

THE
AMERICANS AT HOME.

THE
AMERICANS AT HOME;

OR,

BYEWAYS, BACKWOODS, AND PRAIRIES

EDITED BY

THE AUTHOR OF "SAM SLICK."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE
AMERICANS AT HOME.

I.

A HELP BUT NOT A SERVANT.

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

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

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

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

A portly old gentleman now made his appearance, bearing, flung over his shoulder, what seemed at first view a bolster cased in silk, so limp and helpless was his burden. Behind him came, as best she might, a tall and slender lady, who seemed his wife; and, after scant salutation to the mistress of the cottage, the two old people were at once anxiously occupied in unrolling the said bolster, which proved, after the Champollion process was completed, to be a very delicate and rather pretty young lady, their daughter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“All!” exclaimed the teamster; “I should hope it was! and what anybody on earth can

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

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

The young lady at least, and probably her parents, had never seen the interior of these cabins before; indeed, the damsel, on her

first unrolling, had said, very naturally, "Why, papa, is this a *house*?"

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

A rich green silk, now well draggled; a fine Tuscan-bonnet, a good deal trimmed within and without, and stained ruinously by its soaked veil; the thinnest kid shoes, and white silk stockings figured with mud, were the remains of the dress in which Miss Angelica Margold had chosen to travel through the woods. Her long ringlets hung far below her chin with scarce a remnant of curl, and her little pale face wore an air of vexation which her father and mother did their best most duteously to talk away.

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

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

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

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

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

“Bellowses!” exclaimed the young man (whose name we found to be Butts), “we can do our own blowin’ in the woods. Here! let me try;” and with the old broom-stump he flirted up a fire in a minute, only scattering smoke and ashes on all sides.

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

“Don’t you be scart!” he said; “ashes never pison’d anybody yet.”

Mr. Margold was questioning Mrs. Gaston

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

“But I suppose you have tea—and bread and butter—and——”

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

“Bless my soul! no bread!” said the old gentleman.

“No tea!” exclaimed his wife.

“O dear! what an awful place!” sighed Miss Angelica, piteously.

“Well! I vote we have a Johnny-cake,” said the driver; “you make us a Johnny-cake, aunty, and them that can't make a good supper off of Johnny-cake and butter deserves to go hungry, that's a fact!”

Mrs. Gaston, though evidently hurt by the rude manner of her guests, set herself silently at work in obedience to the hint of Mr. Butts; while that gentleman made him-

self completely at home, took the little girl in his lap with the loving title of "Sis," and cordially invited Mr. Margold to sit down on a board which he had placed on two blocks, to eke out the scanty number of seats.

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

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

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

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

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

quietly took his place with the children to await the second table.

Mr. Butts was now in his element. He took particular pains to press everybody to eat of everything, and observing that Miss Angelica persisted in her refusal of whatever he offered her, he cut with his own knife a bountiful piece of butter, and placed it on her plate with an air of friendly solicitude.

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

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

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

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

II.

A HELP BUT NOT A SERVANT.

CHAPTER II.

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

The sleeping arrangements were of a more perplexing character than those which had

been fortunately devised for the tea. There were two large beds and a trundle-bed, and these, with a scanty supply of bedding, comprised our available means; and besides our tea-party, two little boys had come dripping home from school to add to our numbers. After much consultation, many propositions, and not a few remarks calculated rather to wound the feelings of our civil entertainers, it was concluded to put the two large beds close together in order to enlarge their capabilities, and this extensive couch was to hold all the "women-folks" and some of the children. The trundle-bed by careful stowage took the little ones; and for the old gentleman, a couch of buffalo-ropes and carriage-cushions was skilfully prepared by none other than the forgiving Mr. Butts, who seemed disposed to forget past rebuffs, and to exert himself very heartily in the public service. This disinterested individual was perfectly content to repose Indian fashion, with his feet to the fire, and anything he could get for a pillow; and the master of the house stretched himself out after the same manner.

When all was done, Mrs. Gaston made the ordinary cotton-sheet-partition for the benefit of those who chose to undress; and then began to prepare herself for the rest, which I

am sure she needed. All seemed well enough for weary travellers, and, at any rate, these poor people had done their best. I hoped that all fault-finding would soon be hushed in sleep.

But it became evident ere long that Miss Margold did not intend to become a person of so small consequence. She had disturbed her father several times by requests for articles from different parts of the luggage, without which she declared she could not think of going to bed. She had received from her mother the attendance of a waiting-maid, without offering the slightest service in return, and now, when all her ingenuity seemed to be exhausted, she suddenly discovered that it would be in vain for her to think of sleeping in a bed where there were so many people, and she decided on sitting up all night.

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

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

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

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

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

This proved the drop too many. Out spoke at last the poor half-blind husband and father. His patience was, as Mr. Butts would say, "used up." "Neighbours," said he, "I don't know who you are, nor where you come from, and I didn't ask, for you were driven into my house by a storm. My family were willing to accommodate you as far as they could; such as we had, you were welcome to, but we are poor, and have not much to do with. Now, you haven't seemed to be satisfied with any thing, and your behaviour has

hurt my wife's feelings, and mine too. You think we are poor ignorant people, and so we are; but you think we haven't feelings like other folks, and there you are mistaken. Now, the short and long of the matter is, that as the storm is over and the moon is up, it's my desire that you pick up your things and drive on to the next tavern, where you can call for what you like, and pay for what you get. I don't keep a tavern, though I'm always willin' to entertain a civil traveller as well as I can."

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

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

The Margolds were in a very pitiable perplexity. Miss Angelica, knowing that none of the trouble would come upon herself, was for being very spirited upon the occasion; her papa, who had already begun to dream of Wall-street and Waverley-place, did hate to be recalled to the woods; and Mrs. Margold

had no opinion of her own on this or any other occasion. Mr. Gaston, seeing no demonstrations of retreat, went to Butts, who was or pretended to be asleep, and, shaking him by the shoulder, told him he was wanted to get up his horses.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hospitality claimed as such is, I believe, *invariably* rendered among us, with a freedom

worthy of Arcadia itself. It is only when there is evidently a supposition on the part of the guest that a poor man's house and family are necessarily at the service of anybody, for the sake of a few shillings, that our cherished independence is called into action. It is under such circumstances that those who are disposed to lord it in log-cabins discover that people who are not afraid to be poor can afford to be independent; and that uninvited guests must purchase civility by civility, or find themselves unwelcome in spite of money.

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

Less than this I could not say in fairness to the justly praised hospitality of the west;

and I believe every reader will scarcely think our friend Gaston's apparent departure from the practice of the land needed this apology. It suggested itself unbidden, under the recollection of many a kindness received from strangers in the course of our numerous peregrinations.

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

farewell, in which latter civility he was closely imitated by Mrs. Margold and Miss Angelica.

“*You* didn’t think I was *oncivil*, did ye?” said Gaston, somewhat anxiously, as we prepared to follow.

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

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

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

The morning was a charming one, and a strong breeze from the west came as if on purpose to refresh the spirits and cool the temper of the party after the *contretemps* of the night. But this breeze, bearing on its fresh pinions some of the balmy moisture of last night’s shower, blew Miss Angelica’s

long ringlets about most intolerably, and her little forehead became quilted with very unbecoming wrinkles, when, as we drove through a narrow way where the bushes almost met above our heads, a provoking puff sent down a copious shower from the leaves, demolishing the small remnant of curl and the smaller remnant of patience, and the young lady scolded outright.

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

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

Double-distilled scorn curled Miss Margold’s lip, and she maintained an indignant silence, as the only shield against the impertinence of the driver, who found consolation in an unceasing whistle. They had picked up this youth at a neighbouring village, supposing, from his pleasant countenance and obliging manner, that they had gained a treasure of civility. It had been at Miss Angelica’s especial instance that the party had quitted the usual road and taken to the woods. She wished to be a little

romantic, but she had not counted the cost. Butts was indeed all they had supposed from his address, smart, good-tempered and kind-hearted, yet, as we have seen, he was not the less lacking in the kind of knowledge which was requisite for the part he had undertaken. He had never lived with any but those who considered him quite equal to themselves. He was the son of a respectable farmer, whose ample lands would cut up well among his heirs ; and when our friend Dan engaged to "drive team" for Mr. Margold, he had no idea but that he was to be, to all intents and purposes, one of the party, saving and excepting his duty towards the horses, which he performed with scrupulous fidelity and no small skill. All this seemed so evident, that I almost wondered that Miss Margold could not have passed over his intrusiveness more good-humouredly, setting it to the account of sheer ignorance, and not evil intention. But unfortunately the young lady seemed to fear that her dignity would be irrecoverably compromised if she did not resent each and every instance of impertinence, and as Butts was one of those who cannot take the broadest hint—even an Irish one—he only talked the more, thinking he had not yet hit upon the right way to make himself agreeable.

