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AT HOME AND ABROAD;

OR,

THINGS AND THOUGHTS IN
AMERICA AND EUROPE.

BY

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II
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PART I.

SUMMER ON THE LAKES.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAKES. — CHICAGO, — GENEVA, — A THUNDER-STORM —
FAFAW GROVE.

SCENE, STEAMBOAT. — *About to leave Buffalo. — Baggage coming on board. — Passengers bustling for their berths. — Little boys persecuting everybody with their newspapers and pamphlets. — J., S., and M. huddled up in a forlorn corner, behind a large trunk. — A heavy rain falling.*

M. Water, water everywhere. After Niagara one would like a dry strip of existence. And at any rate it is quite enough for me to have it under foot without having it overhead in this way.

J. Ah, do not abuse the gentle element. It is hardly possible to have too much of it, and indeed, if I were obliged to choose amid the four, it would be the one in which I could bear confinement best.

S. You would make a pretty Undine, to be sure!

J. Nay. I only offered myself as a Triton, a boisterous Triton of the sounding shell. You, M., I suppose, would be a salamander, rather.

M. No! that is too equivocal a position, whether in modern mythology, or Hoffman's tales. I should choose to be a gnome.

J. That choice savors of the pride that apes humility.

M. By no means; the gnomes are the most important of all the elemental tribes. Is it not they who make the money?

J. And are accordingly a dark, mean, scoffing —

M. You talk as if you had always lived in that wild, unprofitable element you are so fond of, where all things glitter, and nothing is gold; all show and no substance. My people work in the

secret, and their works praise them in the open light; they remain in the dark because only there such marvels could be bred. You call them mean. They do not spend their energies on their own growth, or their own play, but to feed the veins of Mother Earth with permanent splendors, very different from what she shows on the surface.

Think of passing a life, not merely in heaping together, but *making* gold. Of all dreams, that of the alchemist is the most poetical, for he looked at the finest symbol. "Gold," says one of our friends, "is the hidden light of the earth, it crowns the mineral, as wine the vegetable order, being the last expression of vital energy."

J. Have you paid for your passage?

M. Yes! and in gold, not in shells or pebbles.

J. No really wise gnome would scoff at the water, the beautiful water. "The spirit of man is like the water."

S. And like the air and fire, no less.

J. Yes, but not like the earth, this low-minded creature's chosen dwelling.

M. The earth is spirit made fruitful,—life. And its heart-beats are told in gold and wine.

J. Oh! it is shocking to hear such sentiments in these times. I thought that Bacchic energy of yours was long since repressed.

M. Not I have only learned to mix water with my wine, and stamp upon my gold the heads of kings, or the hieroglyphics of worship. But since I have learnt to mix with water, let's hear what you have to say in praise of your favorite.

J. From water Venus was born, what more would you have? It is the mother of Beauty, the girdle of earth, and the marriage of nations.

S. Without any of that high-flown poetry, it is enough, I think, that it is the great artist, turning all objects that approach it to picture.

J. True, no object that touches it, whether it be the cart that ploughs the wave for sea-weed, or the boat or plank that rides upon it, but is brought at once from the demesne of coarse utili-

ties into that of picture. All trades, all callings, become picturesque by the water's side, or on the water. The soil, the slovenliness, is washed out of every calling by its touch. All river-crafts, sea-crafts, are picturesque, are poetical. Their very slang is poetry.

M. The reasons for that are complex.

J. The reason is, that there can be no plodding, groping words and motions on my water as there are on your earth. There is no time, no chance for them where all moves so rapidly, though so smoothly; everything connected with water must be like itself, forcible, but clear. That is why sea-slang is so poetical; there is a word for everything and every act, and a thing and an act for every word. Seamen must speak quick and bold, but also with utmost precision. They cannot reef and brace other than in a Homeric dialect, — therefore — (Steamboat bell rings.) But I must say a quick good-by.

M. What, going, going back to earth after all this talk upon the other side. Well, that is nowise Homeric, but truly modern.

J. is borne off without time for any reply, but a laugh — at himself, of course.

S. and *M.* retire to their state-rooms to forget the wet, the chill, and steamboat smell, in their just-bought new world of novels.

Next day, when we stopped at Cleveland, the storm was just clearing up; ascending the bluff, we had one of the finest views of the lake that could have been wished. The varying depths of these lakes give to their surface a great variety of coloring, and beneath this wild sky and changeful light, the waters presented a kaleidoscopic variety of hues, rich, but mournful. I admire these bluffs of red, crumbling earth. Here land and water meet under very different auspices from those of the rock-bound coast to which I have been accustomed. There they meet tenderly to challenge, and proudly to refuse, though not in fact repel. But here they meet to mingle, are always rushing together, and changing places; a new creation takes place beneath the eye.

The weather grew gradually clearer, but not bright; yet we could see the shore and appreciate the extent of these noble waters.

Coming up the river St. Clair, we saw Indians for the first time. They were camped out on the bank. It was twilight, and their blanketed forms, in listless groups or stealing along the bank, with a lounge and a stride so different in its wildness from the rudeness of the white settler, gave me the first feeling that I really approached the West.

The people on the boat were almost all New-Englanders, seeking their fortunes. They had brought with them their habits of calculation, their cautious manners, their love of polemics. It grieved me to hear these immigrants, who were to be the fathers of a new race, all, from the old man down to the little girl, talking, not of what they should do, but of what they should get in the new scene. It was to them a prospect, not of the unfolding nobler energies, but of more ease and larger accumulation. It wearied me, too, to hear Trinity and Unity discussed in the poor, narrow, doctrinal way on these free waters; but that will soon cease; there is not time for this clash of opinions in the West, where the clash of material interests is so noisy. They will need the spirit of religion more than ever to guide them, but will find less time than before for its doctrine. This change was to me, who am tired of the war of words on these subjects, and believe it only sows the wind to reap the whirlwind, refreshing, but I argue nothing from it; there is nothing real in the freedom of thought at the West,—it is from the position of men's lives, not the state of their minds. So soon as they have time, unless they grow better meanwhile, they will cavil and criticise, and judge other men by their own standard, and outrage the law of love every way, just as they do with us.

We reached Mackinaw the evening of the third day, but, to my great disappointment, it was too late and too rainy to go ashore. The beauty of the island, though seen under the most unfavorable circumstances, did not disappoint my expectations.* But I shall see it to more purpose on my return.

* "Mackinaw, that long desired sight, was dimly discerned under a thick fog, yet it soothed and cheered me. All looked mellow there; man seemed to have worked in harmony with Nature instead of rudely invading her, as in most West

As the day has passed dully, a cold rain preventing us from keeping out in the air, my thoughts have been dwelling on a story told when we were off Detroit, this morning, by a fellow-passenger, and whose moral beauty touched me profoundly.

"Some years ago," said Mrs. L., "my father and mother stopped to dine at Detroit. A short time before dinner my father met in the hall Captain P., a friend of his youthful days. He had loved P. extremely, as did many who knew him, and had not been surprised to hear of the distinction and popular esteem which his wide knowledge, talents, and noble temper commanded, as he went onward in the world. P. was every way fitted to succeed; his aims were high, but not too high for his powers, suggested by an instinct of his own capacities, not by an ideal standard drawn from culture. Though steadfast in his course, it was not to overrun others; his wise self-possession was no less for them than himself. He was thoroughly the gentleman, gentle because manly, and was a striking instance that, where there is strength for sincere courtesy, there is no need of other adaptation to the character of others, to make one's way freely and gracefully through the crowd.

"My father was delighted to see him, and after a short parley in the hall, 'We will dine together,' he cried, 'then we shall have time to tell all our stories.'

"P. hesitated a moment, then said, 'My wife is with me.'

"'And mine with me,' said my father; 'that's well; they, too, will have an opportunity of getting acquainted, and can entertain one another, if they get tired of our college stories.'

"P. acquiesced, with a grave bow, and shortly after they all met in the dining-room. My father was much surprised at the appearance of Mrs. P. He had heard that his friend married

ern towns. It seemed possible, on that spot, to lead a life of serenity and cheerfulness. Some richly dressed Indians came down to show themselves. Their dresses were of blue broadcloth, with splendid leggings and knee-ties. On their heads were crimson square's adornment with beads and falling on one shoulder, their hair long and looking cleanly. Near were one or two wild figures clad in the common white blankets." *Manuscript Notes.* — *Ed.*

abroad, but nothing further, and he was not prepared to see the calm, dignified P. with a woman on his arm, still handsome, indeed, but whose coarse and imperious expression showed as low habits of mind as her exaggerated dress and gesture did of education. Nor could there be a greater contrast to my mother, who, though understanding her claims and place with the certainty of a lady, was soft and retiring in an uncommon degree.

