babb exclaimed, defiantly. "A week, did you say? A week a'n't a life-time, and I can stand it. I stood more'n that, when Jason was sick. Don't be concerned about your orders, Sir: I'VE TOOK 'EM TO HEART, and that's enough said."

The housekeeper went back to the kitchen, clinching her fists and nodding her head—the meaning of which was, that there was to be a fair stand-up fight between Death and herself, for the possession of Arbutus Wilson, and that Death was not going to be the victor, no, not if he took herself instead, out of spite. Then and there she commenced her plan of defence. Those precautions which the physician had recommended were taken with a Draconian severity: what he had forbid den ceased to have a possibility of existence. Quiet, of course was included in his orders, and never was a household conducted with so little noise. The sable Melinda, having let a pot-lid fall on the kitchen-floor, found her arm instantly grasped in a bony vice, while an awful voice whispered in her ear (Mrs. Babb had ceased to speak otherwise, even when she went to the garden)—"Don't you dare to do that ag'in!" She prepared and applied the blisters and poultices with her own hands; administered the medicines punctually to the second, whether by day or by night; and the invalid could not turn in his bed but she seemed to know it, by some sort of clairvoyance, in whatever part of the house she might be at the time. At night, although Patrick and Mr. Merryfield volunteered to watch by turns, and tried to induce her to sleep, she never undressed, but lay down on her bed in an adjoining chamber, and made her appearance in the sick-room, tall, dark, and rigid, every half-hour. She would listen with a fearful interest to Bute's ravings, whether profane or passionate, dreading to hear some accusation of herself, which, if he died, he would bear straight to Jason Babb. Her words, however, had made but the slightest surface-wounds on Bute's sturdy nature. No accusation or reproach directed towards her passed his lips; Miss Dilworth's name, it is true, was sometimes mentioned, but more in anger than in love; but his mind ran principally on farming matters, mixed with much incoherent talk, to which Patrick only appeared to have the clue. The latter, at least, was generally able to exercise a guidance over his hallucinations, and to lead them from the more violent to the gentler phases.

Half the week was gone, and no change could be detected in the invalid's condition. The powerful assault of disease had met as powerful a resisting nature, and the struggle continued, with no marked signs of weariness on either side. Much sympathy was felt by the neighbors, when the news became known, and there were kind offers of assistance. The physician, however, judged that the attendance was already sufficient, and as the fever was contagious in many cases, he recommended that there should be as few nurses as possible. The sympathy then took the form of recipes (every one of which was infallible), dried herbs, jellies, oranges, and the like. Mr. Jones, the miller, even sent a pair of trout, which he had caught in Roaring Brook. The housekeeper received all these articles with stern thanks, and then locked them up in her cupboard, saying to herself, "'Ta'n't time for sich messes yet: *I* can git all he wants, jist now."

Slowly the week drew to a close, and Mrs. Babb grew more anxious and excited. The unusual strain upon her old frame began to tell; she felt her strength going, and yet the agonizing suspense in regard to Bute's fate must be quieted before she could allow it to give way altogether. Her back kept its straightness from long habit, but her knees tottered under her every time she mounted the stairs, and the muscles around her mouth began to twitch and relax, in spite of herself. She no longer questioned the physician, but silently watched his face as he came from Bute's room, and waited for him to speak.

On the seventh day, what little information he voluntarily gave afforded no relief to her mind, and for the first time the iron will which had upheld her thus far began to waver. A weariness which, it seemed to her, no amount of sleep could ever heal, assailed her during the night. Slowly she struggled on until morning, and through the eighth day until late in the afternoon, when the physician came. *This* time, as he left the sick-room, she detected a slight change in his expression. Walking slowly towards him, striving to conceal her weakness and emotion, she said, brokenly:

"Can you tell me now?"

"I don't like to promise," he answered, "but there is a chance now that the fever will exhaust itself, before quite all the power of rallying afterwards has been spent. He is not out of danger, but the prospects of his recovery are better than they were, two to one. If he gets well, your nursing, Mrs. Babb, will have saved him. I wish all my patients could have you."

The housekeeper dropped into the nearest chair, and gave vent to her feelings in a single hoarse, dry sob. When the doctor had gone, Melinda put the teapot on the table, arranged the cups and saucers, and said: "Come, now, Miss Forty, you take a cup. I sure you needs um; you jiss' killin' you'self, honey."

Mrs. Babb attempted to comply: she lifted the saucer to her lips, and then set it down again. She felt, suddenly, very faint and sick, and the next moment an icy chill seized her, and shook her from head to foot: her lips were blue, and her seven remaining teeth rattled violently together. Melinda, alarmed, flew to her assistance; but she pushed her back with her long, thin arm, saying, "I knowed it must come so. One of us had got to go. He'll git well, now."

"Oh, Missus!" cried Melinda, and threw her apron over her head.

"Where's the use, Melindy?" said the housekeeper, sternly. "I guess *she*'ll be glad of it: she'd kind o' got used to havin' me with her."

Even yet, she did not wholly succumb to the attack. Deliberately forcing herself to drink two cups of hot tea, in order to break the violence of the chill, she slowly crept up stairs to Bute's room, where Patrick was in attendance. Him she despatched at once to Ptolemy, with a message to the Rev. Mr. Waldo, whom she requested to come at as early an hour as possible. She sent no word to the physician, but the old Melinda had shrewdness enough to discover this omission and supply it.

Wrapped in a blanket, Mrs. Babb took her seat in the old-fashioned rocking-chair at Bute's bedside, and looked long and earnestly on his worn face, in the last light of day. What had become of the warm, red blood which had once painted his round cheeks, showing itself defiantly through the tan of all the suns of summer? Blood and tan seemed to have suddenly vanished together, leaving a waxen paleness and a sunken, pinched expression, so much like death, that his restless movements and mutterings comforted her, because they denoted life. "Yes, there's life in him still!" she whispered to herself. Presently he opened his eyes, and looked at her. The fierceness of his delirium had been broken, but his expression was still strange and troubled.

"I guess we'll begin the oats to-day, Pat," he said, in a weak voice.

"Arbutus!" she cried, "look at me! Don't you know Mother Forty no more?"

"Mother Forty's gittin' breakfast," said he, staring at her.

"Oh, Arbutus," she groaned, desperately; "do try to know me this once't! I'm mortal sick: I'm a-goin' to die. If there's any thing on y'r mind ag'in me, can't you say you forgive me?" And the poor old creature began to cry in a noiseless way.

"I forgive you, Miss Carrie," answered Bute, catching at the word "forgive." "'Ta'n't worth mindin'. You're a little fool, and I'm a big one, that's all."

Mrs. Babb did not try again. She leaned back in the rocking-chair, folding the blanket more closely around her, to keep off the constantly recurring chills, and husbanding her failing strength to perform the slight occasional offices which the invalid required. Thus she sat until Patrick's return, when the negress helped her to bed.

In the morning the physician found her in a pitiable state of debility, but with a mind as clear and determined as ever. Her physical energies were completely broken, and the prospect of supporting them artificially until the fever should subside, seemed very slight. She understood the grave concern upon his face. "You needn't tell me, doctor," she said; "I know all about it. I'll take the medicines, to make *your* mind easy; but it's no use."

Mr. Waldo arriving about the same time, she begged the physician to wait until she had had an interview with the former. He had been summoned for no other purpose than to draw up her will, the signing of which she wished both gentlemen to witness. The document was soon prepared. She bequeathed all she possessed to Arbutus Wilson, her adopted son, after deducting the expenses of her funeral, and a tombstone similar to that which she had erected to the memory of Jason Babb.

Propped up in bed, she carefully went over the various sums, obliging Mr. Waldo to repeat them after her and read them aloud as he wrote them, in order that there might be no mistake. "There's the four hundred dollars Jason left me," said she, "out at interest with David Van Horn; then the morgidge for a thousand dollars on Wilmot's store; then the three hundred *she* willed to me, two hundred lent to Backus, and two hundred and fifty to Dan'el Stevens;—let alone the int'rest what I've saved. You'll find there'd ought to be twenty-seven hundred and four dollars and six shillin's, altogether. The notes is all in my tin box, and the int'rest tied up in my weddin' stockins in the big trunk. I got it turned into gold: the banks is breakin' all the time. It's enough to give Arbutus a good start in the world—a heap better'n either me or Jason had. Put it into the will that he's to be savin' and keerful, for 'twas got by hard work. I know he won't spend it for hisself, but he's to keep it out drawin' int'rest, and if he gits married, he mustn't let his wife put it onto her back. And you may put down my blessin', and that I've tried to bring him up in the right way and hope he won't depart from it."

The will was finally completed. With a strong effort, she signed it with a cramped, but steady hand. The physician and clergyman affixed their signatures as witnesses. "Now I'm ready," whispered Mrs. Babb, sinking down on the pillows, and almost instantly fell asleep.

As the two gentlemen issued from the house, the physician said: "We must get somebody to take care of her."

"Of course," answered Mr. Waldo. "She cannot be intrusted to old Melinda. Leave it to me: I will see that there is a good nurse in the house before night."

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHICH CONTAINS BOTH LOVE AND DEATH.

Good Mr. Waldo drove back to Ptolemy seriously troubled by the calamity which had come upon the household of Lakeside. Its helpless condition, now that the housekeeper was struck down, rendered immediate assistance necessary; but whence was the help to come? He could think of no woman at the same time willing and competent to render it—except his wife—and on her rested the entire care of his own house, as they were unable to afford a servant. The benevolent clergyman actually deliberated whether he should not let her go, and ask the hospitality of one of his parishioners during her absence, in case no other nurse could be found.

As he turned into the short private lane leading to his stable, a rapid little figure, in pink muslin, entered the front yard. It was Miss Caroline Dilworth, who had just returned from a farm-house on the road to Mulligansville, where she had been sewing for a fortnight past. She entered the plain little sitting room at the same moment with Mr. Waldo. The clergyman's wife greeted her with astonishing brevity, and turned immediately to her husband.

"What was the matter?" she asked; "is Bute so much worse?"

"Bute worse!" ejaculated Miss Dilworth, opening her eyes in amazement.

"No," said Mr. Waldo, answering his wife, "the doctor thinks his chance is a little better, though he is still out of his head; but she has the fever now, and her case seems worse than his. I am distressed about them: there is nobody there except the old negro woman, and Mrs. Babb needs a careful nurse immediately."

"What is it? Do tell me what it is?" cried Miss Dilworth, catching hold of the clergyman's arm with both hands.

He explained the case to her in a few words. To the astonishment of both, the little sempstress burst into a violent flood of tears. For a minute or two the agitation was so great that she was unable to speak.

"It's d-dreadful!" she sobbed at last. "Why—why didn't you send w-word to me? But I'll g-go now: don't put out your horse: take—take me there!"

"Carrie! do you really mean it?" said Mrs. Waldo.

Miss Caroline Dilworth actually stamped her foot. "Do you think I'd make fun about it?" she cried. "Yes, I mean to go, if I must go a-foot. He—they must have *somebody*, and there's nobody can go so well as I can."

"I think she is right, wife," said the clergyman.

Mrs. Waldo hesitated a moment. "I know you would be kind and careful, Carrie," she said at length, "and I could come every day, and relieve you for a while. But are you sure you are strong enough for the task?"

Miss Dilworth dried her eyes with her handkerchief and answered: "If I'm not, you'll soon find it out. I'm going over to Friend Thurston's to get some of my things to take along."

"I'll call for you in a quarter of an hour, with the buggy," said Mr. Waldo.

The little sempstress was off without saying good-by. As she went down the plank walk towards the Widow Thurston's cottage, she pushed her tangled curls behind her ears, and then held her hands clenched at her side, too much in earnest to give her head a single toss or allow her feet a single mincing step. All the latent firmness in her lithe figure was suddenly developed. It spoke in her rapid, elastic gait, in the compression of the short red lips, and the earnest forward glance of her eyes, under their uplifted lids. During the spring and summer she had been gradually coming to the conviction that she had treated Bute Wilson shamefully. The failure of the little arts which she had formerly employed with so much success had hastened this conviction. The softest drooping of her eyes, the gentlest drawl of her voice, ceased to move him from his cold, grave indifference. She began to feel that these charms only acquired their potency through the sentiments of those upon whom they were exercised. Had she not again and again cast them forth as nets, only to haul them in at last without having entrapped the smallest fish?

Besides, in another way, her ambition had suffered a severe check. The mistress of the school at Mulligansville having fallen sick, Miss Dilworth took her place for a fortnight. Her first sense of triumph in having attained what she considered to be her true mission, even as the proxy of another, did not last long. For a day or two, the novelty of her appearance kept the school quiet; but, one by one, the rude country children became familiar with her curls, with her soft green eyes, and her unauthoritative voice. They grinned in answer to her smile and met her frown with unconcealed derision; they ate green apples before her very face; pulled each other's hair or tickled each other under the arms; drew pictures on their slates and upset the inkstands over their copy-books. The bigger boys and girls threw saucy notes at each other across the whole breadth of the school-room. They came to her with "sums" which she found herself unable to solve; they read with loud, shrill voices and shocking pronunciation; and when the hour for dismissal came, instead of retiring quietly, they sprang from their benches with frightful whooping and rushed tumultuously out of the house. The "beautiful humanity" of the occupation, which she had heard so extolled, burst like a painted bubble, leaving no trace; the "moral suasion," on which she relied for maintaining discipline, failed her utterly; the "reciprocal love" between teacher and pupil, which she fancied she would develop in the highest degree, resolved itself into hideous contempt on the one side and repugnance on the other. She was finally indebted to one of the biggest and coarsest of the boys—a fellow who almost made her tremble every time he came near her—for sufficient help to prevent the school from falling into chaos before the fortnight came to an end. This boy, who was the bully of the school, and whose voice had a cracked hoarseness denoting the phase of development through which he was passing, was impressed with a vague respect for her curls and her complexion, and chivalrously threw his influence, including his fists, on her side. It was not pleasant, however, to hear the older girls giggle and whisper when he came: "There's the mistress's beau!"

Bute, also, increased in value in proportion as he became inaccessible. She confessed to herself that no masculine eyes had ever looked at her with such honest tenderness as his: and they were handsome eyes, whatever his nose might be. She had always liked to hear his voice, too, in the old time: now it was no longer the same. It was changed to *her*, and she had not imagined that the change could make her so restless and unhappy. Still, she did not admit to herself that she really loved him: their intercourse had had none of that sentimental poetic coloring—that atmosphere of sighs, murmurs, thrills, and silent raptures—which she fancied should accompany Love. He was even coarsely material enough to sneer at the idea of "kindred spirits!" Yet he loved her, for all that; she felt it in his altered manner, as she had never felt it before.

The unexpected shock of the news which Mr. Waldo communicated to her was a sudden betrayal of herself. Had she possessed the least power of introversion, she would have been amazed at it. But her nature was not broad enough to embrace more than a single sensation. The burst of tears and the impulse to offer her services came together, and all that she felt was: "If Bute dies, I shall be wretched." She continued to repeat this to herself, on her way to the Widow Thurston's, adding: "I'll do my best to save him and his stepmother, and I don't care who knows it, and I don't care what they say."

"Why, what's the matter, child?" exclaimed the widow, as Miss Dilworth walked into the sitting-room, erect, determined, and with a real expression on her usually vapid face.

The latter explained her purpose, not without additional tears. "Nobody else would be likely to go," she said: "they would be afraid of catching the fever. But I'm not afraid: I've seen the like before: I may be of use, and I ought to be there now."

The widow looked at her with a gentle scrutiny in her eyes, which made Miss Dilworth drop her lids for the first time and bring forward her curls from behind her ears. The glance changed to one of tender sympathy, and, checking a sigh which would have brought a memory with it, the old woman said:

"I think thee's right."

Thus encouraged, the necessary preparations were soon made, and in an hour from that time Miss Carrie Dilworth was at Lakeside.

The negress, who knew her, received her with a mixture of rejoicing and grief: "Bress de Lord, honey!" she exclaimed; "things is goin' bad. I'se mighty glad you come. Somebody's got to see to 'um, all de time, an' de cookin' *mus'* be 'tended to, ye knows."

Mrs. Babb, after a long sleep, was again awake, but in a state of physical prostration which prevented her from leaving her bed. Her anxiety lest Arbutus should not receive the proper care, aggravated her condition. She kept his medicines on a chair by her bedside, and demanded constant reports of him, which neither Patrick nor Melinda could give with sufficient exactness to satisfy her.

Miss Dilworth, somewhat nervously, ascended the kitchen stairs and entered the housekeeper's room. But the sight of the haggard, bony face, the wild restlessness in the sunken eyes, and the thin gray hair streaming loosely from the queer, old-fashioned night-cap, restored her courage through the inspiration of pity. She went forward with a quick, light step, and stooped down beside the bed.

"I have come to help, Mrs. Babb," she said.

"Help, eh?" answered the housekeeper, in a weak, husky voice; "well—I've got to take any help that comes. Hard pushed, it seems. Thought *you* didn't keer about none of us What are you good for, anyhow?"

"I've helped nurse before, Mrs. Babb. I'll do my best, if you'll let me try. Which medicine do you take?"

The housekeeper lay silent for a while, with her eyes on the sempstress's face. She was so weak that neither her first feeling of astonishment nor her second feeling of repugnance possessed a tithe of their usual force; the sense of her own helplessness overpowered them both. "That bottle with the red stuff," she said at last. "A tea-spoonful every two hours. Three o'clock, next. Take keer!" she gasped, as Miss Dilworth moved to the chair, "you'll knock every thing down with that hair o' yourn!"

The medicines were at last carefully arranged on a small table, the tea-spoonful administered, the pillows shaken up and smoothed, and, the invalid having declared herself comfortable, Miss Dilworth slipped out of the room. When she returned, ten minutes afterwards, her hair was drawn over her temples in masses as smooth as its former condition would allow, and fastened in a knot behind. The change was nevertheless an advantageous one; it gave her an air of sober womanhood which she had never before exhibited. The old woman noticed it at once, but said nothing. Her eyes continually wandered to the door, and she was growing restless.

"Shall I go and see how he is?" whispered Miss Carrie

A strong expression of dislike passed over the housekeeper's face. For a few minutes she did not speak; then, as no one came, she finally groaned: "I can't go myself."

Miss Carrie opened the door of Bute's room with a beating heart. The curtains were down, to keep out the afternoon sun, and a dim yellow light filled the chamber. The air was close, and impregnated with a pungent etherous smell. In an old arm-chair, near the bed, sat Patrick, dozing. But that shorn head, that pale, thin face, and lean, hanging arm, did they really belong to Bute? She approached on tiptoe, holding her breath, and stood beside him. A rush of tenderness, such as she had never felt towards any man, came over her. She longed to lay the wasted head on her bosom, and bring back color into the cheeks from the warmth of her own heart. He turned and muttered, with half-closed eyes, as if neither asleep nor awake, and even when she gently took the hand that lay on the coverlet, the listless fingers did not acknowledge her touch. Once he looked full in her face, but vacantly, as if not even seeing her.

A horrible fear came over her. "Is he worse?" she whispered to the Irishman.

"No, he's no wurrse, Miss—maybe a bit better than he wur."

"When must he have his medicine?"

"I've jist guv' it to him. He'll be quieter now. Could ye stay here and laive me go to the barrn for an hour, jist?"

Miss Carrie reported to the housekeeper, and then relieved Patrick. She noiselessly moved the arm-chair nearer the bed, seated herself, and took Bute's feverish hand in her own. From time to time she moistened his parched lips and cooled his throbbing temples. His restless movements ceased and he lay still, though in a state of torpor, apparently, rather than sleep. It was pitiful to see him thus, stripped of his lusty strength, his red blood faded, the strong fibres of his frame weak and lax, and the light of human intelligence gone from his eye. His helplessness and unconsciousness now, brought into strong relief the sturdy, homely qualities of his mind and heart: the solemn gulf between the two conditions disclosed his real value. Miss Dilworth felt this without thinking it, as she sat beside him, yearning, with all the power of her limited nature, for one look of recognition, though it expressed no kindness for her; one rational word, though it might not belong to the dialect of love.

No such look, no such word, came. The hour slowly dragged out its length; Patrick came back and she returned to the housekeeper's room. The physician paid a second visit in the evening, expressed his satisfaction with her nursing, thus far, and intrusted her with the entire care of administering the medicines. He advised her, however, not to be wasteful of her strength at the outset, as the patients would not soon be able to dispense with careful watching. It was arranged that the old negress should occasionally relieve her at night. In regard to the invalids, he confessed that he had some hope of Bute's recovery; in a day or two the crisis of the fever would be over; but Mrs. Babb, though her attack was much less violent, inspired him with solicitude. The apathetic condition of her system continued, in spite of all his efforts, and the strong will which might have upheld her, seemed to be suddenly broken.

Miss Dilworth fulfilled her duties with an astonishing patience and gentleness. Even the old housekeeper, no longer seeing the curls and drooping eyelids, or hearing the childish affectation of the voice, appeared to regard her as a different creature, and finally trusted the medicines implicitly to her care. On the day after her arrival, Bute, whose wan face and vacant eyes haunted her with a strange attraction, fell into a profound sleep. All that night he lay, apparently lifeless, but for the faint, noiseless breath that came from his parted lips. He could not be aroused to take his medicines. When this was reported to Mrs. Babb, she said, as sternly as her weakness would permit: "Let him alone! It's the turnin' p'int; he'll either die or git well, now."

This remark only increased Miss Dilworth's anxiety. Fifty times during the night she stole into his room, only to find him motionless, senseless as before. Patrick took advantage of the quiet to sleep, and snored loud and hard in his armchair. Once, moved by an impulse which she could not resist, she stooped down and kissed the sick man's forehead. The touch of her lips was light as a breath, but she rose, trembling and blushing at herself, and slipped out of the room

"Quiet—nothing but quiet as long as he sleeps!" said the physician, next morning. Patrick was excluded from the room, because, although he pulled off his boots, there were two or three planks in the floor which creaked under his weight. Miss Dilworth silently laid a row of bed-room rugs from the door to the bedside, and went and came as if on down, over the enormous tufted roses. No sound entered the room but that of the summer wind in the boughs of the nearest elm. Hour after hour of the clouded August day went by, and still no change in the sleeper, unless an increased softness in his listless hand, as she cautiously touched it.

Towards sunset, after a restless day, Mrs. Babb fell asleep, and Miss Dilworth went into Bute's room and seated herself in the chair. The prolonged slumber frightened her. "Oh," she said to herself, "what would I do if he was to die. I've treated him badly, and he would never know that I'm sorry for it—never know that—that I love him! Yes, I know it now when it's too late. If he were well, he's done loving me as he used to—but he won't get well: he'll die and leave me wretched!"

As these words passed through her mind, while she leaned forward, with her face close to that of the invalid, she suddenly noticed a change in his breathing. Its faint, regular character was interrupted: it ceased a moment, and then his breast heaved with a deeper inspiration. "Oh, he's dying!" she whispered to herself in despair. Stooping down, she kissed his forehead passionately, while her tears dropped fast upon it. His arm moved; she rose, and met the glance of his open eyes—clear, tender, happy, wondering, but not with the blank wonder of delirium. It was Bute's self that looked at her—it was Bute's first, faithful love that first came to the surface from the very depth of his heart, before any later memory could thrust itself between. He had felt the kiss on his forehead: his eyes drew her, she knew not how, to his lips. His right arm lifted itself to her neck and held the kiss a moment fast · then it slid back again, and she sank into the chair, covering her face with her hands, and weeping.

After a while Bute's voice came to her—weak and gentle, but with its natural tone. "Carrie," said he, "what is it? What's happened?"

"Oh, Bute," she answered, "you've been very sick: you've been out of your head. And Mrs. Babb's sick too, and I've come to take care of you both. I thought you were going to die, Bute, and now you're going to get well, and I'm so glad—so happy!"

"Why are you glad, Carrie? Why did you come?" he asked, with an echo of the old reproach in his voice. The memory of his disappointment had already returned.

Nothing was further from Miss Dilworth's mind than a resort to her former arts. She was too profoundly and solemnly moved: she would tell the truth, as if it were her own dying hour She took her hands from her face, lifted her head, and looked at him. "Because I have treated you badly, Bute," she said: "because I trifled with you wickedly. I wanted to make some atonement, and to hear you say you forgive me."

She paused. His eyes were fixed on hers, but he did not answer.

"Can you forgive me, Bute?" she faltered. "Try to do it, because I love you, though I don't expect you to love *me* any more."

"Carrie!" he cried. A new tint came to his face, a new light to his eye. His hand wandered towards her on the coverlet.

"Carrie," he repeated, feebly grasping her hand with his fingers and drawing her towards him, "once't more, *now!*" In the kiss that followed there was forgiveness, answering love, and a mutual compact for the future.

"You've brought me back ag'in to life," he murmured, closing his eyes, while two bright tears crept out from under the lids. She sat beside him, holding his hand. He seemed too weak to say more, and thus ten minutes silently passed away.

"Tell me how it happened," said Bute, finally. "Where's Mother Forty?"

"I must go to her at once!" cried Miss Dilworth, starting up. "She's worrying herself to death on your account. And the doctor said if you got awake you were to keep quiet, and not talk. I must go, Bute: do lie still and try to sleep till I come back. Oh, we oughtn't to have said any thing!"

"What we've said won't do me no harm," he murmured, with a patient, happy sigh. "Go, then, Carrie: I'll keep quiet."

Miss Dilworth went into the housekeeper's room so much more swiftly than usual that the latter was awakened by the rustling of her dress. She started and turned her head with a look of terror in her eyes.

"Oh, Mrs. Babb!" cried the sempstress: "Bute's awake at last. And his mind's come back to him! And he says he'll get well!"

The old woman trembled visibly. Her bony hands were clasped under the bed-clothes and her lips moved, but no audible words came from them. Then, fixing her eyes on the face of the kneeling girl, she asked: "What have you been a-sayin' to him?"

Miss Dilworth involuntarily drooped her lids and a deep color came into her face. "I asked him," she answered, "to forgive me for my bad behavior towards him."

"Nothin' else?"

"Yes, Mrs. Babb, I said he could do it now, because I love him."

"You do, do ye?"

"Yes, and he has forgiven me."

"Hnh!"

With this, her customary snort, when she was not prepared to express a decided opinion, the housekeeper closed her eyes and seemed to meditate. Presently, however, she turned her head, and said, rather sternly, though without any signs of bitterness:

"Go 'way now, gal! I want to be alone a spell."

Miss Dilworth obeyed. When she returned, at the time appointed for administering the medicine, Mrs. Babb had resumed her state of passive patience. She made no further inquiries about the conversation which had taken place, nor about any which took place afterwards. A change had come over her whole nature. She lay for hours, with her eyes open, without speaking, evidently without suffering, yet keenly alive to every thing that took place. She took her medicines mechanically, with an air of listless obedience to the orders of the physician, and without any apparent result. Stimulants and sedatives alike failed to produce their customary effect. From day to day she grew weaker, and the physician finally declared that, unless she could be roused and stirred in some way, to arrest the increasing prostration, he could do nothing for her. As the knowledge of the favorable change in Bute's case had left her as before, there was little hope that any further source of excitement remained.

As for Bute, he rallied with a rapidity which amazed the physician, who ascribed to an unusual vitality of his own the life which the invalid had really drawn from another. The only difficulty now was, to retard his impatient convalescence, and Miss Dilworth was obliged to anticipate her conjugal authority and enjoin silence when he had still a thousand happy questions left unasked and unanswered. When that authority failed, she was forced to absent herself from the room, on the plea of watching Mrs. Babb. His impatience, in such case, was almost as detrimental as his loquacity, and the little sempstress was never at ease except when he slept.

After passing a certain stage in the fever, the housekeeper began to sink rapidly. Her mind, nevertheless, made feeble efforts to retain its ascendency—efforts which reacted on her body and completed the ruin of its faculties. One day she astonished Miss Dilworth by rising in her bed with a violent effort

"I must go and see him!" she said: "help me into his room!"

"Oh, you cannot!" cried Miss Dilworth, supporting her with one arm around her waist. "Lie down: you are not strong enough. He will be able to come to you in a day or two."

"No, no! to-day!" gasped the housekeeper. "I a'n't certain o' knowin' him to-morrow, or o' bein' able to say to him what I've got to say." Thereupon her temporary strength gave way, and she sank down on the bed in a fainting state.

After she had somewhat revived, Miss Dilworth took counsel with herself, and soon came to a decision. She went down stairs and summoned Patrick, who carefully wrapped up Bute and placed him in the arm-chair. She herself then assisted in carrying him into the housekeeper's room, and placing him by the bedside. A look of unspeakable fondness came over Mrs. Babb's haggard face; the tears silently flowed from her eyes and rolled down the wrinkles in her hollow cheeks.

"Cheer up, Mother Forty," said Bute, who was the first to speak. "I'm gittin' on famous' and 'll soon be round agin."

"It's as it should be, Arbutus," she whispered, hoarsely, catching her breath between the words; "the old 'un 'll go and the young 'un 'll stay. 'T had to be one of us."

"Don't say that; we'll take care of you—Carrie and me. Won't we, Carrie?"

"Yes, Bute," said Carrie, with her handkerchief to her eyes.

Mrs. Babb looked from one to another, but without any sign of reproof. She feebly shook her head. "What must be must," said she; "my time's come. P'raps I sha'n't see you no more, Arbutus. Maybe I ha'n't done my duty by you always; maybe I've seemed hard, once't and a while, but I meant it for your good, and I don't want you to have any hard thoughts ag'in me when I'm gone."

"Mother Forty!" cried Bute, his eyes filling and overflowing, "God knows I ha'n't nothin' ag'in you! You've been as good to me as you knowed how; it's me that's been rough, and forgitful o' how you took care o' me when I was a little boy. Don't talk that a-way now, don't!"

"Do you really mean it, Arbutus? Do you forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass agi'n me? Can I go to Jason and say I've done my duty by you?"

Bute could not answer: he was crying like a child. He slid forward in the chair. Miss Dilworth put her arm around his waist to steady him, and they sank down together on their knees beside the bed. Bute's head fell forward on the coverlet. The housekeeper placed both her hands upon it.

"Take my blessin', child!" she said, in a feebler voice. "You've been a good boy, Arbutus. I'll tell *her*, and I'll tell your mother. Maybe I'll have a seat betwixt her and Jason. All I have'll be yourn. But you mustn't stay here: say good-by to me and go."

"Will you bless me, with him?" faltered Miss Carrie.

The left hand slowly moved to her head, and rested there. "Be a good wife to him when the time comes, and I'll bless you always. There a'n't many like him, and I hope you know it."

"I do know it," she sobbed; "there's *nobody* like him."

"I want you to leave the money where it is," said the housekeeper, "and only draw the interest. You'll have an easier time of it in your old days than what I've had; but I don't begrudge it to you. It's time you were goin'—say good-by, child!"

The sempstress, small as she was, lifted Bute until his foster-mother could catch and hold his head to her bosom. Then, for the first time in his remembrance, she kissed him, once, twice, not with any violent outburst of feeling, but with a tender gravity as if it were a necessary duty, the omission of which would not be agreeable to Jason Babb. Then she turned over on the pillow, saying "Amen!" and was silent. Patrick was summoned and Bute was speedily replaced in his own bed, where Miss Dilworth left him to resume her place by the housekeeper's side.

But that same night, about midnight, Mrs. Babb died She scarcely spoke again after her interview with Bute, except to ask, two hours later, whether he seemed to be any the worse on account of it. On being told that he was sleeping quietly, she nodded her head, straightened her gaunt form as well as she was able, and clasped her fingers together over her breast. Thus she lay, as if already dead, her strong eyebrows, her hooked nose, and her sharp chin marking themselves with ghastly distinctness as the cheeks grew more hollow and the closed eyes sank deeper in their sockets. Towards midnight a change in her breathing alarmed Miss Dilworth. She hastily called the old negress, who was sleeping on the kitchen settee.

"Honey," said the latter, in an awe-struck whisper, as she stood by the bedside, "she's a-goin' fast. She soon see de glory. Don't you wish fur her to stay, 'case dat'll interfere wid her goin'."

Her breath grew fainter, and came at longer intervals, but the moment when it ceased passed unnoticed by either of the watchers. Melinda first recognized the presence of Death. "You go an' lay down," she said to Miss Carrie. "You can't do no good now. I'll stay wid her till mornin'."

The sempstress obeyed, for she was, in truth, wretchedly weary. For the remainder of the night Melinda sat on a low chair beside the corpse, swinging her body backwards and forwards as she crooned, in a low voice:

"De streets is paved wid gold,
Ober on de udder shore."

CHAPTER XXIV.

VARIOUS CHANGES, BUT LITTLE PROGRESS IN THE STORY.

As soon as the news of Mrs. Babb's death became known, the neighbors hastened to Lakeside to offer their help. The necessary arrangements for the funeral were quietly and speedily made, and, on the second day afterwards, the body of the housekeeper was laid beside that of Jason Babb, in the Presbyterian churchyard at Ptolemy, where he had been slumbering for the last twenty-three years. The attendance was very large, for all the farmers' wives in the valley had known Mrs. Babb, and still held her receipts for cakes, preserves, and pickles in high esteem. The Reverends Styles and Waldo made appropriate remarks and prayers at the grave, so that no token of respect was wanting. All the neighbors said, as they drove homewards, "The funeral was a credit to her." Her spirit must have smiled in stern satisfaction, even from its place by Jason's side, and at the feet of Mrs. Dennison, as it looked down and saw that her last unconscious appearance among mortals was a success.

Miss Dilworth took counsel of her friends, Hannah Thurston and Mrs. Waldo, on the day of the funeral. She confessed to them, with returning misgivings, what had taken place between Bute Wilson and herself, and was a little surprised at the hearty gratification which they both expressed.

"How glad I am!" cried Mrs. Waldo; "it is the very thing!"