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

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

“How do you stan’ it nowadays?” was the salutation of Mr. Butts to his friend.

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

“Why, I’m middlin’ tough. I manage to make pork ache when I get hold on’t.”

“Are you hired with any one now, or do you go your own hook?”

“I’ve been teamin’ on’t some for old Pendleton that built them mills at Wellington. I come on to drive a spell for this here old fellar,” (jerking his thumb backward), “but I guess we shan’t hitch long.”

“Why not? Don’t he pay?”

“Pay! O, no danger o’ that! money’s

the thing he's got most of. But he wants a *servant*, and that, you know, Steve, is a berry that don't grow on these bushes."

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

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

"Well, but it's too funny any how," was the rejoinder; and the two friends branched off into various discussions, and regaled each other with sundry pieces of intelligence referring to the fortunes and characters of the Toms, Dicks, and Harries of their acquaintance. I had become quite absorbed in these matters, and had fallen into a sort of doze, such as I suppose to be the only sleep needed by a French milliner, when I was aroused by a clear, manly voice, with just enough of a nasal twang to make me remember that I was still in the woods, singing an air that recalled "young Lochinvar," and which had doubtless originally been intended for none other. The words were those of a western song which refers to that interesting period in our local history—the admission of Michigan into the Union,—on which occasion our

general government decided that between the States at least, "might makes right."

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

The ditty might have extended to the length of Chevy Chase for aught I can tell, in spite of many signs of indignation on the part of Mrs. Margold and her daughter, if we had not at that moment come in sight of the tavern at Wellington, which caused Mr. Butts to interrupt his vocal efforts, and give a rousing touch to his horses to insure "a trot for the avenue.

We found a decent inn and a tolerable breakfast, but the place itself was the image of desolation. It was one of those which had started into sudden life in speculating times, and the great mill, the great tavern, and various other abortions, had never known the luxury of a pane of glass or a paint-brush, nor did they bear marks of having at any time been occupied. A "variety store," offering for sale every possible article of merchandise, from lace gloves to goose-yokes,—ox-chains, tea-cups, boots and bonnets inclu-

sive,—displayed its tempting sign ; but the clerk sat smoking on the steps, and a few loungers around him looked like whiskey-customers only. There was a banking-house, of course ; and (also of course) it was closed, though the sign still stared impudently at the cheated passenger. And this was “Wellingtongton !” Hollow honour for “le vainqueur du vainqueur du monde !”

After breakfast—at which, by the bye, Mr. Butts and his friend filled high places,—we bade adieu to the Margolds, who were to regain the great road after a few miles of further travel, while we took to the woods again. Before we parted, however, Mr. Butts sought occasion to call us to witness that he returned to Mr. Margold the bank-note which that gentleman had deposited on Mr. Gaston’s table.

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

III.

THE STAMPEDE.

PURSUING our journey on the rolling prairie, we had been about half a day out, and were beginning to lose sight of the lower ranges of hills, when we heard a deep rumbling, like heavy thunder or a distant earthquake, and our guide came to a sudden halt, exclaiming,

“Le diable!”

“Howly jabers! what is it, now?” cried Teddy.

“Hist!” exclaimed Black George. “I’ll be dog-gone ef I don’t think we’re chawed up this time, sure as sin!”

“What is it?” I echoed.

“Von grande stampede, by gar!” answered Pierre.

“Stampede of what, I pray?”

“Buffer,” replied Black George, sententiously.

“What are they?”

“Yonder they is now—here-a-ways they soon will be;” and as he spoke, he pointed over the plain with his finger.

Following the direction with my eyes, I beheld in the distance a cloud of dust, which rolled upward like a morning fog, through which, and in which, I could occasionally catch a glimpse of the huge animals, as they bounded forward with railroad velocity.

“What is to be done?” I cried.

“Grin and bear it,” responded the old trapper.

“But we shall be trodden to death. See! they are coming this way!”

“Can’t die younger,” was the cool rejoinder.

“But can we not fly?”

“Howly mother of Mary!” shouted Teddy, worked up to a keen pitch of excitement; “it’s fly we must, sure, as if the divil was a’ther us, barring that our flying must be did on baasts as have no wings, now, but long legs, jist.”

“What for you run, eh?” grinned the Frenchman. “Him catche you, by gar! just so easy as you catche him, von leetle, tam—vot you call him—musquito, eh?”

“It’s no use o’ showing them critters our backs,” rejoined Black George.—“Heyar’s what don’t turn back on nothin’ that’s got hair.”

“Well,” continued I, “you may do as you please; but as for myself, I have no desire to stand in my tracks and die without an effort.”

Saying this I wheeled my horse, and was just in the act of putting spurs to him, when Black George suddenly dashed up alongside and caught my bridle.

“See heyar, boy—don’t go to runnin’—or you’ll discomflumicate yourself oudaciously—you will, by ——! Eh, Pierre?”

“Certainment, by gar!” answered the guide; and then both burst into a hearty laugh.

“What do you mean?” cried I in astonishment, unable to comprehend their singular actions; and I turned to the other mountaineers, who were sitting quietly on their horses, and inquired if they did not think there was danger.

“Thar’s al’ays danger,” replied one, “in times like this; but thar’s no safety in runnin’.”

“For Heaven’s sake, what are we to do, then? Stay here quietly and get run over?”

Black George gave a quiet laugh, and the Frenchman proceeded to take snuff. This was too much for my patience. I felt myself insulted, and jerking away my rein from the hand of the trapper, I exclaimed, indignantly,

“I do not stay here to be the butt of any party. Teddy, follow me !”

The next moment I was dashing over the prairie at the full speed of my horse, and the Irishman, to use a nautical phrase, close in my wake, whooping and shouting with delight at what he considered a narrow escape. The direction we had taken was the same as that pursued by the running buffalo; and we could only hope for ultimate safety by reaching some huge tree, rock, or other obstacle to their progress, in advance of them. How far we would have to run to accomplish this there was no telling; for as far as the eye could reach ahead of us, we saw nothing but the same monotonous, rolling plain. The herd, thundering on in our rear, was so numerous and broad, that an attempt to ride out of its way, by turning to the right or left, could not be thought of—as the velocity of the animals would be certain to bring a wing upon us, ere we could clear their lines. There was nothing for it, then,

but a dead race ; and I will be free to own, the thought of this fairly chilled my blood. Exposed as I had been to all kinds of danger, I had never felt more alarmed and depressed in spirits than now. What could my companions by mean their indifference and levity ? Was it possible that, having given themselves up for lost, the excitement had stupified some, and turned the brains of others ! Horrible thought ! I shuddered, and turned on my horse to look back. There they stood dismounted, rifles in hand, and, just beyond them, the mighty host still booming forward. Poor fellows ! all hope with them is over, I thought ; and, with a sigh at their fate, I withdrew my gaze and urged on my steed.

On, on we sped, for a mile or more, when I ventured another look behind me. Judge of my surprise, on beholding a long line of buffalo to the right and left, rushing away in different directions ; while directly before me nothing was visible but my friends, who, on perceiving me look back, made signs for me to halt and await them. I did so, and in a few minutes they came up laughing.

“ Why, Bosson,” said Black George, waggishly, “ I hope as how you’ve run the skeer out o’ ye by this time ; for, I’ll be dog-gone

ef you can't travel a few, on pertikelar occasions!"

"Oui, monsieur," added Pierre, "vous 'ave von le plus grande—vot you call him—locomotion, eh?"

"But how, in the name of all that is wonderful, did you escape?" rejoined I.