"However, there was no time to wonder or fancy; they sat down, and P. engaged in conversation, without much vivacity, but with his usual ease. The first quarter of an hour passed well enough. But soon it was observable that Mrs. P. was drinking glass after glass of wine, to an extent few gentlemen did, even then, and soon that she was actually excited by it. Before this, her manner had been brusque, if not contemptuous, towards her new acquaintance; now it became, towards my mother especially, quite rude. Presently she took up some slight remark made by my mother, which, though it did not naturally mean anything of the sort, could be twisted into some reflection upon England, and made it a handle, first of vulgar sarcasm, and then, upon my mother's defending herself with some surprise and gentle dignity, hurled upon her a volley of abuse, beyond Billingsgate.

"My mother, confounded by scenes and ideas presented to her mind equally new and painful, sat trembling; she knew not what to do; tears rushed into her eyes. My father, no less distressed, yet unwilling to outrage the feelings of his friend by doing or saying what his indignation prompted, turned an appealing look on P.

"Never, as he often said, was the painful expression of that sight effaced from his mind. It haunted his dreams and disturbed his waking thoughts. P. sat with his head bent forward, and his eyes cast down, pale, but calm, with a fixed expression, not merely of patient woe, but of patient shame, which it would not have been thought possible for that noble countenance to wear. 'Yet,' said my father, 'it became him. At other times he was handsome, but then beautiful, though of a beauty saddened and abashed. For a spiritual light borrowed from the worldly

perfection of his mien that illustration by contrast, which the penitence of the Magdalen does from the glowing earthliness of her charms.'

"Seeing that he preserved silence, while Mrs. P. grew still more exasperated, my father rose and led his wife to her own room. Half an hour had passed, in painful and wondering surmises, when a gentle knock was heard at the door, and P. entered equipped for a journey. 'We are just going,' he said, and holding out his hand, but without looking at them, 'Forgive.'

"They each took his hand, and silently pressed it; then he went without a word more.

"Some time passed, and they heard now and then of P., as he passed from one army station to another, with his uncongenial companion, who became, it was said, constantly more degraded. Whoever mentioned having seen them wondered at the chance which had yoked him to such a woman, but yet more at the silent fortitude with which he bore it. Many blamed him for enduring it, apparently without efforts to check her; others answered that he had probably made such at an earlier period, and, finding them unavailing, had resigned himself to despair, and was too delicate to meet the scandal that, with such resistance as such a woman could offer, must attend a formal separation.

"But my father, who was not in such haste to come to conclusions, and substitute some plausible explanation for the truth, found something in the look of P. at that trying moment to which none of these explanations offered a key. There was in it, he felt, a fortitude, but not the fortitude of the hero; a religious submission, above the penitent, if not enkindled with the enthusiasm of the martyr.

"I have said that my father was not one of those who are ready to substitute specious explanations for truth, and those who are thus abstinent rarely lay their hand on a thread without making it a clew. Such a man, like the dexterous weaver, lets not one color go till he finds that which matches it in the pattern,—he keeps on weaving, but chooses his shades; and my father found at last what he wanted to make out the pattern for himself. He met

a lady who had been intimate with both himself and P. in early days, and, finding she had seen the latter abroad, asked if she knew the circumstances of the marriage.

"The circumstances of the act which sealed the misery of our friend, I know," she said, "though as much in the dark as any one about the motives that led to it.

"We were quite intimate with P. in London, and he was our most delightful companion. He was then in the full flower of the varied accomplishments which set off his fine manners and dignified character, joined, towards those he loved, with a certain soft willingness which gives the desirable chivalry to a man. None was more clear of choice where his personal affections were not touched, but where they were, it cost him pain to say no, on the slightest occasion. I have thought this must have had some connection with the mystery of his misfortunes.

"One day he called on me, and, without any preface, asked if I would be present next day at his marriage. I was so surprised, and so unpleasantly surprised, that I did not at first answer a word. We had been on terms so familiar, that I thought I knew all about him, yet had never dreamed of his having an attachment; and, though I had never inquired on the subject, yet this reserve where perfect openness had been supposed, and really, on my side, existed, seemed to me a kind of treachery. Then it is never pleasant to know that a heart on which we have some claim is to be given to another. We cannot tell how it will affect our own relations with a person; it may strengthen or it may swallow up other affections; the crisis is hazardous, and our first thought, on such an occasion, is too often for ourselves,—at least mine was. Seeing me silent, he repented his question. "To whom," said I, "are you to be married?" "That," he replied, "I cannot tell you." He was a moment silent, then continued, with an impassive look of cold self-possession, that affected me with strange sadness: "The name of the person you will hear, of course, at the time, but more I cannot tell you. I need, however, the presence, not only of legal, but of respectable and friendly witnesses. I have hoped you and your husband

would do me this kindness. Will you?" Something in his manner made it impossible to refuse. I answered, before I knew I was going to speak, "We will," and he left me.

"I will not weary you with telling how I harassed myself and my husband, who was, however, scarcely less interested, with doubts and conjectures. Suffice it that, next morning, P. came and took us in a carriage to a distant church. We had just entered the porch, when a cart, such as fruit and vegetables are brought to market in, drove up, containing an elderly woman and a young girl. P. assisted them to alight, and advanced with the girl to the altar.

"The girl was neatly dressed and quite handsome, yet something in her expression displeased me the moment I looked upon her. Meanwhile, the ceremony was going on, and, at its close, P. introduced us to the bride, and we all went to the door. "Good by, Fanny," said the elderly woman. The new-made Mrs. P. replied without any token of affection or emotion. The woman got into the cart and drove away.

"From that time I saw but little of P. or his wife. I took our mutual friends to see her, and they were civil to her for his sake. Curiosity was very much excited, but entirely baffled; no one, of course, dared speak to P. on the subject, and no other means could be found of solving the riddle.

"He treated his wife with grave and kind politeness, but it was always obvious that they had nothing in common between them. Her manners and tastes were not at that time gross, but her character showed itself hard and material. She was fond of riding, and spent much time so. Her style in this, and in dress, seemed the opposite of P.'s; but he indulged all her wishes, while, for himself, he plunged into his own pursuits.

"For a time he seemed, if not happy, not positively unhappy; but, after a few years, Mrs. P. fell into the habit of drinking, and then such scenes as you witnessed grew frequent. I have often heard of them, and always that P. sat, as you describe him, his head bowed down and perfectly silent all through, whatever might be done or whoever be present, and always his aspect has inspired

such sympathy that no person has questioned him or resented her insults, but merely got out of the way as soon as possible.'

"'Hard and long penance,' said my father, after some minutes musing, 'for an hour of passion, probably for his only error.'

"'Is that your explanation?' said the lady. 'O, improbable! P. might err, but not be led beyond himself.'

"I know that his cool, gray eye and calm complexion seemed to say so, but a different story is told by the lip that could tremble, and showed what flashes might pierce those deep blue heavens; and when these over-intellectual beings do swerve aside, it is to fall down a precipice, for their narrow path lies over such. But he was not one to sin without making a brave atonement, and that it had become a holy one, was written on that downcast brow."

The fourth day on these waters, the weather was milder and brighter, so that we could now see them to some purpose. At night the moon was clear, and, for the first time, from the upper deck I saw one of the great steamboats come majestically up. It was glowing with lights, looking many-eyed and sagacious; in its heavy motion it seemed a downy queen, and this motion, with its solemn pulse, and determined sweep, becomes these smooth waters, especially at night, as much as the dip of the sail-ship the long billows of the ocean.

But it was not so soon that I learned to appreciate the lake scenery; it was only after a daily and careless familiarity that I entered into its beauty, for Nature always refuses to be seen by being stared at. Like Bonaparte, she discharges her face of all expression when she catches the eye of impertinent curiosity fixed on her. But he who has gone to sleep in childish ease on her lap, or leaned an aching brow upon her breast, seeking there comfort with full trust as from a mother, will see all a mother's beauty in the look she bends upon him. Later, I felt that I had really seen these regions, and shall speak of them again.

In the afternoon we went on shore at the Manitou Islands, where the boat stops to wood. No one lives here except wood-rattlers for the steamboats. I had thought of such a position,

from its mixture of profound solitude with service to the great world, as possessing an ideal beauty. I think so still, even after seeing the wood-cutters and their slovenly huts.