"Yes," said Hannah Thurston, in her grave, deliberate manner, "I think you have made a good choice, Carrie."

If any spark of Miss Caroline Dilworth's old ambition still burned among the ashes of her dreams, it was extinguished at that moment. The prophets of reform were thenceforth dead to her. She even took a consolation in thinking that if her wish had been fulfilled, her future position might have had its embarrassments. She might have been expected to sympathize with ideas which she did not comprehend—to make use of new shibboleths before she had learned to pronounce them —to counterfeit an intelligent appreciation when most conscious of her own incompetency. Now, she would be at ease. Bute would never discover any deficiency in her. She spoke better English and used finer words than he did, and if she made a mistake now and then, he wouldn't even notice it. With the disappearance of her curls her whole manner had become more simple and natural. Her little affectations broke out now and then, it is true, but they had already ceased to be used as baits to secure a sentimental interest. There was even hope that her attachment to Bute would be the means of developing her somewhat slender stock of common-sense.

"Bute says we must be married as soon as he gets well," she said: "he won't wait any longer. Is there any harm in my staying here and taking care of him until he's entirely out of danger?"

Mrs. Waldo reflected a moment. "Certainly none until Mr. Woodbury returns," she said. "Mr. Waldo has answered his letter to Bute, which came this morning. If he leaves Saratoga at once, he will be here in three or four days. The doctor says you are an admirable nurse, and that is reason enough why you should not leave at present."

"The other reason *ought* to be enough," said Hannah Thurston. "She owes a wife's duty towards him now, when he needs help which she can give. I am sure Mr. Woodbury will see it in the same light. He is noble and honorable."

"Why, Hannah!" cried Mrs. Waldo, "I thought you and he were as far apart as the opposite poles!"

"Perhaps we are, in our views of certain subjects," was th quiet reply. "I can, nevertheless, properly estimate his character as a man."

Mrs. Waldo suppressed a sigh. "If you could only estimate your own true character as a woman!" she thought.

Miss Dilworth's duties were now materially lightened. The danger of further contagion had passed, and some one of the neighbors came every day to assist her. Bute only required stimulating medicines, and the usual care to prevent a relapse, of which there seemed to be no danger. He began to recover his healthful sleep at night, and his nurse was thus enabled to keep up her strength by regular periods of rest. Once or twice a day she allowed him to talk, so long as there was no appearance of excitement or fatigue. These half-hours were the happiest Bute had ever known. To the delicious languor and peace of convalescence, was added the active, ever-renewed bliss of his restored love, and the promises which it whispered. He delighted to call Miss Carrie, in anticipation, "Little wife!" pausing, each time he did so, to look for the blush which was sure to come, and the smile on the short red lips, which was the sweetest that ever visited a woman's face. Of course it was.

One day, nevertheless, as he lay looking at her, and thinking how much more steady and sensible she seemed since her curls were gathered up—how much more beautiful the ripples of light brown hair upon her temples—a cloud came over his face. "Carrie," he said, "there's one thought worries me, and I want you to put it straight, if you can. S'pose I hadn't got sick,—s'pose I hadn't lost my senses, would you ever ha' come to your'n?"

She was visibly embarrassed, but presently a flitting roguish expression passed over her face, and she answered: "Would you have given me a chance to do it, Bute?"

"Likely not," said he. "You spoke plain enough last winter, and 'twasn't for me to say the first word, after that. When a man's burnt his fingers once't, he keeps away from the fire. But I want to know why you come to take keer of me and Mother Forty. Was it only because you were sorry, and wanted to pay me for my disapp'intment in that way? Can you lay your hand on your heart and say there was any thing more?"

Miss Carrie immediately laid her hand on her heart. "Yes, Bute," she said, "there *was* something more. I was beginning to find it out, before, but when I heard you were so bad, it came all at once."

"Look here, Carrie," said Bute, still very earnestly, although the cloud was beginning to pass away, "some men have hearts like shuttlecocks, banged back and forth from one gal to another, and none the wuss of it. But I a'n't one of 'em. Whenever I talk serious, I 'xpect to be answered serious. I believe what you say to me. I believed it a'ready, but I wanted to be double sure. You and me have got to live together as man and wife. 'Twon't be all skylarkin': we've got to work, and help one another, and take keer o' others besides, if things goes right. What'll pass in a gal, won't pass in a married woman: you must get shut o' your coquettin' ways. I see you've took the trap out o' your hair, and now you must take it out o' your eyes. 'Ta'n't that it'll mean any thing any more—if I thought it did, I'd feel like killin' you—but it won't look right."

"You mustn't mind my foolishness, Bute," she answered, penitently, "and you mustn't think of Seth Wattles!"

"Seth be—*con-sarn'd!*" Bute exclaimed. "When I see you pickin' up dead frogs, I'll believe you like to shake hands with Seth! I've got agreeabler thoughts than to have him in my head. Well—I don't bear no grudge ag'in him now; but I can't like him."

"I don't like him either. Fancy such a fellow as he thinking himself good enough for Hannah Thurston! There's no man good enough for her!"

"Like enough *she* thinks herself too good for any man," Bute remarked. "But [illegible] woman, Carrie, that a man wants [illegible] an that gits Mi Max."

"Oh, I must go and see to Mr. Woodbury's room!" cried Miss Dilworth, starting up. "Perhaps he'll come this very day. Then I suppose I must go away, Bute."

"I hope not, Carrie. I wouldn't mind bein' a bit sicker for a day or two, o' purpose to keep you here. What! are you goin' away in that fashion, Little Wife?"

Miss Dilworth darted back to the bedside, stooped down, like a humming-bird presenting its bill to a rather large flower, and was about to shoot off again, when Bute caught her by the neck and substituted a broad, firm kiss, full of consistency and flavor, for the little sip she had given him.

"That's comfortin'," said he. "I thank the Lord my mouth a'n't as little as your'n."

Before night, Mr. Woodbury arrived, having taken a carriage at Tiberius and driven rapidly over the hills. Mr. Waldo's letter, announcing Bute's dangerous condition and Mrs. Babb's death, had greatly startled and shocked him. His summer tour was nearly at an end, and he at once determined to return to Lakeside for the autumn and winter. He was not surprised to find his household in charge of Miss Dilworth, for the news had already been communicated to him. She met him at the door, blushing and slightly embarrassed, for she scarcely felt herself entitled to be ranked among his acquaintances, and the calm reserve of his usual manner had always overawed her.

"I am very glad to find you still here, Miss Dilworth," he said, pressing her hand warmly; "how can I repay you for your courage and kindness? Bute—?"

"He is much better, Sir. He is expecting you: will you walk up and see him?"

"Immediately. I suppose I ought not to carry all this dust with me. I will go to my room first."

"It is ready, Sir," said Miss Dilworth. "Let me have your coat."

Before Woodbury had finished washing his face and hands, and brushing the white dust of the highway out of his hair, there was a light tap on the door. He opened it and beheld his coat, neatly dusted and folded, confronting him on the back of a chair. Bute's room he found in the most perfect order The weather had been warm, dry, and still, and the window furthest from the bed was open. The invalid lay, propped up with two extra pillows, awaiting him. Woodbury was at first shocked by his pale, wasted face, to which the close-cut hair gave a strange, ascetic character. His eyes were sunken, but still bright and cheerful, and two pale-blue sparks danced in them as he turned his head towards the door.

"Bute, my poor fellow, how are you? I did not dream this would have happened," said Woodbury, taking the large, spare hand stretched towards him.

"Oh, I'm doin' well now, Mr. Max. 'Twas queer how it come—all 't once't, without any warnin'. I knowed nothin' about it till I was past the danger."

"And Mrs. Babb—was she sick long? Did she suffer much?"

"I don't think she suffered at all: she was never out of her head. She seemed to give up at the start, I'm told, and all the medicines she took was no use. She jist made up her mind to die, and she always had a strong will, you know, Mr. Max." Bute said this quietly and seriously, without the least thought of treating the memory of his foster-mother lightly.

"She had a good nurse, at least," said Woodbury, "and you seem to be equally fortunate."

"Well, I guess I am," answered Bute, his face on a broad grin, and with more color in it than he had shown for many days. "I've had the best o' nussin', Mr. Max. Not but what Pat and Mr. Merryfield was as kind as they could be—'twasn't the same thing. And I may as well out with it plump: there's no nuss quite ek'l to a man's own wife."

"Wife!" exclaimed Woodbury, in amazement.

"Well—no—not jist yit," stammered Bute; "but she will be as soon as I git well enough to marry. I'd been hankerin' after her for these two years, Mr. Max., but it mightn't ha' come to nothin' if I hadn't got sick."

"You mean Miss Dilworth, of course?"

Bute nodded his head.

"You astonish me, Bute. I scarcely know her at all, but I think you have too much good sense to make a mistake. I wish you joy, with all my heart; and yet"—he continued in a graver tone, taking Bute's hand, "I shall be almost sorry for it, if this marriage should deprive me of your services on the farm."

"How?" cried Bute, instantly recovering his former paleness, "do you mean, Mr. Max., that you wouldn't want me afterwards?"

"No, no, Bute! On the contrary, I should be glad to see you settled and contented. But it is natural, now, that you should wish to have a farm of your own, and as Mrs. Babb's legacy will enable you to buy a small one, I thought——"

"Bless you, Mr. Max.!" interrupted Bute, "it *would* be a small one. What's a few hundred dollars? I've no notion o' goin' into farmin' on a ten-acre lot."

"Mr. Waldo tells me that her property amounts to about twenty-seven hundred dollars."

"*Twenty—seven—hundred!*" and Bute feebly tried t whistle. "Well—Mother Forty always was a cute 'un—who'd ha' thought it? And she's left it all to me—she keered a mighty sight more for me than she let on." Here something rose in his throat and stopped his voice for a moment. "I'll do her biddin' by it, that I will!" he resumed. "I shall leave it out at interest, and not touch a cent of the capital. Time enough for my children to draw that. Oh, Mr. Max., now the Lord may jist send as many youngsters to me and Carrie, a He pleases."

A dim sensation, like the memory of a conquered sorrow, weighed upon Woodbury's heart for an instant, and passed away.

"I know when I'm well off," Bute went on. "I'm contented to stay as I am: every thing on the farm—the horses, th oxen, the pigs, the fences, the apple-trees, the timber-land—

seems to me as much mine as it is your'n. If I had a farm o' my own, it'd seem strange like, as if it belonged to somebody else. I've got the hang of every field here, and know jist what it'll bring. I want to make a good livin': I don't deny that; but if I hold on to what I've got now, and don't run no resks, and put out th' interest ag'in every year, it'll roll up jist about as fast and a darned sight surer, than if I was to set up for myself. If you're willin', Mr. Max., we can fix it somehow. If the tenant-house on the 'Nacreon road was patched up a little, it'd do for the beginnin'."

"We can arrange it together, Bute," said Woodbury, rising. "Now you have talked long enough, and must rest. I will see you again before I go to bed."

As Miss Dilworth, at his request, took her seat at the table and poured out the tea, Woodbury looked at her with a new interest. He had scarcely noticed her on previous occasions, and hence there was no first impression to be removed. It seemed to him, indeed, as if he saw her for the first time now. The ripples in her hair caught the light; her complexion was unusually fair and fresh; the soft green of her eyes became almost brown under the long lashes, and the mouth was infantine in shape and color. A trifle of affectation in her manner did not disharmonize with such a face; it was natural to her, and would have been all the same, had she bein eighty years old instead of twenty-six. With this affectation, however, were combined two very useful qualities—a most scrupulous neatness and an active sense of order. "Upon my soul, it is Lisette herself," said Woodbury to himself, as he furtively watched her airs and movements. Who would have expected to find so many characteristics of the Parisian grisette in one of our staid American communities? And how astonishing, could he have known it, her ambitious assumption of Hannah Thurston's views! It was a helmet of Pallas, which not only covered her brow, but fell forward over her saucy retroussé nose, and weighed her slender body half-way to the earth.

She felt his scrutiny, and performed her tea-table duties with two spots of bright color in her cheeks. Woodbury knew that she suspected what Bute's principal communication to him had been, and, with his usual straightforward way of meeting a delicate subject, decided to speak to her at once. She gave a little start of confusion—not entirely natural—as he commenced, but his manner was so serious, frank, and respectful, that she soon felt ashamed of herself and was drawn to her own surprise, to answer him candidly and naturally.

"Bute has told me, Miss Dilworth," said he, "of your mutual understanding. I am very glad of it, for his sake. He is an honest and faithful fellow, and deserves to be happy. I think he is right, also, in not unnecessarily postponing the time, though perhaps I should not think so, if his marriage were to deprive me of his services. But he prefers to continue to take charge of Lakeside, rather than buy or lease a farm for himself. I hope you are satisfied with his decision?"

"Yes, Mr. Woodbury," she answered: "I should not like to leave this neighborhood. I have no relatives in the country, except an aunt in Tiberius. My brother went to Iowa five years ago."

"Bute must have a home," Woodbury continued. "He spoke of my tenant-house, but besides being old and ruinous, it is not well situated, either for its inmates, or for the needs of the farm. I had already thought of tearing it down, and building a cottage on the knoll, near the end of the lane. But that would take time, and——"

"Oh, we can wait, Mr. Woodbury!"

He smiled. "I doubt whether Bute would be as ready to wait as you, Miss Dilworth. I am afraid if I were to propose it, he would leave me at once. No, we must make some other arrangement in the mean time. I have been turning the matter over in my mind and have a proposition to make to you."

"To me!"

"Yes. Mrs. Babb's death leaves me without a housekeeper. My habits are very simple, the household is small, and I see already that you are capable of doing all that will be required. Of course you will have whatever help you need; I ask nothing more than a general superintendence of my domestic affairs until your new home is ready. If you have no objection of your own to make, will you please mention it to Bute?"

"Bute will be *so* pleased!" she cried. "Only, Mr. Woodbury, if it isn't more than I am capable of doing? If I'm able to give you satisfaction!"

"I shall be sure of your wish to do so, Miss Dilworth," said Woodbury, rising from the table; "and I have the further guarantee that you will have Bute to please, as well as myself."

He went into the library and lighted a cigar. "Lucky fellow!" he said to himself, with a sigh. "He makes no intellectual requirements from his wife, and he has no trouble in picking up a nice little creature who is no doubt perfection in his eyes, and who will be faithful to him all his days. If she doesn't know major from minor; if she confuses tenses and doubles negatives; if she eats peas with her knife, and trims her bonnet with colors at open war with each other; if she never heard of Shakespeare, and takes Petrarch to be the name of a mineral—what does he care? She makes him a tidy home; she understands and soothes his simple troubles; she warms his lonely bed, and suckles the vigorous infants that spring from his loins; she gives an object to his labor, a contented basis to his life, and a prospect of familiar society in the world beyond the grave. Simple as this relation of the exes is for him, he feels its sanctity no less than I. His espousals are no less chaste; his wedded honor is as dear, his paternal joys as pure. My nature claims all this from woman, but, alas! it claims more. The cultivated intelligence comes in to question and criticize the movements of the heart. Here, on one side, is goodness, tenderness, fidelity; on the other, grace, beauty, refinement, intellect—both needs must be fulfilled. How shall I ever reach this double marriage, except through a blind chance? Yet here is one woman in whom it would be nearly fulfilled, and a strange delusion into which she has fallen warns me to think of her no more!"

The conscious thread of his thoughts broke off, and they loosened themselves into formless reverie. As he rose to revisit Bute's chamber, he paused a moment, thinking: "That I can analyze her nature thus deliberately, is a proof that I do not love her."

Bute was delighted with the new arrangement which Woodbury had proposed to Miss Dilworth. The latter would leave in a few days, he said, and spend the subsequent two or three weeks before the wedding could take place, at the Widow Thurston's.

"After it's all over, Mr. Max.," said Bute, "she shall stay here and tend to the house jist as long as you want; but—you won't mind my sayin' it, will you?—there's only one right kind of a housekeeper for *you*, and I hope you won't be too long a findin' her."

CHAPTER XXV.

IN WHICH HANNAH THURSTON MAKES A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

In another week, Bute was able to dispense with the grateful nursing which had more than reconciled him to the confinement of his sick-room. He required no attendance at night, and was able to sit, comfortably pillowed, for a great part of the day. He consumed enormous quantities of chicken-broth, and drank immoderately of Old Port and Albany Ale. Miss Dilworth, therefore, made preparations to leave: she was now obliged to sew for herself, and a proper obedience to custom required that she should not remain at Lakeside during the last fortnight of her betrothal.

On the morning of her departure, Woodbury called her into the library. "You have done me a great service, Miss Dilworth," said he, "and I hope you will allow me to acknowledge it by furnishing you with one article which I know will have to be provided." With these words he opened a paper parcel and displayed a folded silk, of the most charming tint of silver-gray.

The little sempstress looked at it in speechless ecstasy. "It's heavenly!" she at last cried, clasping her hands. "I'm obliged to you a thousand times, Mr. Woodbury. It's too much, indeed it is!"

"Bute won't think so," he suggested.

She snatched the parcel, and darted up-stairs in three bounds. "Oh, Bute!" she cried, bursting into his room, "only look at this! It's my wedding-dress! And he's just given it to me!"

"It's the prettiest thing I ever laid my eyes on," said Bute, looking at the silk reverently but not daring to touch it. "That's jist like Mr. Max.—what did I always tell you about him?"

After Miss Dilworth's departure, the housekeeping was conducted, somewhat indifferently, by the old negress. She had, however, the one merit of being an admirable cook, and Woodbury might have managed to live with her assistance, for a fortnight, but for one awkward circumstance. He received a letter from Mrs. Blake, saying that her husband had completed his business in the East and they were preparing to leave Saratoga. Would it be still convenient for him to entertain them for a few days at Lakeside, on their return to St. Louis? If the illness in his household, which had called him home so suddenly, still continued, they would, of course, forego the expected pleasure; but if not, they would be the more delighted to visit him, as it was probable they would not come to the East the following summer. Would he answer the letter at once, as they were nearly ready to leave?

Woodbury was uncertain what to do in this emergency. There was no longer the slightest fear of contagion, and he particularly desired the offered visit; but how could he entertain his friends without a housekeeper? He finally decided that it must be arranged, somehow; wrote an affirmative answer, and rode into Ptolemy to post it without delay, first calling at the Cimmerian Parsonage to ask the advice of a sensible female friend.

"You see," said he, after stating the dilemma to Mrs. Waldo, "now that my tyrant has gone, I wish her back again. A despotism is better than no government at all."

"Ah, but a republic is better than a despotism" she replied. "Do you take my meaning? I'm not certain, after all, that the figure is quite correct. But the thing is to find a temporary housekeeper. I know of no single disengaged woman in Ptolemy, unless it is Miss Ruhaney Goodwin, and her mournful countenance and habit of sighing, would be very discouraging to your guests, even if she were willing to go. Mrs. Bue is a complete intelligence office for Ptolemy servants. Your only chance is to see her."

"And if that fails?"

"Then there is no hope. I shall be vexed, for I want to see this Mrs. Blake. If it were not for taking care of my good husband, I should myself be willing to act as mistress of Lakeside for a few days."

"I knew you would be able to help me!" cried Woodbury, joyfully. "Let me add Mr. Waldo to the number of my guests. I shall be delighted to have him, and the change may be refreshing to him. Besides, you will have us all at the Cimmerian Church, if the Blakes remain over a Sunday."

"You are mistaken, if you supposed that any thing of the kind was in my thoughts," said Mrs. Waldo. "But the proposal sounds very pleasantly. I am sure we both should enjoy it very much, but I cannot accept, you know, before consulting with my husband."

"Leave Mr. Waldo to me."

The matter was very easily arranged. The clergyman, faithful to the promise of his teeth, appreciated a generous diet. His own table was oftentimes sparely supplied, and he was conscious of a gastric craving which gave him discouraging views of life. There was no likelihood of any immediate birth or death in his congregation, and it was not the season of the year when members were usually assailed by doubts and given to backsliding. More fortunate clergymen went to the watering places, or even to Europe, to rest their exhausted lungs; why should he not go to Lakeside for a week? They had no servant, and could shut up the parsonage during their absence: but the old horse?

"Wife, we must get somebody to look after Dobbin," he said, thoughtfully.

"Bring Dobbin along, Woodbury laughed, "my old Dick will be glad to see him."

Although neither he nor the Waldos were aware that they had spoken to any one on the subject, the arrangement that had been made was whispered to everybody in Ptolemy before twenty-four hours were over. Nothing was known of the Blakes, except that they were "fashionable," and those who would have been delighted to be in the place of the poor clergyman and his wife, expressed their astonishment at the conduct of the latter.

"It's what I call *very* open communion," said the Rev. Mr Pinchman, of the Campbellite Church.

Miss Ruhaney Goodwin heaved three of her most mournful sighs, in succession, but said nothing.

"Merry-makings so soon after a death in the house," remarked Mrs. Hamilton Bue: "it's quite shocking to think of."

"Our friend is getting *very* select," said the Hon. Zeno Harder, in his most pompous manner, thereby implying that *he* should not have been overlooked.

Mr. Grindle, of course, improved the opportunity on every possible occasion, and before the Blakes had been two days at Lakeside, it was reported, in temperance circles, that they had already consumed one hundred dollars' worth of wine.

Had these rumors been known to the pleasant little community of Lakeside, they would have added an additional hilarity to the genial atmosphere which pervaded the house. But it was quite removed from the clatter of the village gossip, and by the time such news had gone its rounds. and been conveyed to the victim by sympathizing friends, the occasion which gave rise to it had entirely passed away. In our small country communities, nothing is so much resented as an indirect assumption of social independence. A deviation from the prevailing habits of domestic life—a disregard for prevailing prejudices, however temporary and absurd they may be—a visit from strangers who excite curiosity and are not made common social property: each of these circumstances is felt as an act of injustice, and constitutes a legitimate excuse for assault Since the railroad had reached Tiberius, and the steamer on Atauga Lake began to bring summer visitors to Ptolemy this species of despotism had somewhat relaxed, but it now and then flamed up with the old intensity, and Woodbury was too cosmopolitan in his nature not to provoke its exercise.

Mr. and Mrs. Waldo reached Lakeside the day before the arrival of the Blakes, and the latter took immediate and easy possession of her temporary authority. In addition to Melinda, than whom no better cook, in a limited sphere of dishes, could have been desired, Woodbury had hit upon the singular expedient of borrowing a chamber-maid from the Ptolemy House. Mrs. Waldo's task was thus rendered light and agreeable—no more, in fact, than she would have voluntarily assumed in any household rather than be idle. It was more than a capacity—it was almost a necessity of her nature, to manage something or direct somebody. In the minor details her sense of order may have been deficient; but in regulating departments and in general duties she was never at fault. Her subordinates instantly felt the bounds she had drawn for them, and moved instinctively therein.

The Blakes were charmed with Lakeside and the scenery of the Atauga Valley. Between the boy George and Bute, who was now able to sit on the shaded veranda on still, dry days, there grew up an immediate friendship. Miss Josephine was beginning to develop an interest in poetry and romances, and took almost exclusive possession of the library. Mr. Blake walked over the farm with Woodbury in the forenoons, each developing theories of agriculture equally original and impracticable, while the Mesdames Waldo and Blake improved their acquaintance in house and garden. The two ladies understood each other from the start, and while there were some points, in regard to which—as between any two women that may be selected—each commiserated the other's mistaken views, they soon discovered many reasons for mutual sympathy and mutual appreciation. Mrs. Blake had the greater courage, Mrs. Waldo the greater tact. The latter had more natural grace and pliancy, the former more acquired refinement of manner. They were alike in the correctness of their instincts, but in Mrs. Blake the faculty had been more exquisitely developed, through her greater social experience. It was the same air, in the same key, but played an octave higher. Mrs. Waldo was more inclined to receive her enjoyment of life through impulse and immediate sensation; Mrs. Blake through a philosophic discrimination. Both, perhaps, would have borne misfortune with like calmness; but the resignation of one would have sprung from her temperament, and of the other from her reason. The fact that the resemblances in their matured womanhood were developed from different bases of character, increased the interest and respect which they mutually felt.

On one point, at least, they were heartily in accord; namely, their friendship for Woodbury. Mrs. Blake was familiar, as we have already described, with his early manhood in New York, and furnished Mrs. Waldo many interesting particulars in return for the description which the latter gave of his life at Lakeside. They were also agreed that there was too much masculine sweetness in him to be wasted on the desert air, and that the place, beautiful as it was, could never be an actual home until he had brought a mistress to it.

"He was already chafing under Mrs. Babb's rule," said Mrs Waldo, as they walked up and down the broad garden-alley, "and he will be less satisfied with the new housekeeper. Bute's wife—as she will be—is a much more agreeable person, and will no doubt try to do her best, but he will get very tired of her face and her silly talk. It will be all the worse because she has not a single characteristic strong enough for him to seize upon and say: This offends me! You know what I mean?"

"Perfectly; and your remark is quite correct. Mr. Woodbury is one of those men who demand positive character, of some kind, in the persons with whom they associate. He likes fast colors, and this new housekeeper, from your description, must be a piece that will fade the longer it is used. In that case, she will become intolerable to him, though she may not possess one serious fault."

"That characteristic of his," said Mrs. Waldo, "is the very reason, I think, why it will be difficult for him to find a wife."

"By the by," asked Mrs. Blake, pausing in her walk, "he spoke to me, when we met on the Saguenay, of one woman, here, in your neighborhood, who seems to have made a strong impression upon his mind."

"It was certainly Hannah Thurston!"

"He did not give me her name. He seemed to admire her sincerely, except in one fatal particular—she is strong-minded."

"Yes, it is Hannah!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo. "She is a noble girl, and every way worthy of such a man as he—that is, if she were not prejudiced against all men."

"You quite interest me about her. I heard Bessie Stryker once, when she lectured in St. Louis, and must confess that, while she did not convince *me*, I could see very well how she had convinced herself. Since then, I have been rather tolerant towards the strong-minded class. The principal mistakes they make arise from the fact of their not being married, or of having moral and intellectual milksops for husbands. In either case, no woman can understand our sex, or the opposite."

"I have said almost the same thing to Hannah Thurston," Mrs. Waldo remarked. "If she would only take one step, the true knowledge would come. But she won't."

"I suspect she has not yet found her Fate," said Mrs. Blake. "Was she ever in love, do you think?"

"No, I am sure of it. She has refused two good offers of marriage to my knowledge, and one of them was from a man who believed in the doctrine of Women's Rights. I can't understand her, though I love her dearly, and we have been intimate for years."

"Can you not contrive a way for me to make her acquaintance?"

"Whenever you please. I have no doubt she remembers the story Mr. Woodbury told us last winter. I am hostess, now, you know, and I can invite her to dinner to-morrow, only I must ask somebody else. I have it! Mr. Woodbury must invite Mr. and Mrs. Styles. It will not do for him to show too much partiality to our little sect, and that will keep up the balance of civility."

Woodbury accepted the proposition with more satisfaction than he judged proper to express. It was the very object he desired to accomplish, yet which he could not himself mention without exciting suspicions in the minds of both the ladies. He had not seen Hannah Thurston since his return, and felt a strange curiosity to test his own sensations when they should meet again. Under the circumstances, the invitation could be given and accepted without in the least violating the social propriety of Ptolemy.

The disturbing emotion which had followed her last interview with Woodbury had entirely passed away from Hannah Thurston's mind. Her momentary resolution to avoid seeing him again, presented itself to her as a confession of weakness. A studied avoidance of his society would be interpreted as springing from a hostility which she did not feel. On the contrary, his culture attracted her: his bearing towards her was gratefully kind and respectful, and she acknowledged a certain intellectual pleasure in his conversation, even when it assailed her dearest convictions. Her mother's health, always fluctuating with the season and the weather, had somewhat improved in the last calm, warm days of August, and she could safely leave her for a few hours in Miss Dilworth's charge. The latter, indeed, begged her to go, that she might bring back a minute account of Bute's grade of convalescence. In short, there was no plausible excuse for declining the invitation, had she been disposed to seek one.

It was a quiet but very agreeable dinner-party. Mr. and Mrs. Styles were both amiable and pleasantly receptive persons, and Mrs. Waldo took care that they should not be overlooked in the lively flow of talk. Hannah Thurston, who was seated beside Mr. Blake and opposite his wife, soon overcame her first timid ity, and conversed freely and naturally with her new acquaintances. Woodbury's reception of her had been frank and kind, but he had said less to her than on former occasions. Nevertheless, she occasionally had a presentiment that his eyes were upon her—that he listened to her, aside, when he was engaged in conversing with his other guests. It was an absurd fancy, of course, but it constantly returned.

After dinner, the company passed out upon the veranda, or seated themselves under the old oaks, to enjoy the last mellow sunshine of the afternoon. Mrs. Blake and Hannah Thurston found themselves a little apart from the others—an opportunity which the former had sought. Each was attracted towards the other by an interest which directed their thoughts to the same person, and at the same time restrained their tongues from uttering his name. Hannah Thurston had immediately recognized in her new acquaintance the same mental poise and self-possession, which, in Woodbury, had extorted her unwilling respect, while it so often disconcerted her. She knew that the two were natives of the same social climate, and was curious to ascertain whether they shared the same views of life— whether, in fact, those views were part of a conventional creed adopted by the class to which they belonged, or, in each case, the mature conclusions of an honest and truth-seeking nature. With one of her own sex she felt stronger and better armed to defend herself. Mrs. Blake was not a woman of unusual intellect, but what she did possess was awake and active, to its smallest fibre. What she lacked in depth, she made up in quickness and clearness of vision. She did not attempt to follow abstract theories, or combat them, but would let fall, as if by accident, one of the sharp, positive truths, with which both instinct and experience had stored her mind, and which never failed to prick and let the wind out of every bubble blown towards her. This faculty, added to the advantage of sex, made her the most dangerous antagonist Hannah Thurston could have met. But the latter, unsuspecting, courted her fate.

The conversation, commencing with the beauties of the landscape, branching thence to Ptolemy and its inhabitants, to their character, their degree of literary cultivation, and the means of enlightenment which they enjoyed, rapidly and naturally approached the one important topic. Hannah Thurston mentioned, among other things, the meetings which were held in the interest of Temperance, Anti-Slavery, Non-Resistance, and Women's Rights; Mrs. Blake gave her impressions of Bessie Stryker's lecture: Hannah Thurston grasped the whole gauntlet where only the tip of a finger had been presented, and both women were soon in the very centre of the debatable ground.

"What I most object to," said Mrs. Blake, "is that women should demand a sphere of action for which they are incapacitated—understand me, not by want of intellect, but by sex."

"Do you overlook all the examples which History furnishes?" cried Hannah Thurston. "What is there that Woman has not done?"

"Commanded an army."

"Zenobia!"

"And was brought in chains to Rome. Founded an empire?"

"She has *ruled* empires!"

"After they were already made, and with the help of men. Established a religion? Originated a system of philosophy? Created an order of architecture? Developed a science? Invented a machine?"

"I am sure I could find examples of her having distinguished herself in all these departments of intellect," Hannah Thurston persisted.

"Distinguished herself! Ah! yes, I grant it. After the raw material of knowledge has been dug up and quarried out, and smelted, and hewn into blocks, she steps in with her fine hand and her delicate tools, and assists man in elaborating the nicer details. But she has never yet done the rough work, and I don't believe she ever will."

"But with the same education—the same preparation—the same advantages, from birth, which man possesses? She is taught to anticipate a contracted sphere—she is told that these pursuits were not meant for her sex, and the determination to devote herself to them comes late, when it comes at all. Those intellectual muscles which might have had the same vigor as man's, receive no early training. She is thus cheated out of the very basis of her natural strength: if she has done so much, fettered, what might she not do if her limbs were free?" Hannah Thurston's face glowed: her eyes kindled, and her voice came sweet and strong with the intensity of a faith that *would* not allow itself to be shaken. She was wholly lost in her subject.

After a pause, Mrs. Blake quietly said: "Yes, if we had broad shoulders, and narrow hips, we could no doubt wield sledge-hammers, and quarry stone, and reef sails in a storm."

Again the same chill as Woodbury's conversation had sometimes invoked, came over Hannah Thurston's feelings. Here was the same dogged adherence to existing facts, she thought, the same lack of aspiration for a better order of things! The assertion, which she would have felt inclined to resent in a man, saddened her in a woman. The light faded from her face, and she said, mournfully: "Yes, the physical superiority of man gives him an advantage, by which our sex is overawed and held in subjection. But the rule of force cannot last forever. If woman would but assert her equality of intellect, and claim her share of the rights belonging to human intelligence, she would soon transform the world."

Mrs. Blake instantly interpreted the change in countenance and tone; it went far towards giving her the key to Hannah Thurston's nature. Dropping the particular question which had been started, she commenced anew. "When I lived in New York," said she, "I had many acquaintances among the artists, and what I learned of them and their lives taught me this lesson—that there can be no sadder mistake than to miscalculate one's powers. There is very little of the ideal and imaginative element in me, as you see, but I have learned its nature from observation. I have never met any man who inspired me with so much pity as a painter whom I knew, who might have produced admirable tavern-signs, but who persisted in giving to the world large historical pictures, which were shocking to behold. No recognition came to the man, for there was nothing to be recognized. If he had moderated his ambition, he might at least have gained a living, but he was ruined before he could be brought to perceive the truth, and then died, I am sure, of a broken heart."

"And you mean," said Miss Thurston, slowly, "that I—that we who advocate the just claims of our sex, are making the same mistake."

"I mean," Mrs. Blake answered, "that you should be very careful not to over-estimate the capacity of our sex by your own, as an individual woman. *You* may be capable—under certain conditions—of performing any of the special intellectual employments of Man, but to do so you must sacrifice your destiny as a woman—you must seal up the wells from which a woman draws her purest happiness."

"Why?"

"Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Blake, tenderly, "if your hair were as gray as mine, and you had two such creatures about you as Josey and George yonder, you would not ask. There are times when a woman has no independent life of her own—when her judgment is wavering and obscured—when her impulses are beyond her control. The business of the world must go on, in its fixed order, whether she has her share in it or not. Congresses cannot be adjourned nor trials postponed, nor suffering patients neglected, to await her necessities. The prime of a man's activity is the period of her subjection. She must then begin her political career in the decline of her faculties, when she will never be able to compete successfully with man, in any occupation which he has followed from youth."

Hannah Thurston felt that there must be truth in these words. At least it was not for her, in her maiden ignorance to contradict them. But she was sure, nevertheless, that Mrs. Blake's statement was not sufficient to overthrow her theory of woman's equality. She reflected a moment before she spoke again, and her tone was less earnest and confident than usual.

"The statesmen and jurists, the clergymen, physicians, and men of science," she said, "comprise but a small number of the men. Could not our sex spare an equal number? Would not some of us sacrifice a part of our lives, if it were necessary?"

"And lose the peace and repose of domestic life, which consoles and supports the public life of man!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake. "It is not in *his* nature to make this sacrifice—still less is it in ours. You do not think what you are saying. There is no true woman but feels at her bosom the yearning for a baby's lips. The milk that is never sucked dries into a crust around her heart. There is no true woman but longs, in her secret soul, for a man's breast to lay her head on, a man's eyes to give her the one look which he gives to nobody else in the world!"

Hannah Thurston's eyes fell before those of Mrs. Blake. She painfully felt the warm flush that crept over neck, and cheek, and brow, betraying her secret, but betraying it, fortunately, to a noble and earnest-hearted woman. A silence ensued, which neither knew how to break.

"What are you plotting so seriously?" broke in Woodbury's voice, close behind them. "I must interrupt this *tête-à-tête*, Mrs. Blake. See what you are losing?"

They both rose and turned, in obedience to the movement of his hand. The sun had sunk so low that the shade of the western hill filled all the bed of the valley, and began to creep up the eastern side. A light blue film was gathering over the marsh at the head of the lake, where it divided into two lines, pointing up the creeks. But the patches of woodland on the East Atauga hill, the steep fields of tawny oat-stubble, and the fronts of white farm-houses and barns in the distance, were drowned in a bath of airy gold, slowly deepening into flame color as its tide-mark rose higher on the hills. Over Ptolemy a mountain of fire divided the forking valleys, which receded on either hand, southward, into dim depths of amethyst. Higher and higher crept the splendor, until it blazed like a fringe on the topmost forests and fields: then it suddenly went out and was transferred to a rack of broken cloud, overhead.

Mrs. Styles presently made her appearance, bonneted for the return to Ptolemy. Hannah Thurston was to accompany her. But as they drove homewards through the cool evening air, through the ripe odors of late-flowering grasses, and the golden-rods on the road-banks and the eupatoriums in the meadows, it was the passionate yearning of the woman, not the ambition of the man, which had entire possession of her heart.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN WHICH A WEDDING TAKES PLACE.

"Do you know, Mr. Woodbury," said Mrs. Blake, the same evening, as they were all gathered together in the library, "that I have taken an immense liking to your strong-minded woman?"

"Indeed!" he remarked, with assumed indifference.

"Yes. I had a serious talk with her. I employed a moral probe, and what do you think I found?"

"What?" he repeated, turning towards her with an expression of keen interest.

"No, it would not be fair," tantalizingly answered Mrs. Blake, in her most deliberate tones. "I shall not betray any discoveries I have accidentally made. She is too earnest and genuine a nature to be disposed of with a pleasantry. I will only say this—as far as she is wrong—which, of course, is admitting that she is partly right, I, woman as I am, would undertake to convince her of it. A man, therefore, ought to be able to restore her to the true faith more easily. Yet you have been living at Lakeside nearly a year and have not succeeded."

"I have never tried, my friend," said Woodbury.

"Really?"

"Of course not. Why should I? She is relentless in her prejudices, even in those which spring from her limited knowledge of life. The only cure for such is in a wider experience. She cannot understand that a humane and liberal tolerance of all varieties of habit and opinion is compatible with sincerity of character. She would make every stream turn some kind of a mill, while I am willing to see one now and then dash itself to pieces over the rocks, for the sake of the spray and the rainbows. I confess, though, that I do not think this moral rigidity is entirely natural to her; but the very fact that she has slowly reasoned herself into it, and so intrenched and defended herself against attack from all quarters, makes it so much the more difficult for her to strike her flag. If *you* were to approach her position disarmed and propose a truce, she would look upon it as the stratagem of an enemy."

"No, no!" cried Mrs. Blake, shaking her head, with a mischievous sparkle in her eyes; "that is not the way at all! Don't you know that a strong woman can only be overcome by superior strength? No white flags—no proposals of truce—but go, armed to the teeth, and fire a train to the mine which shall blow her fortress to atoms in a moment!"

"Bravo! What a commander is lost to the world in you! But suppose I don't see any train to the mine?"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake, turning away in mock contempt. "You know very well that there is but *one* kind of moral gunpowder to be used in such cases. I am going to drive into Ptolemy this afternoon with Mrs. Waldo, and I shall make a call at the Thurston cottage. Will you go with us?"

"Thank you, not to-day. Mr. Blake and I have arranged to take a boat on the Lake and fish for pickerel. It is better sport than firing trains of moral gunpowder."

The two ladies drove into Ptolemy as they had proposed. Mrs. Blake made herself quite at home at the Cimmerian Parsonage, where she recognized the Christus Consolator as an old friend out of her own bedroom, and went into raptures over Hannah Thurston's bouquet of grasses. She mentally determined to procure from the donor a similar ornament for her boudoir in St. Louis, and managed the matter, indeed, with such skill that Miss Thurston innocently supposed the offer to make and forward the bouquet came spontaneously from herself.

To the Widow Thurston's cottage Mrs. Blake came like a strong, refreshing breeze. In other households, her sharp, clear, detective nature might have uncomfortably blown away the drapery from many concealed infirmities, but here it encountered only naked truthfulness, and was welcome. She bowed down at once before the expression of past trials in the old woman's face, and her manner assumed a tenderness all the sweeter and more fascinating that it rarely came to the surface. She took Miss Dilworth's measure at a single glance, and the result, as she afterwards expressed it to Mrs. Waldo, was much more favorable than that lady had anticipated.

"He could not have a better housekeeper than she, just at present."

"Why, you astonish me!" Mrs. Waldo exclaimed; "why do you think so?"

"I have no particular reason for thinking so," Mrs. Blake answered; "it's a presentiment."

Mrs. Waldo turned away her eyes from Dobbin's ears (which she always watched with some anxiety, although the poor old beast had long since forgotten how to shy them back), and inspected her companion's face. It was entirely grave and serious. "Oh," she said at last, in a puzzled tone, "that's all?"

"Yes, and therefore you won't think it worth much. But my presentiments are generally correct: wait and see."

The Blakes remained over a Sunday, and went, as it was generally surmised they would, to the Cimmerian Church. The attendance was unusually large on that day, embracing, to the surprise of Mrs. Waldo, the Hamilton Bues and Miss Ruhaney Goodwin. On the entrance of the strangers into the church, a subdued rustling sound ran along the benches (pews were not allowed by the Cimmerians), and most of the heads turned stealthily towards the door. The immediate silence that followed had something of disappointment in it. There was nothing remarkable in the tall, keen-eyed lady in plain black silk, or the stout, shrewd-faced, gray-whiskered man who followed her. Miss Josephine's flat straw hat and blue silk mantilla attracted much more attention among the younger members of the congregation. After the hymn had been given out, however, and the first bars of the triumphant choral of "Wilmot" (according to the music-books, but Carl Maria von Weber in the world of Art) were heard, a new voice gradually took its place in the midst of the accustomed and imperfectly according sounds, and very soon assumed the right of a ruler, forcing the others to keep step with it in the majestic movement of the choral. Not remarkably sweet, but of astonishing strength and metallic sonority, it pealed like a trumpet at the head of the ill-disciplined four battalions of singers, and elevated them to a new confidence in themselves.

The voice was Mrs. Blake's. She professed to be no singer, for she knew her own deficiencies so well, that she never attempted to conceal them; but her voice had the one rare element, in a woman, of power, and was therefore admirably effective in a certain range of subjects. In society she rarely sang any except Scotch songs, and of these especially such as dated from the rebellion of 1745—those gloriously defiant lays, breathing of the Highlands and the heather and bonnie Prince Charlie, which cast an immortal poetic gleam over the impotent attempt to restore a superannuated dynasty. Had she lived in those days Mrs. Blake might have sung the slogan to the gathering clans: as it was, these songs were the only expression of the fine heroic capacity which was latent in her nature. She enjoyed the singing fully as much as her auditors the hearing, and, if the truth could be distinctly known, it is quite probable that she had prompted Mr. Waldo in his selection of the hymn. Her participation in it threw the whole Cimmerian congregation on her side, and the Hamilton Bues privately expressed their belief that the clergyman had taken an undue advantage of his opportunities as a guest at Lakeside, to instil his heretical ideas of baptism into the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Blake. It transpired afterwards, however, that the latter were Episcopalian, both by faith and inheritance.

The day at last arrived for the breaking up of the new household, to the great regret of all its members. Miss Josephine tore herself with difficulty from the library, only partially consoled by the present of "Undine" and "Sintraim." George wanted to stay with Bute and learn to trap musk-rats and snare rabbits. Mr. Waldo half sheathed his teeth with his insufficient lips and went back to his plain fare with a sigh of resignation. The ladies kissed each other, and Woodbury would assuredly have kissed them both if he had known how charitably they would have received the transgression. Bute was embarrassed beyond all his previous experience by the present of half a dozen silver tea-spoons which Mrs. Blake had bought in Ptolemy and presented to him through her boy George.

"You are going to begin housekeeping, I hear," said she, "and you must let George help you with the outfit."

Bute colored like a young girl. "They're wuth more'n the silver, comin' to us that-a-way," he said at last. "I'll tell Carrie, and we sha'n't never use 'em, without thinkin' o' you and George."

The farewells were said, and Lakeside relapsed into its accustomed quiet. The borrowed chambermaid was returned to the Ptolemy House, and the old Melinda alone remained in the kitchen, to prepare her incomparable corn-cake and broiled chicken. Bute was now able, with proper precautions, to walk about the farm and direct the necessary labor, without taking part in it. Woodbury resumed his former habit of horseback exercise, and visited some of his acquaintances in Ptolemy and the neighborhood, but the departure of his pleasant guests left a very perceptible void in his life. He had sufficient resources within himself to endure solitude, but he was made, like every healthily-constituted man, for society.

Thus a few days passed away, and Bute's convalescence began to take the hue of absolute health. He now visited Ptolemy every day or two, to watch the progress made in a certain silver-gray dress, and to enjoy the exquisite novelty of consulting Miss Dilworth about their future household arrangements. The latter sometimes, from long habit, reassumed her former air of coquetry, but it was no longer tantalizing, and an earnest word or look sufficed to check her. A charming humility took the place of her affected superiority, and became her vastly better, as she had sense enough to discern. Her ringlets had disappeared forever, and her eyelids gradually recovered strength for an open and steady glance. In fact, her eyes were prettier than she had supposed. Their pale beryl-tint deepened into brown at the edges, and when the pupil expanded in a subdued light, they might almost have been called hazel. In Spain they would have been sung as "*ojos verdes*" by the poets. On the whole, Bute had chosen more sensibly than we supposed, when we first made Miss Dilworth's acquaintance.

The arrangements for the wedding were necessarily few and simple. Woodbury first proposed that it should be solemnized at Lakeside, but Mrs. Waldo urged, that, since her husband was to officiate on the occasion, it would be better for many reasons—one of which was Mrs. Babb's recent death—that it should take place at the parsonage. Miss Dilworth was secretly bent on having a bridesmaid, who should, of course, be Hannah Thurston, but was obliged to relinquish her project, through the unexpected resistance which it encountered on the part of Bute. "None of the fellows that I could ask to stand up with me would do for *her*," said he.

"Why not Mr. Woodbury?" suggested Miss Carrie.

"He! Well—he'd do it in a minute if I was to ask him, bu I won't. Between you and me, Carrie, they can't bear eacl other; they're like cats and dogs."

"Bute! a'n't you ashamed?"

"What? O' tellin' the truth? No, nor a'n't likely to be. See here, Carrie, why can't we let it alone? Mr. Waldo'll tie us jist as tight, all the same, and when it's over you won't know the difference."

"But—Bute," Miss Carrie persisted, "I think she expects it of me."

"She ha'n't set her heart on it, I'll be bound. I'll ask her. Miss Hannah!"

The two were in the open air, at the corner of the cottage nearest the garden. The window of the little sitting-room was open, and Bute's call brought Miss Thurston to it.

"Oh, Bute, don't!" pleaded Miss Dilworth, ready to cry, but he had already gone too far to stop. "Miss Hannah," said he, "we're talkin' about the weddin'. I'm thinkin' it'll be jist as well without waiters. Carrie'd like to have you for bridesmaid, and I'm sure I'd be glad of it, only, you know, you'd have to stand up with somebody on my side, and there's nobody I could ask but Mr. Max, and—and I'm afraid *that* wouldn't be agreeable, like, for either o' you."

"Bute!" cried Carrie, in real distress.

Bute, however, was too sure of the truth of what he had said to suspect that he could possibly give pain by uttering it. The first rude shock of his words over, Hannah Thurston felt greatly relieved. "You were right to tell me, Arbutus," said she; "for, although I should be quite willing, at another time, to do as Carrie wishes, no matter whom *you* might choose as your nearest friend, I think it best, at present, that there should be as little ceremony as possible. I will talk with you about it afterwards, Carrie." And she moved away from the window.

At length the important day arrived. Bute woke when the cocks crowed three o'clock, and found it impossible to get to sleep again. His new clothes (not made by Seth Wattles) were in the top drawer of the old bureau, and Melinda had laid some sprigs of lavender among them. He tried to imagine how he would look in them, how he would feel during the ceremony and afterwards, how curious it must be to have a wife of your own, and everybody know it. He pictured to himself his friends on the neighboring farms, saying: "How's your wife, Bute?" when they met, and then he thought of

Mother Forty, and what a pity that she had not lived long enough to know Carrie Wilson—who, of course, would be a very different creature from Carrie Dilworth; but he always came back to the new clothes in the top bureau-drawer, and the duty of the day that was beginning to dawn. Then, he heard Pat.'s voice among the cattle at the barn; then, a stirring in the kitchen under him, and presently the noise of the coffee-mill—and still it was not light enough to shave! More slowly than ever before the sun rose; his toilet, which usually lasted five minutes, took half an hour; he combed his hair in three different ways, none of which was successful; and finally went down to breakfast, feeling more awkward and uncomfortable than ever before in his life.

Woodbury shook hands with him and complimented him on his appearance, after which he felt more composed. The preparations for the ride to Ptolemy, nevertheless, impressed him with a certain solemnity, as if he were a culprit awaiting execution or a corpse awaiting burial. A feeling of helplessness came over him: the occasion seemed to have been brought about, not so much by his own will as by an omnipotent fate which had taken him at his word. Presently Pat. came up grinning, dressed in his Sunday suit, and announced: "The hosses is ready, Misther Bute, and it'll be time we're off." After the ceremony Pat. was to drive the happy pair to Tiberius, where they proposed spending a honeymoon of two days with the bride's old aunt. He wore a bright blue coat with brass buttons, and Melinda had insisted on pinning a piece of white ribbon on the left lappel, "Kase," as she remarked, "down Souf ole Missus always had 'um so."

Woodbury mounted his horse and rode off, in advance, through the soft September morning. At the parsonage he found every thing in readiness. Mrs. Waldo, sparkling with satisfaction, rustled about in a dark-green silk (turned, and with the spots carefully erased by camphene), vibrating incessantly between the little parlor where the ceremony was to take place, and the bedroom up-stairs, where the bride was being arrayed under the direction of Hannah Thurston. Nothing, as she candidly confessed, enlisted her sympathies so completely as a wedding, and it was the great inconvenience of a small congregation that her husband had so few occasions to officiate.

"Promise me, Mr. Woodbury," she said, as she finally paused in her movements, from the impossibility of finding any thing else to do, "that you will be married by nobody but Mr. Waldo."

"I can safely promise that," he answered: "but pray don't ask me to fix the time when it shall take place."

"If it depended on me, I would say to-morrow. Ah, there is Bute! How nicely he looks!" With these words she went to the door and admitted him.

Bute's illness had bleached the tan and subdued the defiant ruddiness of his skin. In black broadcloth and the white silk gloves (white kids, of the proper number, were not to be found in Ptolemy) into which he had been unwillingly persuaded to force his large hands, an air of semi-refinement overspread the strong masculine expression of his face and body. His hair, thinned by fever and closely cut, revealed the shape of his well-balanced head, and the tender blue gleam in his honest eyes made them positively beautiful. Mrs. Waldo expressed her approval of his appearance, without the least reserve.

Soon afterwards, a rustling was heard on the stairs; the door opened, and Miss Carrie Dilworth entered the parlor with blushing cheeks and downcast eyes, followed by Hannah Thurston, in the white muslin dress and pearl-colored ribbons which Woodbury so well remembered. The bride was really charming in her gray, silvery silk, and a light-green wreath crowning her rippled hair. Orange-blossoms were not to be had in Ptolemy, and there were no white garden-flowers in bloom except larkspurs, which of course were not to be thought of. Hannah Thurston, therefore, persuaded her to content herself with a wreath of the myrtle-leaved box, as the nearest approach to the conventional bridal diadem, and the effect was simple and becoming.

Each of the parties was agreeably surprised at the other's appearance. Bute, not a little embarrassed as to how he should act, took Miss Dilworth's hand, and held it in his own, deliberating whether or not it was expected that he should kiss her then and there. Miss Dilworth, finding that he did not let it go, boldly answered the pressure and clung to him with a natural and touching air of dependence and reliance. Nothing could have been more charming than the appearance of the two, as they stood together in the centre of the little room, he all man, she all woman, in the most sacred moment of life. They expressed the sweetest relation of the sexes, he yielding in his tenderness, she confiding in her trust. No declaration of mutual rights, no suspicious measurement of the words of the compact, no comparison of powers granted with powers received, but a blind, unthinking, blissful, reciprocal self-bestowal. This expression in their attitude and their faces did not escape Hannah Thurston's eye. It forced upon her mind doubts which she would willingly have avoided, but which she was only strong enough to postpone.

Pat. had already slipped into the room, and stood awkwardly in a corner, holding his hat in both hands. The only other stranger present was Miss Sophia Stevenson, who had kindly assisted the bride in the preparation of her wardrobe, and who differed from her sister spinster, Miss Ruhaney Goodwin, in the fact that she was always more ready to smile than sigh. All being assembled, Mr. Waldo came forward and performed the simple but impressive ceremony, following it with an earnest prayer. Miss Carrie lifted up her head and pronounced the "I will" with courage, but during the prayer she bent it again so that it partly rested against Bute's shoulder. When the final "Amen!" was said, Bute very gently and solemnly kissed his wife, and both were then heartily congratulated by the clergyman, who succeeded in closing his lips sufficiently to achieve the salute which an old friend might take without blame. Then there were hearty greetings all round: the certificate of marriage was signed and given to the wife for safe-keeping, as if its existence were more important to her than to the husband; and finally Mrs. Waldo prepared what the Hon. Zeno Harder would have called a "coe-lation." Woodbury had been thoughtful enough to send to the parsonage a bottle or two of the old Dennison Madeira, rightly judging that if Mrs. Babb had been alive, she would have desired it for the reason that "*she*" would have done the same thing. On this occasion all partook of the pernicious beverage except Hannah Thurston, and even she was surprised to find but a very mild condemnation in her feelings. The newly-wedded couple beamed with a mixture of relief and contentment; Carrie was delighted at hearing herself addressed as "Mrs. Wilson," and even Bute found the words "your wife," after the first ten minutes, not the least strange or embarrassing.

Presently, however, the wife slipped away to reappear in a pink gingham and a plaid shawl. The horses were ready at the door, and Pat. was grinning, whip in hand, as he stowed away a small carpet-bag, containing mingled male and female articles, under the seat. A few curious spectators waited on the plank side-walk, opposite, but Bute, having gone through the grand ordeal, now felt courage to face the world. As they took their seats, and Pat. gave a preliminary flourish of his whip, Mrs. Waldo produced an ancient slipper of her own, ready to hurl it at the right moment. The horses started; the slipper flew, whizzed between their heads and dropped into the bottom of the carriage.

"Don't look back!" she cried; but there was no danger of that. The road must have been very rough, for Bute was obliged to put his arm around his wife's waist, and the dust must have been very dense, for she had raised her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Will you take care of me to-day?" said Woodbury to the Waldos. "I shall not go back to Lakeside until evening."

CHAPTER XXVII.

DESCRIBING CERTAIN TROUBLES OF MR. WOODBURY.

WHEN they returned to Mrs. Waldo's parlor, the conversation naturally ran upon the ceremony which had just been solemnized and the two chief actors in it. There was but one judgment in regard to Bute, and his wife, also, had gained steadily in the good opinion of all ever since her betrothal beside the sick-bed.

"I had scarcely noticed her at all, before it happened," said Woodbury, "for she impressed me as a shallow, ridiculous, little creature—one of those unimportant persons who seem to have no other use than to fill up the cracks of society. But one little spark of affection gives light and color to the most insipid character. Who could have suspected the courage and earnestness of purpose which took her to Lakeside, when the fever had possession of the house? Since then I have heartily respected her. I have almost come to the conclusion that no amount of triumphant intellect is worth so much reverence as we spontaneously pay to any simple and genuine emotion, common to all human beings."

"I am glad to hear you say so!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo. "Because then you will never fail in a proper respect to our sex. Hannah, do you remember, when you lent me Longfellow's Poems, how much I liked that line about 'affection?' I don't often quote, Mr. Woodbury, because I'm never sure of getting it exactly right; but it's this:

"'What I esteem in woman
Is her affection, not her intellect,'

"And I believe all men of sense do."

"I cannot indorse the sentiment, precisely in those words," Woodbury answered. "I esteem *both* affection and intellect in woman, but the first quality must be predominant. Its absence in man may now and then be tolerated, but to woman it is indispensable."

"Might not woman make the same requirement of man?" Hannah Thurston suddenly asked.

"Certainly," he answered, "and with full justice. That is one point wherein no one can dispute the equal rights of the sexes. But the capacity to love is a natural quality, and there is no true affection where the parties are continually measuring their feelings to see which loves the most. Bute and his wife will be perfectly happy so long as they are satisfied with the simple knowledge of giving and receiving."

"That's exactly my idea!" cried Mrs. Waldo, in great delight. "Husband, do you recollect the promises we made to each other on our wedding-day? There's never a wedding happens but I live it all over again. We wore Navarino bonnets then, and sleeves puffed out with bags of down, and you *would* lay your head on one of them, as we drove along, just like Bute and Carrie to-day, on our way to Father Waldo's. I said then that I'd never doubt you, never take back an atom of my trust in you—and I've kept my word from that day to this, and I'll keep it in this world and the next!"

Here Mrs. Waldo actually burst into tears, but smiled through them, like the sudden rush of a stream from which spray and rainbow are born at the same instant. "I am a silly old creature," she said: "don't mind me. Half of my heart has been in Carrie's breast all morning, and I knew I should make a fool of myself before the day was out."

"You're a good wife," said Mr. Waldo, patting her on the head as if she had been a little girl.

Hannah Thurston rose, with a wild, desperate feeling in her heart. A pitiless hand seemed to clutch and crush it in her bosom. So, she thought, some half-drowned sailor, floating on the plank of a wreck, must feel when the sail that promised him deliverance, tacks with the wind and slides out of his horizon. The waves of life, which had hitherto only stirred for her with the grand tidal pulse which moves in their depths, now heaved threateningly and dashed their bitter salt in her face at every turn. Whence came these ominous disturbances? What was there in the happy marriage of two gnorant and contented souls, to impress her with such vague intolerable foreboding? With the consciousness of her inability to suppress it came a feeling of angry shame at the deceitfulness of her own strength. But perhaps—and this was a gleam of hope—what she experienced was the disappointed protest of an instinct common to every human being, and which must therefore be felt and conquered by others as well.

She stole a glance at Woodbury. His face was abstracted but it expressed no signs of a struggle akin to her own. The large brown eyes were veiled with the softness of a tender, subdued longing; the full, regular lips, usually closed with all the firmness and decision of his character in their line of junction, were slightly parted, and the corners drooped with an expression unutterably sad. Even over cheeks and brow, a soft, warm breath seemed to have blown. He appeared to her, suddenly, under a new aspect. She saw the misty shadow which the passion of a man's heart casts before it, and turned away her eyes in dread of a deeper revelation.

As she took leave of the Waldos, he also rose and gave her his hand. The tender cloud of sadness had not entirely passed from his face, and she avoided meeting his gaze. Whether it was the memory of a lost, or the yearning for an absent love, which had thus betrayed itself, she felt that it gave him the temporary power to discern something of the emotion which had mastered her. Had he done so, she never could have met him again. To this man, of all men, she would continue to assert her equality. Whatever weaknesses others might discover, he at least should only know her in her strength.

The rest of the day passed rather tamely to Woodbury, and as he rode down the valley during the sweet and solemn coming-on of the twilight, he was conscious of a sensation which he had not experienced since the days of his early trials in New York. He well remembered the melancholy Sabbath evenings, when he walked along the deserted North River piers, watching the purple hills of Staten Island deepen into gray as the sunset faded—when all that he saw, the quiet vessels, the cold bosom of the bay, the dull red houses on the shores and even the dusky heaven overhead, was hollow and unreal—when there was no joy in the Present and no promise in the Future. The same hopeless chill came over him now. All the life had gone out of the landscape; its colors were cold and raw, the balmy tonic odor of the golden-rods and meadow marigolds seemed only designed to conceal some rank odor of decay, and the white front of Lakeside greeted him with the threat of a prison rather than the welcome of a home.

On the evening of the second day Bute returned, as delighted to get back as if he had made a long journey. The light of his new life still lay upon him and gave its human transfiguration to his face. Woodbury studied the change, unconsciously to its subject, with a curiosity which he had never before acknowledged in similar cases. He saw the man's supreme content in the healthy clearness of his eye, in the light, elastic movement of his limbs, and in the lively satisfaction with which he projected plans of labor, in which he was to perform the principal part. He had taken a fresh interest in life, and was all courage and activity. In Carrie, on the other hand, the trustful reliance she had exhibited appeared now to have assumed the form of a willing and happy submission. She recognized the ascendency of sex, in her husband, without being able to discern its nature. Thus Bute's plain common-sense suddenly took the form of rough native intellect in her eyes, and confessing (to herself, only) her own deficiency, her affection was supported by the pride of her respect. Her old aunt had whispered to her, before they left Tiberius:

"*Carr*line, you're a lucky gal. Y'r husband's a proper nice man as ever I see, and so well set-up, too. You'll both be well to do, afore you die, if you take keer o' what you've got, and lay up what it brings in. I shouldn't wonder if you was able to send your boys to Collidge."

This suggestion opened a new field for her ambition. The thought seemed still a scarcely permitted liberty, and she did not dare to look at her face in the glass when it passed through her mind; but the mother's instinct, which lurks, unsuspected, in every maiden's breast, boldly asserted its existence to the young wife, and she began to dream of the future reformers or legislators whom it might be her fortunate lot to cradle. Her nature, as we have already more than once explained, was so shallow that it could not contain more than one set of ideas at a time. The acquired affectations by which she had hitherto been swayed, being driven from the field, her new faith in Bute possessed her wholly, and she became natural by the easiest transition in the world. Characters like hers rarely have justice done to them. Generally, they are passed over as too trivial for serious inspection: their follies and vanities are so evident and transparent, that the *petit verre* is supposed to be empty, when at the bottom may lie as potent a drop of the honey of human love, as one can find in a whole huge ox-horn of mead.

Now began for Woodbury a life very different from what he had anticipated. Bute took possession of his old stewardship with the joyous alacrity of a man doubly restored to the world, and Mrs. Carrie Wilson fidgeted about from morning until night, fearful lest some neglected duty in her department might be seen. The careful respect which Woodbury exercised towards her gave her both courage and content in her new position, while it preserved a certain distance between them. She soon learned, not only to understand but to share Bute's exalted opinion of his master. In this respect, Woodbury's natural tact was unerring. Without their knowledge, he guided those who lived about him to the exact places, which he desired them to fill. In any European household such matters would have settled themselves without trouble; but in America, where the vote of the hired neutralizes that of the hirer, and both have an equal chance of reaching the Presidential chair—where the cook and chambermaid may happen to wear more costly bonnets than their mistress, and to have a livelier interest in the current fashions, it requires no little skill to harmonize the opposite features of absolute equality and actual subjection. Too great a familiarity, according to the old proverb, breeds contempt; too strict an assertion of the relative positions, breeds rebellion.

The man of true cultivation, who may fraternize at will with the humblest and rudest of the human race, reserves, nevertheless, the liberty of selecting his domestic associates Woodbury insisted on retaining his independence to this extent, not from an assumption of superiority, but from a resistance to the dictation of the uncultivated in every thing that concerned his habits of life. He would not have hesitated to partake of a meal in old Melinda's cottage, but it was always a repugnant sensation to him, on visiting the Merryfields, when an Irish laborer from the field came in his shirt-sleeves, or a strapping mulatto woman, sweating from the kitchen fire, to take their places at the tea-table. Bute's position was above that of a common laborer, and Woodbury, whose long Indian life had not accustomed him to prefer lonely to social meals, was glad to have the company of his wedded assistants at breakfast and dinner, and this became the ordinary habit; but he was careful to preserve a margin sufficient for his own freedom and convenience. Carrie, though making occasional mistakes, brought so much good-will to the work, that the housekeeping went on smoothly enough to a bachelor's eyes. If Mrs. Blake's favorable judgment had reference to this aspect of the case, she was sufficiently near the truth, but in another respect she certainly made a great mistake.

It was some days before Woodbury would confess to himself the disturbance which the new household, though so conveniently regulated, occasioned him. The sight of Bute's clear morning face, the stealthy glance of delight with which he followed the movements of his beaming little wife, as she prepared the breakfast-table, the eager and absurd manœuvres which she perpetrated to meet him for just *one* second (long enough for the purpose), outside the kitchen-door as he returned from the field—all these things singularly annoyed Woodbury. The two were not openly demonstrative in their nuptial content, but it was constantly around them like an atmosphere. A thousand tokens, so minute that alone they meant nothing, combined to express the eternal joy which man possesses in woman, and woman in man. It pervaded the mansion of Lakeside from top to bottom, like one of those powerful scents which cling to the very walls and cannot be washed out. When he endeavored to avoid seeing it or surmising its existence, in one way, it presented itself to him in another. When, as it sometimes happened, either of the parties became conscious that he or she had betrayed a little too much tenderness, the simulated indifference, the unnatural gravity which followed, made the bright features of their new world all the more painfully distinct by the visible wall which it built up, temporarily, between him and them. He was isolated in a way which left him no power of protest. They were happy, and his human sympathy forbade him to resent it; they were ignorant and uncultivated, in comparison to himself, and his pride could give him no support; they were sincere, and his own sincerity of character was called upon to recognize it; their bond was sacred, and demanded his reverence. Why, then, should he be disturbed by that which enlisted all his better qualities, and peremptorily checked the exercise of the opposite? Why, against all common-sense, all gentle instincts, all recognition of the loftiest human duty, should he in this new Paradise of Love, be the envious serpent rather than the protecting angel?

The feeling was clearly there, whatever might be its explanation. There were times when he sought to reason it away as the imaginary jealousy of a new landed proprietor, who presents to himself the idea of ownership in every possible form in order to enjoy it the more thoroughly. Lakeside was his, to the smallest stone inside his boundary fence, and the mossiest shingle on the barn-roof; but the old house —the vital heart of the property—now belonged more to others than to himself. The dead had signed away their interest in its warmth and shelter, but it was haunted in every chamber by the ghosts of the living. The new-made husband and wife filled it with a feeling of home, in which he had no part. They had usurped his right, and stolen the comfort which ought to belong to him alone. It was *their* house, and he the tenant. As he rode down the valley, in the evenings, and from the bridge over Roaring Brook glanced across the meadows to the sunny knoll, the love, which was not his own, looked at him from the windows glimmering in the sunset and seemed to say: "You would not ask me to be your guest, but I am here in spite of you!"

Woodbury, however, though his nature was softened by the charm of a healthy sentiment, was not usually imaginative. He was not the man to endure, for any length of time, a mental or moral unrest, without attempting to solve it. His natural powers of perception, his correct instincts, his calm judgment, and his acquired knowledge of life, enabled him to interpret himself as well as others. He never shrank from any revelation which his own heart might make to him. If a wound smarted, he thrust the probe to the bottom with a steady hand. The pain was none the less, afterwards, perhaps, but he could estimate when it would heal. He possessed, moreover, the virtue so often mistaken for egotism, of revering in himself the aspirations, the sacrifices, and the sanctities which he revered in other men. Understanding, correctly, his nature as a man, his perceptions were not easily confused. There are persons whose moral nature is permanently unhinged by the least license: there are others who may be led, by circumstance, into far graver aberrations, and then swing back, without effort, to their former integrity. He belonged to the latter class.

It was not long, therefore, before he had surveyed the whole ground of his disturbance. Sitting, late into the night, in his library, he would lay down his book beside the joss-stick, which smouldered away into a rod of white ashes in its boat, and quietly deliberate upon his position. He recalled every sensation of annoyance or impatience, not disguising its injustice or concealing from himself its inherent selfishness, while on the other hand he admitted the powerful source from which it sprang. He laid no particular blame to his nature, from the fact that it obeyed a universal law, and deceived himself by no promise of resistance. Half the distress of the race is caused by their fighting battles which can never be decided. Woodbury's knowledge simply taught him how to conceal his trouble, and that was all he desired. He knew that the ghost which had entered Lakeside must stay there until he should bring another ghost to dislodge it.