"Just as nateral as barkin' to a pup," answered Black George. "We didn't none of us hev no fear no time; and was only jest playin' possum, to see ef we could make your hair stand; never 'specting, though, you was a-goin' to put out and leave us."

"But pray tell me how you extricated yourselves?" said I, feeling rather crest-fallen at my recent unheroic display.

"Why jest as easy as shootin'—and jest that, hoss, and nothin' else."

"Explain yourself."

"Well, then, we kind o' waited till them critters got up, so as we could see thar peepers shine, and then we all burnt powder and tumbled over two or three leaders. This skeered them as was behind, and they jest sniffed, and snorted, and sot off ayther ways like darnation. It warnt anything wonderful—that warnt—and it 'ud been onnateral for 'em to done anything else."

"I say, your honour," rejoined Teddy,

with a significant wink, "it's like, now, we've made jackasses o' ourselves, barring your honour."

"Very like," returned I, biting my lips with vexation, "all but the barring."

The truth is, I felt much as one caught in a mean act, and I would have given no small sum to have had the joke on some one else. I detected many a quiet smile curling the lips of my companions, when they thought I did not notice them, and I knew by this they were laughing in their sleeves, as the saying is; but, being in my service, did not care to irritate my feelings by a more open display. It is very galling to a sensitive person to know he has made himself ridiculous, and is a private subject of jest with his inferiors. It is no use for one under such circumstances to fret, and foam, and show temper. No! such things only make the matter worse. The best way is to come out boldly, own to the joke, and join in the laugh. Acting upon this, I said:

"Friends, I have made a fool of myself—I am aware of it—and you are at liberty to enjoy the joke to its full extent. But, remember, you must not spread it! and, when we reach a station, consider me your debtor for a 'heavy wet' all round."

This proved a decided hit. All laughed freely at the time, and that was the last I heard of it, till I fulfilled my liquor pledge at Uintah Fort, when Black George ventured the toast, "Buffer and a run," which was followed by roars of mirth at my expense, and there the matter ended.

IV.

STOPPING TO "WOOD."

IN spite of the magic changes which have been wrought in the "way of doing things" upon the western waters, the primitive mode of "wooding" from the bank remains unaltered—as a sort of vagabond Indian in the midst of a settlement—as the gallows does in the light of civilization. The same rude plank is "shoved" ashore, the same string of black and white straggle through the mud to the "pile," the same weary waste of time exists as was the case twenty years ago. Steamers have grown from pigmies to giants, speed has increased from a struggle to a "rush," yet the conception of a ready-loaded truck, or a burden-swinging crane—despatching a "cord" for every shoulder-load, appears not to have entered the head of either wood-dealer or captain.

At the same time, though the present mode is to be condemned as "behind the time;" as tedious, slovenly, and unnecessary, there are occasions when "stopping to wood" is an event of positive interest and excitement. Passed over be the fine sun-shiney morning when, jogging along—nothing behind—nothing before, the passengers lounging about—heels up, or heads down—the unnoticed bell gives the signal for "wood," and the boat draws listlessly alongside of the "pile." Equally unregarded be the rainy day, when, mud to the knees and drenched to the skin, the steaming throng, slipping and plashing, drop their backloads, with a "*whew!*" and fail to find, even in the whiskey-barrel, a laugh or a "break-down." But *not* so the star-lit evening in June, when, the water at a "good stage," and out for a "brag trip," with a rival boat behind, and the furnaces roaring for "more" the more they are fed, the signal is given and a faint flicker on the distant bank beacons the hungry monster towards its further supply of fuel. From New Orleans thus far on the trip up, the two boats, of nearly equal speed, have alternately passed each other during the stop to "wood," shewing no gain of consequence on the part of either, and the grand struggle has been, as

it at present is, to "rush" the operation so as to get a start before being overtaken. The bank is reached—the boat made fast—gangways are formed—"Lively! men, lively!" cries the mate, and while the upper cabins pour out their crowds upon the boiler deck, the "hands," and the swarms of wild-looking passengers below (obliged by contract), dash ashore among the brush. Now ensues a scene that tasks description! The fire, augmented by piles of the driest wood, crimsons the tangled forest! Black and white, many of them stripped to their waist, though others, more careful, protect their skins by ripping and forming *cowls* of empty salt sacks, attack the lengthened pile, and, amid laugh, shout, curse, and the scarcely intermitting scream of the iron chimneys (tortured by the still-making steam), remove it to the boat.

"Lively, men, lively!" rings the cry, and lively, lively is the impulse inspired by it! See that swart, gigantic negro, his huge shoulder hidden beneath a pyramid of wood, hurl to the deck his load, cut a caper along the plank, and, leaping back, seize a flaming brand to whirl it round his head in downright enjoyment! "Lively! lively!" Laugh, shout, whoop, and the pile is rapidly disappearing, when a cry is heard from the "hurricane deck"—

"Here she comes, round the point!"

'Tis the rival steamer, sure enough; and once more she will pass during this detention. Now dash both mate and captain ashore to "rush" the matter. The bell is struck for starting, as if to compel impossibility; the accumulated steam is let off in brief, impatient screams, and the passengers, sharing the wild excitement, add their cries.

"Passed again, by thunder!" "We've got enough wood!" "Leave the rest!" &c. In the meantime, round the point below, sweeps the up-comer—all lights and sparks—moving over the water like a rushing fire-palace! Now her "blow" is heard, like a suppressed curse of struggle and defiance, and now, nearing the bank where lies her rival, a sort of frenzy seizes on the latter—

"Tumble it in!" "Rush her!" "D—n the rest!" "You've got enough!" *Ra-a-a-s-h!* goes the steam; the engine, "working off," thunders below;—again, the bell rings, and the hurly burly on shore is almost savage. At length, as the coming boat is hard on astern, the signal tap is given, "all hands aboard!" The lines are let go, the planks are shoved in by the negroes, who are themselves drawn from the water with them, and, amid a chaos of timber, a whirl of steam,

and a crash of machinery, once more she is under weigh. The struggle is to leave the bank before she can be passed, and fuel, flame, and frenzy, seemingly unite to secure the object ; barrels of combustibles are thrust into the furnaces, while, before the doors, the "firemen," naked and screaming, urge their wild efforts !

"Here she is, alongside!" and now the struggle indeed is startling ; the one endeavouring to shoot out from the bank across the bows of the other, and *she*, authorized by river custom, holding her way, the consequences of collision resting alone on her imprudent competitors. Roar for roar—scream for scream—huzza for huzza—but now, the inner boat apparently gaining, a turn of her antagonist's wheel leaves her no option but to be *run into* or turn again towards the bank ! A hundred oaths and screams reply to this manœuvre, but on *she comes*—on, on, a moment more and she strikes ! With a shout of rage the defeated pilot turns her head—at the same moment snatching down his rifle and discharging it into the pilot-house of his opponent ! Fury has now seized the thoughts of all, and the iron throats of the steamers are less hideous than the human ones beneath them. The wheel for a moment

neglected, the thwarted monster has now "taken a sheer in the wild current," and, beyond the possibility of prevention, is driving on to the bank! A cry of terror rises aloft—the throng rush aft—the steam, every valve set free, makes the whole forest shiver—and, amid the fright, the tall chimneys, caught by the giant trees, are wrenched and torn out like tusks from a recoiling mastodon.

"That's a stretcher," will cry out some of our readers, and such a scene is not likely to be witnessed *now*, but the writer will not soon forget that such he bore a part in, some ten years ago; and that the captain, when asked what he thought of it, replied, "Well, I think we've got a mus, any how!"

V.

WHO SHALL COOK FOR THE CAMP ?