In times of slower growth, man did not enter a situation without a certain preparation or adaptedness to it. He drew from it, if not to the poetical extent, at least in some proportion, its moral and its meaning. The wood-cutter did not cut down so many trees a day, that the Hamadryads had not time to make their complaints heard; the shepherd tended his sheep, and did no jobs or chores the while; the idyl had a chance to grow up, and modulate his eaten pipe. But now the poet must be at the whole expense of the poetry in describing one of these positions; the worker is a true Midas to the gold he makes. The poet must describe, as the painter sketches Irish peasant-girls and Danish fishwives, adding the beauty, and leaving out the dirt.

I come to the West prepared for the distaste I must experience at its mushroom growth. I know that, where "go ahead" is the only motto, the village cannot grow into the gentle proportions that successive lives and the gradations of experience involuntarily give. In older countries the house of the son grew from that of the father, as naturally as new joints on a bough, and the cathedral crowned the whole as naturally as the leafy summit the tree. This cannot be here. The march of peaceful is scarcely less wanton than that of warlike invasion. The old landmarks are broken down, and the land, for a season, bears none, except of the rudeness of conquest and the needs of the day, whose bivouac-fires blacken the sweetest forest glades. I have come prepared to see all this, to dislike it, but not with stupid narrowness to distrust or defame. On the contrary, while I will not be so obliging as to confound ugliness with beauty, discord with harmony, and laud and be contented with all I meet, when it conflicts with my best desires and tastes, I trust by reverent faith to woo the mighty meaning of the scene, perhaps to foresee the law by which a new order, a new poetry, is to be evoked from this chaos, and with a curiosity as ardent, but not so selfish, as that of Macbeth, to call up the apparitions of future kings from the

strange ingredients of the witch's caldron. Thus I will not grieve that all the noble trees are gone already from this island to feed this caldron, but believe it will have Medea's virtue, and reproduce them in the form of new intellectual growths, since centuries cannot again adorn the land with such as have been removed.

On this most beautiful beach of smooth white pebbles, interspersed with agates and cornelians for those who know how to find them, we stepped, not like the Indian, with some humble offering, which, if no better than an arrow-head or a little parched corn, would, he judged, please the Manitou, who looks only at the spirit in which it is offered. Our visit was so far for a religious purpose that one of our party went to inquire the fate of some Unitarian tracts left among the wood-cutters a year or two before. But the old Manitou, though, daunted like his children by the approach of the fire-ships, which he probably considered demons of a new dynasty, he had suffered his woods to be felled to feed their pride, had been less patient of an encroachment which did not to him seem so authorized by the law of the strongest, and had scattered those leaves as carelessly as the others of that year.

But S. and I, like other emigrants, went, not to give, but to get, to rifle the wood of flowers for the service of the fire-ship. We returned with a rich booty, among which was the *Uva-ursi*, whose leaves the Indians smoke, with the *Kinnikinnik*, and which had then just put forth its highly finished little blossoms, as prettily as those of the blueberry.

Passing along still further, I thought it would be well if the crowds assembled to stare from the various landings were still confined to the *Kinnikinnik*, for almost all had tobacco written on their faces, their cheeks rounded with plugs, their eyes dull with its fumes. We reached Chicago on the evening of the sixth day, having been out five days and a half, a rather longer passage than usual at a favorable season of the year.

Chicago, June 20.

There can be no two places in the world more completely thoroughfares than this place and Buffalo. They are the two

correspondent valves that open and shut all the time, as the life-blood rushes from east to west, and back again from west to east.

Since it is their office thus to be the doors, and let in and out, it would be unfair to expect from them much character of their own. To make the best provisions for the transmission of produce is their office, and the people who live there are such as are suited for this, — active, complaisant, inventive, business people. There are no provisions for the student or idler; to know what the place can give, you should be at work with the rest; the mere traveller will not find it profitable to loiter there as I did.

Since circumstances made it necessary for me so to do, I read all the books I could find about the new region, which now began to become real to me. Especially I read all the books about the Indians, — a paltry collection truly, yet which furnished material for many thoughts. The most narrow-minded and awkward recital still bears some lineaments of the great features of this nature, and the races of men that illustrated them.

Catlin's book is far the best. I was afterwards assured by those acquainted with the regions he describes, that he is not to be depended on for the accuracy of his facts, and indeed it is obvious, without the aid of such assertions, that he sometimes yields to the temptation of making out a story. They admitted, however, what from my feelings I was sure of, that he is true to the spirit of the scene, and that a far better view can be got from him than from any source at present existing, of the Indian tribes of the Far West, and of the country where their inheritance lay.

Murray's Travels I read, and was charmed by their accuracy and clear, broad tone. He is the only Englishman that seems to have traversed these regions as man simply, not as John Bull. He deserves to belong to an aristocracy, for he showed his title to it more when left without a guide in the wilderness, than he can at the court of Victoria. He has, himself, no poetic force at description, but it is easy to make images from his hints. Yet we believe the Indian cannot be looked at truly except by a poetic eye. The Pawnees, no doubt, are such as he describes them, filthy in their habits, and treacherous in their character, but some

would have seen, and seen truly, more beauty and dignity than he does with all his manliness and fairness of mind. However, his one fine old man is enough to redeem the rest, and is perhaps the relic of a better day, a Phocion among the Pawnees.

Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches* is a valuable book, though a worse use could hardly have been made of such fine material. Had the mythological or hunting stories of the Indians been written down exactly as they were received from the lips of the narrators, the collection could not have been surpassed in interest, both for the wild charm they carry with them, and the light they throw on a peculiar modification of life and mind. As it is, though the incidents have an air of originality and pertinence to the occasion, that gives us confidence that they have not been altered, the phraseology in which they were expressed has been entirely set aside, and the flimsy graces, common to the style of annals and souvenirs, substituted for the Spartan brevity and sinewy grasp of Indian speech. We can just guess what might have been there, as we can detect the fine proportions of the Brave whom the bad taste of some white patron has arranged in frock-coat, hat, and pantaloons.

The few stories Mrs. Jameson wrote out, though to these also a sentimental air has been given, offend much less in that way than is common in this book. What would we not give for a completely faithful version of some among them! Yet, with all these drawbacks, we cannot doubt from internal evidence that they truly ascribe to the Indian a delicacy of sentiment and of fancy that justifies Cooper in such inventions as his Uncas. It is a white man's view of a savage hero, who would be far finer in his natural proportions; still, through a masquerade figure, it implies the truth.

Irving's books I also read, some for the first, some for the second time, with increased interest, now that I was to meet such people as he received his materials from. Though the books are pleasing from their grace and luminous arrangement, yet, with the exception of the *Tour to the Prairies*, they have a stereotype, second-hand air. They lack the breath, the glow, the charming minute

traits of living presence. His scenery is only fit to be glanced at from dioramic distance; his Indians are academic figures only. He would have made the best of pictures, if he could have used his own eyes for studies and sketches; as it is, his success is wonderful, but inadequate.

McKenney's *Tour to the Lakes* is the dullest of books, yet faithful and quiet, and gives some facts not to be met with everywhere.

I also read a collection of Indian anecdotes and speeches, the worst compiled and arranged book possible, yet not without clues of some value. All these books I read in anticipation of a canoe-voyage on Lake Superior as far as the Pictured Rocks, and, though I was afterwards compelled to give up this project, they aided me in judging of what I subsequently saw and heard of the Indians.

In Chicago I first saw the beautiful prairie-flowers. They were in their glory the first ten days we were there, —

"The golden and the flame-like flowers."

The flame-like flower I was taught afterwards, by an Indian girl, to call "*Wickapee*"; and she told me, too, that its splendours had a useful side, for it was used by the Indians as a remedy for an illness to which they were subject.

Beside these brilliant flowers, which gemmed and girt the grass in a sunny afternoon's drive near the blue lake, between the low oak-wood and the narrow beach, stimulated, whether sensuously by the optic nerve, unused to so much gold and crimson with such tender green, or symbolically through some meaning dimly seen in the flowers, I enjoyed a sort of fairy-land exultation never felt before, and the first drive amid the flowers gave me anticipation of the beauty of the prairies.

At first, the prairie seemed to speak of the very desolation of dulness. After sweeping over the vast monotony of the lakes to come to this monotony of land, with all around a limitless horizon, — to walk, and walk, and run, but never climb, oh! it was too dreary for any but a Hollander to bear. How the eye greeted

the approach of a sail, or the smoke of a steamboat ; it seemed that anything so animated must come from a better land, where mountains gave religion to the scene.