Where was the sweet phantom to be found? If, in some impatient moment, he almost envied Bute the possession of the attached, confiding, insipid creature, in whom the former was so unspeakably content, his good sense told him, the next, that the mere capacity to love was not enough for the needs of a life. That which is the consecration of marriage does not alone constitute marriage. Of all the women whom he knew, but one could offer him the true reciprocal gifts. Towards her, he acknowledged himself to be drawn by an interest much stronger than that of intellect—an interest which might grow, if he allowed it, into love. The more he saw or learned of this woman, the more admirably pure and noble his heart acknowledged her to be. He had come to look upon her errors with a gentle pity, which taught him to avoid assailing them, whenever the assault might give her pain. Was the hard, exacting manner in which she claimed delusive rights--not, indeed, specially for herself, but for all her sex—the result of her position as a champion of those rights, or was it an inte gral part of herself? This was the one important question which it behooved him to solve. To what extent was the false nature superimposed upon the true woman beneath it?

Supposing, even, that he should come to love her, and, improbable as it might seem, should awaken an answering love in her heart, would she unite her fate, *unconditionally*, to his? Would she not demand, in advance, security for some unheard-of domestic liberty, as a partial compensation for the legal rights which were still withheld? One of her fellow-championesses had recently married, and had insisted on retaining her maiden name. He had read, in the newspapers, a contract drawn up and signed by the two, which had disgusted him by its cold business character. He shuddered as the idea of Hannah Thurston presenting a similar contract for his signature, crossed his mind. "No!" he cried, starting up: "it is incredible!" Nothing in all his intercourse with her suggested such a suspicion. Even in the grave dignity of her manner she was entirely woman. The occasional harshness of judgment or strength of prejudice which repelled him, were faults, indeed, but faults that would melt away in the light of a better knowledge of herself. She was at present in a position of fancied antagonism, perhaps not wholly by her own action. The few men who agreed with her gave her false ideas of their own sex: the others whom she knew misunderstood and misrepresented her. She thus stood alone, bearing the burden of aspirations, which, however extravagant, were splendidly earnest and unselfish.

Mrs. Blake's words came back to Woodbury's memory and awakened a vague confidence in his own hopes. She was too clear-eyed a woman to be easily mistaken in regard to one of her sex. Her bantering proposition might have been intended to convey a serious counsel. "A strong woman can only be overcome by superior strength." But how should this strength (supposing he possessed it) be exercised? Should he crush her masculine claims under a weight of argument? Impossible: if she were to be convinced at all, it must be by the knowledge that comes through love. There was another form of strength, he thought—a conquering magnetism of presence, a force of longing which supplants will, a warmth of passion which disarms resistance—but such strength, again, is simply Love, and *he* must love before he could exercise it. The question, therefore, was at last narrowed to this: should he cherish the interest he already felt until it grew to the passion he prefigured, and leave to fate its return, free as became a woman or fettered with suspicious provisions?

This, however, was a question not so easy to decide. Were he sure of exciting a reciprocal interest, the venture, he felt, would be justified to his own heart; but nothing in her manner led him to suspect that she more than tolerated him—in distinction to her former hostile attitude—and there is no man of gentle nature but shrinks from the possibility of a failure. "Ah," said he, "I am not so young as I thought. A young man would not stop to consider, and doubt, and weigh probabilities. If I fail, my secret is in sacred keeping; if I win, I must win every thing. Am I not trying to keep up a youthful faculty of self-illusion which is lost forever, by demanding an ideal perfection in woman? No, no! I must cease to cheat myself: I must not demand a warmer flame than I can give."

Sometimes he attempted to thrust the subject from his mind. The deliberations in which he had indulged seemed to him cold, material, and unworthy the sanction of love. They had the effect, however, of making Hannah Thurston's image an abiding guest in his thoughts, and the very familiarity with his own doubts rendered them less formidable than at first. A life crowned with the bliss he passionately desired, might reward the trial. If it failed, his future could not be more barren and lonely than it now loomed before him: how barren, how lonely, every sight of Bute's face constantly resuggested.

The end of it all was a determination to seek Hannah Thurston's society—to court a friendly intimacy, in which he should not allow his heart to be compromised. So far he might go with safety to himself, and in no case, according to his views, could there be danger to her. His acquaintance with the widow, which had been kept up by an occasional brief visit, and the present condition of the latter's health, gave him all the opportunity he needed. The Catawba grapes were already ripening on the trellises at Lakeside, and he would take the earliest bunches to the widow's cottage.

The impression, in Ptolemy society, of a strong antagonism between himself and Hannah Thurston, was very general. Even Mrs. Waldo, whose opportunities of seeing both were best of all, fancied that their more cordial demeanor towards each other, in their later interviews, was only a tacitly understood armistice. Woodbury was aware of this impression, and determined not to contradict it for the present.

Thus, tormented from without and within, impelled by an outcry of his nature that would not be silenced, without consciousness of love, he took the first step, knowing that it might lead him to love a woman whose ideas were repugnant to all his dreams of marriage and of domestic peace.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH HANNAH THURSTON, ALSO, HAS HER TROUBLES.

When Woodbury made his first appearance at the cottage, the Widow Thurston, who had not seen him since his return from the Lakes, frankly expressed her pleasure in his society. It was one of her favorable days, and she was sitting in her well-cushioned rocking-chair, with her feet upon a stool. She had grown frightfully thin and pale during the summer, but the lines of physical pain had almost entirely passed away from her face. Her expression denoted great weakness and languor. The calm, resigned spirit which reigned in her eyes was only troubled, at times, when they rested on her daughter. She had concealed from the latter, as much as possible, the swiftness with which her vital force was diminishing, lest she should increase the care and anxiety which was beginning to tell upon her health. She knew that the end was not far off: she could measure its approach, and she acknowledged in her heart how welcome it would be, but for her daughter's sake.

"It's very kind of thee to come, Friend Woodbury," said she. "I've been expecting thee before."

"I ought to have come sooner," said he, "but there have been changes at Lakeside."

"Yes, I know. The two guests that will not be kept out have come to thy home, as they come to the homes of others. We must be ready for either. The Lord sends them both."

"Yes," said Woodbury, with a sigh, "but one of them is long in coming to me." The sweet serenity and truth of the old woman's words evoked a true reply. All that she said came from a heart too sincere for disguise, and spoke to his undisguised self. There would have been something approaching to sacrilege in an equivocal answer.

She looked at him with a sad, serious inquiry in her glance. "I see thee's not hasty to open thy doors," she said, at last, "and it's well. There's always a blessing in store for them that wait. I pray that it may come to thee in the Lord's good time."

"Amen!" he exclaimed, earnestly. An irresistible impulse, the next moment, led him to look at Hannah Thurston. She was setting in order the plants on the little flower-stand before the window, and her face was turned away from him, but there was an indefinable intentness in her attitude which told him that no word had escaped her ears.

Presently she seated herself, and took part in the conversation, which turned mainly upon Bute and his wife. The light from the south window fell upon her face, and Woodbury noticed that it had grown somewhat thinner and wore a weary, anxious expression. A pale violet shade had settled under the dark-gray eyes and the long lashes drooped their fringes. No latent defiance lurked in her features: her manner was grave, almost to sadness, and in her voice there was a gentle languor, like that which follows mental exhaustion.

In all their previous interviews, Woodbury had never been able entirely to banish from his mind the consciousness of her exceptional position, as a woman. It had tinged, without his having suspected the fact, his demeanor towards her. Something of the asserted independence of man to man had modified the deferential gentleness of man to woman. She had, perhaps, felt this without being able to define it, for, though he had extorted her profound respect he had awakened in her a disposition scarcely warmer than she gave to abstract qualities. Now, however, she presented herself to him under a different aspect. He forgot her masculine aspirations, seeing in her only the faithful, anxious daughter, over whom the shadow of her approaching loss deepened from day to day. The former chill of his presence did not return, but in its place a subtle warmth seemed to radiate from him. Before, his words had excited her intellect: now, they addressed themselves to her feelings. As the conversation advanced, she recovered her usual animation, yet still preserved the purely feminine character which he had addressed in her. The positions which they had previously occupied were temporarily forgotten, and at parting each vaguely felt the existence of unsuspected qualities in the other.

During this first visit, Hannah Thurston indulged without reserve, in the satisfaction which it gave to her. She always found it far more agreeable to like than to dislike. Woodbury's lack of that enthusiasm which in her soul was an ever burning and mounting fire—his cold, dispassionate power of judgment—his tolerance of what she considered perverted habits of the most reprehensible character, and his indifference to those wants and wrongs of the race which continually appealed to the Reformer's aid, had at first given her the impression that the basis of his character was hard and selfish. She had since modified this view, granting him the high attributes of truth and charity; she had witnessed the manifestation of his physical and moral courage; but his individuality still preserved a cold, statuesque beauty. His mastery over himself, she supposed, extended to his intellectual passions and his affections. He would only be swayed by them so far as seemed to him rational and convenient.

His words to her mother recalled to her mind, she knew not why, the description of her own father's death. It was possible that an equal capacity for passion might here again be hidden under a cold, immovable manner. She had sounded, tolerably well, the natures of the men of whom she had seen most, during the past six or eight years, and had found that their own unreserved protestations of feeling were the measure of their capacity to feel. There was no necessity, indeed, to throw a plummet into their streams, for they had egotistically set up their own Nilometers, and the depth of the current was indicated at the surface. She began to suspect, now, that she had been mistaken in judging Woodbury by the same test. The thought, welcome as it was from a broad, humane point of view, nevertheless almost involved a personal humiliation. Her strong sense of justice commanded her to rectify the mistake, while her recognition of it weakened her faith in herself.

In a few days Woodbury came again, and as before, on an errand of kindness to her mother. She saw that his visits gave pleasure to the latter, and for that reason alone it was her duty to desire them, but on this occasion she detected an independent pleasure of her own at his appearance. A certain friendly familiarity seemed to be already established between them. She had been drawn into it, she scarcely knew how, and could not now withdraw, yet the consciousness of it began to agitate her in a singular way. A new power came from Woodbury's presence, surrounded and assailed her. It was not the chill of his unexcitable intellect, stinging her into a half-indignant resistance. It was a warm, seductive, indefinable magnetism, which inspired her with a feeling very much like terror. Its weight lay upon her for hours after he had gone. Whatever it was, its source, she feared, must lie in herself; he seemed utterly unconscious of any design to produce a particular impression upon her. His manner was as frank and natural as ever: he conversed about the books which he or she had recently read, or on subjects of general interest, addressing much of his discourse to her mother rather than herself. She noticed, indeed, that he made no reference to the one question on which they differed so radically; but a little reflection showed her that he had in no former case commenced the discussion, nor had he ever been inclined to prolong it when started.

Their talk turned for a while on the poets. Hannah Thurston had but slight acquaintance with Tennyson, who was Woodbury's favorite among living English authors, and he promised to bring her the book. He repeated the stanzas descriptive of Jephtha's Daughter, in the "Dream of Fair

Women," the majestic rhythm and superb Hebrew spirit of which not only charmed her, but her mother also. The old woman had a natural, though very uncultivated taste for poetry. She enjoyed nothing which was purely imaginative: verse, for her, must have a devotional, or at least an ethical character. In rhythm, also her appreciation was limited. She delighted most in the stately march of the heroic measure, and next to that, in the impetuous rush of the dactylic. In youth her favorite poems had been the "Davidis" of Thomas Elwood, Pope's "Essay on Man," and the lamenting sing-song of Refine Weeks, a Nantucket poet, whom history has forgotten. The greater part of these works she knew by heart, and would often repeat in a monotonous chant, resembling that in which she had formerly preached. Hannah, however, had of late years somewhat improved her mother's taste by the careful selection of poetry of a better character, especially Milton's "Christmas Hymn," and the works of Thomson and Cowper.

Woodbury returned the very next day, bringing the promised volumes. He was about to leave immediately, but the widow insisted on his remaining.

"Do sit down a while, won't thee?" said she. "I wish thee would read me something else: I like to hear thy voice."

Woodbury could not refuse to comply. He sat down, turned over the leaves of the first volume, and finally selected the lovely idyll of "Dora," which he read with a pure, distinct enunciation. Hannah Thurston, busy with her sewing at a little stand near the eastern window, listened intently. At the close she turned towards him with softened eyes, and exclaimed: "How simple! how beautiful!"

"I'm greatly obliged to thee, Maxwell," said the widow, addressing Woodbury for the first time by his familiar name. "It is always pleasant," she added, smiling, "to an old woman, to receive a kindness from a young man."

"But it ought to be the young man's pleasure, as it is his duty, to give it," he answered. "I am glad that you like my favorite author. I have brought along 'The Princess, also, Miss Thurston: you have certainly heard of it?"

"Oh yes," said she, "I saw several critical notices of it when it was first published, and have always wished to read it."

"It gives a poetical view of a subject we have sometimes discussed," he added playfully, "and I am not quite sure that you will be satisfied with the close. It should not be read, however, as a serious argument on either side. Tennyson, I suspect, chose the subject for its picturesque effects, rather than from any intentional moral purpose. I confess I think he is right. We may find sermons in poems as we find them in stones, but one should be as unconscious of the fact as the other. It seems to me that all poetry which the author designs, in advance, to be excessively moral or pious, is more or less a failure."

"Mr. Woodbury! Do you really think so?" exclaimed Hannah Thurston, in surprise.

"Yes; but the idea is not original with me. I picked it up somewhere, and finding it true, adopted it as my own. There was a fanciful illustration, if I recollect rightly—that poetry is the blossom of Literature, not the fruit; therefore that while it suggests the fruit—while its very odor foretells the future flavor—it must be content to be a blossom and nothing more. The meaning was this: that a moral may *breathe* through a poem from beginning to end, but must not be plumply expressed. I don't know the laws which govern the minds of poets, but I know when they give me most pleasure. Apply the test to yourself: I shall be interested to know the result. Here, for instance, is 'The Princess,' which, if it has a particular moral, has one which you may possibly reject, but I am sure your enjoyment of pure poetry will not thereby be lessened."

"I shall certainly read the book with all the more interest from what you have said," she frankly replied. "You have very much more literary cultivation than I, and perhaps it is presumptuous in me to dispute your opinion; but my nature leads me to honor an earnest feeling for truth and humanity, even when its expression is not in accordance with literary laws."

"I honor such a feeling also, whenever it is genuine, however expressed," Woodbury answered, "but I make a distinction between the feeling and the expression. In other words, the cook may have an admirable character, and yet the roast may be spoiled. Pollok is considered orthodox and Byron heretical, but I am sure you prefer the 'Hebrew Melodies' to the "Course of Time.'"

"Hannah, I guess thee'd better read the book first," said the widow, who did not perceive how the conversation had drifted away from its subject. "It is all the better, perhaps, if our friend differs a little from thee. When we agree in every thing, we don't learn much from one another."

"You are quite right, Friend Thurston," said Woodbury, rising. "I should be mistaken in your daughter if she accepted any opinion of mine, without first satisfying her own mind of its truth. Good-by!"

He took the widow's hand with a courteous respect, and then extended his own to Hannah. Hers he held gently for a moment while he said: "Remember, I shall want to know what impression the poem makes on your mind. Will you tell me?"

"Thank you. I will tell you," she said.

Strange to say, the boldest eulogiums which had ever reached Hannah Thurston's ears, never came to them with so sweet a welcome as Woodbury's parting compliment. Nay, it was scarcely a compliment at all; it was a simple recognition of that earnest seeking for truth which she never hesitated to claim for herself. Perhaps it was his supposed hostile attitude which gave the words their value, for our enemies always have us at a disadvantage when they begin to praise us. Politicians go into obscurity, and statesmen fall from their high places, ruined, not by the assaults but by the flatteries of the opposite party.

She could no longer consider Woodbury in the light of an enemy. His presence, his words, his self-possessed manner failed to excite the old antagonism, which always marred her intellectual pleasure in his society. One by one the discordant elements in her own nature seemed to be withdrawn, or rather, she feared, were *benumbed* by some new power which he was beginning to manifest. She found, with dismay, that instead of seeking, as formerly, for weapons to combat his views, her mind rather inclined to the discovery of reasons for agreeing with them. It mattered little, perhaps, which course she adopted, so long as the result was Truth; but the fact that she recognized the change as agreeable gave her uneasiness. It might be the commencement of a process of mental subjection—the first meshes of a net of crafty reasoning, designed to ensnare her judgment and lead her away from the high aims she prized. Then, on the other hand, she reflected that such a process presupposed intention on Woodbury's part, and how could she reconcile it with his manly honesty, his open integrity of character? Thus, the more enjoyment his visits gave her while they lasted, the greater the disturbance which they left behind.

That new and indescribable effluence which his presence gave forth not only continued, but seemed to increase in power. Sometimes it affected her with a singular mixture of fascination and terror, creating a physical restlessness which it was almost impossible to subdue. An oppressive weight lay upon her breast; her hands burned, and the nerves in every limb trembled with a strange impulse to start up and fly. When, at night, in the seclusion of her chamber, she recalled this condition, her cheeks grew hot with angry shame of herself, and she clenched her hands with the determination to resist the return of such weakness. But even as she did so, she felt that her power of will had undergone a change. An insidious, corrosive doubt seemed to have crept over the foundations of her mental life: the forms of faith, once firm and fair as Ionic pillars under the cloudless heaven, rocked and tottered as if with the first me nacing throes of an earthquake. When she recalled her past labors for the sacred cause of Woman, a mocking demon now and then whispered to her that even in good there were the seeds of harm, and that she had estimated, in vanity, the fruits of her ministry. "God give me strength!" she whispered—"strength to conquer doubt, strength to keep the truth for which I have lived and which must soon be my only life, strength to rise out of a shameful weakness which I cannot understand!"

Then, ere she slept, a hope to which she desperately clung, came to smooth her uneasy pillow. Her own future life must differ from her present. The hour was not far off, she knew, when her quiet years in the cottage must come to an end. She could not shut her eyes to the fact that her mother's time on earth was short; and short as it was, she would not cloud it by anxiety for the lonely existence beyond it. She resolutely thrust her own future from her mind, but it was nevertheless always present in a vague, hovering form. The uncertainty of her fate, she now thought,—the dread anticipation of coming sorrow—had shaken and unnerved her. No doubt her old, steadfast self-reliance and self-confidence would assert themselves, after the period of trial had been passed. She must only have patience, for the doubts which she could not now answer would then surely be solved. With this consolation at her heart—with a determination to possess *patience*, which she found much more easy than the attempt to possess herself of *will*, she would close her aching eyes and court the refreshing oblivion of sleep.

But sleep did not always come at her call. That idea of the sad, solitary future, so near at hand, would not be exorcised. If she repelled it, it came back again in company with a still more terrible ghost of the Past—her early but now hopeless dream of love. When she tried to call that dream a delusion, all the forces of her nature gave her the lie—all the fibres of her heart, trembling in divinest harmony under the touch of the tormenting angel, betrayed her, despairingly, to her own self. The crown of independence which she had won bruised her brows; the throne which she claimed was carved of ice; the hands of her sister women, toiling in the same path, were grateful in their help, but no positive pulse of strength throbbed from them to her heart. The arm which alone could stay her must have firmer muscle than a woman's it must uphold as well as clasp. Why did Heaven give her the dream when it must be forever vain? Where was the man at the same time tender enough to love, strong enough to protect and assist, and just enough to acknowledge the equal rights of woman? Alas! nowhere in the world. She could not figure to herself his features; he was a far-off unattainable idea, only; but a secret whisper, deep in the sacredest shrine of her soul, told her that if he indeed existed, if he should find his way to her, if the pillow under her cheek were his breast, if his arms held her fast in the happy subjection of love—but no, the picture was not to be endured. It was a bliss, more terrible in its hopelessness, than the most awful grief in its certainty. She shuddered and clasped her hands crushingly together, as with the strength of desperation, she drove it from her bosom.

Had her life been less secluded, the traces of her internal struggles must have been detected by others. Her mother, indeed, noticed an unusual restlessness in her manner, but attributed it to care for her own condition. With the exception of Mrs. Waldo, they saw but few persons habitually. Miss Sophia Stevenson or even Mrs. Lemuel Styles occasionally called, and the widow always made use of these occasions to persuade Hannah to restore herself by a walk in the open air. When the former found that their visits were thus put to good service, they benevolently agreed to come regularly. The relief she thus obtained, in a double sense, cheered and invigorated Hannah Thurston. Her favorite walk, out the Mulligansville road, to the meadows of East Atauga Creek, took her in a quarter of an hour from the primly fenced lots and stiff houses of the village to the blossoming banks of the winding stream, to the sweet breath of the scented grass, and the tangled thickets of alder, over which bittersweet and clematis ran riot and strove for the monopoly of support. Here, all her vague mental troubles died away like the memory of an oppressive dream; she drew resignation from every aspect of Nature, and confidence in herself from the crowding associations of the Past which the landscape inspired.

Mrs. Waldo, of course, soon became aware of Woodbury's frequent visits. He had made no secret of them, as he always called at the Parsonage at the same time, and she had shared equally in the ripening vintage of Lakeside. But he had spoken much more of the Widow Thurston than of her daughter, and the former had been equally free in expressing her pleasure at his visits, so that Mrs. Waldo never doubted the continuance of the old antagonism between Hannah and Woodbury. Their reciprocal silence in relation to each other confirmed her in this supposition. She was sincerely vexed at a dislike which seemed not only unreasonable, but unnatural, and grew so impatient at the delayed conciliation that she finally spoke her mind on the subject.

"Well, Hannah," she said, one day, when Woodbury's name had been incidentally mentioned, "I really think it is time that you and he should practise a little charity towards each other. I've been waiting, and waiting, to see your prejudices begin to wear away, now that you know him better. You can't think how it worries me that two of my best friends, who are so right and sensible in all other acts of their lives, should be so stubbornly set against each other."

"Prejudices? Does *he* think I am stubbornly set against him?" Hannah Thurston cried, the warm color mounting into her face.

"Not he! He says nothing about you, and that's the worst of it. You say nothing about him, either. But anybody can see it. There, I've vexed you, and I suppose I ought not to have opened my mouth, but I love you so dearly, Hannah—I love him, too, as a dear friend—and I can't for the life of me see why you are blind to the truth and goodness in each other that I see in both of you."

Here Mrs. Waldo bent over her and kissed her cheek as a mother might have done. The color faded from Hannah Thurston's face, as she answered: "I know you are a dear, good friend, and as such you cannot vex me. I do not know whether you have mistaken Mr. Woodbury's feelings: you certainly have mistaken mine. I did his character, at first, injustice, I will confess. Perhaps I may have had a prejudice against him, but I am not aware that I have one now. I honor him as a noble-minded, just, and unselfish man. We have different views of life, but in this respect he has taught me, by his tolerance towards me, to be at least equally tolerant towards him."

"You make me happy!" cried Mrs. Waldo, in unfeigned delight; but the next instant she added, with a sigh: "But, in spite of all, you don't seem to me like friends."

This explanation added another trouble to Hannah Thurston's mind. It was very possible that Woodbury suspected her of cherishing an unfriendly prejudice against him. She had assuredly given him cause for such a suspicion, and if the one woman in Ptolemy, who, after her mother, knew her best, had received this impression, it would not be strange if he shared it. In such case, what gentle consideration, what forgiving kindness had he not exhibited towards her? What other man of her acquaintance would have acted with the same magnanimity? Was it not her duty to undeceive him—not by words, but by meeting him frankly and gratefully—by exhibiting to him, in some indirect way, her confidence in his nobility of character?

Thus, every thing conspired to make him the centre of her thoughts, and the more she struggled to regain her freedom, the more helplessly she entangled herself in the web which his presence had spun around her.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH A CRISIS APPROACHES.

One cannot play with fire without burning one's fingers. Woodbury supposed that he was pursuing an experiment, which might at any moment be relinquished, long after a deep and irresistible interest in its object had taken full possession of him. Seeing Hannah Thurston only as a daughter—conversing with her only as a woman—her other character ceased to be habitually present to his mind. After a few visits, the question which he asked himself was not: "Will I be able to love her?" but: "Will I be able to make her love me?" Of his own ability to answer the former question he was entirely satisfied, though he steadily denied to himself the present existence of passion. He acknowledged that her attraction for him had greatly strengthened—that he detected a new pleasure in her society—that she was not unfemininely cold and hard, as he had feared, but at least gentle and tender: yet, with all this knowledge, there came no passionate, perturbing thrill to his heart, such as once had heralded the approach of love. She had now a permanent place in his thoughts, it is true: he could scarcely have shut her out, if he had wished: and all the new knowledge which he had acquired prompted him to stake his rising hopes upon one courageous throw, and trust the future, if he gained it, to the deeper and truer development of her nature which would follow.

At the next visit which he paid to the cottage after Mrs. Waldo's half-reproachful complaint, the friendly warmth with which Hannah Thurston received him sent a delicious throb of sweetness to his heart. Poor Hannah! In her anxiety to be just, she had totally forgotten what her treatment of Seth Wattles, from a similar impulse, had brought upon her. She only saw, in Woodbury's face, the grateful recognition of her manner towards him, and her conscience became quiet at once The key-note struck at greeting gave its character to the interview, which Woodbury prolonged much beyond his usual habit. He had never been so attractive, but at the same time, his presence had never before caused her such vague alarm. All the cold indifference, which she had once imagined to be his predominant characteristic, had melted like a snow-wreath in the sunshine: a soft, warm, pliant grace diffused itself over his features and form, and a happy under-current of feeling made itself heard in his lightest words. He drew her genuine self to the light, before she suspected how much she had allowed him to see: she, who had resolved that he should only know her in her strength, had made a voluntary confession of her weakness!

Hannah Thurston was proud as she was pure, and this weird and dangerous power in the man, wounded as well as disturbed her. She felt sure that he exercised it unconsciously, and therefore he was not to be blamed; but it assailed her individual freedom—her coveted independence of other minds—none the less. It was weakness to shrink from the encounter: it was humiliation to acknowledge, as she must, that her powers of resistance diminished with each attack.

Woodbury rode home that evening very slowly. For the first time since Bute's marriage, as he looked across the meadows to a dusky white speck that glimmered from the knoll in the darkening twilight, there was no pang at his heart. "I foresee," he said to himself, "that if I do not take care, I shall love this girl madly and passionately. I know her now in her true tenderness and purity; I see what a wealth of womanhood is hidden under her mistaken aims. But is she not too loftily pure—too ideal in her aspirations—for my winning? Can she bear the knowledge of my life? I cannot spare her the test. If she comes to me at last, it must be with every veil of the Past lifted. There dare be no mystery between us—no skeleton in our cupboard. If she were less true, less noble—but no, there can be no real sacrament of marriage, without previous confession. I am laying the basis of relations that stretch beyond this life. It would be a greater wrong to shrink, for her sake, than for my own. It must come to this, and God give her strength of heart equal to her strength of mind!"

Woodbury felt that her relation to him had changed, and he could estimate, very nearly, the character which it had now assumed. Of her struggles with herself—of the painful impression which his visits left behind—he had, of course, not the slightest presentiment. He knew, however, that no suspicion of his feelings had entered her breast, and he had reasons of his own for desiring that she should remain innocent of their existence, for the present. His plans, here, came to an end, for the change in himself interposed an anxiety which obscured his thoughts. He had reached the point where all calculation fails, and where the strongest man, if his passion be genuine, must place his destiny in the hands of Chance.

But there is, fortunately, a special chance provided for cases of this kind. All the moods of Nature, all the little accidents of life, become the allies of love. When the lover, looking back from his post of assured fortune over the steps by which he attained it, thinks: "Had it not been for such or such a circumstance, I might have wholly missed my happiness," he does not recognize that all the powers of the earth and air were really in league with him—that his success was not the miracle he supposed, but that his failure would have been. It is well, however, that this delusion should come to silence the voice of pride, and temper his heart with a grateful humility; for him it is necessary that "fear and sorrow fan the fire of joy."

Woodbury had no sooner intrusted to Chance the further development of his fate, than Chance generously requited the trust. It was certainly a wonderful coincidence that, as he walked into Ptolemy on a golden afternoon in late September, quite uncertain whether he should this time call at the widow's cottage, he should meet Hannah Thurston on foot, just at the junction of the Anacreon and Mulligansville highways. It was Miss Sophia Stevenson's day for relieving her, and she had gone out for her accustomed walk up the banks of the stream.

As Woodbury lifted his hat to greet her, his face brightened with a pleasure which he did not now care to conceal. There was a hearty, confiding warmth in the grasp of his hand, as he stood face to face, looking into her clear, dark-gray eyes with an expression as frank and unembarrassed as a boy's. It was this transparent warmth and frankness which swept away her cautious resolves at a touch. In spite of herself, she felt that an intimate friendship was fast growing up between them, and she knew not why the consciousness of it should make her so uneasy. There was surely no reproach to her in the fact that their ideas and habits were so different; there was none of her friends with whom she did not differ on points more or less important. The current setting towards her was pure and crystal-clear, yet she drew back from it as from the rush of a dark and turbid torrent.

"Well-met!" cried Woodbury, with a familiar playfulness. "We are both of one mind to-day, and what a day for out-of-doors! I am glad you are able to possess a part of it; your mother is better, I hope?"

"She is much as usual, and I should not have left her, but for the kindness of a friend who comes regularly on this day of the week to take my place for an hour or two."

"Have you this relief but *once* in seven days?"

"Oh, no. Mrs. Styles comes on Tuesdays, and those two days, I find, are sufficient for my needs. Mrs. Waldo would relieve me every afternoon if I would allow her."

"If you are half as little inclined for lonely walks as I am," said Woodbury, "you will not refuse my companionship to day. I see you are going out the eastern road."

"My favorite walk," she answered, "is in the meadows yonder. It is the wildest and most secluded spot in the neighborhood of the village."

"Ah, I have noticed, from the road, in passing, the beauty of those elms and clumps of alder, and the picturesque curves of the creek. I should like to make a nearer acquaintance with them. Do you feel sufficient confidence in my appreciation of Nature to perform the introduction?"

"Nature is not exclusive," said she, adopting his gay tone, "and if she were, I think she could not exclude you, who have known her in her royal moods, from so simple and unpretending a landscape as this."

"The comparison is good," he answered, walking onward by her side, "but you have drawn the wrong inference. I find that every landscape has an individual character. The royal moods, as you rightly term them, may impose upon us, like human royalty; but the fact that you have been presented at Court does not necessarily cause the humblest man to open his heart to you. What is it to yonder alder thickets that I have looked on the Himalayas? What does East Atauga Creek care for the fact that I have floated on the Ganges? If the scene has a soul at all, it will recognize every one of your footsteps, and turn a cold shoulder to me, if I come with any such pretensions."

Hannah Thurston laughed at the easy adroitness with which he had taken up and applied her words. It was a light, graceful play of intellect to which she was unaccustomed—which, indeed, a year previous, would have struck her as trivial and unworthy an earnest mind. But she had learned something in that time. Her own mind was no longer content to move in its former rigid channels; she acknowledged the cheerful brightness which a sunbeam of fancy can diffuse over the sober coloring of thought.

He let down the movable rails from the panel of fence which gave admittance into the meadow, and put them up again after they had entered. The turf was thick and dry with a delightful elasticity which lifted the feet where they pressed it. A few paces brought them to the edge of the belt of thickets, or rather islands of lofty shrubbery, between which the cattle had worn paths, and which here and there enclosed little peninsulas of grass and mint, embraced by the swift stream. The tall autumnal flowers, yellow and dusky purple, bloomed on all sides, and bunches of the lovely fringed gentian, blue as a wave of the Mediterranean, were set among the ripe grass like sapphires in gold. The elms which at intervals towered over this picturesque jungle, had grown up since the valley-bottom was cleared, and no neighboring trees had marred the superb symmetry of their limbs.

Threading the winding paths to the brink of the stream, or back again to the open meadow, as the glimpses through the labyrinth enticed them, they slowly wandered away from the road. Woodbury was not ashamed to show his delight in every new fragment of landscape which their exploration disclosed, and Miss Thurston was thus led to make him acquainted with her own selected gallery of pictures, although her exclusive right of possession to them thereby passed away forever.

Across one of the bare, grassy peninsulas between the thicket and the stream lay a huge log which the spring freshet had stolen from some saw-mill far up the valley. Beyond it, the watery windings ceased for a hundred yards or more, opening a space for the hazy hills in the distance to show their purple crests. Otherwise, the spot was wholly secluded: there was not a dwelling in sight, nor even a fence, to recall the vicinity of human life. This was the enticing limit of Hannah Thurston's walks. She had not intended to go so far to-day, but "a spirit in her feet" brought her to the place before she was aware.

"Ah!" cried Woodbury, as they emerged from the tangled paths, "I see that you are recognized here. Nature has intentionally placed this seat for you at the very spot where you have at once the sight of the hills and the sound of the water. How musical it is, just at this point! I know you sing here, sometimes: you cannot help it, with such an accompaniment."

She did not answer, but a flitting smile betrayed her assent. They took their seats on the log, as if by a silent understanding. The liquid gossip of the stream, in which many voices seemed to mingle in shades of tone so delicate that the ear lost, as soon as it caught them, sounded lullingly at their feet. Now and then a golden leaf dropped from the overhanging elm, and quivered slantwise to the ground.

"Ah, that reminds me," said Woodbury, finally breaking the peaceful, entrancing silence—"one of those exquisite songs in 'The Princess' came into my head. Have you read the book? You promised to tell me what impression it made upon you."