THE task of taking oxen on to the ground to the lumberer's camp every fall is very considerable, especially when we go far into the interior, as we frequently do nearly two hundred miles. This labour and expense are sometimes obviated by leaving them in the spring to shift for themselves in the wilderness and on the meadows, where they remain until autumn, when they are hunted up. During their wilderness exile they thrive finely, and, when found, appear very wild ; yet wondering, they seem to look at us as though they had some lingering recollection of having seen us before. It is often very difficult to catch and yoke them ; but, with all their wildness, they evidently show signs of pleasure in the recognition. When turned out in this way, however, instances have

occurred when they have never again been seen or heard of. In some cases they probably get mired and cast, and die; in others, they doubtless stray away, and fall a prey to bears and wolves. Bears as well as wolves have been known to attack oxen. An individual who owned a very fine "six-ox team" turned them into the woods to browse, in a new region of country. Late in the evening, his attention was arrested by the bellowing of one of them. It continued for an hour or two, then ceased altogether. The night was very dark, and, as the ox was supposed to be more than a mile distant, it was thought not advisable to venture in search of him until morning. As soon as daylight appeared, he started, in company with another man, to investigate the cause of the uproar. Passing on about a mile, he found one of his best oxen lying prostrate, and, on examination, there was found a hole eaten into the thickest part of his hind quarter nearly as large as a hat; not less than six or eight pounds of flesh were gone. He had bled profusely. The ground was torn up for rods around where the encounter occurred; the tracks indicated the assailant to be a very large bear, who had probably worried the ox out, and then satiated his

ravenous appetite, feasting upon him while yet alive. A road was bushed out to the spot where the poor creature lay, and he was got upon a sled and hauled home by a yoke of his companions, where the wound was dressed. It never, however, entirely healed, though it was so far improved as to allow of his being fattened, after which he was slaughtered for food.

After a few days' respite, and as soon as a sufficient quantity of snow has fallen, we commence hauling the logs. As there are several departments of labour, each man is assigned to some one of them. In most cases, indeed, every hand is hired with the distinct understanding that he is to perform a particular part of the labour, and the wages differ accordingly, being regulated also by the ability with which they can severally fill those stations.

First, then, comes the "boss," or the principal in charge. Then the choppers, meaning those who select, fell, and cut the logs, one of whom is master chopper. Next the swampers, who cut and clear the roads through the forest to the fallen trees, one of whom is master swamper. Then comes the barker and loader, the man who hews off the bark from that part of the log which is to drag on the

snow, and assists the teamster in loading. Then we have the captain of the goad, or teamster, to whom we have already alluded; and finally the cook, whose duty is too generally known to require any particular description. Every crew is not supplied with the last important character; this deficiency, I believe, is much more common on the St. Croix than on the Penobscot, where the mode of camp life and fare is much better attended to. When we have no person specially set apart to this work, the crew generally take turns, to do which there is an obligation imposed by usage and common consent on some rivers; and each man, therefore, must comply, or furnish a substitute by employing some one to act for him. In those instances, where no cook is provided, we take turns, a week at a time, or each man consents to perform some particular duty in cookery; for instance, one makes all the bread, another the tea and coffee, and so on through the routine of camp domesticism. A slight degree of rebellion sometimes manifests itself touching this business, especially before matters receive their regular winter mould. One refuses to cook, another says he "was hired to do something else," while another says, "I don't cook, any how." I recollect a

pleasant occurrence of this kind, at least one rendered so by the clever management of an old man connected with the crew. They had returned to camp from the labours of the day, the fire was nearly out, and nothing prepared for supper. Alike fatigued and hungry, each refused in turn to discharge the duties of cook, and the gloomy prospect presented itself of a supperless night. "Uncle Nat," as we familiarly called him, was a "jolly old soul," the very personification of goodnature, corpulency, and quietude, possessing withal a good share of ingenious wit; and from his corpulency and asthmatical tendencies, reminding one of a small locomotive by the puffing and blowing consequent on physical exertion. Now how to settle this matter, and have even any number of volunteer cooks, at once occurred to "Uncle Nat." "Dear me" (his favourite expression), "what a time about cooking. Why, it is the easiest thing in nature to get supper. Now, boys, if you will wait upon me, I'll be cook." "Agreed! agreed!" was the ready response on all hands. This matter being settled, "Uncle Nat" very deliberately deposited himself on the "deacon seat," and commenced drilling the volunteer assistants. "Now, Richard, get a little wood and kindle

up the fire. Isaac, step down to the brook and fetch a pail of water; and you, Mac, while the fire is getting under way, wash a few potatoes, and get them ready to put on when the pot boils." "Now, Jake, cut a few slices of pork," continued our chief cook, with much sang froid, "and put it over the fire to fry." "But you was to get supper, Uncle Nat." "Yes, I was to get supper, but you were to wait upon me," says he, casting a significant glance toward Tom, at the same time ordering him to make the dishes ready. Remonstrance was vain: they had agreed to wait upon him, if he would be cook. Every thing was arranged, supper ready, and there still sat the old gentleman—hadn't stirred an inch. "Dear me" (deep breathing), "dear me," said Uncle Nat, "I have got supper, and 'twas one of the easiest things in the world." The "boys" are caught—it was a "good 'un;" and to the enjoyment of a relishable supper was added a hearty laugh. Uncle Nat's proposition passed into a by-word, and all, ever after, were ready to do any thing, provided they could be "waited upon."

VI.

THE VILLAGE PRIZE.

IN one of the loveliest villages of old Virginia there lived, in the year 175— and odd, an old man, whose daughter was declared, by universal consent, to be the loveliest maiden in all the country round. The veteran, in his youth, had been athletic and muscular above all his fellows; and his breast, where he always wore them, could show the adornment of three medals, received for his victories in gymnastic feats when a young man. His daughter was now eighteen, and had been sought in marriage by many suitors. One brought wealth—another, a fine person—another, industry—another, military talents—another this, and another that. But they were all refused by the old man, who became at last a by-word for his obstinacy among the young men of

the village and neighbourhood. At length, the nineteenth birthday of Annette, his charming daughter, who was as amiable and modest as she was beautiful, arrived. The morning of that day, her father invited all the youth of the country to a hay-making frolic. Seventeen handsome and industrious young men assembled. They came not only to make hay, but also to make love to the fair Annette. In three hours they had filled the father's barns with the newly dried grass, and their own hearts with love. Annette, by her father's command, had brought them malt liquor of her own brewing, which she presented to each enamoured swain with her own fair hands.

“Now, my boys,” said the old keeper of the jewel they all coveted, as leaning on their pitch forks they assembled round his door in the cool of the evening—“Now my lads, you have nearly all of you made proposals for my Annette. Now you see, I don't care anything about money nor talents, book larning, nor soldier larning—I can do as well by my gal as any man in the county. But I want her to marry a man of my own grit. Now, you know, or ought to know, when I was a youngster, I could beat anything in all Virginny in the way o' leaping. I got my

old woman by beating the smartest man on the eastern shore, and I have took the oath and sworn it, that no man shall marry my daughter without jumping for it. You understand me, boys. There's the green, and here's Annette," he added, taking his daughter, who stood timidly behind him, by the hand; "Now the one, that jumps the furthest on 'dead level,' shall marry Annette this very night."

This unique address was received by the young men with applause. And many a youth, as he bounded gaily forward to the arena of trial, cast a glance of anticipated victory back upon the lovely object of village chivalry. The maidens left their looms and quilting frames, the children their noisy sports, the slaves their labours, and the old men their arm-chairs and long pipes, to witness and triumph in the success of the victor. All prophesied and many wished that it would be young Carroll. He was the handsomest and best-humoured youth in the county, and all knew that a strong and mutual attachment existed between him and the fair Annette. Carroll had won the reputation of being the "best leaper," and in a country where such athletic achievements were the *sine quá non* of a man's cleverness,

this was no ordinary honour. In a contest like the present, he had therefore every advantage over his fellow *athletæ*.

The arena allotted for this hymeneal contest was a level space in front of the village inn, and near the centre of a grass plat, reserved in the midst of the village denominated the Green. The verdure was quite off at this place by previous exercises of a similar kind, and a hard surface of sand, more befitting for the purpose to which it was to be used, supplied its place.

The father of the lovely, blushing, and withal *happy* prize, (for she well knew who would win), with three other patriarchal villagers, were the judges appointed to decide upon the claims of the several competitors. The last time Carroll tried his skill in this exercise, he "cleared"—to use the leaper's phraseology—twenty-one feet and one inch.

The signal was given, and by lot the young men stepped into the arena.

"Edward Grayson, seventeen feet," cried one of the judges. The youth had done his utmost. He was a pale intellectual student. But what had intellect to do in such an arena? Without looking at the maiden he slowly left the ground.