The only thing I liked at first to do was to trace with slow and unexpected step the narrow margin of the lake. Sometimes a heavy swell gave it expression ; at others, only its varied coloring, which I found more admirable every day, and which gave it an air of mirage instead of the vastness of ocean. Then there was a grandeur in the feeling that I might continue that walk, if I had any seven-langued mode of conveyance to save fatigue, for hundreds of miles without an obstacle and without a change.

But after I had ridden out, and seen the flowers, and observed the sun set with that calmness seen only in the prairies, and the cattle winding slowly to their homes in the "island groves," — most peaceful of sights, — I began to love, because I began to know the scene, and shrank no longer from "the encircling vastness."

It is always thus with the new form of life ; we must learn to look at it by its own standard. At first, no doubt, my accustomed eye kept saying, if the mind did not, What ! no distant mountains ? What ! no valleys ? But after a while I would ascend the roof of the house where we lived, and pass many hours, needing no sight but the moon reigning in the heavens, or starlight falling upon the lake, till all the lights were out in the island grove of men beneath my feet, and felt nearer heaven than there was nothing but this lovely, still reception on the earth ; no towering mountains, no deep tree-shadows, nothing but plain earth and water bathed in light.

Sunset, as seen from that place, presented most generally, low-lying, flaky clouds, of the softest serenity.

One night a star "shot madly from its sphere," and it had a fair chance to be seen, but that serenity could not be astonished.

Yes ! it was a peculiar beauty, that of those sunsets and moonlights on the levels of Chicago, which Chamouny or the Trossachs could not make me forget.*

* From the prairie near Chicago had I seen, some days before, the sun set with

Notwithstanding all the attractions I thus found out by degrees on the flat shores of the lake, I was delighted when I found myself really on my way into the country for an excursion of two or three weeks. We set forth in a strong wagon, almost as large, and with the look of those used elsewhere for transporting caravans of wild beasts, loaded with everything we might want, in case nobody would give it to us, — for buying and selling were no longer to be counted on, — with a pair of strong horses, able and willing to force their way through mud-holes and amid stumps, and a guide, equally admirable as marshal and companion, who knew by heart the country and its history, both natural and artificial, and whose clear hunter's eye needed neither road nor goal to guide it to all the spots where beauty best loves to dwell.

Add to this the finest weather, and such country as I had never seen, even in my dreams, although these dreams had been haunted by wishes for just such a one, and you may judge whether years of dulness might not, by these bright days, be redeemed, and a sweetness be shed over all thoughts of the West.

The first day brought us through woods rich in the moccasin-flower and lupine, and plains whose soft expanse was continually touched with expression by the slow moving clouds which

" Sweep over with their shadows, and beneath
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges."

to the banks of the Fox River, a sweet and graceful stream. We reached Geneva just in time to escape being drenched by a violent thunder-shower, whose rise and disappearance threw expression into all the features of the scene.

Geneva reminds me of a New England village, as indeed there, and in the neighborhood, are many New-Englanders of an ex-

that calmness observed only on the prairies. I know not what it says, but something quite different from sunset at sea. There is no motion except of waving grasses, — the cattle move slowly homeward in the distance. That *home* / where is it? It seems as if there was no home, and no need of one, and there is room enough to wander on for ever."—Manuscript Notes.

cellent stamp, generous, intelligent, discreet, and seeking to win from life its true values. Such are much wanted, and seem like points of light among the swarms of settlers, whose aims are sordid, whose habits thoughtless and slovenly.*

With great pleasure we heard, with his attentive and affectionate congregation, the Unitarian clergyman, Mr. Conant, and afterward visited him in his house, where almost everything bore traces of his own handiwork or that of his father. He is just such a teacher as is wanted in this region, familiar enough with the habits of those he addresses to come home to their experience and their wants; earnest and enlightened enough to draw the important inferences from the life of every day.†

A day or two we remained here, and passed some happy hours in the woods that fringe the stream, where the gentlemen found a rich booty of fish.

Next day, travelling along the river's banks, was an uninterrupted pleasure. We closed our drive in the afternoon at the house of an English gentleman, who has gratified, as few men do, the common wish to pass the evening of an active day amid the quiet influences of country life. He showed us a bookcase filled with books about this country; these he had collected for years, and become so familiar with the localities, that, on coming here at last, he sought and found, at once, the very spot he wanted, and

* "We passed a portion of one day with Mr. and Mrs. ———, young, healthy, and, thank Heaven, gay people. In the general dulness that broods over this land where so little genius flows, and care, business, and fashionable frivolity are equally dull, unspeakable is the relief of some flashes of vivacity, some sparkles of wit. Of course it is hard enough for those, most natively disposed that way, to strike fire. I would willingly be the tinder to promote the cheering blaze." — *Manuscript Notes.*

† "Let any who think men do not need or want the church, hear these people talk about it as if it were the only indispensable thing, and see what I saw in Chicago. An elderly lady from Philadelphia, who had been visiting her sons in the West, arrived there about one o'clock on a hot Sunday noon. She rung the bell and requested a room immediately, as she wanted to get ready for afternoon service. Some delay occurring, she expressed great regret, as she had ridden all night for the sake of attending church. She went to church, neither having dined nor taken any repose after her journey." — *Manuscript Notes.*

where he is as content as he hoped to be, thus realizing Wordsworth's description of the wise man, who "sees what he foresaw."

A wood surrounds the house, through which paths are cut in every direction. It is, for this new country, a large and handsome dwelling; but round it are its barns and farm-yard, with cattle and poultry. These, however, in the framework of wood, have a very picturesque and pleasing effect. There is that mixture of culture and rudeness in the aspect of things which gives a feeling of freedom, not of confusion.

I wish it were possible to give some idea of this scene, as viewed by the earliest freshness of dewy dawn. This habitation of man seemed like a nest in the grass, so thoroughly were the buildings and all the objects of human care harmonized with what was natural. The tall trees bent and whispered all around, as if to hail with sheltering love the men who had come to dwell among them.

The young ladies were musicians, and spoke French fluently, having been educated in a convent. Here in the prairie, they had learned to take care of the milk-room, and kill the rattlesnakes that assailed their poultry-yard. Beneath the shade of heavy curtains you looked out from the high and large windows to see Norwegian peasants at work in their national dress. In the wood grew, not only the flowers I had before seen, and wealth of tall, wild roses, but the splendid blue spiderwort, that ornament of our gardens. Beautiful children strayed there, who were soon to leave these civilized regions for some really wild and western place, a post in the buffalo country. Their no less beautiful mother was of Welsh descent, and the eldest child bore the name of Gwynthleon. Perhaps there she will meet with some young descendants of Madoc, to be her friends; at any rate, her looks may retain that sweet, wild beauty, that is soon made to vanish from eyes which look too much on shops and streets, and the vulgarities of city "parties."

Next day we crossed the river. We ladies crossed on a little foot-bridge, from which we could look down the stream, and see the wagon pass over at the ford. A black thunder-cloud was coming up; the sky and waters heavy with expectation. The

motion of the wagon, with its white cover, and the laboring horses, gave just the due interest to the picture, because it seemed as if they would not have time to cross before the storm came on. However, they did get across, and we were a mile or two on our way before the violent shower obliged us to take refuge in a solitary house upon the prairie. In this country it is as pleasant to stop as to go on, to lose your way as to find it, for the variety in the population gives you a chance for fresh entertainment in every hut, and the luxuriant beauty makes every path attractive. In this house we found a family "quite above the common," but, I grieve to say, not above false pride, for the father, ashamed of being caught barefoot, told us a story of a man, one of the richest men, he said, in one of the Eastern cities, who went barefoot, from choice and taste.

Near the door grew a Provence rose, then in blossom. Other families we saw had brought with them and planted the locust. It was pleasant to see their old home loves, brought into connection with their new splendors. Wherever there were traces of this tenderness of feeling, only too rare among Americans, other things bore signs also of prosperity and intelligence, as if the ordering mind of man had some idea of home beyond a mere shelter beneath which to eat and sleep.

No heaven need wear a lovelier aspect than earth did this afternoon, after the clearing up of the shower. We traversed the blooming plain, unmarked by any road, only the friendly track of wheels which bent, not broke, the grass. Our stations were not from town to town, but from grove to grove. These groves first floated like blue islands in the distance. As we drew nearer, they seemed fair parks, and the little log-houses on the edge, with their curling smokes, harmonized beautifully with them.