"Your judgment is correct, so far," she answered, "that it is poetry, not argument. But it could never have been written by one who believes in the just rights of woman. In the first place, the Princess has a very faulty view of those rights, and in the second place she adopts a plan to secure them which is entirely impracticable. If the book had been written for a serious purpose, I should have been disappointed; but, taking it for what it is, it has given me very great pleasure."

"You say the Princess's plan of educating her sex to independence is impracticable; yet—pardon me if I have misunderstood you—you seem to attribute your subjection to the influence of man—an influence which must continue to exercise the same power it ever has. What plan would you substitute for hers?"

"I do not know," she answered, hesitatingly; "I can only hope and believe that the Truth must finally vindicate itself. I have never aimed at any thing more than to assert it."

"Then you do not place yourself in an attitude hostile to man?" he asked.

Hannah Thurston was embarrassed for a moment, but her frankness conquered. "I fear, indeed, that I have done so," she said. "There have been times when a cruel attack has driven me to resistance. You can scarcely appreciate our position, Mr. Woodbury. We could bear open and honorable hostility, but the conventionalities which protect us against that offer us no defence from sneers and ridicule. The very term applied to us—'strong-minded'—implies that weak minds are our natural and appropriate inheritance. It is in human nature I think, to forgive honest enmity sooner than covert contempt."

"Would it satisfy you that the sincerity and unselfishness of your aims are honored, though the aims themselves are accounted mistaken."

"It is all we could ask now!" she exclaimed, her eyes growing darker and brighter, and her voice thrilling with its earnest sweetness. "But who would give us that much?"

"*I* would," said Woodbury, quietly. "Will you pardon me for saying that it has seemed to me, until recently, as if you suspected me of an active hostility which I have really never felt. My opinions are the result of my experience of men, and you cannot wonder if they differ from yours. I should be very wrong to arrogate to myself any natural superiority over you. I think there never can be any difficulty in determining the relative rights of the sexes, when they truly understand and respect each other. I can unite with you in desiring reciprocal knowledge and reciprocal honor. If that shall be attained, will you trust to the result?"

"Forgive me: I *did* misunderstand you," she said, not answering his last question.

A pause ensued. The stream gurgled on, and the purple hills smiled through the gaps in the autumnal foliage. "Do you believe that Ida was happier with the Prince, supposing he were faithful to the picture he drew, than if she had remained at the head of her college?" he suddenly asked.

"You will acquit me of hostility to your sex when I say 'Yes.' The Prince promised her equality, not subjection. It is sad that the noble and eloquent close of the poem should be its most imaginative part."

The tone of mournful unbelief in her voice fired Woodbury's blood. His heart protested against her words and demanded to be heard. The deepening intimacy of their talk had brought him to that verge of frankness where the sanctities of feeling, which hide themselves from the gaze of the world, steal up to the light and boldly reveal their features. "No," he said, warmly and earnestly, "the picture is not imaginative. Its counterpart exists in the heart of every true man. There can be no ideal perfection in marriage because there is none in life; but it can, and should, embody the tenderest affection, the deepest trust, the divinest charity, and the purest faith which human nature is capable of manifesting. I, for one man, found my own dream in the words of the Prince. I have not remained unmarried from a selfish idea of independence or from a want of reverence for woman. Because I hold her so high, because I seek to set her side by side with me in love and duty and confidence, I cannot profane her and myself by an imperfect union. I do not understand love without the most absolute mutual knowledge, and a trust so complete that there can be no question of rights on either side. Where that is given, man will never withhold, nor will woman demand, what she should or should not possess. That is my dream of marriage, and it is not a dream too high for attainment in this life!"

The sight of Hannah Thurston's face compelled him to pause. She was deadly pale, and trembled visibly. The moment he ceased speaking, she rose from her seat, and, after mechanically plucking some twigs of the berried bittersweet, said: "It is time for me to return."

Woodbury had not intended to say so much, and was fearful, at first, that his impassioned manner had suggested the secret he still determined to hide. In that case, she evidently desired to escape its utterance, but he had a presentiment that her agitation was owing to a different cause. Could it be that he had awakened the memory of some experience of love through which she had passed? After the first jealous doubt which this thought inspired, it presented itself to his mind as a relief. The duty which pressed upon him would be more lightly performed; the test to which he must first subject her would be surer of success.

As they threaded the embowered paths on their homeward way, he said to her, gravely, but cheerfully: "You see, Miss Thurston, your doubt of my sex has forced me to show myself to you as I am, in one respect. But I will not regret the confession, unless you should think it intrusive."

"Believe me," she answered, "I know how to value it. You have made me ashamed of my unbelief."

"And you have confirmed me in my belief. This is a subject which neither man nor woman can rightly interpret, alone. Why should we never speak of that which is most vital in our lives? Here, indeed, we are governed by conventional ideas, springing from a want of truth and purity. But a man is always ennobled by allowing a noble woman to look into his heart. Do you recollect my story about the help Mrs. Blake gave me, under awkward circumstances, before her marriage?"

"Perfectly. It was that story which made me wish to know her. What an admirable woman she is!"

"Admirable, indeed!" Woodbury exclaimed. "That was not the only, nor the best help she gave me. I learned from her that women, when they are capable of friendship—don't misunderstand me, I should say the same thing of men—are the most devoted friends in the world. She is the only consoling figure in an episode of my life which had a great influence upon my fate. The story is long since at an end, but I should like to tell it to you, some time."

"If you are willing to do so, I shall be glad to hear another instance of Mrs. Blake's kindness."

"Not only that," Woodbury continued, "but still another portion of my history. I will not press my confidence upon you, but I shall be glad, very glad, if you will kindly consent to receive it. Some things in my life suggest questions which I have tried to answer, and cannot. I must have a woman's help. I know you are all truth and candor, and I am willing to place my doubts in your hands."

He spoke earnestly and eagerly, walking by her side, but with eyes fixed upon the ground. His words produced in her a feeling of interest and curiosity, under which lurked a singular reluctance. She was still unnerved by her former agitation. "Why should you place such confidence in me?" she at length faltered. "You have other friends who deserve it better."

"We cannot always explain our instincts," he answered. 'I *must* tell you, and you alone. If I am to have help in these doubts, it is you who can give it."

His words seized her and held her powerless. Her Quaker blood still acknowledged the authority of those mysterious impulses which are truer than reason, because they come from a deeper source. He spoke with a conviction from which there was no appeal, and the words of refusal vanished from her lips and from her heart.

"Tell me, then," she said. "I will do my best. I hope I may be able to help you."

He took her hand and held it a moment, with a warm pressure. "God bless you!" was all he said.

They silently returned up the road. On reaching the gate of the cottage, he took leave of her, saying: "You will have my story to-morrow." His face was earnest and troubled; it denoted the presence of a mystery, the character of which she could not surmise.

On entering the cottage, she first went up-stairs to her own room. She had a sensation of some strange expression having come over her face, which must be banished from it before she could meet her mother. She must have five minutes alone to think upon what had passed, before she could temporarily put it away from her mind. But her thoughts were an indistinct chaos, through which only two palpable sensations crossed each other as they moved to and fro one of unreasoning joy, one of equally unreasoning terror. What either of them portend ed she could not guess. She only felt that there was no stable point to which she could cling, but the very base of her being seemed to shift as her thoughts pierced down to it.

Her eyes fell upon the volume of "The Princess," which lay upon the little table beside her bed. She took it up with a sudden desire to read again the closing scene, where the heroine lays her masculine ambition in the hands of love. The book opened of itself, at another page: the first words arrested her eye and she read, involuntarily:

"Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea,
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold on fold, of mountain and of cape,
But oh, too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

"Ask me no more: what answer could I give?
I love not hollow cheek and fading eye,
Yet oh, my friend, I would not have thee die:
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

"Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed.
I strove against the stream, and strove in vain:
Let the great river bear me to the main!
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield—
Ask me no more."

The weird, uncontrollable power which had taken possession of her reached its climax. She threw down the book and burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXX.

MR. WOODBURY'S CONFESSION.

TOWARDS evening, on Saturday, Bute called at the cottage, and after inquiring concerning the widow's condition, and giving, in return, a most enthusiastic report of Carrie's accomplishments, he produced a package, with the remark:

"Here, Miss Hannah, 's a book that Mr. Max. give me for you. He says you needn't be in a hurry to send any of 'em back. He got a new lot from New York yisterday."

She laid it aside until night. It was late before her mother slept and she could be certain of an hour, alone, and secure from interruption. When at last all was quiet and the fire was burning low on the hearth, and the little clock ticked like a strong pulse of health, in mockery of the fading life in the bosom of the dear invalid in the next room, she took the book in her hands. She turned it over first and examined the paper wrapping, as if that might suggest the nature of the unknown contents; then slowly untied the string and unfolded the paper. When the book appeared, she first looked at the back; it was Ware's "Zenobia"—a work she had long desired to possess. A thick letter slipped out from between the blank leaves and fell on her lap. On the envelope was her name only—"Hannah Thurston"—in a clear, firm, masculine hand. She laid the volume aside, broke the seal and read the letter through from beginning to end:

"DEAR MISS THURSTON:—I know how much I have asked of you in begging permission to write, for your eye, the story which follows. Therefore I have not allowed myself to stand shivering on the brink of a plunge which I have determined to make, or to postpone it, from the fear that the venture of confidence which I now send out will come to shipwreck. Since I have learned to appreciate the truth and nobleness of your nature—since I have dared to hope that you honor me with a friendly regard—most of all, since I find that the feelings which I recognize as the most intimate and sacred portion of myself seek expression in your presence, I am forced to make you a participant in the knowledge of my life. Whether it be that melancholy knowledge which a tender human charity takes under its protecting wing and which thenceforward sleeps calmly in some shadowy corner of memory, or that evil knowledge which torments because it cannot be forgotten, I am not able to foresee. I will say nothing, in advance, to secure a single feeling of sympathy or consideration which your own nature would not spontaneously prompt you to give. I know that in this step I may not be acting the part of a friend; but, whatever consequences may follow it, I entreat you to believe that there is no trouble which I would not voluntarily take upon myself, rather than inflict upon you a moment's unnecessary pain.

"Have you ever, in some impartial scrutiny of self, discovered to what extent your views of Woman, and your aspirations in her behalf, were drawn from your own nature? Are you not inclined to listen to your own voice as if it were the collective voice of your sex? If so, you may to some extent, accept me as an interpretation of Man. I am neither better nor worse than the general average of men. My principal advantages are, that I was most carefully and judiciously educated, and that my opportunities of knowing mankind have been greater than is usual. A conscientious study of human nature ought to be the basis of all theories of reform. I think you will agree with me, thus far; and therefore, however my present confession may change your future relations towards me, I shall have, at least, the partial consolation of knowing that I have added something to your knowledge.

"Let me add only this, before I commence my narrative—that it treats entirely of the occurrences of my life, which have brought me near to woman through my emotions. It is my experience of the sex, so far as that experience has taken a deeper hold on my heart. You are not so cold and unsympathetic as to repel the subject. The instinct which has led me to choose you as the recipient of my confidence cannot be false. That same instinct tells me that I shall neither withhold nor seek to extenuate whatever directly concerns myself. I dare not do either.

"My nature was once not so calm and self-subdued as it may seem to you now. As a youth I was ardent, impetuous, and easily controlled by my feelings. In the heart of almost any boy, from seventeen to twenty, there is a train laid, and waiting for the match. As I approached the latter age, mine was kindled by a girl two years younger than myself, the daughter of a friend of my father. I suppose all early passions have very much the same character: they are intense, absorbing, unreasoning, but generally shallow, not from want of sincerity but from want of development. The mutual attachment necessarily showed itself, and was tacitly permitted, but without any express engagement. I had never surprised her with any sudden declaration of love: our relation had gradually grown into existence, and we were both so happy therein that we did not need to question and discuss our feelings. In fact, we were rarely sufficiently alone to have allowed of such confidences; but we sought each other in society or in our respective family circles and created for ourselves a half-privacy in the presence of others. Nothing seemed more certain to either of us than that our fates were already united, for we accepted the tolerance of our attachment as a sanction of its future seal upon our lives.

"After my father's failure and death, however, I discovered, with bitterness of heart, that it was not alone my pecuniary prospects which had changed. Her father, a shrewd, hard man of business, was one of the very few who prospered in a season of general ruin—who perhaps foresaw the crash and prepared himself to take advantage of the splendid opportunities which it offered. His wealth was doubled, probably trebled, in a year: he won advantages which compelled the most exclusive circles to receive him, and his family dropped their old associations as fast as they familiarized themselves with the new. I saw this change, at first, without the slightest misgiving: my faith in human nature was warm and fresh, and the satisfied bliss of my affections disposed me to judge all men kindly. I only refrained from asking the father's assistance in my straits, from a feeling of delicacy, not because I had any suspicion that it would not be given. Little by little, however, the conviction forced itself upon my mind that I was no longer a welcome visitor at the house: I was dropped from the list of guests invited to dinners and entertainments, and my reception became cold and constrained. From the sadness and uneasiness on the face of my beloved, I saw that she was suffering for my sake, and on questioning her she did not deny that she had been urged to give me up. She assured me, nevertheless, of her own constancy, and exhorted me to have patience until my prospects should improve.

"It was at this juncture that Miss Remington (Mrs. Blake, you will remember) became a comforting angel to both of us. She had remarked our attachment from its first stage, and with her profound scorn of the pretensions of wealth, she determined to assist the course of true love. We met, as if by accident, at her father's house, and she generally contrived that we should have a few minutes alone. Thus, several months passed away. My position had not advanced, because I had every thing to learn when I first took it, but I began to have more confidence in myself, and remained cheerful and hopeful. I was not disturbed by the fact that my beloved sometimes failed to keep her appointments, but I could not help remarking, now, that when she did appear, she seemed ill at ease and strove to make the interviews as short as possible.

"There was something in Miss Remington's manner, also, which I could not understand. I missed the frank, hearty sympathy with faithful and persecuted love, which she had given me. A restless anxiety, pointing to one thing or another, but never towards the truth, took possession of me. One day on making my pre-arranged call, I found Miss Remington alone. Her face was grave and sad. She saw my look of disappointment: she allowed me to walk impatiently up and down the room three or four times, then she arose and seized me by both hands. 'Am I mistaken in you?' she asked: 'Are you yet a man?' 'I am trying to prove it,' I answered. 'Then,' she said, 'prove it to me. If you were to have a tooth drawn, would you turn back a dozen times from the dentist's door and bear the ache a day longer, or would you go in at once and have it out?' I sat down, chilled to the heart, and said, desperately: 'I am ready for the operation!' She smiled, but there were tears of pity in her eyes. She told me as kindly and tenderly as possible, all she had learned: that the girl who possessed my unquestioning faith was unworthy of the gift: that the splendors of the new circle into which she had ascended had become indispensable to her that her attachment to me was now a simple embarrassment: that her beauty had attracted wealthy admirers, one of whom, a shallow-brained egotist, was reported to be especially favored by her, and that any hope I might have of her constancy to me must be uprooted as a delusion.

"I tried to reject this revelation, but the evidence was too clear to be discredited. Nevertheless, I insisted on seeing the girl once more, and Miss Remington brought about the interview. I was too deeply disappointed to be indignant: she showed a restless impatience to be gone, as if some remnant of conscience still spoke in her heart. I told her, sadly, that I saw she was changed. If her attachment for me had faded, as I feared, I would not despotically press mine upon her, but would release her from the mockery of a duty which her heart no longer acknowledged. I expected a penitent confession of the truth, in return, and was therefore wholly unprepared for the angry reproaches she heaped upon me. 'Very fine!' she cried; 'I always thought there was no *suspicion* where there was love! I am to be accused of falsehood, from a jealous whim. It's very easy for you to give up an attachment that died out long ago!' But I will not repeat her expressions further. I should never have comprehended them without Miss Remington's assistance. She was vexed that I should have discovered her want of faith and given her back her freedom: *she* should have been the first to break the bonds. I laughed, in bitterness of heart, at her words; I could give her no other answer.

"The shock my affections received was deeper than I cared to show. It was renewed, when, three months afterwards, the faithless girl married the rich fool whom she had preferred to me. I should have become moody and cynical but for the admirable tact with which Miss Remington, in her perfect friendship, softened the blow. Many persons suppose that a pure and exalted relation of this kind cannot exist between man and woman, without growing into love—in other words, that friendship seeks its fulfilment in the same sex and love in the opposite. I do not agree with this view. The thought of loving Julia Remington never entered my mind, and she would have considered me as wanting in sanity if I had intimated such a thing, but there was a happy and perfect confidence between us, which was my chief support in those days of misery.

"I accepted, eagerly, the proposition to become the Calcutta agent of the mercantile house in which I was employed. The shadow of my disappointment still hung over me, and there were now but few associations of my life in New York to make the parting difficult. I went, and in the excitement of new scenes, in the absorbing duties of my new situation, in the more masculine strength that came with maturity, I gradually forgot the blow which had been struck—or, if I did not forget, the sight of the scar no longer recalled the pain of the wound. Nevertheless, it had made me suspicious and fearful.

I questioned every rising inclination of my heart, and suppressed the whispers of incipient affection, determined that no woman should ever again deceive me as the first had done. The years glided away, one by one; I had slowly acquired the habit of self-control, on which I relied as a natural and sufficient guard for my heart, and the longing for woman's partnership in life, which no man can ever wholly suppress, again began to make itself heard. I did not expect a recurrence of the passion of youth. I knew that I had changed, and that love, therefore, must come to me in a different form. I remembered what I heard at home, as a boy, that when the original forest is cleared away, a new forest of different trees is developed from the naked soil. But I still suspected that there must be a family likeness in the growth, and that I should recognize its sprouting germs.

"Between five and six years ago, it was necessary that I should visit Europe, in the interest of the house. I was absent from India nearly a year, and during that time made my first acquaintance with Switzerland, the memory of which is now indissolubly connected, in my mind, with that song which I have heard you sing. But it is not of this that I would speak. I find myself shrinking from the new revelation which must be made. The story is not one of guilt—not even of serious blame, in the eyes of the world. If it were necessary I could tell it to any *man*, without reluctance for my own sake Men, in certain respects, have broader and truer views of life than women; they are more tender in their judgment, more guarded in their condemnation. I am not justifying myself, in advance, for I can acquit myself of any intentional wrong. I only feel that the venture, embodied in my confession, is about to be sent forth—either to pitying gales that shall waft it safely back to me, or to storms in which it shall go down. Recollect, dear Miss Thurston, that whatever of strength I may possess you have seen. I am now about to show you, voluntarily, my weakness.

"Among the passengers on board the steamer by which I returned to India, there was a lady who had been recommended to my care by some mutual acquaintance in England. She was the wife of a physician in the Company's Service who was stationed at Benares, and who had sent her home with her children a year and a half before. The latter were left in England, while she returned to share the exile of her husband until he should be entitled to a pension. She was a thoroughly refined and cultivated woman, of almost my own age, and shrank from contact with the young cubs of cadets and the ostentatious indigo-planters, with their beer-drinking wives, who were almost the only other passengers. We were thus thrown continually together, and the isolation of ocean-life contributed to hasten our intimacy. Little by little that intimacy grew deep, tender, and powerful. I told her the humiliating story of my early love which you have just read, and she described to me, with tearful reluctance, the unhappiness of her married life. Her husband had gone to England eight years before, on leave of absence, on purpose to marry. She had been found to answer his requirements, and ignorant of life as she was at that time, ignorant of her own heart, had been hurried into the marriage by her own family. Her father was in moderate circumstances, and he had many daughters to provide with husbands; this was too good a chance to let slip, and, as it was known that she had no other attachment, her hesitation was peremptorily overruled. She discovered, too late, that there was not only no point of sympathy between her husband and herself, but an absolute repulsion. He was bold and steady-handed as a surgeon, and had performed some daring operations which had distinguished him in his profession; but he was hard, selfish, and tyrannical in his domestic relations and his unfortunate wife could only look forward with dread to the continual companionship which was her doom.

"I had been sure of recognizing any symptom of returning love in my heart—but I was mistaken. It took the form of pity, and so lulled my suspicions to sleep that my power of will was drugged before I knew it. Her own heart was not more merciful towards her. Poor woman! if she had ever dreamed of love the dream had been forgotten. She was ignorant of the fatal spell which had come upon us, and I did not detect my own passion until its reflection was thrown back to me from her innocent face. When I had discovered the truth, it was too late—too late, I mean, for her happiness, not too late for the honor of both our lives. I could not explain to her a danger which she did not suspect, nor could I embitter, by an enforced coldness, her few remaining happy days of our voyage. With a horrible fascination, I saw her drawing nearer and nearer the brink of knowledge, and my lips were sealed, that only could have uttered the warning cry.

"Again I was called upon to suffer, but in a way I had never anticipated. The grief of betrayed love is tame, beside the despair of forbidden love. This new experience showed me how light was the load which I had already borne. On the one side, two hearts that recognized each other and would have been faithful to the end of time; on the other, a monstrous bond, which had only the sanction of human laws. I rebelled, in my very soul, against the mockery of that legal marriage, which is the basis of social virtue, forgetting that Good must voluntarily bind itself in order that Evil may not go free. The boundless tenderness towards her which had suddenly revealed itself must be stifled. I could not even press her hand warmly, lest some unguarded pulse should betray the secret; I scarcely dared look in her eyes, lest mine might stab her with the sharpness of my love and my sorrow in the same glance.

"It was all in vain. Some glance, some word, or touch of hand, on either side, *did* come, and the thin disguise was torn away forever. Then we spoke, for the consolation of speech seemed less guilty than the agony of silence. In the moonless nights of the Indian Ocean we walked the deck with hands secretly clasped, with silent tears on our cheeks, with a pang in our souls only softened by the knowledge that it was mutual. Neither of us, I think, then thought of disputing our fate. But as the voyage drew near its end, I was haunted by wild fancies of escape. I could not subdue my nature to forego a fulfilment that seemed possible. We might find a refuge, I thought, in Java, or Celebes, or some of the Indian Isles, and once beyond the reach of pursuit what was the rest of the world to us? What was wealth, or name, or station? —they were hollow sounds to us now, they were selfish cheats, always. In the perverted logic of passion all was clear and fair.

"This idea so grew upon me that I was base enough to propose it to her—I who should have given reverence to that ignorance of the heart which made her love doubly sacred, strove to turn it into the instrument of her ruin! She heard me, in fear, not in indignation. 'Do not tempt me!' she cried, with a pitiful supplication; 'think of my children, and help me to stand up against my own heart!' Thank God I was not deaf to that cry of weakness; I was armed to meet resistance, but I was powerless against her own despairing fear of surrender. Thank God, I overcame the relentless selfishness of my sex! She took from my lips, that night, the only kiss I ever gave her—the kiss of repentance, not of triumph It left no stain on the purity of her marriage vow. That was our true parting from each other. There were still two days of our voyage left, but we looked at each other as if through the bars of opposite prisons, with a double wall between. Our renunciation was complete, and any further words would have been an unnecessary pang. We had a melancholy pleasure in still being near each other, in walking side by side, in the formal touch of hands that dared not clasp and be clasped. This poor consolation soon ceased. The husband was waiting for her at Calcutta, and I purposely kept my state-room when we arrived, in order that I might not see him. I was not yet sure of myself.

"She went to Benares, and afterwards to Meerut, and I never saw her again. In a little more than a year I heard she was dead: 'the fever of the country,' they said. I was glad of it—death was better for her than her life had been—now at least, when that life had become a perpetual infidelity to her heart. Death purified the memory of my passion, and gave me, perhaps, a sweeter resignation than if she had first yielded to my madness. Sad and hopeless as was this episode of my life, it contained an element of comfort, and restored the balance which my first disappointment had destroyed. My grief for her was gentle, tender and consoling, and I never turned aside from its approaches. It has now withdrawn into the past, but its influence still remains, in this—that the desire for that fulfilment of passion, of which life has thus far cheated me, has not grown cold in my heart.

"There are some natures which resemble those plants that die after a single blossoming—natures in which one passion seems to exhaust the capacities for affection. I am not one of them, yet I know that I possess the virtue of fidelity. I know that I still wait for the fortune that shall enable me to manifest it. Do you, as a woman, judge me unworthy to expect that fortune? You are now acquainted with my history; try me by the sacred instincts of your own nature, and according to them, pardon or condemn me. I have revealed to you my dream of the true marriage that is possible—a dream that prevents me from stooping to a union not hallowed by perfect love and faith. Have I forfeited the right to indulge this dream longer? Would I be guilty of treason towards the virgin confidence of some noble woman whom God may yet send me, in offering her a heart which is not fresh in its knowledge, though fresh in its immortal desires? I pray you to answer me these questions? Do not blame your own truth and nobility of nature, which have brought you this task. Blame, if you please, my selfishness in taking advantage of them.

"I have now told you all I meant to confess, and might here close. But one thought occurs to me, suggested by the sudden recollection of the reform to which you have devoted yourself. I fear that all reformers are too much disposed to measure the actions and outward habits of the human race, without examining the hidden causes of those actions. There is some basis in our nature for all general customs, both of body and mind. The mutual relation of man and woman, in Society, is determined not by a conscious exercise of tyranny on the one side, or subjection on the other. Each sex has its peculiar mental and moral laws, the differences between which are perhaps too subtle and indefinable to be distinctly drawn, but they are as palpable in life as the white and red which neighboring roses draw from the self-same soil. When we have differed in regard to Woman, I have meant to speak sincerely and earnestly, out of the knowledge gained by an unfortunate experience, which, nevertheless, has not touched the honor and reverence in which I hold the sex. I ask you to remember this, in case the confidence I have forced upon you should hereafter set a gulf between us.

" I have deprived myself of the right to make any request, but whatever your judgment may be, will you let me hear it from your own lips? Will you allow me to see you once more? I write to you now, not because I should shrink from speaking the same words, but because a history like mine is not always easily or clearly told, and I wish your mind to be uninfluenced by the sympathy which a living voice might inspire.

" On Tuesday next you will be free to take your accustomed walk. May I be your companion again, beside the stream? But, no: do not write: you will find me there if you consent to see me. If you do not come, I shall expect the written evidence, if not of your continued respect, at least of your forgiveness. But, in any case, think of me always as one man who having known you, will never cease to honor Woman.

" Your friend,

" MAXWELL WOODBURY."

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN WHICH THE STRONG-MINDED WOMAN BECOMES WEAK.

It did not require the sound of a living voice to inspire Hannah Thurston with sympathy for the story which she had just read. Never before had any man so freely revealed to her the sanctities of his experience of women. Completely absorbed in the recital, she gave herself up to the first strong impressions of alternate indignation and pity, without reflecting upon the deeper significance of the letter. Woodbury's second episode of passion at first conflicted harshly with the pure ideal in her own mind; the shock was perhaps greater to her than the confession of actual guilt would have been to a woman better acquainted with the world. Having grown up in the chaste atmosphere of her sect, and that subdued life of the emotions which the seclusion of the country creates, it startled her to contemplate a love forbidden by the world, yet justifying itself to the heart. Nevertheless, the profound pity which came upon her as she read took away from her the power of condemnation. The wrong, she felt, was not so much in the love which had unsuspectedly mastered both, as in the impulse to indulge rather than suppress it; but having been suppressed—passion having been purified by self-abnegation and by death, she could not withhold a tender human charity even for this feature of the confession.

Woodbury's questions, however, referred to the future, no less than to the past. They hinted at the possibility of a new love visiting his heart. The desire for it, he confessed, had not grown cold. Deceit and fate had not mastered, in him, the immortal yearning: was he unworthy to receive it? "Try me," he had written, "by the sacred instincts of your own nature, and according to them pardon or condemn me." She had already pardoned. Perhaps, had she read the same words coming from a stranger, or as an incident of a romance, she would have paused and deliberated; her natural severity would have been slow to relax; but knowing Woodbury as she had latterly learned to know him, in his frankness, his manly firmness and justice, his noble consideration for herself her heart did not delay the answer to his questions. He had put her to shame by voluntarily revealing his weakness, while she had determined that she would never allow him to discover her own.

Little by little, however, after it became clear that her sympathy and her charity were justifiable, the deeper questions which lay hidden beneath the ostensible purpose of his letter crept to the surface. In her ignorance of the coming confession, she had not asked herself, in advance, why it should have been made; she supposed it would be its own explanation. The reason he had given was not in itself sufficient, but presupposed something more important which he had not expressed. No man makes such a confidence from a mere feeling of curiosity. Simultaneously with this question came another —why should he fancy that his act might possibly set a gulf between them? Was it simply the sensitiveness of a nature which would feel itself profaned by having its secrets misunderstood? No; a heart thus sensitive would prefer the security of silence. Was he conscious of a dawning love, and, doubtful of himself, did he ask for a woman's truer interpretation of his capacity to give and keep faith? "It is cruel in him to ask me," she said to herself; "does he think my heart is insensible as marble, that I should probe it with thoughts, every one of which inflicts a wound? Why does he not send his confession at once to *her?* It is she who should hear it, not I! He is already guilty of treason to her, in asking the question of *me!*"

She put the letter suddenly on the table, and half rose from her chair, in the excitement of the thought. Then, as if struck by a stunning blow, she dropped back again. Her face grew cold and deadly pale, and her arms fell nerveless at her sides. Her eyes closed, and her breath came in long, labored sighs After a few minutes she sat up, placed her elbow on the table and rested her forehead on her hand. "I am growing idiotic," she whispered, with an attempt to smile; "my brain is giving way—it is only a woman's brain."

The fire had long been extinct. The room was cold, and a chill crept over her. She rose, secured the letter and the book, and went to bed. As the balmy warmth stole over her frame, it seemed to soften and thaw the painful constriction of her heart, and she wept herself into a sad quiet. "Oh, if it *should* be so," she said, "I must henceforth be doubly wretched! What shall I do? I *cannot* give up the truths to which I have devoted my life, and they now stand between my heart and the heart of the noblest man I have ever known. Yes: my pride is broken at last, and I will confess to myself how much I honor and esteem him—not *love*—but even there I am no longer secure. We were so far apart—how could I dream of danger? But I recognize it now, too late for him—almost too late for me!"

Then, again, she doubted every thing. The knowledge had come too swiftly and suddenly to be accepted at once. He could not love her; it was preposterous. Until a few days ago he had thought her cold and severe: now, he acknowledged her to be true, and his letter simply appealed to that truth, unsuspicious of the secret slumbering in her heart. He had spoken of the possibility of a pure and exalted friendship between the sexes, such as already existed between himself and Mrs Blake: perhaps he aimed at nothing more, in this instance. Somehow, the thought was not so consoling as it ought properly to have been, and the next moment the skilful explanation which she had built up tumbled into ruins.

She slept but little, that night, and all the next day went about her duties as if in a dream. She knew that her mother's eye sometimes rested uneasily on her pale face, and the confession of her trouble more than once rose to her tongue, but she resolutely determined to postpone it until the dreaded crisis was past. She would not agitate the invalid with her confused apprehensions, all of which, moreover, might prove themselves to have been needless. With every fresh conflict in her mind her judgment seemed to become more unsteady. The thought of Woodbury's love, having once revealed itself to her, would not be banished, and every time it returned, it seemed to bring a gentler and tenderer feeling for him into her heart. On the other hand her dreams of a career devoted to the cause of Woman ranged themselves before her mental vision, in an attitude of desperate resistance. "Now is the test!" they seemed to say: "vindicate your sex, or yield to the weakness of your heart, and add to its reproach!"

When Monday came, it brought no cessation of the struggle, but she had recovered something of her usual self-control. She had put aside, temporarily, the consideration of her doubts; the deeper she penetrated into the labyrinth, the more she became entangled, and she made up her mind to wait, with as much calmness as she could command, for the approaching solution. The forms of terror, of longing, of defence and of submission continually made their presence felt by turns, or chaotically together, but the only distinct sensation she permitted herself to acknowledge was this: that if her forebodings were true, the severest trial of her life awaited her. Her pride forbade her to shrink from the trial, yet every hour that brought her nearer to it increased her dread of the meeting.

Her mother's strength was failing rapidly, and on this day she required Hannah's constant attendance. When, at last, the latter was relieved for the night, her fatigue, combined with the wakeful torment of the two preceding nights, completely overpowered her and she slumbered fast and heavily until morning. Her first waking thought was—"The day is come, and I am not prepared to meet him." The morning was dull and windless, and as she looked upon the valley from her window, a thick blue film enveloped the distant woods, the dark pines and brown oaks mingling with it indistinctly, while the golden and orange tints of the maples shone through. Her physical mood corresponded with the day. The forces of her spirit were sluggish and apathetic, and she felt that the resistance which, in the contingency she dreaded, *must* be made, would be obstinately passive, rather than active and self-contained. A sense of inexpressible weariness stole over her. Oh, she thought, if she only could be spared the trial! Yet, how easily it might be avoided! She needed only to omit her accustomed walk: she could write to him, afterwards, and honor his confidence as it deserved. But an instinct told her that this would only postpone the avowal, not avert it. If she was wrong, she had nothing to fear; if she was right, it would be cowardly, and unjust to him, to delay the answer she must give.

Her mother had slightly rallied, and when Mrs. Styles arrived, as usual, early in the afternoon, the invalid could be safely left in her charge. Nevertheless, Hannah, after having put on her bonnet and shawl, lingered in the room, with a last, anxious hope that something might happen which would give her a pretext to remain.

"Child, isn't thee going?" the widow finally asked.

"Mother, perhaps I had better stay with thee this afternoon?" was the hesitating answer.

"Indeed, thee shall not do any such thing! Thee's not been thyself for the last two days, and I know thee always comes back from thy walks fresher and better. Bring me a handful of gentians, won't thee?"

"Yes, mother." She stooped and kissed the old woman's forehead, and then left the house.