"Dick Boulden, nineteen feet." Dick

with a laugh turned away and replaced his coat.

“Harry Preston, nineteen feet and three inches.”

“Well done, Harry Preston,” shouted the spectators; “you have tried hard for the acres and homestead.”

Harry also laughed and swore he only “jumped for the fun of the thing.” Harry was a rattle-brained fellow, but never thought of matrimony. He loved to walk and talk—and laugh and romp with Annette, but sober marriage never came into his head. He only jumped “for the fun of the thing.” He would not have said so if sure of winning.

“Charley Simms, fifteen feet and a half.” “Hurrah for Charley! Charley ’ll win!” cried the crowd, good-humouredly. Charley Simms was the cleverest fellow in the world. His mother had advised him to stay at home, and told him if ever he won a wife, she would fall in love with his good temper, rather than his legs. Charley however made the trial of the latter’s capabilities and lost. Many refused to enter the lists altogether, others made the trial, and only one of the leapers had cleared twenty feet.

“Now,” cried the villagers, “let ’s see Henry Carroll. He ought to beat this,” and

every one appeared, as they called to mind the mutual love of the last competitor and the sweet Annette, as if they heartily wished him success.

Henry stepped to his post with a firm tread. His eye glanced with confidence around upon the villagers and rested, before he bounded forward, upon the face of Annette, as if to catch therefrom that spirit and assurance for which the occasion called. Returning the encouraging glance with which she met his own, with a proud smile upon his lip, he bounded forward.

“Twenty-one feet and a half!” shouted the multitude, repeating the announcement of one of the judges, “Twenty-one feet and a half. Harry Carroll for ever. Annette and Harry.” Hands, caps, and kerchiefs, waved over the heads of the spectators, and the eyes of the delighted Annette sparkled with joy.

When Harry Carroll moved to his station to strive for his prize, a tall, gentlemanly young man in a military undress frock-coat, who rode up to the inn, dismounted and joined the spectators unperceived, while the contest was going on, stepped suddenly forward, and with a “knowing eye,” measured deliberately the space accomplished by the last leaper. He was a stranger in the village. His handsome

face and easy address attracted the eyes of the village maidens, and his manly and sinewy frame, in which symmetry and strength were happily united, called forth the admiration of the young men.

“Mayhap, sir stranger, you think you can beat that,” said one of the by-standers, remarking the manner in which the eye of the stranger scanned the area. “If you can leap beyond Harry Carroll, you’ll beat the best man in the colonies.” The truth of this observation was assented to by a general murmur.

“Is it for mere amusement you are pursuing this pastime?” inquired the youthful stranger, “or is there a prize for the winner?”

“Annette, the loveliest and wealthiest of our village maidens, is to be the reward of the victor,” cried one of the judges.

“Are the lists open to all?”

“All, young sir!” replied the father of Annette, with interest,—his youthful ardour rising as he surveyed the proportions of the straight-limbed young stranger. “She is the bride of him who outleaps Henry Carroll. If you will try, you are free to do so. But let me tell you, Harry Carroll has no rival in Virginy. Here is my daughter, sir, look at her and make your trial.”

The young officer glanced upon the trembling maiden about to be offered on the altar of her father's unconquerable monomania with an admiring eye. The poor girl looked at Harry, who stood near with a troubled brow and angry eye, and then cast upon the new competitor an imploring glance.

Placing his coat in the hands of one of the judges, he drew a sash he wore beneath it tighter around his waist, and taking the appointed stand, made, apparently without effort, the bound that was to decide the happiness or misery of Henry and Annette.

"Twenty-two feet one inch!" shouted the judge. The announcement was repeated with surprise by the spectators, who crowded around the victor, filling the air with congratulations, not unmingled, however, with loud murmurs from those who were more nearly interested in the happiness of the lovers.

The old man approached, and grasping his hand exultingly, called him his son, and said he felt prouder of him than if he were a prince. Physical activity and strength were the old leaper's true patents of nobility.

Resuming his coat, the victor sought with his eye the fair prize he had, although nameless and unknown, so fairly won. She

leaned upon her father's arm, pale and distressed.

Her lover stood aloof, gloomy and mortified, admiring the superiority of the stranger in an exercise in which he prided himself as unrivalled, while he hated him for his success.

“Annette, my pretty prize,” said the victor, taking her passive hand—“I have won you fairly.” Annette's cheek became paler than marble! she trembled like an aspen-leaf, and clung closer to her father, while her drooping eye sought the form of her lover. His brow grew dark at the stranger's language.

“I have won you, my pretty flower, to make you a bride!—tremble not so violently—I mean not for myself, however proud I might be,” he added with gallantry, “to wear so fair a gem next my heart. Perhaps,” and he cast his eyes around inquiringly, while the current of life leaped joyfully to her brow, and a murmur of surprise ran through the crowd—“perhaps there is some favoured youth among the competitors who has a higher claim to this jewel. Young sir,” he continued, turning to the surprised Henry, “methinks you were victor in the lists before me—I strove not for the maiden,

though one could not well strive for a fairer—but from love for the manly sport in which I saw you engaged. You are the victor, and as such, with the permission of this worthy assembly, receive from my hands the prize you have so well and honourably won.”

The youth sprang forward and grasped his hand with gratitude; and the next moment, Annette was weeping from pure joy upon his shoulders. The welkin rang with the acclamations of the delighted villagers, and, amid the temporary excitement produced by this act, the stranger withdrew from the crowd, mounted his horse, and spurred at a brisk trot through the village.

That night Henry and Annette were married, and the health of the mysterious and noble-hearted stranger was drunk in overflowing bumpers of rustic beverage.

In process of time, there were born unto the married pair sons and daughters, and Harry Carroll had become Colonel Henry Carroll, of the revolutionary army.

One evening, having just returned home after a hard campaign, he was sitting with his family on the gallery of his handsome country house, when an advance courier rode up and announced the approach of General Washington and suite, informing him that

he should crave his hospitality for the night. The necessary directions were given in reference to the household preparations, and Colonel Carroll, ordering his horse, rode forward to meet and escort to his house the distinguished guest, whom he had never yet seen, although serving in the same widely-extended army.

That evening at the table Annette, now become the dignified, matronly, and still handsome Mrs. Carroll, could not keep her eyes from the face of her illustrious visitor. Every moment or two she would steal a glance at his commanding features, and half-doubtingly, half-assumedly, shake her head and look again and again, to be still more puzzled. Her absence of mind and embarrassment at length became evident to her husband, who inquired affectionately if she were ill.

“I suspect, Colonel,” said the General,—who had been some time, with a quiet, meaning smile, observing the lady’s curious and puzzled survey of his features—“that Mrs. Carroll thinks she recognizes in me an old acquaintance.” And he smiled with a mysterious air, as he gazed upon both alternately.

The Colonel stared, and a faint memory of

the past seemed to be revived as he gazed, while the lady rose impulsively from her chair, and bending eagerly forward over the tea-urn, with clasped hands and an eye of intense, eager inquiry, fixed full upon him, stood for a moment with her lips parted as if she would speak.

“Pardon me, my dear madam—pardon me, Colonel, I must put an end to this scene. I have become, by dint of camp fare and hard usage, too unwieldy to leap again twenty-two feet one inch, even for so fair a bride as one I wot of.”

The recognition, with the surprise, delight and happiness that followed, are left to the imagination of the reader.

General Washington was indeed the handsome young “leaper,” whose mysterious appearance and disappearance in the native village of the lovers is still traditionary, and whose claim to a substantial body of *bonâ-fide* flesh and blood was stoutly contested by the village story-tellers, until the happy *dénouement* which took place at the hospitable mansion of Colonel Carroll.

VII.

THE SWAMP DOCTOR'S FIRST CALL.

BEHOLD me, then, who late was a city physician of a week's duration, a veritable "Swamp Doctor," settled down quietly, far from the blandishments of fashionable life, and awaiting, as when in town, though with not half of my then anxiety, the "first call."