One of these groves, Ross's Grove, we reached just at sunset. It was of the noblest trees I saw during this journey, for generally the trees were not large or lofty, but only of fair proportions. Here they were large enough to form with their clear stems pillars for grand cathedral aisles. There was space enough for crimson light to stream through upon the floor of water which the shower had left. As we slowly plashed through, I thought I was never in a better place for vespers.

That night we rested, or rather tarried, at a grove some miles beyond, and there partook of the miseries, so often jocosely portrayed, of bedchambers for twelve, a milk dish for universal hand-basin, and expectations that you would use and lend your "handkercher" for a towel. But this was the only night, thanks to the hospitality of private families, that we passed thus; and it was well that we had this bit of experience, else might we have pronounced all Trollopian records of the kind to be inventions of pure malice.

With us was a young lady who showed herself to have been bathed in the Britannic fluid, wittily described by a late French writer, by the impossibility she experienced of accommodating herself to the indecorums of the scene. We ladies were to sleep in the bar-room, from which its drinking visitors could be ejected only at a late hour. The outer door had no fastening to prevent their return. However, our host kindly requested we would call him, if they did, as he had "conquered them for us," and would do so again. We had also rather hard couches (mine was the supper-table); but we Yankees, born to rove, were altogether too much fatigued to stand upon trifles, and slept as sweetly as we would in the "bigly bower" of any baroness. But I think England sat up all night, wrapped in her blanket-shawl, and with a neat lace cap upon her head, — so that she would have looked perfectly the lady, if any one had come in, — shuddering and listening. I know that she was very ill next day, in requital. She watched, as her parent country watches the seas, that nobody may do wrong in any case, and deserved to have met some interruption, she was so well prepared. However, there was none, other than from the nearness of some twenty sets of powerful lungs, which would not leave the night to a deathly stillness. In this house we had, if not good beds, yet good tea, good bread, and wild strawberries, and were entertained with most free communications of opinion and history from our hosts. Neither shall any of us have a right to say again that we cannot find any who may be willing to hear all we may have to say. "A's fish that comes to the net," should be painted on the sign at Papaw Grove.

CHAPTER V.

THOUGHTS AND SCENES IN WISCONSIN. — SOCIETY IN MILWAUKIE. — INDIAN ANECDOTE. — SEERESS OF PREYORST. — MILWAUKIE.

A TERRITORY, not yet a State; * still nearer the acorn than we were.

It was very pleasant coming up. These large and elegant boats are so well arranged that every excursion may be a party of pleasure. There are many fair shows to see on the lake and its shores, almost always new and agreeable persons on board, pretty children playing about, ladies singing (and if not very well, there is room to keep out of the way). You may see a great deal here of Life, in the London sense, if you know a few people; or if you do not, and have the tact to look about you without seeming to stare.

We came to Milwaukie, where we were to pass a fortnight or more.

This place is most beautifully situated. A little river, with romantic banks, passes up through the town. The bank of the lake is here a bold bluff, eighty feet in height. From its summit is enjoyed a noble outlook on the lake. A little narrow path winds along the edge of the lake below. I liked this walk much, — above me this high wall of rich earth, garlanded on its crest with trees, the long ripples of the lake coming up to my feet. Here, standing in the shadow, I could appreciate better its magnificent

* Wisconsin was not admitted into the Union as a State till 1847, after this volume was written. — Ed.

changes of color, which are the chief beauties of the lake-waters ; but these are indescribable.

It was fine to ascend into the lighthouse, above this bluff, and thence watch the thunder-clouds which so frequently rose over the lake, or the great boats coming in. Approaching the Milwaukie pier, they made a bend, and seemed to do obeisance in the heavy style of some dowager duchess entering a circle she wishes to treat with especial respect.

These boats come in and out every day, and still afford a cause for general excitement. The people swarm down to greet them, to receive and send away their packages and letters. To me they seemed such mighty messengers, to give, by their noble motion, such an idea of the power and fulness of life, that they were worthy to carry despatches from king to king. It must be very pleasant for those who have an active share in carrying on the affairs of this great and growing world to see them approach, and pleasant to such as have dearly loved friends at the next station. To those who have neither business nor friends, it sometimes gives a desolating sense of insignificance.

The town promises to be, some time, a fine one, as it is so well situated ; and they have good building material, — a yellow brick, very pleasing to the eye. It seems to grow before you, and has indeed but just emerged from the thickets of oak and wild-roses. A few steps will take you into the thickets, and certainly I never saw so many wild-roses, or of so beautiful a red. Of such a color were the first red ones the world ever saw, when, says the legend, Venus flying to the assistance of Adonis, the rose-bushes kept catching her to make her stay, and the drops of blood the thorns drew from her feet, as she tore herself away, fell on the white roses, and turned them this beautiful red.

One day, walking along the river's bank in search of a waterfall to be seen from one ravine, we heard tones from a band of music, and saw a gay troop shooting at a mark, on the opposite bank. Between every shot the band played ; the effect was very pretty.

On this walk we found two of the oldest and most gnarled hem-

locks that ever afforded study for a painter. They were the only ones we saw; they seemed the veterans of a former race.

At Milwaukee, as at Chicago, are many pleasant people, drawn together from all parts of the world. A resident here would find great piquancy in the associations, — those he met having such dissimilar histories and topics. And several persons I saw, evidently transplanted from the most refined circles to be met in this country. There are lures enough in the West for people of all kinds; — the enthusiast and the cunning man; the naturalist, and the lover who needs to be rich for the sake of her he loves.

The torrent of immigration swells very strongly towards this place. During the fine weather, the poor refugees arrive daily, in their national dresses, all travel-soiled and worn. The night they pass in rude shanties, in a particular quarter of the town, then walk off into the country, — the mothers carrying their infants, the fathers leading the little children by the hand, seeking a home where their hands may maintain them.

One morning we set off in their track, and travelled a day's journey into this country, — fair, yet not, in that part which I saw, comparable, in my eyes, to the Rock River region. Rich fields, proper for grain, alternate with oak openings, as they are called; bold, various, and beautiful were the features of the scene, but I saw not those majestic sweeps, those boundless distances, those heavenly fields; it was not the same world.

Neither did we travel in the same delightful manner. We were now in a nice carriage, which must not go off the road, for fear of breakage, with a regular coachman, whose chief care was not to tire his horses, and who had no taste for entering fields in pursuit of wild-flowers, or tampering some strange wood-path in search of whatever might befall. It was pleasant, but almost as tame as New England.

But charming indeed was the place where we stopped. It was in the vicinity of a chain of lakes, and on the bank of the loveliest little stream, called the Bark River, which flowed in rapid amber brightness, through fields, and dells, and stately knolls, of most poetic beauty.

The little log-cabin where we slept, with its flower-garden in front, disturbed the scene no more than a stray lock on the fair cheek. The hospitality of that house I may well call princely; it was the boundless hospitality of the heart, which, if it has no Aladdin's lamp to create a palace for the guest, does him still higher service by the freedom of its bounty to the very last drop of its powers.

Sweet were the sunsets seen in the valley of this stream, though here, and, I grieve to say, no less near the Rock River, the fiend, who has every liberty to tempt the happy in this world, appeared in the shape of mosquitos, and allowed us no bodily to enjoy our mental peace.

One day we ladies gave, under the guidance of our host, to visiting all the beauties of the adjacent lakes, — Nomabbin, Silver, and Pine Lakes. On the shore of Nomabbin had formerly been one of the finest Indian villages. Our host said, that once, as he was lying there beneath the bank, he saw a tall Indian standing at gaze on the knoll. He lay a long time, curious to see how long the figure would maintain its statue-like absorption. But at last his patience yielded, and, in moving, he made a slight noise. The Indian saw him, gave a wild, snorting sound of indignation and pain, and strode away.

What feelings must consume their hearts at such moments! I scarcely see how they can forbear to shoot the white man where he stands.

But the power of fate is with the white man, and the Indian feels it. This same gentleman told of his travelling through the wilderness with an Indian guide. He had with him a bottle of spirit which he meant to give him in small quantities, but the Indian, once excited, wanted the whole at once. "I would not," said Mr. —, "give it him, for I thought, if he got really drunk, there was an end to his services as a guide. But he persisted, and at last tried to take it from me. I was not armed; he was and twice as strong as I. But I knew an Indian could not resist the look of a white man, and I fixed my eye steadily on his. He bore it for a moment, then his eye fell; he let go the bottle.

I took his gun and threw it to a distance. After a few moments' pause, I told him to go and fetch it, and left it in his hands. From that moment he was quite obedient, even servile, all the rest of the way."