The sky was still heavy and gray, and there was an oppressive warmth in the air. Crickets chirped loud among the dying weeds along the garden-palings, and crows cawed hoarsely from the tops of the elms. The road was deserted, as far as she could see, but the sound of farmers calling to their oxen came distinctly across the valley from the fields on the eastern hill. Nature seemed to lie benumbed, in drowsy half-consciousness of her being, as if under some narcotic influence.

She walked slowly forward, striving to subdue the anxious beating of her heart. At the junction of the highways, she stole a glance down the Anacreon road: nobody was to be seen. Down the other: a farm-wagon was on its way home from Ptolemy—that was all. To the first throb of relief succeeded a feeling of disappointment. The walk through the meadow-thickets would be more lonely than ever, remembering the last time she had seen them. As she looked towards their dark-green mounds, drifted over with the downy tufts of the seeded clematis, a figure suddenly emerged from the nearest path and hastened towards her across the meadow!

He let down the bars for her entrance and stood waiting for her. His brown eyes shone with a still, happy light, and his face brightened as if struck by a wandering sunbeam. He looked so frank and kind—so cheered by her coming—so unembarrassed by the knowledge of the confession he had made, that the wild beating of her heart was partially soothed, and she grew calmer in his presence.

"Thank you!" he said, as he took her hand, both in greeting and to assist her over the fallen rails. When he had put them up, and regained her side, he spoke again: "Shall we not go on to that lovely nook of yours beside the creek? I have taken a great fancy to the spot; I have recalled it to my memory a thousand times since then."

"Yes, if you wish it," she answered.

As they threaded the tangled paths, he spoke cheerfully and pleasantly, drawing her into talk of the autumnal plants, of the wayward rapids and eddies of the stream, of all sights and sounds around them. A balmy quiet, which she mistook for strength, took possession of her heart. She reached the secluded nook, with a feeling of timid expectancy, it is true.

but with scarcely a trace of her former overpowering dread. There lay the log, as if awaiting them, and the stream gurgled contentedly around the point, and the hills closed loftily through blue vapor, up the valley, like the entrance to an Alpine gorge.

As soon as they were seated, Woodbury spoke. "Can you answer my questions?"

"You have made that easy for me," she replied, in a low voice. "It seems to me rather a question of character than of experience. A man naturally false and inconstant might have the same history to relate, but I am sure you are true. You should ask those questions of your own heart; where you are sure of giving fidelity, you would commit no treason in bestowing—attachment."

She dared not utter the other word in her mind.

"I was not mistaken in you!" he exclaimed. "You have the one quality which I demand of every man or woman in whom I confide; you distinguish between what is true in human nature and what is conventionally true. I must show myself to you as I am, though the knowledge should give you pain. The absolution of the sinner," he added, smiling, "is already half-pronounced in his confession."

"Why should I be your confessor?" she asked. "The knowledge of yourself which you have confided to me, thus far, does not give me pain. It has not lowered you in my esteem but I feel, nevertheless, that your confidence is a gift which I have done nothing to deserve, and which I ought not to accept unless—unless I were able to make some return. If I had answered your questions otherwise, I do not think it would have convinced you, against your own feelings. With your integrity of heart, you do not need the aid of a woman whose experience of life is so much more limited than yours."

She spoke very slowly and deliberately, and the sentences seemed to come with an effort. Woodbury saw that her clear vision had pierced through his flimsy stratagem, and guessed that she must necessarily suspect the truth. Still, he drew back from the final venture upon which so much depended. He would first sound the depth of her suspicions.

"No man," he said, gently, "can be independent of woman's judgment, without loss to himself. Her purer nature is a better guide to him than his own clouded instincts. I should not have attributed a different answer to your true self, but to the severe ideas of duty which I imagined you to possess. You were right to suppose that I had already answered for myself, but can you not understand the joy of hearing it thus confirmed? Can you not appreciate the happy knowledge that one's heart has not been opened in vain?"

"I can understand it, though I have had little experience of such knowledge. But I had not supposed that you needed it, Mr. Woodbury—least of all from me. We seem to have had so little in common——"

"Not so!" he interrupted. "Opinions, no matter how powerfully they may operate to shape our lives, are external circumstances, compared with the deep, original springs of character. You and I have only differed on the outside, and hence we first clashed when we came in contact; but now I recognize in you a nature for which I have sought long and wearily. I seek some answering recognition, and in my haste have scarcely given you time to examine whether any features in myself have grown familiar to you. I see now that I was hasty: I should have waited until the first false impression was removed."

The memory of Mrs. Waldo's reproach arose in Hannah Thurston's mind. "Oh no, you mistake me!" she cried. "I am no longer unjust to you. But you surpass me in magnanimity as you have already done in justice. You surprised me by a sacred confidence which is generally accorded only to a tried friend. I had given you no reason to suppose that I was a friend: I had almost made myself an enemy."

"Let the Past be past: I know you now. My confidence was not entirely magnanimous. It was a test."

"And I have stood it?" she faltered.

"Not yet," he answered, and his voice trembled into a sweet and solemn strain, to which every nerve in her body seemed to listen. "Not yet! You must hear it now. I questioned you, after you knew the history of my heart, in order that you might decide for yourself as well as me. Love purifies itself at each return. My unfortunate experience has not prevented me from loving again, and with a purity and intensity deeper than that of my early days, because the passion was doubted and resisted instead of being received in my heart as a coveted guest. I am beyond the delusions of youth, but not beyond the wants of manhood. I described to you, the other day, on this spot, my dream of marriage. It was not an ideal picture. Hannah Thurston, I thought of *you!*"

The crisis had come, and she was not prepared to meet it. As he paused, she pressed one hand upon her heart, as if it might be controlled by physical means, and moved her lips, but no sound came from them.

"I knew you could not have anticipated this," he continued; "I should have allowed you time to test me, in return, but when the knowledge of your womanly purity and gentleness penetrated me, to the overthrow of all antagonism based on shallow impressions, I parted with judgment and will. A power stronger than myself drove me onward to the point I have now reached—the moment of time which must decide your fate and mine."

She turned upon him with a wild, desperate energy in her face and words. "Why did you come," she cried, "to drive me to madness? Was it not enough to undermine the foundations of my faith, to crush me with the cold, destroying knowledge you have gained in the world? My life was fixed, before I knew you; I was sure of myself and satisfied with the work that was before me: but now I am sure of nothing. You have assailed me until you have discovered my weakness, and you cruelly tear down every prop on which I try to lean! If I could hate you I should regain my strength, but I cannot do that—you know I cannot!"

He did not misinterpret her excitement, which yielded more than it assailed. "No, Hannah!" he said tenderly, "I would give you strength, not take it from you—the strength of my love, and sympathy, and encouragement. I know how these aims have taken hold upon you: they are built upon a basis of earnest truth which *I* recognize, and though I differ with you as to the ends to be attained, we may both enlighten each other, and mutual tenderness and mutual respect govern our relations in this as in all else. Do not think that I would make my love a fetter. I can trust to your nature working itself into harmony with mine. If I find, through the dearer knowledge of you, that I have misunderstood Woman, I will atone for the error; and I will ask nothing of you but that which I know you will give—the acknowledgment of the deeper truth that is developed with the progress of life."

She trembled from head to foot. "Say no more," she murmured, in a faint, hollow voice, "I cannot bear it. Oh, what will become of me? You are noble and generous—I was learning to look up to you and to accept your help, and now you torture me!"

He was pitiless. He read her more truly than she read herself, and he saw that the struggle must now be fought out to its end. Her agitation gave him hope—it was the surge and swell of a rising tide of passion which she resisted with the last exercise of a false strength. He must seem more cruel still, though the conflict in her heart moved him to infinite pity. His voice assumed a new power as he spoke again:

"Hannah," he said, "I *must* speak. Remember that I am pleading for all the remaining years of my life—and, it may be, for yours. Here is no question of subjection; I offer you the love that believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. It is not for me to look irreverently into your maiden heart: but, judging you, as woman, by myself, as man, you must have dreamed of a moment like this. You must have tried to imagine the face of the unknown beloved; you must have prefigured the holy confidence of love which would force you to give your fate into his hands; you must have drawn the blessed life, united with his, the community of interest, of feeling, and of faith, the protecting support on his side, the consoling tenderness on yours——"

She seized his arm with the hand nearest him, and grasped it convulsively. Her head dropped towards her breast and her face was hidden from his view. He gently disengaged the hand and held it in his own. But he would not be silent, in obedience to her dumb signal: he steeled his heart against her pain, and went on:

"You have tried to banish this dream from your heart, but you have tried in vain. You have turned away from the contemplation of the lonely future, and cried aloud for its fulfilment in the silence of your soul. By day and by night it has clung to you, a torment, but too dear and beautiful to be renounced——"

He paused. She did not withdraw her hand from his, but she was sobbing passionately. Still, her head was turned away from him. Her strength was only broken, not subdued.

"Remember," he said, "that nothing in our lives resembles the picture which anticipates its coming. I am not the man of your dreams. Such as I fancy them to be, no man on the earth would be worthy to represent him. But I can give you the tenderness, the faith, the support you have claimed from him, in your heart. Do not reject them while a single voice of your nature tells you that some portion of your ideal union may be possible in us. The fate of two lives depends on your answer: in this hour trust every thing to the true voice of your heart. You say you cannot hate me?"

She shook her head, without speaking. She was still sobbing violently.

"I do not ask you, in this moment, if you love me I cannot stake my future on a venture which I feel to be perilous. But I will ask you this: *could* you love me?"

She made no sign: her hand lay in his, and her face was bent towards her bosom. He took her other hand, and holding them both, whispered: "Hannah, look at me."

She turned her head slowly, with a helpless submission, and lifted her face. Her cheeks were wet with tears, and her lovely dark-gray eyes, dimmed by the floods that had gushed from them in spite of herself, met his gaze imploringly. The strong soul of manhood met and conquered the woman in that glance. He read his triumph, but veiled his own consciousness of it—curbed his triumphant happiness, lest she should take alarm. Softly and gently, he stole one arm around her waist and drew her to his breast. The violence of her agitation gradually ceased; then, lifting her head, she withdrew from his clasp, and spoke, very softly and falteringly, with her eyes fixed on the ground:

"Yes, Maxwell, it is as I have feared. I will not say that I love you now, for my heart is disturbed. It is powerless to act for me, in your presence. I have felt and struggled against your power, but you have conquered me. If you love me, pity me also, and make a gentle use of your triumph. Do not bind me by any promise at present. Be satisfied with the knowledge that has come to me—that I have been afraid to love you, because I foresaw how easy it would be. Do not ask any thing more of me now. I can bear no more to-day. My strength is gone, and I am weak as a child. Be magnanimous."

He drew her once more softly to his breast and kissed her lips. There was no resistance, but a timid answering pressure. He kissed her again, with the passionate clinging sweetness of a heart that seals an eternal claim. She tore herself loose from him and cried with a fiery vehemence: "God will curse you if you deceive me now! You have bound me to think of you day and night, to recall your looks and words, to--oh, Maxwell, to what have you not bound my heart!"

"I would bind you to no more than I give," he answered. "I ask no promise. Let us simply be free to find our way to the full knowledge of each other. When you can trust your life to me, I will take it in tender and reverent keeping. I trust mine to you now."

She did not venture to meet his eyes again, but she took his outstretched hand. He led her to the edge of the peninsula, and they stood thus, side by side, while the liquid, tinkling semitones of the water made a contented accompaniment to the holy silence. In that silence the hearts of both were busy. He felt that though his nature had proved the stronger, she was not yet completely won: she was like a bird bewildered by capture, that sits tamely for a moment, afraid to try its wings. He must complete by gentleness what he had begun by power. She, at the moment, did not think of escape. She only felt how hopeless would be the attempt, either to advance or recede. She had lost the strong position in which she had so long been intrenched, yet could not subdue her mind to the inevitable surrender.

"I know that you are troubled," he said at last, and the considerate tenderness of his voice fell like a balm upon her heart, "but do not think that you alone have yielded to a power which mocks human will. I spoke truly, when I said that the approach of love, this time, had been met with doubt and resistance in myself. I have first yielded, and thus knowledge came to me while you were yet ignorant. From that ignorance the consciousness of love cannot, perhaps, be born at once. But I feel that the instinct which led me to seek you, has not been false. I can now appreciate something of your struggle, which is so much the more powerful than my own as woman's stake in marriage is greater than man's. Let us grant to each other an equally boundless trust, and in that pure air all remaining doubt, or jealousy, or fear of compromised rights, will die. Can you grant me this much, Hannah? It is all I ask now."

She had no strength to refuse. She trusted his manhood already with her whole heart, though foreseeing what such trust implied. "It is myself only, that I doubt," she answered.

"Be kind to me," she added, after a pause, releasing her hand from his clasp and half turning away: "Consider how I have failed—how I have been deceived in myself. Another woman would have been justly proud and happy in my place, for she would not have had the hopes of years to uproot, nor have had to answer to her heart the accusation of disloyalty to humanity."

"We will let that accusation rest," he soothed her. "Do not think that you have failed: you never seemed so strong to me as now. There can be no question of conflicting power between two equal hearts whom love unites in the same destiny. The time will come when this apparent discord will appear to you as a 'harmony not understood.' But, until then, I shall never say a word to you which shall not be meant to solve doubt, and allay fear, and strengthen confidence."

"Let me go back, now, to my mother," she said. "Heaven pardon me, I had almost forgotten her. She wanted me to bring her some gentians. It is very late and she will be alarmed."

He led her back through the tangled, briery paths. She took his offered hand with a mechanical submission, but the touch thrilled her through and through with a sweetness so new and piercing, that she reproached herself at each return, as if the sensation were forbidden. Woodbury gathered for her a bunch of the lovely fringed gentian, with the short autumn ferns, and the downy, fragrant silver of the life-everlasting. They walked side by side, silently, down the meadow, and slowly up the road to the widow's cottage.

"I will deliver the flowers myself," said he, as they reached the gate, "Besides, is it not best that your mother should know of what has passed?"

She could not deny him. In the next moment they were in the little sitting-room. Mrs. Styles expected company to tea, and took her leave as soon as they appeared.

"Mother, will thee see Mr. Woodbury?" said Hannah, opening the door into the adjoining room, where the invalid sat, comfortably propped up in her bed.

"Thee knows I am always glad to see him," came the answer, in a faint voice.

They entered together, and Woodbury laid the flowers on her bed. The old woman looked from one to another with a glance which, by a sudden clairvoyance, saw the truth. A new light came over her face. "Maxwell!" she cried; "Hannah!"

"Mother!" answered the daughter, sinking on her knees and burying her face in the bed-clothes.

Tears gushed from the widow's eyes and rolled down her hollow cheeks. "I see how it is," she said; "I prayed that it might happen. The Lord blesses me once more before I die. Come here, Maxwell, and take a mother's blessing. I give my dear daughter freely into thy hands."

Hannah heard the words. She felt that the bond, thus consecrated by the blessing of her dying mother, dared not be broken.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN WHICH ALL RETREAT IS CUT OFF.

"COME back to-morrow, Maxwell," the Widow Thurston had said, as he took an affectionate leave of her; "come back, and let me hear what thee and Hannah have to say. I am too weak now to talk any more. My life has been so little acquainted with sudden visitations of joy, that this knowledge takes hold of my strength. Thee may leave me too, Hannah; I think I could sleep a little."

The latter carefully smoothed and arranged the pillows, and left the invalid to repose. Woodbury was waiting for her, in the door leading from the sitting-room to the hall. "I am going home now," he said; "can you give me a word of hope and comfort on the way? tell me that you trust me!"

"Oh, I do, I do!" she exclaimed; "Do not mistake either my agitation or my silence. I believe that if I could once be in harmony with myself, what I have heard from your lips to-day would make me happy. I am like my mother," she added, with a melancholy smile, "I am more accustomed to contempt than honor."

He led her into the hall and closed the door behind them. He put one arm protectingly around her, and she felt herself supported against the world. "Hereafter, Hannah," he whispered, "no one can strike at you except through me. Good-by until to-morrow!" He bent his head towards her face, and their eyes met. His beamed with a softened fire, a dewy tenderness and sweetness, before which her soul shivered and tingled in warm throbs of bliss, so quick and sharp as to touch the verge of pain. A wonderful, unknown fascination drew her lips to his. She felt the passionate pressure; her frame trembled; she heard the door open and close as in a dream, and blindly felt her way to the staircase, where she sank upon the lower step and buried her face in her hands.

She neither thought, nor strove to think. The kiss burned on and on, and every throb of her pulses seemed to break in starry radiations of light along her nerves. Dissolving rings of color and splendor formed and faded under her closed lids, and the blood of a new life rustled in her ears, as if the spirits of newly-opened flowers were whispering in the summer wind. She was lapped in a spell too delicious to break—an exquisite drunkenness of her being, beside which all narcotics would have been gross. External sounds appealed no more to her senses; the present, with its unfinished struggles, its torturing doubts, its prophecies of coming sorrow, faded far away, and her soul lay helpless and unresisting in the arms of a single sensation.

All at once, a keen, excited voice, close at hand, called her name. It summoned her to herself with a start which took away her breath.

"My dear girl! Good gracious, what's the matter!" exclaimed Mrs. Waldo, who stood before her. "I saw your mother was asleep, and I've been hunting you all over the house. You were not asleep, too?"

"I believe I was trying to think."

"Bless me, haven't you thought enough yet? I should say, from the look of your face, that you had seen a ghost—no, it must have been an angel! Don't look so, my dear, or I shal be afraid that you are going to die."

"If I were to die, it would make all things clear," Hannah Thurston answered, with a strong effort of self-control; "but I must first learn to live. Do not be alarmed on my account. I am troubled and anxious: I am not my old self."

"I don't wonder at it," rejoined Mrs. Waldo, tenderly "You must see the loss that is coming, as well as the rest of us."

"Yes, I know that my mother can never recover, and I begin, already, to shrink from the parting, as if it were close at hand."

"Oh, my dear," cried Mrs. Waldo, melting into tears, "don't you see the truth yet? Don't you see that the parting is close at hand? I was afraid you did not know; your mother, I was sure, would not tell you; but, putting myself in your place, I did not think it right that you should be kept in ignorance. She is failing very fast."

Hannah Thurston grew very pale. Her friend led her through the door, and out into the little garden in the rear of the cottage. Some wind, far away to the west, had lifted into a low arch the gray concave of cloud, and through this arch the sinking sun poured an intense, angry, brassy light over the tree-tops and along the hillside fields. They leaned against the paling at the bottom of the garden, and looked silently on the fiery landscape. Hannah was the first to speak.

"You are a good friend to me," she said; "I thank you for the knowledge. I knew the blow *must* come, but I hoped it might be delayed a little longer. I must bear it with what strength I may."

"God will help you, Hannah," said Mrs. Waldo, wiping away her tears. "He measures the burden for the back that is to bear it."

Woodbury walked home alone, without waiting, as usual, for Bute and the buggy. He threw back his shoulders and inhaled long draughts of the fresher evening air, with the relief of a man who has performed a trying task. He had full confidence in the completeness of his victory, yet he saw how narrowly he had escaped defeat. Had his mind not been previously occupied with this woman—had he not penetrated to the secret of her nature—had he not been bold enough to stake his fortune on the inherent power of his manhood, he must have failed to break down those ramparts of false pride which she had built up around her heart. A man of shallower knowledge would have endeavored to conquer by resistance—would have been stung by her fierce assertion of independence utterly mistaking the source from whence it sprang. In him it simply aroused a glorious sense of power, which he knew how to curb to the needs of the moment. It thrilled him with admiration, like the magnificent resistance of some wild mare of the steppes, caught in the hunter's lasso. It betrayed an unsuspected capacity for passion which could satisfy the cravings of his heart. This is no tame, insipid, feminine creature, he thought; but a full-blown woman, splendid in her powers splendid in her faults, and unapproachable in that truth and tenderness which would yet bring her nature into harmony with his own.

A part of the power he had drawn from her seemed to be absorbed into his own being. The rapid flow of his blood lifted his feet and bore him with winged steps down the valley. His heart overleaped the uncertainties yet to be solved, and stood already, deep in the domestic future. After crossing Roaring Brook, he left the road and struck across his own meadows and fields in order to select a site, at once convenient and picturesque, for the cottage which he must build for Bute. Of course there could not be two households at Lakeside.

The next day made good the threat of the brassy sunset It rained in wild and driving gusts, and the sky was filled with the rifled gold of the forests. Woodbury paced his library impatiently, unable to read or write, and finally became so restless that he ordered dinner an hour before his accustomed time, to Mrs. Carrie Wilson's great dismay. Bute was no less astonished when Diamond and the buggy were demanded. "Why, Mr. Max.!" he exclaimed; "you're not goin' out such a day as this? Can't I go for you?"

"I have pressing business, Bute, that nobody can attend to but myself. Don't let your tea wait for me, Mrs. Wilson: I may be late."

Leaving the happy pair—happy in the rain which kept them all day to each other—to their wonder and their anxious surmises, Woodbury drove through the wind, and rain, and splashing mud, to the Widow Thurston's cottage. Hannah met him with an air of touching frankness and reliance, clasping his hand with a tender firmness which atoned for the silence of her lips. She looked pale and exhausted, but a soft, rosy flush passed over her face and faded away.

"I will tell mother you have come," she said. The next moment she reappeared at the door of the sick-room, and beckoned him to enter.

The widow was still in bed, and it was plainly to be seen that she would never leave it again. The bouquet of gentian and life-everlasting stood on a little table near her head. Her prim Quaker cap was uncrumpled by the pillow, and a light fawn-colored shawl enveloped her shoulders. She might have been placed in the gallery of the meeting-house, among her sister Friends, without a single fold being changed. Her thin hands rested weakly on the coverlet, and her voice was scarcely above a whisper, but the strong soul which had sustained her life was yet clear in her eye.

The daughter placed a chair for Woodbury by the bedside. He sat down and took the old woman's hand in both his own. She looked at him with a gentle, affectionate, motherly benignity, which made his eyes dim with the thought of his own scarcely-remembered mother.

"Maxwell," she said at last, "thee sees my days on the earth are not many. Thee will be honest with me, therefore, and answer me out of thy heart. I have not had many opportunities of seeing thee, but thee had my confidence from the first. Thee has had thy struggles with the world; thee is old enough to know thyself, and I will believe that thee hast learned to know Hannah, truly. She is not like other girls: she was always inclined to go her own way, but she has never failed in her duty to me, and I am sure she will not fail in her duty as thy wife."

Hannah, sitting at the foot of the bed, started at these words. She looked imploringly at her mother, but did not speak.

"Yes, Hannah," continued the old woman, "I have no fears for thee, when thee once comes to understand thy true place as a woman. Thee was always more like thy father than like me. I see that it has not been easy for thee to give up thy ideas of independence, but I am sure that thy husband will be gentle and forbearing, so that thee will hardly feel the yoke Will thee not, Maxwell?"

"I will," Woodbury replied. "I have told your daughter that I impose no conditions upon our union. It was the purity and truth of her nature which drew me almost against my will, to love her. I have such entire faith in that truth, that I believe we shall gradually come into complete harmony, not only in our feelings and aspirations, but even in our external views of life. I am ready to sacrifice whatever individual convictions may stand in the way of our mutual approach, and I only ask of Hannah that she will allow, not resist, the natural progress of her heart in the knowledge of itself."

"Thee hears what he says?" said the old woman, turning her eyes on her daughter. "Maxwell has answered the question I intended to ask: he loves thee, Hannah, as thee deserves to be loved. The thought of leaving thee alone in the world was a cross which I could not bring my mind to bear. The Lord has been merciful. He has led to thee the only man into whose hands I can deliver thee, with the certainty that he will be thy stay and thy happiness when I am gone. Tell me, my daughter, does thee answer his affection in the same spirit?"

"Mother," sobbed Hannah, "thee knows I would show thee my heart if I could. Maxwell deserves all the honor and gratitude I am capable of giving: he has been most noble and just and tender towards me: I cannot reject him—it is not in my nature—and yet—don't think hard of me, mother—it has all come so suddenly, it is so new and strange——"

Here she paused and covered her face, unable to speak further.

"It seems that I know thee better than I thought," said the widow, and something like a smile flitted over her wasted features. "Thee needn't say any thing more: my mind is at rest. Come nearer to me, here, and seat thyself at Maxwell's side. I have a serious concern upon me, and you must both bear with me while I tell it."

The daughter came and seated herself at the head of the bed, beside Woodbury. The mother's right hand seemed to feel for hers, and she gave it. The other found its way, she knew not how, into his. The old woman looked at them both, and the expression of peace and resignation left her eyes. They were filled with a tender longing which she hesitated to put into words. In place of the latter came tears, and then her tongue was loosed.

"My children," she whispered, "it is best to be plain with you. From day to day I expect to hear the Master's call. I have done with the things of this life; my work is over, and now the night cometh, when I shall rest. The thought came to me in the silent watches, when I lifted up my soul to the Lord and thanked Him that He had heard my prayer. I thought, then, that nothing more was wanting; and, indeed, it may be unreasonable of me to ask more. But what I ask seems to be included in what has already happened. I know the instability of earthly things, and I should like to see with these eyes, the security of my daughter's fate. Maxwell, I lost the little son who would have been so near thy age had he lived. Will thee give me the right to call *thee* 'son' in his place? Is thee so sure of thy heart that thee could give Hannah thy name *now?* It is a foolish wish of mine, I know; but if you love each other, children, you may be glad, in the coming time, that the poor old mother lived to see and to bless your union!"

Woodbury was profoundly moved. He tenderly kissed the wasted hand he held, and said, in a hushed, reverential voice: "I am sure of my own heart. With your daughter's consent, it shall be as you say."

"Mother, mother!" cried Hannah: "I cannot leave thee!"

"Thee shall not, child. I would not ask it of thee. Maxwell knows what I mean: nothing shall be changed while I live, but you will not be parted for long. Nay, perhaps, I am selfish in this thing. Tell me, honestly, my children, would it make your wedding sad, when it should be joyful?"

"It will make it sacred," Woodbury answered.

"I will not ask too much of thee, Hannah," the widow continued. "What I wish would give me a feeling of comfort and security; but I know I ought to be satisfied without it. I have had my own concerns on thy account; I saw a thorny path before thee if thee were obliged to walk through life alone, and I feared thee would never willingly bend thy neck to wear the pleasant yoke of a wife. If I knew that thy lot was fixed, in truth; if I could hear thee speak the words which tell me that I have not lost a daughter but gained a son, the last remaining bitterness would be taken from death, and I would gladly arise and go to my Father!"

All remaining power of resistance was taken away from Hannah Thurston. She had yielded so far that she could no longer retreat with honor. Woodbury had taken, almost even before he claimed it, the first place in her thoughts, and though she still scarcely confessed to herself that she loved him as *her* husband should be loved, yet her whole being was penetrated with the presentiment of coming love. If she still feebly strove to beat back the rising tide, it was not from fear of her inability to return the trust he gave, but rather a mechanical effort to retain the independence which she felt to be gradually slipping from her grasp. Her mother's words showed her that she, also, foreboded this struggle and doubted its solution; she had, alas! given her cause to mistrust the unexpected emotion. Towards men—towards Woodbury, especially—she had showed herself hard and unjust in that mother's eyes. Could she refuse to remove the unspoken doubt by postponing a union, which, she acknowledged to herself, was destined to come? Could she longer hold back her entire faith from Woodbury, with his parting kiss of yesterday still warm upon her lips?

She leaned forward, and bent her head upon the old woman's breast. "Mother," she said, in a scarcely audible voice, "it shall be as thee wishes."

The widow tenderly stroked her dark-brown hair. "If I were not sure it was right, Hannah," she said, "I would give thee back thy consent. Let it be soon, pray, for I see that my sojourn with you is well-nigh its end."

"Let it be to-morrow, Hannah," Woodbury then said. "Every thing shall be afterwards as it was before. I will not take you from your mother's bedside, but you will simply give me the right to offer, and her the right to receive, a son's help and comfort."

It was so arranged. Only the persons most intimately connected with both—Waldos, Merryfields, Bute and Carrie—were to be informed of the circumstances and invited to be present. Mr. Waldo, of course, was to solemnize the union, though the widow asked that the Quaker form of marriage should first be repeated in her presence. She was exhausted by the interview, and Woodbury soon took his leave, to give the necessary announcements.

Hannah accompanied him to the door, and when it closed behind him, murmured to herself:

> "I strove against the stream, and strove in vain—
> Let the great river bear me to the main!"

The Waldos were alone in their little parlor—alone, but not lonely; for they were one of those fortunate wedded pairs who never tire of their own society. The appearance of Woodbury, out of the wind and rain, was a welcome surprise, and they both greeted him with hearty delight.

"Husband," cried Mrs. Waldo, "do put the poor horse into our stable, beside Dobbin. Mr. Woodbury will not think of going home until after tea."

The clergyman was half-way through the door before the guest could grasp his arm. "Stay, if you please," he said; "I have something to say, at once, to both of you."

His voice was so grave and earnest, that they turned towards him with a sudden alarm. Something in his face tranquilized while it perplexed them.

"I once promised you, Mrs. Waldo," he continued, "that your husband should perform the marriage ceremony for me. The time has come when I can fulfil my promise. I am to be married to-morrow!"

The clergyman's lips receded so as to exhibit, not only all of his teeth, but also a considerable portion of the gums. His wife's dark eyes expanded, her hands involuntarily came together in a violent clasp, and her breath was suspended.

"I am to be married to-morrow," Woodbury repeated. "to Hannah Thurston."

Mrs. Waldo dropped into the nearest chair. "It's a poor joke," she said, at last, with a feeble attempt to laugh; "and I shouldn't have believed you could make it."

In a very few words he told them the truth. The next moment, Mrs. Waldo sprang upon her feet, threw both arms around him, and kissed him tempestuously. "I can't help it, husband!" she cried, giving way to a mild hysterical fit of laughter and tears: "It's so rarely things happen as they ought, in this world! What a fool I've been, to think you hated each other! I shall never trust my eyes again, no, nor my ears, nor my stupid brains. I'll warrant Mrs. Blake was a deal sharper than I have been; see if she is surprised when you send her word! Oh, you dear people, how happy you have made me—I'd rather it should come so than that husband should get a thousand converts, and build the biggest church in Ptolemy!"

Mr. Waldo also was moved, in his peculiar fashion. He cleared his throat as if about to commence a prayer, walked three times to the door and back, squeezing Woodbury's hand afresh at each return, and finally went to the window and remarked: "It is very stormy to-day."

In proportion as the good people recovered from their happy amazement, Woodbury found it difficult to tear himself away. They stormed him with questions about the rise and progress of his attachment, which his sense of delicacy forbade him to answer. "It is enough," he said, "that we love each other, and that we are to be married to-morrow." As he turned his horse's head towards Ptolemy, a figure wrapped in an old cloak and with a shapeless quilted hood upon the head, appeared on the plank sidewalk hastening in the direction of the widow's cottage. It was Mrs. Waldo.

The Merryfields were also at home when he called. Their life had, of late, been much more quiet and subdued than formerly, and hence they have almost vanished out of this history; but, from the friendly relation which they bore to Hannah Thurston, they could not well be omitted from the morrow's occasion. The news was unexpected, but did not seem to astonish them greatly, as they were both persons of slow perceptions, and had not particularly busied their minds about either of the parties.

"I'm sure I'm very glad, as it were," said Mr. Merryfield. "There are not many girls like Hannah Thurston, and she deserves to be well provided for."

"Yes, it's a good thing for her," remarked his wife, with a little touch of malice, which, however, was all upon the surface; "but Women's Rights will be what they always was, if their advocates give them up."

Darkness was setting down, and the rain fell in torrents, as Woodbury reached Lakeside. Bute, who had been coming to the door every five minutes for the last hour, had heard the rattling of wheels through the storm, and the Irishman was already summoned to take charge of the horse. In the sitting-room it was snug, and bright, and cheerful. A wood-fire blazed on the hearth, and Mrs. Carrie, with a silk handkerchief tied under her chin, was dodging about the tea-table. By the kindly glow in his heart towards these two happy creatures, Woodbury felt that his cure was complete; their bliss no longer had power to disturb him.

"How pleasant it is here!" he said. "You really make the house home-like, Mrs. Wilson."

Carrie's eyes sparkled and her cheeks reddened with delight. Bute thought: "He's had no unlucky business, after all." But he was discreet enough to ask no questions.

After tea, Woodbury did not go into the library, as usual. He drew a chair towards the fire, and for a while watched Mrs. Wilson's fingers, as they rapidly plied the needles upon a pair of winter socks for Bute. The latter sat on the other side of the fire, reading Dana's "Two Years before the Mast."

"Bute," said Woodbury, suddenly, "do you think we have room for another, in the house?"

To his surprise, Bute blushed up to the temples, and seemed embarrassed how to answer. He looked stealthily at Carrie.

Woodbury smiled, and hastened to release him from his error. "Because," said he, "you brought something to Lakeside more contagious than your fever. I have caught it, and now *I* am going to marry."

"Oh, Mr. Max., you don't mean it! It's not Miss Amelia Smith?"

Woodbury burst into a laugh.

"How can you think of such a thing, Bute?" exclaimed his wife. "There's only one woman in all Ptolemy worthy of Mr. Woodbury, and yet I'm afraid it isn't her."

"Who, Mrs. Wilson?"

"You won't be offended, Sir, will you? I mean Hannah Thurston."

"You have guessed it!"

Carrie gave a little scream and dropped her knitting. Bute tried to laugh, but something caught in his throat, and in his efforts to swallow it the water came into his eyes.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONCERNING MARRIAGE, DEATH, GOSSIP, AND GOING HOME.