A veritable "swamp doctor," to whom French boots and broadcloth must be obsolete ideas; the honest squatters thinking—and with propriety too—that a doctor who could put broadcloth over their stiles, must have to charge very high to support such extravagance. A charge to which it is almost fatal for a doctor to lay himself liable.

A pair of coarse mud boots enclose my feet; copperas-coloured linsey pants occupy their proper position; a gaudy plaid vest

with enormous jet buttons, blanket-coat and cap, complete the equipment of my outer man. Allow me to introduce you to my horse ; for Charley occupies in my mind too large a space to be passed over silently when the "swamp doctor" is being described. Too poor to own but one, he has to perform the labour of several, which the fine blood that courses through his veins easily enables him to do ; like his master, his external appearance is rather unprepossessing ; but would that thy master, Charley, possessed thy integral virtues ! High-spirited art thou, old friend—for age is touching thee, Charles, though thou givest no indication of it, save in the lock of grey which overhangs thy flashing eyes. Tall in thy proportions, gaunt in thy outline, sorrel in thy hue, thou hast proved to me, Charles, that there is other friendship and companioning besides human kind ; thou hast shared my lowly lot for many years, Charles—together we have passed the lonely night, lost in the swamp—breasted many an angry stream, and given light to many darksome hearts, when fever-stricken they awaited my coming, and heard thy joyous neigh and eager bound. I did not know thy good qualities, Charles, when first I bought thee, but the years that have

wasted away have taught thy true worth, and made me respect thee as a man. But I must return, Charles, to when we first took up our home within the "swamp."

My residence is as humble as my pretensions or my dress, being composed of split trees, and known in American parlance as a "log cabin."

A lazy sluggish "*bayou*"—as all the small water-courses in this country are frenchifically termed—glorying in the name of the "Tensas," runs or rather creeps, by the door, before which—on the margin of the stream—stands one of those grand alluvial oaks which could canopy an army.

The day is rather sultry; a soft wind is moving its branches, on the topmost one of which is perched a mocking-bird! how wildly he carols, how blithesome is every movement! Happy fellow! the barn-yard, the ploughed ground, the berry-laden tree, all furnish him with food. Nature clothes him annually, and the leafy branch beneath shields him from the cold, when clouds and darkness gather around. Happy fellow! he can sing with a light heart; his wants are few and easily supplied. Would that the "swamp doctor" had as little care pressing upon him, that he might join you in your

song; would that his necessities were as few and as readily provided for! Then too he could mock at the world, then too sing like thine a joyous strain; but poverty, youthfulness, the stranger's want of loving sympathy, chill the rising ardour of his song, and fling him back upon the cold wave of the world.

But away, care, for the present! away, forebodings of the future! Be as in former days, Swamp Doctor, joyful at heart—thou hast sung in strains as wild as that winsome bird's! Let the harmony that pervades the air paint for thee the future; and of the by-gones, "let the dead Past bury its dead!" But lo! here is a call:—

"Come quick, Mass' Doctor! ole missus got a fit!" aroused me from my poetical reverie, and brought the invocation to Esculapius to an abrupt termination.

I was just apostrophizing "High Heaven" when the voice outspoke; laughing at the ludicrous transition of sounds and ideas, I rolled up my manuscript and turned to take a survey of the speaker.

He presented nothing remarkable in his appearance, being only a negro messenger, belonging to a small planter living at the extremity of what I regarded as my legiti-

mate circuit of practice; from the appearance of the mule he bestrode, he had evidently ridden in great haste.

Perceiving me to be laughing, and not knowing of anything in his annunciation to create mirth, he thought I had not heard him when he first spoke, and therefore repeated, "Come quick, Mass' Doctor! ole missus got a fit, an' I 'spec is monstrus low, for as I cum by de lot, I hear Mass' Bill holler to Mass' Bob, and tell him, arter he got dun knockin' de horns off de young bull, to cum in de house an' see his gran'-mammy die." But still I laughed on—there was such an odd mingling of poetry, Esculapius, missus, fit, Mass' Bob, and knocking the horn off the young bull, as to strike full my bump of the ludicrous, and the negro, sitting on his little crop-eared mule, gazed at me in perfect astonishment, as a monument of unfeelingness.

Suddenly the recollection that this was my "first call," came over and sobered me in a second; my profession, with all its sober realities and responsibilities, was again triumphant, and I stood a serious "swamp doctor."

Ordering a servant to catch my horse, I began to prepare for the ride, by questioning

the negro as to the nature of the disease, age of the patient, and other circumstances of the case, that might enable me to carry medicines along suitable to the occasion, as my saddle bags were of limited capacity, and none of the people kept medicines at home, except a few of the simplest nature.

“You say your mistress has fits? Does she have them often?” The object of my inquiries will be apparent to the professional reader.

“Not as I nose on, Mass’ Doctor, although I did hearn her say when she lived in Georgy, she was monstrus narvus-like at de full of de moon.”

“How old is your mistress? do you know, boy?”

“How ole! why, Mass’ Doctor, she’s a bobbullushnary suspensioner, an’ her hare is grayer dan a ’possum’s. Ole missus ole for a fak!”

“Has anything happened lately that could have given your mistress the fit?”

“Nuffin’, Mass’ Doctor, as I nose on, ’cept pr’aps day ’fore yisterday night ole missus’ private jug guv out, an’ she tole wun of de boys to go in de smoke-house and draw him full; de fule chile stuck de lite tu nere de baril, de whiskey kotch, an’ sich

a 'sploshun never war herd as de ole smoke-house guvin' up de goast!"

"Your old mistress drinks whiskey, then, and has been without any two days?"

"Yes, Mass' Doctor, an' I 'spec it's that what's usen her up, for she'd sorter got 'customed to de 'stranger.'"

I had learned enough of the case to give me a suspicion of the disease; the verification must be deferred until I saw the patient.

She being very old, nervous, and excitable, accustomed to alcoholic stimulation, suddenly deprived of her usual beverage, and brought under the depressory influences of losing her smoke house and barrel of whiskey, was sufficient cause to produce a case of disease formed by an amalgamation of *sub-hysteria* and *quasi delirium tremens*; a not very flattering diagnosis, considered in a moral point of view, to the old lady, whose acquaintance I was yet to make. Knowing how much depended upon the success with which I treated my first cases, it was unnecessary to give me a serious and reflective air, that I should remember how much people judged from appearances, and that mine were anything but indicative of the doctor; whiskers or beard had I none, and, even when wearing

the most sober mask, a smile would lurk at the corner of my mouth, eager to expand into a laugh.

But I must start. Labelling a bottle of brandy "Arkansas Fitifuge," I slipped it in my pocket, and, mounting my horse, set off upon the fulfilment of my "first call."

When we reached the house—my horse reeking with sweat from the haste which we had traversed the muddy roads—I introduced myself, as I had never seen one of the family before, nor they me—as Doctor Tensas, and required to be shown the patient. I saw from the countenance of the assembly, which was more numerous than I had expected to find, that they were disappointed in the appearance of the new doctor, and that my unstriking and youthful visage was working fatally against me. In fact, as I approached the bed, which was surrounded with women, I heard one old crone remark, *sotto voce*,—"Blessed J——s! is that *thing* a doctor? why, his face's as smooth as an egg-shell, an' my son John 'peers a heap older than him, an' he's only been *pupped* ateen years; grashus nowe sich a young-lookin' critter as that shuddent gin me doctor's truck; he can't have 'sperience, but sens he's here we'll have to let him go on; half a 'pology

is better an' no commiseration in an agger-
vated insult."

Paying no attention to her depreciatory remarks, but determined to show them that I knew a thing or two, I commenced examining the patient.

Had I not been prepared by the negro's description, I would have been surprised at the example of longevity in that insalubrious country which the invalid presented. Judging from external appearances, she must have had the opportunity of doing an immensity of talking in her time; her hair was whiter than the inside of a persimmon seed, and the skin upon her face resembled a piece of corrugated and smoky parchment, more than human cuticle; it clove tightly to the bones, bringing out all their prominences, and showing the course of the arteries and veins beneath; her mouth was partly open, and on looking in I saw not the vestige of a tooth; the great dentist, Time, had succeeded in extracting the last. She would lie very quietly in a dull comatose condition for a few moments, and then, giving a loud screech, attempt to rub her stomach against the rafters of the cabin, mumbling out something about "Whiskey spilt—smoke-house ruined—and Ginerel Jackson fit the Injuns—

and she haddent the histericks !” requiring the united strength of several of the women to keep her on the bed.