This gentleman, though in other respects of most kindly and liberal heart, showed the aversion that the white man soon learns to feel for the Indian on whom he encroaches, — the aversion of the injurer for him he has degraded. After telling the anecdote of his seeing the Indian gazing at the seat of his former home,

"A thing for human feelings the most trying,"

and which, one would think, would have awakened soft compassion — almost remorse — in the present owner of that fair hill, which contained for the exile the bones of his dead, the ashes of his hopes, he observed: "They cannot be prevented from straggling back here to their old haunts. I wish they could. They might not to be permitted to drive away *our* game." *Our* game, — just heavens!

The same gentleman showed, on a slight occasion, the true spirit of a sportsman, or perhaps I might say of Man, when engaged in any kind of chase. Showing us some antlers, he said: "This one belonged to a majestic creature. But this other was the beauty. I had been lying a long time at watch, when at last I heard them come crackling along. I lifted my head cautiously, as they burst through the trees. The first was a magnificent fellow; but then I saw coming one, the prettiest, the most graceful I ever beheld, — there was something so soft and beseeching in its look. I chose him at once, took aim, and shot him dead. You see the antlers are not very large; it was young, but the prettiest creature!"

In the course of this morning's drive, we visited the gentlemen on their fishing party. They hailed us gayly, and rowed ashore to show us what fine booty they had. No disappointment there, no dull work.

On the beautiful point of land from which we first saw them lived a contented woman, the only one I heard of out there. She was

English, and said she had seen so much suffering in her own country, that the hardships of this seemed as nothing to her. But the others — even our sweet and gentle hostess — found their labors disproportioned to their strength, if not to their patience; and, while their husbands and brothers enjoyed the country in hunting or fishing, they found themselves confined to a comfortless and laborious in-door life. But it need not be so long.

This afternoon, driving about on the banks of these lakes, we found the scene all of one kind of loveliness; wide, graceful woods, and then these fine sheets of water, with fine points of land jutting out boldly into them. It was lovely, but not striking or peculiar.

All woods suggest pictures. The European forest, with its long glades and green, sunny dells, naturally suggested the figures of armed knight on his proud steed, or maiden, decked in gold and pearl, pricking along them on a snow-white palfrey; the green dells, of weary Palmer sleeping there beside the spring with his head upon his wallet. Our minds, familiar with such figures, people with them the New England woods, wherever the sunlight falls down a longer than usual cart-track, wherever a cleared spot has lain still enough for the trees to look friendly, with their exposed sides cultivated by the light, and the grass to look velvet warm, and be embroidered with flowers. These Western woods suggest a different kind of ballad. The Indian legends have often an air of the wildest solitude, as has the one Mr. Lowell has put into verse in his late volume. But I did not see those wild woods; only such as suggest to me little romances of love and sorrow, like this:—

GUTHILDA.

A maiden sat beneath the tree,
Tear-bedewed her pale cheeks be,
And she sigheth heavily.

From forth the wood into the light
A hunter strides, with carol light,
And a glance so bold and bright.

His careless stopped and eyed the maid;
"Why weapest thou?" he gently said;
"I love thee well; be not afraid."

He takes her hand, and leads her on;
She should have waited there alone,
For he was not her chosen one.

He leans her head upon his breast,
She knew 't was not her home of rest,
But ah! she had been sore distressed.

The sacred stars looked sadly down;
The parting moon appeared to frown,
To see thus dimmed the diamond crown.

Then from the thicket starts a deer,
The huntsman, seizing on his spear,
Cries, "Maiden, wait thou for me here."

She sees him vanish into night,
She starts from sleep in deep affright,
For it was not her own true knight.

Though but in dream Gunhilda failed,
Though but a fancied ill assailed,
Though she but fancied fault bewailed,—

Yet thought of day makes dream of night:
She is not worthy of the knight,
The innermost altar burns not bright.

If loneliness thou canst not bear,
Cannot the dragon's venom dare,
Of the pure meed thou shouldst despair.

Now sadder that lone maiden sighs,
Far bitterer tears profane her eyes,
Crushed in the dust her heart's flower lies.

On the bank of Silver Lake we saw an Indian encampment. A shower threatened us, but we resolved to try if we could not visit

it before it came on. We crossed a wide field on foot, and found the Indians amid the trees on a shelving bank; just as we reached them, the rain began to fall in torrents, with frequent thunder-claps; and we had to take refuge in their lodges. These were very small, being for temporary use, and we crowded the occupants much, among whom were several sick, on the damp ground, or with only a ragged mat between them and it. But they showed all the gentle courtesy which marks their demeanor towards the stranger, who stands in any need; though it was obvious that the visit, which inconvenienced them, could only have been caused by the most impertinent curiosity, they made us as comfortable as their extreme poverty permitted. They seemed to think we would not like to touch them; a sick girl in the lodge where I was, persisted in moving so as to give me the dry place; a woman, with the sweet melancholy eye of the race, kept off the children and wet dogs from even the hem of my garment.

Without, their fires smouldered, and black kettles, hung over them on sticks, smoked and seethed in the rain. An old, theatrical-looking Indian stood with arms folded, looking up to the heavens, from which the rain dashed and the thunder reverberated; his air was French-Roman; that is, more Romanesque than Roman. The Indian ponies, much excited, kept careering through the wood, around the encampment, and now and then, halting suddenly, would thrust in their intelligent, though amazed faces, as if to ask their masters when this awful potlter would cease, and then, after a moment, rush and trample off again.

At last we got away, well wetted, but with a picturesque scene for memory. At a house where we stopped to get dry, they told us that this wandering band (of Pottawattamies), who had returned on a visit, either from homesickness, or need of relief, were extremely destitute. The women had been there to see if they could barter for food their head-bands, with which they club their hair behind into a form not unlike a Grecian knot. They seemed, indeed, to have neither food, utensils, clothes, nor bedding; nothing but the ground, the sky, and their own strength. Little wonder if they drove off the game!

Part of the same band I had seen in Milwaukee, on a begging dance. The effect of this was wild and grotesque. They wore much paint and feather head-dresses. "Indians without paint are poor coats," said a gentleman who had been a great deal with, and really liked, them; and I like the effect of the paint on them; it reminds of the gay fantasies of nature. With them in Milwaukee was a chief, the finest Indian figure I saw, more than six feet in height, erect, and of a sullen, but grand gait and gesture. He wore a deep-red blanket, which fell in large folds from his shoulders to his feet, did not join in the dance, but slowly strode about through the streets, a fine sight, not a French-Roman, but a real Roman. He looked unhappy, but listlessly unhappy, as if he felt it was of no use to strive or resist.

While in the neighborhood of these lakes, we visited also a foreign settlement of great interest. Here were minds, it seemed, to "comprehend the trust" of their new life; and, if they can only stand true to them, will derive and bestow great benefits therefrom.

But sad and sickening to the enthusiast who comes to these shores, hoping the tranquil enjoyment of intellectual blessings, and the pure happiness of mutual love, must be a part of the scene that he encounters at first. He has escaped from the heartlessness of courts, to encounter the vulgarity of the mob; he has secured solitude, but it is a lonely, a deserted solitude. Amid the abundance of nature, he cannot, from petty, but insuperable obstacles, procure, for a long time, comforts or a home.

But let him come sufficiently armed with patience to learn the new spells which the new dragons require, (and this can only be done on the spot,) he will not finally be disappointed of the promised treasure; the mob will resolve itself into men, yet crude, but of good dispositions, and capable of good character; the solitude will become sufficiently enlivened, and home grow up at last from the rich soil.

In this transition state we found one of these homes. As we approached, it seemed the very Eden which earth might still afford to a pair willing to give up the hackneyed pleasures of the

world for a better and more intimate communion with one another and with beauty: the wild road led through wide, beautiful woods, to the wilder and more beautiful shores of the finest lake we saw. On its waters, glittering in the morning sun, a few Indians were paddling to and fro in their light canoes. On one of those fair knolls I have so often mentioned stood the cottage, beneath trees which stooped as if they yet felt brotherhood with its roof-tree. Flowers waved, birds fluttered round, all had the sweetness of a happy seclusion; all invited to cry to those who inhabited it, All hail, ye happy ones!

But on entrance to those evidently rich in personal beauty, talents, love, and courage, the aspect of things was rather sad. Sickness had been with them, death, care, and labor; these had not yet blighted them, but had turned their gay smiles grave. It seemed that hope and joy had given place to resolution. How much, too, was there in them, worthless in this place, which would have been so valuable elsewhere! Refined graces, cultivated powers, shine in vain before field-laborers, as laborers are in this present world; you might as well cultivate heliotropes to present to an ox. Oxen and heliotropes are both good, but not for one another.