THE occasion which called the few friends together at the cottage, the next morning, was sad and touching, as well as joyful. At least, each one felt that the usual cheerful sympathy with consummated love would be out of place, in circumstances so unusual and solemn. The widow felt that she was robbing her daughter's marriage of that sunshine which of right belonged to it, but in this, as in all other important decisions of life, she was guided by "the spirit." She perceived, indeed, that Hannah had not yet reached the full consciousness of her love—that the fixed characteristics of her mind fought continually against her heart, and would so fight while any apparent freedom of will remained; and, precisely for this reason, the last exercise of maternal authority was justified to her own soul. In the clairvoyance of approaching death she looked far enough into the future to know that, without this bond, her daughter's happiness was uncertain: with it, she saw the struggling elements resolve themselves into harmony.

Woodbury suspected the mother's doubt, though he did not share it to the same extent. He believed that the fierceness of the struggle was over. The chain was forged, and by careful forbearance and tenderness it might be imperceptibly clasped. There were still questions to be settled, but he had already abdicated the right of control; he had intrusted their solution to the natural operation of time and love. He would neither offer nor accept any express stipulations of rights, for this one promise embraced them all. Her nature could only be soothed to content in its new destiny by the deeper knowledge which that destiny would bring, and therefore, the mother's request was perhaps best for both. It only imposed upon him a more guarded duty, a more watchful self-control, in the newness of their relation to each other.

Mrs. Waldo, unable to sleep all night from the excitement of her honest heart, was with Hannah Thurston early in the morning. It was as well, no doubt, that the latter was allowed no time for solitary reflection, as the hour approached. By ten o'clock the other friends, who had first driven to the Cimmerian Parsonage, made their appearance in the little sitting-room. Woodbury came in company with Mr. Waldo, followed by Bute and Carrie. He was simply dressed in black, without the elaborate waistcoat and cravat of a bridegroom. But for the cut of his coat collar, the Friends themselves would not have found fault with his apparel. His face was calm and serene: whatever emotion he felt did not appear on the surface.

Mrs. Merryfield, in a lavender-colored silk, which made her sallow complexion appear worse than ever, occasionally raised her handkerchief to her eyes, although there were no signs of unusual moisture in them.

The door to the invalid's room was open, and the bed had been moved near it, so that she could both see and converse with the company in the sitting-room. Her spotless book-muslin handkerchief and shawl of white crape-silk were scarcely whiter than her face, but a deep and quiet content dwelt in her eyes and gave its sweetness to her feeble voice. She greeted them all with a grateful and kindly cheerfulness. The solemnity of the hour was scarcely above the earnest level of her life; it was an atmosphere in which her soul moved light and free.

Presently Hannah Thurston came into the room. She was dressed in white muslin, with a very plain lace collar and knot of white satin ribbon. Her soft dark hair, unadorned by a single flower, was brought a little further forward on the temples, giving a gentler feminine outline to her brow. Her face was composed and pale, but for a spot of red on each cheek, and a singularly vague, weary expression in her eyes. When Woodbury took her hand it was icy cold. She received the greetings of the others quietly, and then went forward to the bedside, at the beckon of her mother. The latter had been allowed to direct the ceremony according to her wish, and the time had now arrived.

The bridal pair took their seats in the sitting-room, side by side, and facing the open door where the invalid lay. The guests, on either side of them, formed a half-circle, so arranged that she could see them all. She, indeed, seemed to be the officiating priestess, on whom depended the solemnization of the rite. After a few moments of silence, such as is taken for worship in Quaker meetings, she began to speak. Her voice gathered strength as she proceeded, and assumed the clear, chanting tone with which, in former years, she had been wont to preach from the gallery where she sat among the women-elders of the sect.

"My friends," she said, "I feel moved to say a few words to you all. I feel that you have not come here without a realizing sense of the occasion which has called you together, and that your hearts are prepared to sympathize with those which are now to be joined in the sight of the Lord. I have asked of them that they allow mine eyes, in the short time that is left to me for the things of earth, to look upon their union. When I have seen that, I can make my peace with the world, and, although I have not been in all things a faithful servant, I can hope that the joy of the Lord will not be shut out from my soul. I feel the approach of the peace that passeth understanding, and would not wish that, for my sake, the house of gladness be made the house of mourning. Let your hearts be not disturbed by the thought of me. Rejoice, rather, that the son I lost so long ago is found at the eleventh hour, and that the prop for which I sought, for strength to walk through the Valley of the Shadow, is mercifully placed in my hands. For I say unto you all, the pure affection of the human heart is likest the love of the Heavenly Father, and they who bestow most of the one shall deserve most of the other!"

She ceased speaking, and made a sign with her hand. The hearts of the hearers were thrilled with a solemn, reverential awe, as if something more than a human presence overshadowed them. Woodbury and Hannah arose, in obedience to her signal, and moved a step towards her. The former had learned the simple formula of the Friends, and was ready to perform his part. Taking Hannah's right hand in his own, he spoke in a clear, low, earnest voice: "In the presence of the Lord, and these, our friends, I take Hannah Thurston by the hand, promising, through Divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until Death shall separate us."

It was now the woman's turn. Perhaps Woodbury may have felt a pulse fluttering in the hand he held, but no one saw a tremor of weakness in her frame or heard it in the firm, perfect sweetness of her voice. She looked in his eyes as she pronounced the words, as if her look should carry to his heart the significance of the vow. When she had spoken, Mr. Waldo rose, and performed the scarcely less simple ceremonial of the Cimmerian Church. After he had pronounced them man and wife, with his hands resting on theirs linked in each other, he made a benedictory prayer. He spoke manfully to the end, though his eyes overflowed, and his practised voice threatened at every moment to break. His hearers had melted long before: only the Widow Thurston and the newly-wedded pair preserved their composure. They were beyond the reach of sentiment, no matter how tender. None of the others suspected what a battle had been fought, nor what deeper issues were involved in the victory.

The two then moved to the bedside, and the old woman kissed them both. "Mother," said Woodbury, "let me be a son to you in truth as in name."

"Richard!" she cried, "my dear boy! Thee is welcomer than Richard, for Hannah's sake. Children, have faith in each other—bear each other's burdens. Hannah, is there peace in thy heart now?"

"Mother, I have promised," she answered; "I have given my life into Maxwell's hands: peace will come to me."

"The Lord give it to thee, as He hath given it to me!" She closed her eyes, utterly exhausted, but happy.

The marriage certificate was then produced and signed by those present, after which they took their leave. Woodbury remained until evening, assisting his wife in her attendance on the invalid, or keeping her company in the sitting-room, when the latter slept. He said nothing of his love, or his new claim upon her. Rightly judging that her nature needed rest, after the severe tension of the past week, he sought to engage her in talk that would call her thoughts away from herself. He was so successful in this that the hours fled fast, and when he left with the falling night, to return to Lakeside, she felt as if a stay had been withdrawn from her.

The next morning he was back again at an early hour, taking his place as one of the household, as quietly and unobtrusively as if he had long been accustomed to it. Another atmosphere came into the cottage with him—a sense of strength and reliance, and tender, protecting care, which was exceedingly grateful to Hannah. The chaos of her emotions was already beginning to subside, or, rather, to set towards her husband in a current that grew swifter day after day. The knowledge that her fate was already determined silenced at once what would otherwise have been her severest conflict; her chief remaining task was to reconcile the cherished aims of her mind with the new sphere of duties which encompassed her life. At present, however, even this task must be postponed She dared think of nothing but her mother, and Woodbury's share in the cares and duties of the moment became more and more welcome and grateful. It thrilled her with a sweet sense of the kinship of their hearts, when she heard him address the old woman as "mother"—when his arm, as tender as strong, lifted that mother from the bed to the rocking chair, and back again—when she saw the wasted face brighten at his coming, and heard the voice of wandering memory call him, in the wakeful watches of the night. She, too, counted the minutes of the morning until he appeared, and felt the twilight drop more darkly before the cottage-windows after he had gone.

But, as the widow had promised, she did not part them long. On the fifth day after the marriage she sank peacefully to rest, towards sunset, with a gradual, painless fading out of life, which touched the hearts of the watchers only with the solemn beauty and mystery of death, not with its terror. Her external consciousness had ceased, some hours before, but she foresaw the coming of the inevitable hour, and there was a glad resignation in her farewell to her daughter and her newly-found son. "Love one another!" were her last, faintly-whispered words, as her eyes closed on both.

Hannah shrank from leaving the cottage before the last rites had been performed, and Miss Sophia Stevenson, as well as Mrs. Waldo, offered to remain with her. Woodbury took charge of the arrangements for the funeral, which were simple and unostentatious, as became the habit of her sect.

A vague impression of what had happened was floating through Ptolemy, but was generally received with an incredulity far from consistent with the avidity of village gossip. The death of the Widow Thurston had been anticipated, but the previous marriage of her daughter was an event so astounding—so completely unheralded by the usual prognostications, and so far beyond the reach of any supposable cause—that the mind of Ptolemy was slow to receive it as truth. By the day of the funeral, however, the evidences had accumulated to an extent that challenged further doubt. But doubters and believers alike determined to profit by the occasion to gratify their curiosity under the Christian pretext of showing respect to the departed. The rumor had even reached Atauga City by the evening stage, and the Misses Smith, having recently supplied themselves with lilac dresses, which, as a half-mourn ing color, would not be inappropriate, resolved also to attend the funeral services.

As the hour drew nigh, the road in front of the little cottage was crowded with vehicles. It was a mild, sunny October afternoon, and as the room in which the corpse lay would not contain a tenth part of the guests, they filled the yard and garden and even the side-walk in front, entering the house as they arrived, to take that silent look at the dead which is suggested, let us believe, more by human sympathy than by human curiosity. And, indeed, a solemn loveliness of repose rested on the thin, composed features of the corpse. All shadow of pain had passed away, and an aspect of ineffable peace and comfort had settled in its place. Her hands were laid, one over the other, upon her breast—not with the stony pressure of death, but as if in the light unconsciousness of sleep. Upon the coffin-lid lay a wreath of life-everlasting, its gray, silvery leaves and rich, enduring odor, harmonizing well with the subdued tastes and the quiet integrity of the sect to which the old widow had belonged. Even the Rev. Lemuel Styles, to whom the term "Quaker" implied a milder form of infidelity, stood for a long time beside the coffin, absorbed in the beauty of the calm, dead face, and murmured as he turned away: "She hath found Peace."

Two old Friends from Tiberius, with their wives, were also in attendance, and the latter devoted themselves to Hannah, as if it were a special duty imposed upon them. Before the coffin-lid was screwed down, they sat for some time beside the corpse, with their handkerchiefs pressed tightly over their mouths. Their husbands, with Mr. Waldo and Merryfield, bore the coffin to the hearse. The guests gathered around and in front of the house now began to open their eyes and prick their ears. The daughter must presently appear, as first of the mourners, and in company with her husband, if she were really married. They had not long to wait. Hannah, leaning on Woodbury's arm, issued from the front door of the cottage, and slowly passed down the gravel walk to the carriage in waiting. Her unveiled face was pale and profoundly sad; her eyes were cast down, and none of the company caught their full glance. Woodbury's countenance indicated the grave and tender sympathy which filled his heart. He saw the spectators, without seeming to notice them, and the keenest curiosity was baffled by his thorough self possession. Both were surrounded by an atmosphere of sorrow and resignation, in which all expression of their new nuptial relation was lost. They might have been married for years, so far as any thing could be guessed from their manner.

The other carriages gradually received their occupants and followed, in the order of their nearness to the deceased, whether in the bonds of sect or those of friendship. Among these the Waldos claimed a prominent place and the Merryfields were close behind them. The procession was unusually large; it seemed, indeed, as if all Ptolemy were present. On reaching the Cimmerian churchyard, Bute and the farmers whose lands adjoined Lakeside were on hand to assist the mourners and their friends in alighting from the carriages, and to take care of the horses. The grave was dug at a little distance from those of the Cimmerians, in a plot of soft, unbroken turf. Supports were laid across its open mouth, and when the coffin had been deposited thereon, preparatory to being lowered, and the crowd had gathered in a silent ring, enclosing the mourners and their immediate friends, one of the Friends took off his broad-brimmed hat and in simple, eloquent words, bore testimony to the truth and uprightness, to the Christian trust and Christian patience of the departed. The two women again pressed their handkerchiefs violently upon their mouths, while he spoke. Woodbury took off his hat and reverently bent his head, though the other Friend stood bolt upright and remained covered.

Mr. Waldo then followed, with an earnest, heart-felt prayer He was scarcely aware how much he risked in thus consecrating the burial of a Quaker woman, and it was fortunate that no laxity of doctrine could be discovered in the brief sentences he uttered. It was not Doctrine, but Religion, which inspired his words, and the most intolerant of his hearers felt their power while secretly censuring the act. He, too, referred to the widow's life as an example of pious resignation, and prayed that the same Christian virtue might come to dwell in the hearts of all present.

When the coffin had been lowered, and the first spadeful of earth, though softly let down into the grave, dropped upon the lid with a muffled, hollow roll, Hannah started as if in pain, and clung with both hands to her husband's arm. He bent his head to her face and whispered a word; what it was, no other ear than hers succeeded in hearing. The dull, rumbling sounds continued, until the crumbling whisper of the particles of earth denoted that the coffin was forever covered from sight. Then they turned away, leaving the mild Autumn sun to shine on the new mound, and the thrush to pipe his broken song over the silence of the dead.

The moment the churchyard gate was passed, Ptolemy returned to its gossip. The incredulous fact was admitted, but the mystery surrounding it was not yet explained. In the few families who considered themselves "the upper circle," and were blessed with many daughters, to none of whom the rich owner of Lakeside had been indifferent, there was great and natural exasperation.

"I consider it flying in the face of Providence," said Mrs. Hamilton Bue to her husband, as they drove homewards; "for a man like him, who knows what society is, and ought to help to purtect it from fanaticism, to marry a strong-minded woman like she is. And after all he said against their doctrines! I should call it hypocritical, *I* should!"

"Martha," her husband answered, "If I were you, I wouldn't say much about it, for a while yet. He's only insured in the Saratoga Mutual for a year, to try it."

Mrs. Styles consoled her sister, Miss Legrand, who at one time allowed herself dim hopes of interesting Woodbury in her behalf. "I always feared that he was not entirely firm in the faith; he never seemed inclined to talk with Mr. Styles about it She, you know, is quite an Infidel, and, of course, he could not have been ignorant of it. It's very sad to see a man so misled—'the lust of the eye,' Harriet."

"I should say it was witchcraft," Harriet remarked, with a snappish tone; "she's a very plain-looking girl—like an owl with her big gray eyes and straight hair." Miss Legrand wore hers in ropy ringlets of great length.

"I shouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes!" exclaimed Miss Celia Smith to her sister, Miss Amelia. "I always thought they were dead set against each other." Miss Celia was more inclined to be emphatic than choice in her expressions.

"They made believe they were," her sister replied. "She must have been afraid he'd back out, after all, or they wouldn't have been married so, right off the reel. It was her last chance: she's on the wrong side of thirty-five, I should say." Miss Amelia was thirty-three, herself, although she only confessed to twenty-five. The memory of a certain sleigh-ride the winter before, during which her incessant fears of an overturn obliged Woodbury to steady her with his arm, was fresh in her mind, with all its mingled sweet and bitter. Several virgin hearts shared the same thought, as the carriages went homeward—that it was a shame, so it was, that this strong minded woman, whom nobody imagined ever could be a rival, should sneak into the fold by night and carry off the pick of the masculine flock!

Meanwhile, the objects of all this gossip returned to the desolate cottage. When they entered the little sitting-room, Hannah's composure gave way, under the overwhelming sense of her loss which rushed upon her, as she saw that every thing was restored to its usual place, and the new life, without her mother, had commenced. Her tears flowed without restraint, and her husband allowed the emotion to exhaust itself before he attempted consolation. But at last he took her, still sobbing, to his breast, and silently upheld her.

"Hannah," he said, "my dear wife, how can I leave you here alone, to these sad associations? This can no longer be your home. Come to me with your burden, and let me help you to bear it."

"Oh, Maxwell," she answered, "you are my help and my comfort. No one else has the same right to share my sorrow. My place is beside you: I will try to fill it as I ought: but—Maxwell—can I, dare I enter your home as a bride, coming thus directly from the grave of my mother?"

"You will bring her blessing in the freshness of its sanctity," he said. "Understand me, Hannah. In the reverence for your sorrow, my love is patient. Enter my home, now, as the guest of my heart, giving me only the right to soothe and comfort, until you can hear, without reproach, the voice of love."

His noble consideration for her grief and her loneliness melted Hannah's heart. Through all the dreary sense of her loss penetrated the gratitude of love. She lifted her arms and clasped them about his neck. "Take me, my dear husband," she whispered, "take me, rebellious as I have been, unworthy as I am, and teach me to deserve your magnanimity."

He took her home that evening, under the light of the rising moon, down the silence of the valley, through the gathering mists of the meadows, and under the falling of the golden leaves. The light of Lakeside twinkled, a ruddy star, to greet them, and with its brightening ray stole into her heart the first presentiment of Woman's Home.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCERNING THE NEW HOUSEHOLD OF LAKESIDE.

In a day or two all the familiar articles of furniture which Hannah desired to retain, were transferred to Lakeside with her personal effects, and the cottage was closed until a new tenant could be found. In the first combined shock of grief and change, the secluded beauty of her new home was especially grateful. The influences of Nature, no less than the tender attentions of her husband, and the quiet, reverent respect of Bute and Carrie, gradually soothed and consoled her. Day after day the balmy southwest wind blew, hardly stirring the smoky purple of the air, through which glimmered the floating drifts of gossamer or the star-like tufts of wandering down. The dead flowers saw their future resurrection in these winged, emigrating seeds; the trees let fall the loosened splendor of their foliage, knowing that other summers were sheathed in the buds left behind; even the sweet grass of the meadows bowed its dry crest submissively over the green heart of its perennial life. Every object expressed the infinite patience of Nature with her yearly recurring doom. The sun himself seemed to veil his beams in noonday haze, lest he should smite with too severe a lustre the nakedness of the landscape, as it slowly put off its garment of life.

For years past, she had been deprived of the opportunity so to breathe the enchantment of the heavenly season. As soon as the chill of the morning dew had left the earth, she went forth to the garden and orchard, and along the sunny margin of the whispering pine-wood behind the house, striving to comprehend the change that had come over her, and fit her views of life to harmony with it. In the afternoons she went, at Woodbury's side, to a knoll overhanging the lake, whence the landscape was broader and grander, opening northward beyond the point, where now and then a sail flashed dimly along the blue water. Here, sitting on the grassy brink, he told her of the wonderful life of the tropics, of his early hopes and struggles, of the cheating illusions he had cherished, the sadder knowledge he had wrested from experience, and that immortal philosophy of the heart in which all things are reconciled. He did not directly advert to his passion for herself, but she felt it continually as the basis from which his confidences grew. He was a tender, trustful friend, presenting to her, leaf by leaf, the book of his life. She, too, gave him much of hers in return. She found a melancholy pleasure in speaking of the Past to one who had a right to know it, and to whom its most trifling feature was not indifferent. Her childhood, her opening girlhood, her education, her desire for all possible forms of cultivation, her undeveloped artistic sympathies and their conflict with the associations which surrounded her—all these returned, little by little, and her husband rejoiced to find in them fresh confirmations of the instinctive judgment, on the strength of which he had ventured his love.

In the evenings they generally sat in the library, where he read to her from his choice stores of literature, and from the reading grew earnest mutual talk which calmed and refreshed her mind. The leisure of his long years in India had not been thrown away: he had developed and matured his natural taste for literature by the careful study of the English and French classics, and was familiar with the principal German and Italian authors, so far as they could be known through translations. He had also revived, to some extent, his musty knowledge of the Greek and Latin poets, and his taste had thus become pure and healthy in proportion to the variety of his acquirements. Hannah had, now and then, perhaps (though this is doubtful, in the circumscribed community of Ptolemy), encountered men of equal culture, but none who had spoken to her as an equal, from the recognition of like capacities in her own mind. She saw, in this intercourse with her husband, the commencement of a new and inexhaustible intellectual enjoyment. That clamor of her nature for the supposed rights denied to her sex was, in part, the result of a baffled mental passion, which now saw the coveted satisfaction secured to it; and thus the voice of her torment grew weaker day by day.

Day by day, also, with scarce a spoken word of love, the relations between the two became more fond and intimate. Woodbury's admirable judgment taught him patience. He saw the color gradually coming back to the pale leaves of the flower, and foresaw the day when he might wear it on his bosom. The wind-tossed lake smoothed its surface more and more, and gleams of his own image were reflected back to him from the subsiding waves. The bride glided into the wife by a gentle, natural transition. She assumed her place as head of the household, and Carrie, who was always nervously anxious under the weight of the responsibility, transferred it gladly to her hands. The sense of her ownership in the treasures of Lakeside, which had at first seemed incredible, grew real by degrees, as she came to exercise her proper authority, and as her husband consulted with her in regard to the proposed changes in the garden and grounds. All these things inspired her with a new and delightful interest. The sky of her life brightened as the horizon grew wider. Her individual sphere of action had formerly been limited on every side; her tastes had been necessarily suppressed; and the hard, utilitarian spirit, from which she shrank, in the associations of her sect, seemed to meet her equally wherever she turned. Her instinct of beauty was now liberated; for Woodbury, possessing it himself, not only appreciated, but encouraged its vitality in her nature. The rooms took the impression of her taste, at first in minor details and then in general arrangements, and this external reflection of herself in the features of her home reacted upon her feelings, separating her by a constantly widening gulf from her maiden life.

The gold of the forests corroded, the misty violet bloom of the Indian Summer was washed away by sharp winds and cold rains, and when winter set in, the fire on the domestic hearth burned with a warm, steady flame. Immediately after the marriage, Woodbury had not only picked out a very pretty site for the cottage which he must now build in earnest for Bute's occupancy, but had immediately engaged masons and carpenters to commence the work. It was on a low knob or spur of the elevation upon which stood his own house, but nearer the Anacreon road. Bute and Carrie were in ecstasies with the design, which was selected from "Downing's Landscape Gardening." It was a story and a half high, with overhanging balconies, in the Swiss style, and promised to be a picturesque object in the view from Lakeside, especially as it would just hide the only ragged and unlovely spot in the landscape, to the left of Roaring Brook. By great exertion on Bute's part, it was gotten under roof, and then left for a winter's seasoning, before completion in the spring. This house and every thing connected with it took entire possession of the mind of Mrs. Carrie Wilson, and not a day passed without her consulting Hannah in regard to some internal or external arrangement. She would have flowered chintz curtains to the windows of the "best room"—blue, with small pink roses: the stuff would be cheap and of course she would make them herself: would it be better to have them ruffled with the same, or an edging of the coarse cotton lace which she had learned to knit? Bute had promised her a carpet, and they could furnish the room little by little, so that the expense would not be felt. "We must economize," she invariably added, at the close: "we are going to lay something by every year, and I want to show Bute that I can manage to have every thing nice and tasty, without spending much."

The little woman still retained her admiration for Hannah, perhaps in an increased degree, now that Woodbury (for whom Carrie had conceived such a profound respect) had chosen her to be his wife. She confided to the latter all her wonderful plans for the future, utterly forgetful how they differed from the confidences which she had been accustomed to bestow. Hannah could not help remarking her present unconsciousness of that ambition which she had once pitied as mistaken, though she had not the heart to check it. A similar change seemed to be taking place in herself. "Is it always so?" she reflected. "Is the fulfilment of our special destiny as women really the end of that lofty part which we resolved to take in the forward struggle of the race? Was my desire to vindicate the just claims of my sex only the blind result of the relinquishment of earlier dreams? It cannot be: but this much is true—that the restless mind is easily cradled to sleep on the beatings of a happy heart."

The strict seclusion of her life was rarely broken. The Waldos and Merryfields came once or twice for a brief call, but Woodbury, though he went occasionally to Ptolemy, did not urge her to accompany him. Sometimes, on mild days, he drove with her over the hills, re-exploring for her the picturesque little nooks of the upland which he had discovered. Hannah was contented with this; she knew that Society awaited her, after a time, but it could not now deny her that grateful repose, in which she gathered strength, and hope, and harmony with herself. Indeed, the life of Ptolemy flowed more quietly than usual, this season. The Great Sewing-Union was not reorganized, because the Cimmerians had decided on a "Donation Party" for Mr. Waldo's benefit, instead of a Fair; the Abolitionists had not sufficient cohesive power without the assistance of Hannah and Mrs. Merryfield, and prepared their contributions separately at home; and thus only the Mission Fund remained. The latter, however, was stimulated to fresh activity by the arrival of a package of letters, early in December, from Mrs. Jehiel Preeks (formerly Miss Eliza

Clancy), dated from Cuddapah, in the Telugu Country. She had passed a week at Jutnapore, and was shocked to find that her brown namesake, for whom she had made the mousseline-delaine frock with tucks, had been married a year, although not yet fourteen, and exhibited to her a spiritual grand-baby, on her arrival. She forwarded to Miss Ruhaney Goodwin a letter in the Telugu language from her son Elisha, which the spinster had framed and hung up beside her looking-glass. "It's more like bird-tracks than any thing else," she whispered, confidentially, "but the sight of it gives me a deal of comfort."

Thus, the labors for the Mission Fund were resumed, but the young men who attended looked back to the days of the Great Sewing-Union with regret. The mixed composition of the latter had been its great charm, and even the ladies of the Fund missed the extended comparison of stuffs and patterns, and the wider range of mantua-making gossip which they had enjoyed during the previous winter. The curiosity in regard to the Woodburys still continued to be rife; but Mrs. Waldo, who was continually appealed to, as their nearest friend, for an explanation of the mystery, knew no more than any of the others what had passed between the two before their marriage. The first sharpness of public comment on the occurrence soon gave place to a more just and reasonable feeling. Both were popular, in a different way, in Ptolemy. A moderate amount of good-luck would not have been grudged to either, but that they should find it in each other was the thought which astounded the community. The strangest things, however, soon grow common-place, and all that had been said or thought, in the first period of wonderment, was gradually forgotten. Both Mrs. Styles and Mrs. Hamilton Bue called at Lakeside, and went home well pleased with the kindly courtesy and hospitality which they received. They saw that the husband and wife evidently understood each other and were happy in the knowledge: any thing further than this the keenest scrutiny failed to discover. Woodbury had the coolness of a thorough man of the world in turning aside impertinent questions, such as many good persons, with their unformed American ideas of propriety, see no harm in asking It is true that he sometimes gave offence in this way, but his apparent unconsciousness of the fact healed the wound, while it prevented a repetition of the impertinence.

Hannah admired the self-possession of her husband, as a power, the attainment of which was beyond her own reach. The characteristic which had most repelled her, on their first acquaintance, was now that which threw around her a comforting sense of protection and defence. It was not a callous condition of his finer sensibilities, she saw; it was a part of his matured balance and repose of character, yet the latter still sometimes impressed her almost like coldness, in comparison with her own warmth of sentiment. For this reason, perhaps, as her love to him deepened and strengthened—as his being became more and more a blissful necessity—his composed, unchanging tenderness often failed to satisfy, in full measure, the yearnings of her heart. While she was growing in the richness of her affections, he seemed to be standing still.

With all Woodbury's experience of woman, he had yet much to learn. No course could have been better chosen than the delicate and generous consideration which he exhibited towards his wife, up to a certain point. His mistake was, that he continued it long after the necessity had ceased, and when, to her changed nature, it suggested a conscientious sense of justice rather than the watchfulness of love. He was waiting for her heart to reach the knowledge which already filled it to overflowing, betraying itself daily by a subtle language which he did not understand. The experiences through which he had passed had familiarized him with the presence of passion in himself: his heart did not throb less powerfully, but it throbbed beneath a mask of calmness which had been sternly enforced upon him. He did not reflect that his wife, with all the pervading passion of the ripened woman, still possessed, in this her first love, the timidity of a girl, and could not ask for that independent speech of the heart which he withheld.

Even with regard to the questions which had so nearly kept them asunder, she would have preferred frank discussion to silence Here, however, he had promised her full liberty of action, and she could not refer to them without a seeming doubt of his word. Once or twice, indeed she timidly approached the subject, but he had avoided it with a gentleness and kindness which she could not resist. She suffered no reproach to rest upon him, in her inmost thought; she reproached herself for having invoked the promise—for having obliged him to raise the thin, impalpable screen which still interposed itself between their hearts. Mrs. Styles, in reporting her visit, had said: "they look as if they had already been married ten years," and she had said truly. That calm, which was so grateful in the first tumult of the wife's feelings, which enabled her to pass through the transition of her nature in peace, now sometimes became oppressive in the rush of happy emotions that sought but knew not how to find expression.

The knowledge that Woodbury had modified his personal habits so as to avoid offending her prejudices, also gave her pain. She learned, from Carrie, that he had been in the habit of drinking a glass or two of claret at dinner, and of smoking in the library after meals, or as he read in the evenings. Now, the wine had disappeared from the table, and he took his cigar in the garden, or in the veranda. Both the habits were still repugnant to her sense of right, but love was beginning to teach her tolerance. He was, perhaps, partly weaned from them, she thought, and in that case it would be wrong in her to lead him back to his old subjection; yet, on the other hand, what sacrifice had he not made for her? and what had she made for him?

Towards the end of winter, she found that her mind was becoming singularly confused and uncertain. The reconciliation with her destiny, the harmony of heart and brain, which she seemed to be on the point of attaining, slid back again into something which appeared to be a disturbance of temperament rather than of intellect. Things, trifling in themselves, exalted or depressed her without any apparent reason; unreasonable desires presented themselves to her mind, and in this perpetual wavering of the balance of her nature, nothing seemed steady except her love for her husband. She longed, at times, to throw herself upon his breast and weep the confession she did not dare to speak; but her moments of strength perversely came when he was absent, and her moments of cowardice when he was present. Through all the uncertain, shifting range of her sensations, ran, nevertheless, a dazzling thread of some vague, foreboded bliss, the features of which she could not distinguish. She often repeated to herself the song of Clärchen, in Goethe's "Egmont," which was among the works her husband had read with her:

"Blessèd,
Depressèd,
Pensively brooding amain;
Trembling,
Dissembling,
Hovering in fear and in pain:
Sorrowing to death, or exulting the angels above,
Blessed alone is the heart in its love!"

One afternoon she was seized with such an intense longing for the smell of tobacco-smoke, that she could scarcely wait until Woodbury, who had ridden into Ptolemy, returned home. As soon as he had taken off his great-coat and kissed her, as was his wont, she drew him into the library.

"Maxwell," she said, "I have a favor to ask of you."

"Have you? I shall be delighted to grant it."

"You will think it strange," she continued, blushing: "I wish you would light a cigar; I think I should find the smoke agreeable."

"That is not asking a favor, Hannah; it is granting one to me. I'll take one of my best, and you shall have a fair trial."

He laughed pleasantly at what he considered a benevolent effort on her part to endure his favorite indulgence. He placed easy-chairs for them, on opposite sides of the fire, lest her experiment might fail from being overdone, and lighted one of his choicest Cabañas. The rich, delicate, sedative odor soon pervaded the air, but she held her ground. He took down Sir Thomas Browne, one of his favorites, and read aloud the pleasant passages. The snowy ashes lengthened in the cigar, the flavor of the book grew more choice and ripe, and after an hour he tossed the diminutive remaining end into the grate, saying:

"Well, what is the result?"

"I quite forgot the cigar, Maxwell," she answered, "in my enjoyment of Sir Thomas. But the odor at first—you will laugh at me—was delightful. I am so sorry that you have been so long deprived of what must be to you an agreeable habit, on my account."

"I have only been acting up to my principles," he said, "that we have a right to exercise our individual freedom in such matters, when they do not interfere directly with the comfort of others. But here, I am afraid, Sir Thomas helped to neutralize your repugnance. Shall we go on with him, a chapter and a cigar at a time? Afterwards I can take Burton and Montaigne, if you are not fully acclimated."

He spoke gayly, with a dancing light in his eyes, but the plan was seriously carried out. Hannah was surprised to find in Montaigne a reference to the modern doctrine (as she supposed it to be) of "Women's Rights." It was not a pleasant reflection that the cause had made so little progress in three centuries. The reading of this passage brought up the subject in a natural way, and she could not help remarking:

"Discussions on the subject will never come to an end, until we have some practical application of the theory, which will be an actual and satisfactory test of its truth."

"I, for one, would not object to that," Woodbury answered, "provided it could be tried without disturbing too much the established order of Society. If a large class of women should at any time demand these rights, a refusal to let the experiment be tested would imply a fear of its success. Now, I do not believe that any system can be successful which does not contain a large proportion of absolute truth, and while I cannot think, as you know, that woman is fitted for the same career as man, I am not afraid to see her make the trial. I will pledge myself to abide by the result."

"If all men were as just, Maxwell, we should have no cause to complain. After all, it is the right *to try*, rather than the right *to be*, which we ask. The refusal to grant us that does not seem either like the magnanimity of the stronger, or even an assured faith in his strength."

"Men do not seriously consider the subject," said he. "The simple instinct of sex dictates their opposition. They attribute to a distorted, unfeminine ambition, what is often—in *you*, Hannah, I know it—a pure and unselfish aspiration. The basis of instinct is generally correct, but it does not absolve us from respect for the sincerity of that which assails it."

"I will try to be as just to you, in return!" she exclaimed. "I feel that my knowledge has been limited—that I have been self-boastful of the light granted to my mind, when it was only groping in twilight, towards the dawn. My heart drew back from you, because it feared a clashing of opinions which could never harmonize.

She was on the verge of a tenderer confession, but he did not perceive it. His words, unwittingly, interrupted the current of her feelings. His voice was unintentionally grave and his brow earnest, as he said: "I trust, more than ever, to the true woman's nature in you, Hannah. Let me say one thing to set your mind at rest forever. It was my profound appreciation of those very elements in your character which led you to take up these claims of Woman and make them your own, that opened the way for you to my heart. I reverence the qualities without accepting all the conclusions born of them. I thank God that I was superior to shallow prejudice, which would have hindered me from approaching you, and thus have lost me the blessing of my life!"