The examination verified my suspicion as to the nature of the disease, but I had too much knowledge of human nature to give the least intimation to the females of my real opinion. I had been told by an old practitioner of medicine, “If you wish to ruin yourself in the estimation of your female patients, hint that the disease they are labouring under is connected with hysterics.” What little knowledge I had acquired of the sex during my student life went to confirm his observations. But if the mere intimation of hysteria produced such an effect, what would the positive pronouncing that it was not only hysterics but a touch of drunken mania? I had not courage to calculate upon such a subject, but hastily dismissed it. Pronouncing that she had *fits*, sure enough, I commenced the treatment. Brandy and opium were the remedies indicated; I administered them freely at half-hour intervals, with marked benefit, and towards midnight she fell into a gentle slumber. As I heard her quiet breathing, and saw the rise and fall of her bosom in regular succession, indicating that the disease was yielding to my

remedies, a gleam of pleasure shot over my face, and I felt happier by the bedside of that old drunken woman, in that lowly cabin, in that obscure swamp, than if the many voices of the city were shouting "laus" unto my name. I was taking the first round in the race between medicine and disease, and so far was leading my competitor.

It was now past midnight; up to this time I had kept my place by the bedside of the patient, and began to get wearied. I could with safety transfer her care now to one of the old dames, and I determined to do so, and try and obtain some sleep. The house consisted of a double log cabin of small dimensions, a passage, the full depth of the house, running between the "pens." As sleep was absolutely required for the preservation of the patient, and the old dames who were gathered round the fire, discoursing of the marvels of their individual experience, bade fair to step over the bounds of proper modulation in their garrulity, I proposed, in such a way that there was no withstanding the appeal, that we should all, except the one nursing, adjourn to the other room. The old ladies acquiesced without a single demurrer, as they were all dying to have a talk with the "young doctor," who hitherto,

absorbed in his patient, had shown but little communicativeness.

The male portion of the family had adjourned to the fodder-house to pass the night, so my once fair companions and self had the whole of the apartment to ourselves. Ascertaining by actual experiment that it was sufficiently removed by the passage to prevent ordinary conversation from being audible at the bedside of the invalid, the old ladies, despite my hints of "being very tired," "Really I am very sleepy," and "I wish I hadn't such a long ride to take to-morrow," commenced their attack in earnest, by opening a tremendous battery of small talk and queries upon me. The terrible breaches that it made had the effect of keeping *mine* on, and I surrendered at discretion to the ladies, *almost* wishing, I must confess, that they were a bevy of young damsels, instead of a set so antiquated that their only knowledge of love was in seeing their grandchildren. Besides, they were only exacting from me the performance of one of the prescribed duties of the country physician, performed by him from time immemorial; and why should they not exact it of me? The doctor of a country settlement was then—they have become so common now as to

place it in the power of nearly every planter to own a physician, and consequently they attract little regard—a very important character in the community. Travelling about from house to house, he became the repository of all the news, scandal, and secrets of the neighbourhood, which he was expected to retail out as required for the model edification of the females of his “beat;” consequently, his coming was an event of great and exciting interest to the womenkind generally.

It is a trite observation, that “when you have rendered yourself popular with the wife, you are insured of the patronage of the husband;” apply it to the whole sex of women, and it still holds good—married or single they hold the men up, and, without their support, no physician can succeed. I had imagined, in my youthful simplicity, that when I entered the swamp I had left female curiosity—regarding it as the offspring of polished society—behind; but I found out my mistake, and, though I was very sleepy, I loved my profession too well not to desire to perfect myself in all the duties of the calling. I have often had a quiet laugh to myself, when I reflect upon the incidents of that night, and what a ludicrous appear-

ance I must have presented to a non-participant, when, on a raw-hide-bottomed chair, I sat in that log cabin, directly in front of a cheerful fire—for, though spring, the nights were sufficiently cool to render a fire pleasant—the apex of a pyramid of old women, who stretched in two rows, three on each side, down to the jambs of the chimney.

There was *Miss* Pechum, and *Miss* Stivers, and *Miss* Limsey, on one side; and *Miss* Dims—who, unfortunately, as she informed me, had had her nose bit off by a wild hog—and *Miss* Ripson, and *Miss* Tillot, on the other. Six old women, with case-hardened tongues, and only *one* poor humble “swamp doctor,” whom the verdict of one, at first sight, had pronounced a *thing*, to talk to them all! Fearful odds I saw, and seeing trembled; for the fate of the adventurous Frenchman came fresh to my mind, who proposed, for a wager, to talk twelve hours with an old widow, and who at the expiration of the time was found dead, with the old lady whispering vainly “frog soup” in his ear. There it was one against one, here it was six *versus* one, and a small talker at that; but the moments were flying, no time was to be lost, and we commenced. What marvellous stories I told them about things I had seen,

and what wonderful recitals they gave me in return! How, first, I addressed my attention to one side of the pyramid, and then bestowed a commensurate intensity upon the other! How learnedly we discoursed upon “yarbs,” and “kumfrey tea,” and “sweet gum sav!” How readily we all acquiesced in the general correctness of the broken-nose lady’s remark, “Bless the Lord!” we must all die when our time kums;” and what a general smile—which I am certain, had it not been for the propinquity of the invalid, would have amounted to a laugh—went round the pyramid, when Miss Pechum, who talked through her nose, snuffled out a witticism of her youngest son, when he was a babe, in which the point of the joke lay in *bite*, or *right*, or *fight*, or some word of some such sound, but which the imperfection of her pronunciation somewhat obscured! How intently we all listened to Miss Stivers’ ghost-story! what upholding of hands and lap-dropping of knitting, and exclamations of fear and horror and admiration, and “Blessed Master!” and “Lordy grashus!” and “Well, did you ever!” and “You don’t say so!” and “Dear heart, do tell!” and what a universal sigh was heaved when the beautiful maid that was haunted by the

ghost was found drowned in a large churn of buttermilk that her mother had set away for market next day! How profuse in my expressions of astonishment and admiration I was, when, after a long comparison of the relative sufferings of the two sexes, Miss Stivers—the lady who talked through her nose, in reply to Miss Dims, the lady who had no nose at all—declared that “Blessed Master permittin’, arter all their talk ’bout women’s sufferings, she must say that she thought men had the hardest of it!” How we debated “whether the ‘hives’ were catchin’ or not;” and were perfectly unanimous in the conclusion that “Sheep safern” were wonderful “truck!”

Suddenly one of the small screech, or horned owls, so common in the south and west, gave forth his discordant cry from a small tree, distant only a few feet from the house; instantaneously every voice was hushed, all the lower jaws of the old woman dropped, every eye was dilated to its utmost capacity, till the whites looked like a circle of cream around a black bean, every forefinger was raised to command attention, and every head gave a commiserative shake, moderating gradually to a solemn settling. After a considerable pause, Miss Ripson

broke the silence. "Poor creetur! she's gone doctor, the fitifuge can't cure her, she's knit her last pair of socks! Blessed Master! the *screech owl* is hollered, and she's bound to die, certin!" "Certin!" every voice belonging to the females responded, and every head, besides, nodded a mournful acquiescence to the melancholy decision.

Not thoroughly versed in the superstitions of the backwoods, I could not see what possible connexion there could be between the screech of the owl and the fate of the patient. Desirous of information upon the subject, I broke my usual rule, never to acknowledge ignorance upon any matter to ladies—from the first eruption of Vesuvius to the composition of a plumptitudinizer—and therefore asked Miss Ripson to enlighten me.