With them were some of the old means of enjoyment, the books, the pencil, the guitar; but where the wash-tub and the axe are so constantly in requisition, there is not much time and pliancy of hand for these.

In the inner room, the master of the house was seated; he had been sitting there long, for he had injured his foot on ship-board, and his farming had to be done by proxy. His beautiful young wife was his only attendant and nurse, as well as a farm house-keeper. How well she performed hard and unaccustomed duties, the objects of her care showed; everything that belonged to the house was rude, but neatly arranged. The invalid, confined to an uneasy wooden chair, (they had not been able to induce any one to bring them an easy-chair from the town,) looked as neat and elegant as if he had been dressed by the valet of a duke. He was of Northern blood, with clear, full blue eyes, calm features, a

tempering of the soldier, scholar, and man of the world, in his aspect. Either various intercourses had given him that thoroughbred look never seen in Americans, or it was inherited from a race who had known all these disciplines. He formed a great but pleasing contrast to his wife, whose glowing complexion and dark yellow eye bespoke an origin in some climate more familiar with the sun. He looked as if he could sit there a great while patiently, and live on his own mind, biding his time; she, as if she could bear anything for affection's sake, but would feel the weight of each moment as it passed.

Seeing the album full of drawings and verses, which bespoke the circle of elegant and affectionate intercourse they had left behind, we could not but see that the young wife sometimes must need a sister, the husband a companion, and both must often miss that electricity which sparkles from the chain of congenial minds.

For mankind, a position is desirable in some degree proportioned to education. Mr. Birkbeck was bred a farmer, but these were nurslings of the court and city; they may persevere, for an affectionate courage shone in their eyes, and, if so, become true lords of the soil, and informing geniuses to those around; then, perhaps, they will feel that they have not paid too dear for the tormented independence of the new settler's life. But, generally, damask roses will not thrive in the wood, and a ruder growth, if healthy and pure, we wish rather to see there.

I feel about these foreigners very differently from what I do about Americans. American men and women are inexcusable if they do not bring up children so as to be fit for vicissitudes; the meaning of our star is, that here all men being free and equal, every man should be fitted for freedom and an independence by his own resources wherever the changeful wave of our mighty stream may take him. But the star of Europe brought a different horoscope, and to mix destinies breaks the thread of both. The Arabian horse will not plough well, nor can the plough-horse be rode to play the jereed. Yet a man is a man wherever he goes, and something precious cannot fail to be gained by one who knows how to abide by a resolution of any kind, and pay the cost without a murmur.

Returning, the fine carriage at last fulfilled its threat of breaking down. We took refuge in a farm-house. Here was a pleasant scene,—a rich and beautiful estate, several happy families, who had removed together, and formed a natural community, ready to help and enliven one another. They were farmers at home, in Western New York, and both men and women knew how to work. Yet even here the women did not like the change, but they were willing, “as it might be best for the young folks.” Their hospitality was great: the houseful of women and pretty children seemed all of one mind.

Returning to Milwaukee much fatigued, I entertained myself for a day or two with reading. The book I had brought with me was in strong contrast with the life around me. Very strange was this vision of an exalted and sensitive existence, which seemed to invade the next sphere, in contrast with the spontaneous, instinctive life, so healthy and so near the ground I had been surveying. This was the German book entitled:—

“*The Secrets of Prevorst. — Revelations concerning the Inward Life of Man, and the Projection of a World of Spirits into ours, communicated by Justinus Kerner.*”

This book, published in Germany some twelve years since, and which called forth there plentiful dews of admiration, as plentiful hail-storms of jeers and scorns, I never saw mentioned in any English publication till some year or two since. Then a playful, but not sarcastic account of it, in the *Dublin Magazine*, so far excited my curiosity, that I procured the book, intending to read it so soon as I should have some leisure days, such as this journey has afforded.

Dr. Kerner, its author, is a man of distinction in his native land, both as a physician and a thinker, though always on the side of reverence, marvel, and mysticism. He was known to me only through two or three little poems of his in Catholic legends, which I much admired for the fine sense they showed of the beauty of symbols.

He here gives a biography, mental and physical, of one of the most remarkable cases of high nervous excitement that the age,

so interested in such, yet affords, with all its phenomena of clairvoyance and susceptibility of magnetic influences. As to my own mental position on these subjects, it may be briefly expressed by a dialogue between several persons who honor me with a portion of friendly confidence and criticism, and myself, personified as *Bros Hope*. The others may be styled *Old Church*, *Good Sense*, and *Self-Poise*.

DIALOGUE.

Good Sense. I wonder you can take any interest in such observations or experiments. Don't you see how almost impossible it is to make them with any exactness, how entirely impossible to know anything about them unless made by yourself, when the least heaven of credulity, excited fancy, to say nothing of willing or careless imposture, spoils the whole loaf? Beside, allowing the possibility of some clear glimpses into a higher state of being, what do we want of it now? All around us lies what we neither understand nor use. Our capacities, our instincts for this our present sphere, are but half developed. Let us confine ourselves to that till the lesson be learned; let us be completely natural, before we trouble ourselves with the supernatural. I never see any of these things but I long to get away and lie under a green tree, and let the wind blow on me. There is marvel and charm enough in that for me.

Free Hope. And for me also. Nothing is truer than the Wordsworthian creed, on which Carlyle lays such stress, that we need only look on the miracle of every day, to sate ourselves with thought and admiration every day. But how are our faculties sharpened to do it? Precisely by apprehending the infinite results of every day.

Who sees the meaning of the flower uprooted in the ploughed field? The ploughman who does not look beyond its boundaries and does not raise his eyes from the ground? No, — but the poet who sees that field in its relations with the universe, and looks oftener to the sky than on the ground. Only the dreamer shall

understand realities, though, in truth, his dreaming must be not out of proportion to his waking!

The mind, roused powerfully by this existence, stretches of itself into what the French sage calls the "aromual state." From the hope thus gleaned it forms the hypothesis, under whose banner it collects its facts.

Long before these slight attempts were made to establish as a science what is at present called animal magnetism, always, in fact, men were occupied more or less with this vital principle,—principle of flux and influx,—dynamic of our mental mechanics,—human phase of electricity. Poetic observation was pure, there was no quackery in its free course, as there is so often in this wilful tampering with the hidden springs of life, for it is tampering unless done in a patient spirit and with severe truth; yet it may be, by the rude or greedy miners, some good ore is unearthed. And some there are who work in the true temper, patient and accurate in trial, not rushing to conclusions, feeling there is a mystery, not eager to call it by name till they can know it as a reality: such may learn, such may teach.

Subject to the sudden revelations, the breaks in habitual existence, caused by the aspect of death, the touch of love, the flood of music, I never lived, that I remember, what you call a common natural day. All my days are touched by the supernatural, for I feel the pressure of hidden causes, and the presence, sometimes the communion, of unseen powers. It needs not that I should ask the clairvoyant whether "a spirit-world projects into ours." As to the specific evidence, I would not tarnish my mind by hasty reception. The mind is not, I know, a highway, but a temple, and its doors should not be carelessly left open. Yet it were sin, if indolence or coldness excluded what had a claim to enter; and I doubt whether, in the eyes of pure intelligence, an ill-grounded hasty rejection be not a greater sign of weakness than an ill-grounded and hasty faith.

I will quote, as my best plea, the saying of a man old in years, but not in heart, and whose long life has been distinguished by that clear adaptation of means to ends which gives the credit of

practical wisdom. He wrote to his child, "I have lived too long, and seen too much, to be incredulous." Noble the thought, no less so its frank expression, instead of saws of caution, mean advices, and other modern instances. Such was the romance of Socrates when he bade his disciples "sacrifice a cock to Æsculapius."

Old Church. You are always so quick-witted and voluble, Free Hope, you don't get time to see how often you err, and even, perhaps, sin and blaspheme. The Author of all has intended to confine our knowledge within certain boundaries, has given us a short span of time for a certain probation, for which our faculties are adapted. By wild speculation and intemperate curiosity we violate His will, and incur dangerous, perhaps fatal, consequences. We waste our powers, and, becoming morbid and visionary, are unfitted to obey positive precepts, and perform positive duties.

Free Hope. I do not see how it is possible to go further beyond the results of a limited human experience than those do who pretend to settle the origin and nature of sin, the final destiny of souls, and the whole plan of the Causal Spirit with regard to them. I think those who take your view have not examined themselves, and do not know the ground on which they stand.