He rose and laid away the book. Every word he had said was just and noble, but it was not the fervid, impassioned utterance which her heart craved to hear. There were tears in her eyes, but he misinterpreted them.

Ah, the "true woman's nature!" Did he trust to it? Did he know it, in its timidity, in its exacting fondness, in its pride of devotion and its joy of sacrifice?

Not yet.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHICH WE ATTEND ANOTHER MEETING IN FAVOR OF "WOMEN'S RIGHTS."

EARLY in April, Mr. Isaiah Bemis again made his appearance in Ptolemy. He had adopted REFORM as his profession, and in the course of fifteen years' practice had become a Jack-of-all-trades in philanthropy and morals. He was ready, at the shortest notice, to give an address on Total Abstinence, Vegetarianism (or "Vegetality," as he termed it, with a desire to be original), Slavery, Women's Rights, or Non-Resistance, according to the particular need of the community he visited.

He also preached, occasionally, before those independent religious bodies which spring up now and then in a spasmodic protest against church organization, and which are the natural complement of the Perfectionists in Government and Society, who believe that the race is better off without either. In regard to Spiritualism he was still undecided: it was not yet ingrafted upon the trunk of the other Reforms as an accepted branch of the same mighty tree, and a premature adherence to it might loosen his hold on those boughs from which he sucked sustenance, fame, and authority.

By slender contributions from the Executive Committees of the various Societies, and the free hospitality of the proselytes of one or the other, all through the country, Mr. Bemis was in the possession of a tolerable income, which came to him through the simple gratification of his natural tendencies. To harangue the public was a necessity rather than a fatigue. He was well stored with superficial logic wherewith to overwhelm ordinary disputants, while with his hosts, from whom no opposition was to be expected, he assumed an air of arrogant superiority. This was principally their own fault. A man who hears himself habitually called an Apostle and a Martyr, very soon learns to put on his robes of saintship. None of his subjects was bold enough to dispute the intellectual and moral autocracy which he assumed. Thus, for fifteen years, a Moral Gypsy, he had led a roving life through the country, from Maine to Indiana, interrupted only by a trip to England, in 1841, as a "delegate at large" to the "World's Anti-Slavery Convention." During all this time his wife had supported herself by keeping a boarding-house in a small town in New Jersey. He was accustomed to visit her once a year, and at such times scrupulously paid his board during the few weeks of his stay—which circumstance was exploited as an illustration of his strict sense of justice and his constancy to the doctrine of Women's Rights.

Central New York was a favorite field for Mr. Bemis, and he ranged its productive surface annually. His meetings being announced in advance in the *Annihilator*, his friends were accustomed to have all the arrangements made on his arrival. On reaching Ptolemy, however, two or three days still intervened before the meeting could be held, on account of Tumblety Hall having been previously engaged by the "Mozart Ethiopian Opera," and the "Apalachicolan Singers." Mr. Bemis, as a matter of course, claimed the hospitality of the Merryfields in the interval. He was not received with the expected *empressement*, nor were his Orphic utterances listened to with the reverence to which he was used. The other friends of the cause—foremost among them Seth Wattles—nevertheless paid their court as soon as his arrival became known, and (spiritually) on bended knees kissed the hand of the master.

The arrangements for the coming meeting were first to be discussed. Attention had been drawn away from the reform during the previous summer by the renewed agitation in favor of Temperance, and it was desirable to renovate the faded impression. The Rev. Amelia Parkes had been invited but was unable to leave her congregation; and Bessie Stryker was more profitably engaged in lecturing before various literary associations, at one hundred dollars a night (payable only in gold). Mr. Chubbuck, of Miranda, could be depended upon, but he was only a star of the second magnitude, and something more was absolutely required.

"We must get Miss Thurston—I mean Mrs. Woodbury—again. There is nothing else to be done," remarked Mr. Bemis, drawing down his brows. He had not forgotten that the people of Ptolemy had freely given to her the applause which they had withheld from his more vigorous oratory.

"I rather doubt, as it were," said Mr. Merryfield, "whether Hannah will be willing to speak."

"Why not?" thundered Bemis.

"She's lived very quietly since her marriage, and I shouldn't wonder if she'd changed her notions somewhat."

"*I* shouldn't wonder," said Seth, drawing up his thick nostrils, "if her husband had forbidden her ever to speak again. If he could bully her into marrying him, he could do that, too."

"You're mistaken, Seth," exclaimed Mr. Merryfield, coloring with a mild indignation, "there's nothing of the bully about Woodbury. And if they two don't love each other sincerely, why, Sarah and me don't!"

"We can easily find out all about it," said Mr. Bemis, rising and buttoning his coat over his broad chest. "Mr. Wattles, will you come with me? We will constitute ourselves a Committee of Invitation."

Seth, nothing loath, put on his hat, and the two started on their errand. It was but a short walk to Lakeside, which they reached soon after Woodbury had taken his customary place in the library, with a cigar in his mouth and a volume of Pepys' Diary in his hand. Hannah sat near him, quiet and happy: she was not only reconciled to her husband's habit, but enjoyed the book and talk which accompanied it more than any other part of the day. On this occasion they were interrupted by Bute, who announced the visitors in the following style:

"Miss' Woodbury, here's Seth Wattles and another man has come to see you."

Hannah rose with a look of disappointment, and turned towards her husband, hesitatingly.

"Shall I go, also?" he asked.

"I would prefer it, Maxwell; I have no private business with any one."

Bute had ushered the visitors into the tea-room. The door to the library was closed, but a faint Cuban perfume was perceptible. Seth turned towards Mr. Bemis with elevated eyebrows, and gave a loud sniff, as much as to say: "Do you notice that?" The latter gentleman scowled and shook his head, but said nothing.

Presently the door opened and Hannah made her appearance, followed by her husband. She concealed whatever embarrassment she may have felt at the sight of Mr. Bemis, frankly gave him her hand, and introduced him to her husband.

"Be seated, gentlemen," said the latter, courteously. "I would ask you into the library, but I have been smoking there, and the room may not be agreeable to you."

"Hem! we are not—exactly—accustomed to such an atmosphere," said Mr. Bemis, taking a chair.

Woodbury began talking upon general topics, to allow his guests time to recover from a slight awkwardness which was evident in their manner. It was not long, however, before Mr. Bemis broached the purpose of his visit. "Mrs. Woodbury," said he, "you have heard that we are to have a meeting on Wednesday evening?"

"Yes."

"We have been disappointed in getting the Rev. Amelia Parkes, and the advocacy of The Cause is incomplete unless a woman takes part in it. I have therefore come to ask your assistance. We wish, this time, to create an impression."

It was not a welcome message. She knew that such a test must come, some time; but of late she had been unable to apply her mind steadily to any subject, and had postponed, by an agreement with herself, the consideration of all disturbing questions. She looked at her husband, but his calm face expressed no counsel. He was determined that she should act independently, and he would allow no word or glance to influence her decision.

"It is long since I have spoken," she said at last; "I am not sure that I should be of service." She wished to gain time by an undecided answer, still hoping that Woodbury would come to her assistance.

"*We* are the best judges of that," said Mr. Bemis, with something of his old dictatorial tone. "I trust you will not fail us, now when we have such need. The interest in The Cause has very much fallen off, in this neighborhood, and if you desert us, to whom shall we look for help?"

"Yes, Hannah," chimed in Seth, "you know we have always looked upon you as one of the Pillars of Progress."

It grated rather harshly upon Woodbury's feelings to hear his wife addressed so familiarly by the ambitious tailor; but she was accustomed to it, from the practice of her sect to bear testimony against what they call "compliments."

"I have not lost my interest in the cause," Hannah answered, after another vain attempt to read Woodbury's face; "but I have freely uttered my thoughts on the subject, and I could say nothing that has not been already heard."

"Nothing else is wanted," said Mr. Bemis, eagerly. "The Truth only gains by repetition; it still remains eternally new. How many thousand times have the same Bible texts been preached from, and yet their meaning is not exhausted—it is not even fully comprehended. How much of the speaker's discourse do you suppose the hearers carry home with them? Not a tenth part—and even that tenth part must be repeated ten times before it penetrates beneath the surface of their natures. Truth is a nail that you cannot drive into ordinary comprehensions with one blow of the hammer: you must pile stroke upon stroke, before it enters far enough to be clinched fast. It is not the time for you to draw back now, in a season of faint-heartedness and discouragement. If you fail, it will be said that your views have changed with the change in your life, and you will thus neutralize all your labors heretofore."

"That cannot be said of me!" exclaimed Hannah, thoroughly aroused and indignant. "My husband has been too just—too generous, differing with me as he does—to impose any restrictions upon my action!" She turned towards him. He answered her glance with a frank, kindly smile, which thanked her for her words, but said no more. "Well, then!" she continued; "I will come, if only to save him from an unjust suspicion. I will not promise to say much. You overestimate my value as an advocate of the reform."

"It is not for me," said Mr. Bemis, with affected humility, "to speak of what *I* have done; but I consider myself competent to judge of the services of others. Your influence will be vastly increased when your consistency to The Cause shall be known and appreciated. I now have great hopes that we shall inaugurate an earnest moral awakening."

Little more was said upon the subject, and in a short time the two reformers took their leave. After Woodbury had returned from the door, whither he had politely accompanied them, he said, in his usual cheerful tone: "Well, Hannah, shall we return to Old Pepys?"

Her momentary excitement had already died away. She appeared perplexed and restless, but she mechanically rose and followed him into the library. As he took up the book, she interrupted him: "Tell me, Maxwell, have I done right?"

"You should know, Hannah," he answered. "I wish you to act entirely as your own nature shall prompt, without reference to me. I saw that you had not much desire to accept the invitation, but, having accepted it, I suppose you must fulfil your promise."

"Yes, I suppose so," she said; but her tone was weary and disappointed. How gladly would she have yielded to his slightest wish, if he would only speak it! What a sweet comfort it would have been to her heart, to know that she had sacrificed something belonging to herself, even were it that higher duty which had almost become a portion of her conscience, for his sake! The independence which he, with an over-considerate love, had assured to her, seemed to isolate her nature when it should draw nearer to his. His perfect justice crushed her with a cold, unyielding weight of—not obligation, for that cannot coexist with love—but something almost as oppressive. She had secured her freedom from man's dictation—that freedom which once had seemed so rare and so beautiful—and now her heart cried aloud for one word of authority. It would be so easy to yield, so blissful to be able to say: "Maxwell, I do this willingly, for your sake!"—but he cruelly hid the very shadow of his wish from her sight and denied her the sacrifice! He forced her independence back upon her when she would have laid it down, trusting all she was and all she might be to the proved nobility of his nature! Self-abnegation, she now felt, is the heart of love; but the rising flood of her being was stayed by the barriers which she had herself raised.

All the next day her uneasiness increased. It was not only her instinctive fear of thwarting her husband's hidden desire which tormented her, but a singular dread of again making her appearance before the public. She was not conscious of any change in her views on the question of Woman, but they failed to give her strength and courage. A terrible sinking of the heart assailed her as often as she tried to collect her thoughts and arrange the expected discourse in her mind. Every thing seemed to shift and slide before the phantasm of her inexplicable fear. Woodbury could not help noticing her agitation, but he understood neither its origin nor its nature. He was tender as ever, and strove to soothe her without adverting to the coming task. It was the only unhappy day she had known since she had come to Lakeside.

The next morning dawned—the morning of Wednesday—and noon came swiftly as a flash, since she dreaded its approach. The dinner had been ordered earlier than usual, for the meeting was to commence at two o'clock; and as soon as it was over, Woodbury said to her: "It is time you were ready, Hannah. I will take you to Ptolemy, of course, and will attend the meeting, or not, as you desire."

She drew him into the library. "Oh, Maxwell!" she cried; "will you not tell me what you wish me to do?"

"My dear wife," he said, "do not torment yourself on my account. I have tried to fulfil to the utmost my promise to you: have I said or done any thing to make you suspect my sincerity?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing! You have kept it only too well. But, Maxwell, my heart fails me: I cannot go! the very thought of standing where I once stood makes me grow faint. I have no courage to do it again."

"Then do not," he answered; "I will make a suitable apology for your failure. Or, if that is not enough, shall I take your place? I will not promise," he added, smiling, "to go quite so far as you might have done, but I will at least say a few earnest words which can do no harm. Who has so good a right to be your substitute as your husband?"

"Maxwell," she sobbed, "how you put me to shame!" It was all she could say. He took her in his arms, kissed her tenderly, and then drove into Ptolemy.

Tumblety Hall was crowded. The few advocates of the cause had taken good care to spread the news that Mrs. Woodbury was to be one of the speakers, and there was a general, though indefinite curiosity to hear her again, now that she was married. Mr. Bemis rubbed his hands as he saw how rapidly the benches were filling, and observed to Seth Wattles: "The iron is hot, and we have only to strike hard." After the audience had assembled, the latter was chosen Chairman of the meeting, Mr. Merryfield declining, on account of his having so frequently filled that office, "as it were."

Seth called the meeting to order with a pompous, satisfied air. His phrases were especially grandiloquent; for, like many semi-intelligent persons, he supposed that the power of oratory depended on the sound of the words. If the latter were not always exactly in the right place, it made little difference. "Be ye convinced, my brethren," he concluded, "that absoloot Right will conquer, in spite of the concatenations and the hostile discrepancies of Urrur (Error)! Our opponents have attempted to shut up every door, every vein and artery, and every ramification of our reform, but the angel of Progress bursts the prison-doors of Paul and Silas, and when the morning dawns, the volcano is extinct!"

Mr. Bemis followed, in what he called his "sledge-hammer style," which really suggested a large hammer, so far as voice and gesture were concerned, but the blows did not seem to make much impression. He had, however, procured a few new anecdotes, both of the wrongs and the capacities of woman, and these prevented his harangue from being tedious to the audience. They were stepping-stones, upon which the latter could wade through the rushing and turbid flood of his discourse.

It had been arranged that Hannah should follow him, and Mr. Chubbuck, of Miranda, close the performance. When, therefore, Mr. Bemis sat down, he looked around for his successor, and the audience began to stir and buzz, in eager expectation. She was not upon the platform, but Woodbury was seen, pressing down the crowded side-aisle, apparently endeavoring to make his way to the steps. He finally reached them and mounted upon the platform, where a whispered consultation took place between himself and Mr. Bemis. The countenance of the latter gentleman grew dark, and he in turn whispered to Seth, who, after some hesitation, arose and addressed the meeting:

"We have again an illustration," he said, "of the vanity of human wishes. We expected to present to you the illustrious prototype of her sex, to whose cerulean accents you have often listened and applauded, but disappointment has chilled the genial current of our souls. She has sent a subsidy in her place, and he is prepared to await your pleasure, if you will hear the spontaneous vindication."

A movement of surprise ran through the audience, but their disappointment at once gave place to a new curiosity, and a noise of stamping arose, in token of satisfaction. Woodbury, whose demeanor was perfectly serious and collected, in spite of a strong tendency to laugh at Seth, stepped forward to the front of the platform, and, as soon as silence returned, began to speak. His manner was easy and natural, and his voice unusually clear and distinct, though the correctness of his pronunciation struck his hearers, at first, like affectation.

"I appear voluntarily before you, my friends," he said, "as a substitute for one whom you know. She had promised to speak to you on a subject to which she has given much earnest thought, not so much for her own sake as for that of her sex. Being unable to fulfil that promise, I have offered to take her place,—not as the representative of her views, or of the views of any particular association of persons, but as a man who reveres woman, and who owes her respect in all cases, though he may not always agree with her assertion of right. ('Good!' cried some one in the audience.) I stand between both parties; between you who denounce the tyranny of man (turning to Mr. Bemis), and you who meet with contempt and abuse (turning back towards the audience) all earnest appeals of woman for a freer exercise of her natural faculties. No true reform grows out of reciprocal denunciation. When your angry thunders have been launched, and the opposing clouds dissolve from the exhaustion of their supply, the sunshine of tolerance and charity shines between, and the lowering fragments fuse gently together in the golden gleam of the twilight. Let me speak to you from the neutral ground of universal humanity; let me tell you of some wrongs of woman which none of you need go far to see—some rights which each man of you, to whom God has given a help-meet, may grant beside his own hearth-stone and the cradle of his children! We Americans boast of our superior civilization; we look down with a superb commiseration not only upon the political, but the social and domestic life of other lands. Let us not forget that the position which woman holds in the State—always supposing that it does not transcend the destiny of her sex—is the unerring index on the dial of civilization. It behooves us, therefore, in order to make good our boast, to examine her condition among us. We are famed, and perhaps justly, for the chivalrous respect which we exhibit towards her in public; do we grant her an equal consideration in our domestic life? Do we seek to understand her finer nature, her more delicate sensibilities, her self-sacrificing desire to share our burdens by being permitted to understand them?"

The attention of the audience was profoundly enlisted by these words. The calm, dispassionate, yet earnest tone of the speaker was something new. It was an agreeable variation from the anathemas with which they not only did not sympathize, but which they were too indifferent to resent. Mr. Bemis, it is true, fidgeted uneasily in his arm-chair, but he was now quite a secondary person. Woodbury went on to advocate a private as well as public respect for woman; he painted, in strong colors, those moral qualities in which she is superior to man; urged her claim to a completer trust, a more generous confidence on his part; and, while pronouncing no word that could indicate an actual sympathy with the peculiar rights which were the object of the meeting, demanded that they should receive, at least, a respectful consideration. He repeated the same manly views which we have already heard in his conversations with his wife, expressing his faith in the impossibility of any permanent development not in accordance with nature, and his confidence that the sex, under whatever conditions of liberty, would instinctively find its true place.

His address, which lasted nearly an hour, was received with hearty satisfaction by his auditors. To the advocates of the reform it was a mixture of honey and gall. He had started, apparently, from nearly the same point; his path, for a while, had run parallel with theirs, and then, without any sensible divergence, had reached a widely different goal. Somehow, he had taken, in advance, all the strength out of Mr. Chubbuck's oration; for, although the latter commenced with an attack on Woodbury's neutral attitude, declaring that "we cannot serve two masters," the effort was too sophistical to deceive anybody. His speech, at least, had the effect to restore Mr. Bemis to good humor. Miss Silsbee, a maiden lady from Atauga City, was then persuaded to say a few words. She recommended the audience to "preserve their individuality: when that is gone, all is gone," said she. "Be not like the foolish virgins, that left their lamps untrimmed. O trim your wicks before the eleventh hour comes, and the Master finds you sleeping!"

There seemed to be but a very remote connection between these expressions and the doctrine of Women's Rights, and the audience, much enlivened by the fact, dispersed, after adopting the customary resolutions by an overwhelming majority. "We have sowed the field afresh," cried Mr. Bemis, rubbing his hands, as he turned to his friends on the platform, "in spite of the tares of the Enemy." This was a figurative allusion to Woodbury.

The latter resisted an invitation to take tea with the Waldos, in order to hurry home to his wife. Mrs. Waldo had been one of his most delighted hearers, and her parting words were: "Remember, if you don't tell Hannah every thing you said, I shall do it, myself!"

On reaching Lakeside, Hannah came to the door to meet him. Her troubled expression had passed away, and a deep, wonderful light of happiness was on her face. Her eyes trembled in their soft splendor, like stars through the veil of falling dew, and some new, inexpressible grace clung around her form. She caught his hands eagerly, and her voice came low and vibrant with its own sweetness.

"Did you take my place, Maxwell?" she asked.

He laughed cheerfully. "Of course I did. I made the longest speech of my life. It did not satisfy Bemis, I am sure, but the audience took it kindly, and you, Hannah, if you had been there, would have accepted the most of it."

"I know I should!" she exclaimed. "You must tell me all —but not now. Now you must have your reward—oh, Maxwell, I think I can reward you!"

"Give me another kiss, then."

He stooped and took it. She laid her arms around his neck, and drew his ear to her lips. Then she whispered a few fluttering words. When he lifted his face she saw upon it the light and beauty of unspeakable joy.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHICH THE MAN AND WOMAN COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING.

WOODBURY, without having intended it, very much increased his popularity in Ptolemy by the part he had taken in the meeting. His address was marked by a delicate tact which enabled him to speak for Woman, on behalf of his wife, while preserving his own independence of her peculiar views. The men suspected that her opinions had been modified by his stronger mind, and that this was the secret of her non-appearance: they were proud that he had conquered the championess. The women, without exception, were delighted with his defence of their domestic rights; most of them had had more or less experience of that misapprehension of their nature which he portrayed, and the kindness, the considerate justice which dictated his words came very gratefully to their ears. Even Mrs. Hamilton Bue remarked to a neighbor, at the close of his speech: "Well, if he's learned all that from *her*, she's done *some* good, after all!"

Thus it happened that the marriage came to be regarded with favor. Ptolemy not only submitted with a good grace to what was irrevocable, but readily invented a sufficient justification for it. Hannah found a friendly disposition towards her, as she began to mingle a little more with the society of the place: the women, now that they recognized her as one of themselves, approached her more genially and naturally than hitherto, and the men treated her with a respect, under which no reserved hostility was concealed. The phenomenon was adopted, as is always the case, into the ordinary processes of nature.

But a new life had commenced at Lakeside, and this and all other changes in the temper of the community passed unnoticed. The spring advanced with a lovelier mystery in every sprouting germ, in every unfolding bud. In those long, sunny days when the trodden leaves of the last year stir and rustle under the upward pressure of the shooting grass, when new violets and buttercups open from hour to hour, and the shimmering, gauzy tints of the woodlands deepen visibly between dawn and sunset, the husband and wife saw but the external expression of the rich ripening of their own lives. The season could not impart its wonted tender yearnings, for they slept in the bliss of the possession they had only prefigured before, but it brought, in place of them, a holier and more wonderful promise. Here, the wife's nature at last found a point of repose: around this secret, shining consciousness, the struggling elements ranged themselves in harmonious forms. A power not her own, yet inseparable from both, and as welcome as it was unforeboded, had usurped her life, and the remembrance of the most hardly-won triumphs which her mind had ever achieved grew colorless and vain.

By the end of May the cottage for Bute was completed. It was all that Downing had promised from the design, except in regard to the expense, which was nearly double his estimate. However, it formed a very picturesque feature in the foreground of the landscape from Lakeside, and was conveniently situated for the needs of the farm. It was a day of jubilee for Bute and Carrie when they took possession of it. Mrs. Waldo must needs be present at the migration, and assist with her advice in the arrangement of the furniture. Fortunately, the little "best room" had but two windows, and Mrs. Wilson's dream of the chintz curtains was realized. Bute had bought a brownish ingrain carpet, somewhat worn, at an auction sale in Ptolemy, for a very trifling sum; and in addition to the portraits of General and Lady Washington, which Mrs. Babb had inherited from Jason, and bequeathed to him in turn, Woodbury had given him a splendidly-colored lithograph of an

"American Homestead," with any quantity of cattle and poultry. It is impossible to describe the pride of Mrs. Wilson in this room. One window commanded a cheerful view of the valley towards Ptolemy, while the white front of Lakeside looked in at the other. Bute had surrounded the looking-glass and picture-frames with wreaths of winter-green, which reminded Woodbury of his impromptu ball-room in the Bowery, and in the fireplace stood a huge pitcher filled with asparagus, blossoming lilacs, and snow-balls. It was Mrs. Wilson's ambition to consecrate the house by inviting them all to tea, and a very pleasant party they were.

When the guests had left, and the happy tenants found themselves alone, the little wife exclaimed: "Oh, Bute, to think that we should have a house of our own!"

"Yes," said he, "'*t is* our'n, jist as much as though we owned it, as long as we *think* so. Property's pretty much in *thinkin'*, onless you've got to raise money on it. I know when I'm well off, and if you'll hitch teams with me in savin', Carrie, we can leastways put back all the interest, and it'll roll up as fast as we want it."

"You'll see, Bute," his wife answered, with a cheerful determination; "it's a life that will suit me *so* much better than sewing around from house to house. I'll raise chickens and turkeys, and we can sell what we don't want; and then there's the garden; and the cow; and we won't spend much for clothes. I wish you'd let me make *yours*, Bute; I'm sure I could do it as well as Seth Wattles."

The grin on Bute's face broadened, as he listened to the lively little creature, and when she stopped speaking, he took her around the waist by both arms and lifted her into the air. She was not alarmed at this proceeding, for she knew she would come down gently, getting a square, downright kiss on the way. Never were two persons better satisfied with each other.

At Lakeside there were also changes and improvements. The garden was remodelled, the grounds were extended, and fresh consignments of trees and plants continually arrived from the Rochester nurseries. Both Woodbury and his wife delighted in the out-door occupation which these changes gave, and the spring deepened into summer before they were aware. To a thoroughly cultivated man, there is no life compared to that of the country, with its independence, its healthy enjoyments, its grateful repose—provided that he is so situated that his intellectual needs can be satisfied. Woodbury's life in Calcutta had accustomed him to seek this satisfaction in himself, or, at best, to be content with few friends. In Hannah, he had now the eager, sympathetic companion of his mind, no less than the partner of his affections. The newest literature came to him regularly from New York and Boston, and there was no delight greater than to perceive how rapidly her tastes and her intellectual perceptions matured with the increase of her opportunities of culture.

The tender secret which bound them so closely soothed her heart for the time, without relieving its need of the expression and the answer which still failed. His watchful fondness was always around her, folding her more closely and warmly, day by day; but he still seemed to assert, in her name, that freedom which her love no longer demanded—nay, which stood between her and the fulfilment of her ideal union with him. She craved that uncalculating passion which is as ready to ask as to give—the joy of mutual demand and mutual surrender. The calm, deep, and untroubled trust which filled his nature was not enough. Perhaps love, she thought, in the self-poised, self-controlled being of man, takes this form; perhaps it lies secure and steadfast below the tender agitations, the passionate impulses, the voiceful yearnings which stir the soul of woman. If so, she must be content; but one thing she must yet do, to satisfy the conscience of love. She must disabuse his mind of the necessity of granting her that independence which she had ignorantly claimed; she must confess to him the truer consciousness of her woman's nature; and—if her timid heart would allow—she must once, though only once, put in words all the passionate devotion of her heart for him.

The days went by, the fresh splendor of the foliage darkened, the chasing billows of golden grain drifted away and left a strand of tawny stubble behind, and the emerald bunches on the trellises at Lakeside began to gather an amethystine bloom. And the joy, and the fear, and the mystery increased, and the shadow of a coming fate, bright with the freshest radiance of Heaven, or dark with unimagined desolation—but which, no one could guess—lay upon the household. Woodbury had picked up in the county paper, published at Tiberius, a little poem by Stoddard, of which these lines clung to his memory and would not be banished:

"The laden summer will give me
What it never gave before,
Or take from me what a thousand
Summers can give no more!"

Thus, as the approach of Death is not an unmingled sorrow, the approach of Life is not an unmingled joy. But, as we rarely breathe, even to those we best love, the fear that at such times haunts our hearts, chased away as soon as recognized, so to her he was always calm and joyfully confident.

September came, and fiery touches of change were seen on the woods. The tuberoses she had planted in the spring poured from their creamy cups an intoxicating dream of the isles of nutmeg-orchards and cinnamon-groves; the strong, ripe blooms of autumn lined the garden walks, and the breath of the imprisoned wine dimmed the purple crystal of the grapes. Then, one morning, there was a hushed gliding to and fro in the mansion of Lakeside; there was anxious waiting in the shaded rooms; there were heart-wrung prayers, as the shadows of the different fates sank lower upon the house, and fitfully shifted, like the rapid, alternate variations of cloud and sunshine in a broken sky. Death stood by to dispute the consummation of life; but, as the evening drew on, a faint, wailing cry of victory was heard, and Life had triumphed.

Woodbury's strong nature was shaken to its centre, both by the horrible weight of the fears which had been growing upon him throughout the day, and the lightning-flash of overwhelming gladness which dispersed them. As he took the helpless, scarcely human creature in his arms. and bent his face over it, his tears fell fast. He knelt beside the bed, and held it before the half-closed eyes of the mother, who lay silent, pale, as if flung back, broken, from the deeps of Death. The unfeeling authority which reigned in the chamber drove him away. The utmost caution, the most profound repose, was indispensable, the physician said. All night long he watched in the next room, slowly gathering hope from the whispered bulletins of the nurse. In the morning, he left his post for a little while, but soon returned to it. But a single interview was granted that day, and he was forbidden to speak. He could only take his wife's hand, and look upon the white, saintly beauty of her face. She smiled faintly, with a look of ineffable love, which he could not bear unmoved, and he was forbidden to agitate her.

Gradually the severity of the orders was relaxed, and he was allowed to enter the room occasionally, in a quiet way, and look upon the unformed features of his son. The mother was slowly gaining strength, and the mere sight of her husband was so evident a comfort to her that it could not now be denied. In the silent looks they interchanged there was a profounder language than they had yet spoken. In him, the strong agitation of the man's heart made itself felt through the mask of his habitual calm; in her, the woman's all-yielding love confessed its existence, and pleaded for recognition. Woodbury, too grateful for the fact that the crisis of imminent danger was slowly passing away, contented himself with these voiceless interviews, and forcibly shut for a while within his heart the words of blessing and of cheer which he longed to utter.

On the fifth day the physician said to him: "She is now safe, with the ordinary precautions. I have perhaps been a little over-despotic, because I know the value of the life at stake. You have been patient and obedient, and you shall have your reward. You may see her as often as you like, and I will allow you to talk, on condition that you break off on the least appearance of fatigue."

After his departure, Woodbury, glad at heart, hastened to his wife's chamber. She lay perfectly still, and the curtains were drawn to shield her face from the light. "She is asleep," said the nurse.

"Leave me a while here, if you please," said he, "I will watch until she wakes."

The nurse left the room. He knelt beside the cradle, and bent over the sleeping babe, giving way, undisturbed by a watching eye, to the blissful pride of a father's heart. Presently his eyes overflowed with happy tears, and he whispered to the unconscious child: "Richard! my son, my darling!"

The babe stirred and gave out a broken wail of waking. He moved the cradle gently, still murmuring: "Richard, my darling! God make me worthy to possess thee!"

But he was not unseen; he was not unheard. Hannah's light slumber had been dissolved by the magnetism of his presence, but so gently that her consciousness of things, returning before the awaking of the will, impressed her like a more distinct dream. As in a dream, through her partially-closed lids, she saw her husband kneel beside the cradle. She saw the dim sparkle of his tears, as they fell upon the child; she heard his soliloquy of love and gratitude—heard him call that child by her father's name! Her mother's words flashed across her mind with a meaning which she had never thought of applying to her own case. *Her* father, too, had wept over his first-born; in his heart passion had smouldered with intensest heat under a deceitful calm; and her mother had only learned to know him when the knowledge came too late. To herself, that knowledge had come now: she had caught one glimpse of her husband's heart, when he supposed that only God's ear had heard him. In return for that sacred, though involuntary confession, she would voluntarily make one as sacred. The duty of a woman gave her strength; the dignity of a mother gave her courage.

When the babe was again lulled into quiet, she gently called: "Maxwell!"

He rose, came to the bed, softly put his arms around her, and laid his lips to hers. "My dear wife," he said.

"Maxwell, I have seen your heart," she whispered; "would you see mine? Do you recollect what you asked me that afternoon, in the meadows—not whether I loved, but whether I *could* love? You have never repeated the other question since."

"There was no need to ask," said he; "I saw it answered."

"My dear husband, do you not know that feeling, in a woman, must be born through speech, and become a living joy, instead of lying as a happy, yet anxious weight beneath the heart? Maxwell, the truth has been on my tongue a thousand times, waiting for some sign of encouragement from you; but you have been so careful to keep the promise which I accepted—nay, almost exacted, I fear—that you could not see what a burden it had become to me. You have been too just to me; your motive was generous and noble: I complain of myself only in having made it necessary. You did right to trust to the natural development of my nature through my better knowledge of life; but, oh, can you not see that the development is reached? Can you not feel that you are released from a duty towards me which is inconsistent with love?"

"Do you release me willingly, my wife?" he cried, an eager light coming into his eyes. "I have always felt that you were carried to me by a current against which you struggled. I could not resist the last wish of your mother, though I should never, alone, have dared to hasten our union. I would have waited—would have given you time to know your heart—time to feel that the only true freedom for man or woman is reached through the willing submission of love."

"Ignorant as I was," she answered, "I might never have come to that knowledge. I should have misunderstood the submission, and fought against it to the last. Mother was right. She knew me better than I knew myself. Maxwell, will you take back your promise of independence? Will you cease to allow that cold spectre of justice to come between our hearts?"

"Tell me why you ask it?" said he.

"Because I love you! Because the dream whose hopelessness made my heart sick has taken your features, and is no more a dream, but a blessed, blessed truth! Ask yourself what that means, and you will understand me. If you but knew how I have pined to discover your wish, in order that I might follow it! You have denied me the holiest joy of love—the joy of sacrifice. As you have done it for my sake, so for my sake abandon the unfair obligation. Think what you would most desire to receive from the woman you love, and demand that of me!"

"My darling, I have waited for this hour, but I could not seem to prematurely hasten it. I have held back my arms when they would have clasped you; I have turned away my eyes, lest they might confuse you by some involuntary attraction; I have been content with silence, lest the voice of my love might have seemed to urge the surrender which your heart must first suggest. Do you forgive me, now, for the pitiless passion with which I stormed you?"

"There is your forgiveness," she murmured, through her tears, pointing to the cradle.

He tenderly lifted the sleeping babe, and laid it upon her bosom. Then he knelt down at the bed, and bent his face upon the pillow, beside her own. "Darling," he whispered, "I accept all that you give: I take the full measure of your love, in its sacred integrity. If any question of our mutual rights remain, I lay it in these precious little hands, warm with the new life in which our beings have become one."

"And they will forever lead me back to the true path, if I should sometimes wander from it," was her answer.

THE END.

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