I acknowledge no limit, set up by man's opinion, as to the capacities of man. "Care is taken," I see it, "that the trees grow not up into heaven"; but, to me it seems, the more vigorously they aspire, the better. Only let it be a vigorous, not a partial or sickly aspiration. Let not the tree forget its root.

So long as the child insists on knowing where its dead parent is, so long as bright eyes weep at mysterious pressures, too heavy for the life, so long as that impulse is constantly arising which made the Roman emperor address his soul in a strain of such touching softness, vanishing from the thought, as the column of smoke from the eye, I know of no inquiry which the impulse of man suggests that is forbidden to the resolution of man to pursue. In every inquiry, unless sustained by a pure and reverent spirit, he gropes in the dark, or falls headlong.

Self-Poise. All this may be very true, but what is the use of

all this straining? Far-sought is dear-bought. When we know that all is in each, and that the ordinary contains the extraordinary, why should we play the baby, and insist upon having the moon for a toy when a tin dish will do as well? Our deep ignorance is a chasm that we can only fill up by degrees, but the commonest rubbish will help us as well as shred silk. The god Brahma, while on earth, was set to fill up a valley, but he had only a basket given him in which to fetch earth for this purpose; so is it with us all. No leaps, no starts, will avail us; by patient crystallization alone, the equal temper of wisdom is attainable. Sit at home, and the spirit-world will look in at your window with moonlit eyes; run out to find it, and rainbow and golden cup will have vanished, and left you the beggarly child you were. The better part of wisdom is a sublime prudence, a pure and patient truth, that will receive nothing it is not sure it can permanently lay to heart. Of our study, there should be in proportion two thirds of rejection to one of acceptance. And, amid the manifold infatuations and illusions of this world of emotion, a being capable of clear intelligence can do no better service than to hold himself upright, avoid nonsense, and do what chores lie in his way, acknowledging every moment that primal truth, which no fact exhibits, nor, if pressed by too warm a hope, will even indicate. I think, indeed, it is part of our lesson to give a formal consent to what is farcical, and to pick up our living and our virtue amid what is so ridiculous, hardly deigning a smile, and certainly not vexed. The work is done through all, if not by every one.

Free Hope. Then art greatly wise, my friend, and ever respected by me, yet I find not in your theory or your scope room enough for the lyric inspirations or the mysterious whispers of life. To me it seems that it is madder never to abandon one's self, than often to be infatuated; better to be wounded, a captive, and a slave, than always to walk in armor. As to magnetism, that is only a matter of fancy. You sometimes need just such a field in which to wander vagrant, and if it bear a higher name, yet it may be that, in last result, the trance of Pythagoras might be classed with the more infantine transports of the Seeress of Prevorst.

What is done interests me more than what is thought and supposed. Every fact is impure, but every fact contains in it the juices of life. Every fact is a clod, from which may grow an amaranth or a palm.

Climb you the snowy peaks whence come the streams, where the atmosphere is rare, where you can see the sky nearer, from which you can get a commanding view of the landscape? I see great disadvantages as well as advantages in this dignified position. I had rather walk myself through all kinds of places, even at the risk of being robbed in the forest, half drowned at the ford, and covered with dust in the street.

I would beat with the living heart of the world, and understand all the moods, even the fancies or fantasies, of nature. I dare to trust to the interpreting spirit to bring me out all right at last, — establish truth through error.

Whether this be the best way is of no consequence, if it be the one individual character points out.

For one, like me, it would be vain
 From glittering heights the eyes to strain;
 I the truth can only know,
 Tested by life's most fiery glow.
 Seeds of thought will never thrive,
 Till dews of love shall bid them live.

Let me stand in my age with all its waters flowing round me. If they sometimes subdue, they must finally upbear me, for I seek the universal, — and that must be the best.

The Spirit, no doubt, leads in every movement of my time: if I seek the flow, I shall find it, as well as if I busied myself more with the Why.

Whatever is, is right, if only men are steadily bent to make it so, by comprehending and fulfilling its design.

May not I have an office, too, in my hospitality and ready sympathy? If I sometimes entertain guests who cannot pay with gold coin, with "fair rose nobles," that is better than to lose the chance of entertaining angels unawares.

You, my three friends, are held in heart-honor, by me. You,

especially, Good Sense, because where you do not go yourself, you do not object to another's going, if he will. You are really liberal. You, Old Church, are of use, by keeping unforgot the effigies of old religion, and reviving the tone of pure Spenserian sentiment, which this time is apt to stifle in its childish haste. But you are very faulty in censuring and wishing to limit others by your own standard. You, Self-Poise, fill a priestly office. Could but a larger intelligence of the vocations of others, and a tender sympathy with their individual natures, be added, had you more of love, or more of apprehensive genius, (for either would give you the needed expansion and delicacy,) you would command my entire reverence. As it is, I must at times deny and oppose you, and so must others, for you tend, by your influence, to exclude us from our full, free life. We must be content when you censure, and rejoice when you approve; always admonished to good by your whole being, and sometimes by your judgment.

Do not blame me that I have written so much suggested by the German seeress, while you were looking for news of the West. Here on the pier, I see disembarking the Germans, the Norwegians, the Swedes, the Swiss. Who knows how much of old legendary lore, of modern wonder, they have already planted amid the Wisconsin forests? Soon, their tales of the origin of things, and the Providence which rules them, will be so mingled with those of the Indian, that the very oak-tree will not know them apart,—will not know whether itself be a Runic, a Druid, or a Winnebago oak.

Some seeds of all growths that have ever been known in this world might, no doubt, already be found in these Western wilds, if we had the power to call them to life.

I saw, in the newspaper, that the American Tract Society boasted of their agent's having exchanged, at a Western cabin door, tracts for the "Devil on Two Sticks," and then burnt that more entertaining than edifying volume. No wonder, though, they study it there. Could one but have the gift of reading the

dreams dreamed by men of such various birth, various history, various mind, it would afford much more extensive amusement than did the chambers of one Spanish city !

Could I but have flown at night through such mental experiences, instead of being shut up in my little bedroom at the Milwaukee boarding-house, this chapter would have been worth reading. As it is, let us hasten to a close.

Had I been rich in money, I might have built a house, or set up in business, during my fortnight's stay at Milwaukee, matters move on there at so rapid a rate. But being only rich in curiosity, I was obliged to walk the streets and pick up what I could in casual intercourse. When I left the street, indeed, and walked on the bluffs, or sat beside the lake in their shadow, my mind was rich in dreams congenial to the scene, some time to be realized, though not by me.

A boat was left, keel up, half on the sand, half in the water, swaying with each swell of the lake. It gave a picturesque grace to that part of the shore, as the only image of inaction, — only object of a pensive character to be seen. Near this I sat, to dream my dreams and watch the colors of the lake, changing hourly, till the sun sank. These hours yielded impulses, wove webs, such as life will not again afford.

Returning to the boarding-house, which was also a boarding-school, we were sure to be greeted by gay laughter.

This school was conducted by two girls of nineteen and seventeen years ; their pupils were nearly as old as themselves. The relation seemed very pleasant between them ; the only superiority — that of superior knowledge — was sufficient to maintain authority, — all the authority that was needed to keep daily life in good order.

In the West, people are not respected merely because they are old in years ; people there have not time to keep up appearances in that way ; when persons cease to have a real advantage in wisdom, knowledge, or enterprise, they must stand back, and let those who are oldest in character "go ahead," however few years they may count. There are no banks of established respectability in

which to bury the talent there ; no napkin of precedent in which to wrap it. What cannot be made to pass current, is not esteemed coin of the realm.

To the windows of this house, where the daughter of a famous "Indian fighter," i. e. fighter against the Indians, was learning French and the piano, came wild, tawny figures, offering for sale their baskets of berries. The boys now, instead of brandishing the tomahawk, tame their hands to pick raspberries.

Here the evenings were much lightened by the gay chat of one of the party, who with the excellent practical sense of mature experience, and the kindest heart, united a *naïveté* and innocence such as I never saw in any other who had walked so long life's tangled path. Like a child, she was everywhere at home, and, like a child, received and bestowed entertainment from all places, all persons. I thanked her for making me laugh, as did the sick and poor, whom she was sure to find out in her briefest sojourn in any place, for more substantial aid. Happy are those who never grieve, and so often aid and enliven their fellow-men !

This scene, however, I was not sorry to exchange for the much celebrated beauties of the island of Mackinaw.