I shall never forget the mingled look of astonishment and contempt that the old lady, to whom the query was propounded, cast upon me as she replied:—

"How dus screech owls hollerin' make sick people die? Blessed Master! you a doctor, and ax sich a question! How is ennything fotch 'bout 'cept by sines, an' awgrese, an' simbles, an' figurashuns, an' hiramglijptix, and sich like vareus wase that the Creator works out his desine to man's

intimashun and expoundin'. Don't spose there's conjurashun an' majestix in the matter, for them's agin Scriptur; but this much I do no—I never sot up with a sick body, and heard a screech owl holler, or a dog howl, or a scratchin' agin the waul, but what they dide; ef they diddent then, they did 'fore long, which pruves that the sine war true! Blessed Master! what weke creetur's we is, sure enuf! I reculleck when I lived down to Bunkum County, North Carliny—Miss Dims, you node Miss Plyser, what lived down to Zion Spring?"—(Miss Dims, being the noseless lady, snuffled out that she did as well as one of her own children, as the families were monstrous familiar, and seed a heap of one another). "Well, Miss Plyser war takin awfil sick arter etin a bate of cold fride collards—I alwase tole her cold fride collards warn't 'dapted to the delicases of her constytushun, but the poor crittur war indoost to them, and wuddent taik my device; an' it wood hav been a grate dele beter for her ef she had, as the sekil wil pruve; poor crittur! ef she oonly had, she mout bin a settin' here to-nite, fur her husband shortly arter sed, ef sarkumstancis haddent altired his 'tarmynashun he didn't no but wat he wood like to take a look at

them Luzaanny botums, wair all you had to do to clar the land, war to cut down all the trespes and wate fur the next overflow to wash them off; but pr'aps she wuddent nethur, for arter all he dident cum, an' you no she cud-dent kum 'cept with him 'ceptin' she dun like Lizey Johnson's middle darter, Prinsanna, who left her husband in the state of Georgy, and kum to Luzaanny an' got married to a nother man, the pisen varmint, to do sich as that and her own laful husband, for I no that he borrherd a dollar of my sister Jane's sister to pay for the license and eatables for the crowd—but Blessed Master, where is I talking to!—well, as I sed, Miss Plyser made herself monstrous sick etin cold fride collards; wen I got where she was they had sent for the doctor, an' shortly arter I kum he cum, an' the fust thing he axed fur arter he got in the house war for a hanful of red pepper-pods—it war a monstrous fine time for pepper and other gardin truck that sesun—an' wen he got them he tuck a hanful of lobely an' mixt the pepper-pods with it an' then he poured hot bilin' water over it, and made a strong decokshun. Jes as it was got reddy for 'ministering, but before it was guv, I heered a screech owl holler on the gable end of the cabin. I sed then as I say

now, in the present case, that it war a sine and a forerunner that she was gwine to die, but the doctor, in spite of my 'swadements, gin her a tin cup of the pepper and lobely, but I nude it war no use—the screech owl had hollered, and she war called fur; an' jes to think of a nice young 'ooman like her, with the purtiest pair of twins in the world, and as much alike as two pese, only one had black hare and lite ise, an' the other had black ise and lite hare—bein' carrid to a grave by cold fride collards apeered a hard case, but the Lord is in the heavens an' he nose! Well, the first dose that he gin her didn't 'fect much, so he gin her another pint, an' then cummenst stemin' her, when the pirspirashun began to kum out, she sunk rite down, an' begun to siken awful! but it war too late, the screech owl had hollered, an' she dide, pooper creetur! the Lord be marsyful to her poor soul! But I sed from the fust she wood die. Doctor, weed better see how Miss Jimsey is; it's no use to waste the 'futifuge' on her, the screech owl has hollered, and she mus go though all the doctors of a king war here; poor creetur! she has lived a long time, an' I 'speck her Lord and Master wants her."

And thus saying, the old lady preceded

the way to the sick room, myself and the five other old women bringing up the rear.

Somewhat, I thought, to the disappointment of the superstitious dames, we found the invalid still buried in a profound slumber, her regular, placid breathing indicating that the proper functions of the system were being restored. I softly felt her pulse, and it, too, showed improvement. Leaving the room, we returned to the other cabin. I informed the family that she was much better, and if she did not have a return of the spasms by morning, and rested undisturbed in the meantime, that she would get well. But I saw that superstition had too deep a hold on their minds for my flattering opinion to receive their sanction. An incredulous shake of the head was nearly my only reply, except from the owl enthusiast.

“Doctor, you’re mistaken, certin. The screech owl has hollered, and she is boun to die—it’s a sure sign, and can’t fail!”

I saw the uselessness of argument, and therefore did not attempt to show them how ridiculous, nay irreligious, it was to entertain such notions, willing that the termination of the case should be the reply.

It would require a ponderous tome to contain all that passed in conversation during

our vigils that night. Morning broke, and I went softly in to see if my patient still slept. The noise I made in crossing the rough floor aroused her, and as I reached the bed-side, she half raised herself up, and to my great delight accosted me in her perfect senses.

“I s’pose, young man, you’re a doctor, aint you?”

I assured her that her surmise was correct, and pressed her to cease talking and compose herself. She would not do it, however, but demanded to see the medicine I was giving her. I produced the Arkansas fitifuge, and as it was near the time that she should take a dose, I poured one out and gave it to her. Receiving it at first with evident disgust, with great reluctance she forced herself to drink a small quantity. I saw pleasure and surprise lighting up her countenance; she drank a little more—looked at me—took another sip—and then, as if to test it by the other senses, applied it to her nose, and shaking the glass applied it to her ear; all the results were satisfactory, and she drank it to the dregs without a murmur.

“Doctor,” said she, “ef you’re a mineral fissishun, and this truck has got calomy in it, you needn’t be afeard of salavatin me, and

stop givin' it, for I wont git mad ef my gums is a leetle touched!"

I assured her that the "fitifuge" was perfectly harmless.

"It's monstros pleasant truck, ennyhow! What did you say was the name of it?"

"Arkansas fitifuge, madam, one of the best medicaments for spasmodic diseases that I have ever used. You were in fits last night when I arrived; but you see the medicine is effecting a cure, and you are now out of danger, although extreme quietude is highly necessary."

"Doctor, will you give me a leetle more of the truck? I declare it's monstrous pleasant. Doctor, I'm mity narvous, gine-rally; don't you think I'd better take it pretty often through the day? Ef they'd sent for you sooner I woodent bin half as bad off. But, thank the Lord, you has proved a kapable fissishun, sent to me in the hour of need, an' I wont complane, but trust in a mersyful Saveyur!"

"How do you feel now, sister Jimsey? do you think you're looking up this morning?" was now asked by the lady of screech-owl memory.

"Oh, sister Ripson, thank the Lord, I do feel a power better this mornin', an' I think

in the course of a day or two I will be able to get about agen."

"Well, mersyful Master, wonders will never stop! las nite I thot sure you cuddent stand it till mornin, speshully arter I heerd the screech owl holler! 'tis a mirrykul, sure, or else this is the wonderfulest doctor in creashun!"

"Did the screech owl holler mor'n wunst, sister Ripson?"

"No, he only screached wunst! Ef he'd hollered the second time, I'd defide all the doctors in the created wurld to 'ad cured you; the thing would have bin unpossible!"

Now as the aforesaid screech owl had actually screeched twice, I must have effected an impossibility in making the cure; but I was unwilling to disturb the old lady in her delusion, and therefore did not inform her of that which she would have heard herself, had she not been highly alarmed.

I directed the "fitifuge" to be given at regular intervals through the day; and then, amidst the blessings of the patient, the congratulations of the family for the wonderful cure I had effected, and their assurances of future patronage, took my departure for home, hearing, as I left the house, the same old lady who had underrated me at my

entrance ejaculate, "Well, bless the Lord I didn't die last yere of the yeller janders, or I'd never lived to see with my own eyes a doctor who could cure a body arter the screech owl hollered!"

VIII.

HOW JACK WOOD GOT THIN.

IT was during my autumnal trip of 1849, to the backwoods of Pennsylvania, that I became acquainted with the hero of this sketch. He was about thirty-five years old, six feet two in height, and stout in proportion—a noble specimen of a man, quite an Ajax in size and courage. His hair was long and black, and fell in a curly mass down his shoulders. He could walk as far, run as fast, and shoot or fight as well, as “the next one.”

He always prided himself on his hunting dress, and always looked neat in his person; his usual dress was a thick blanket hunting frock, of a dark brown colour, bound round the neck, skirt, and sleeves, with strips of beaver skin; his stout homespun breeches was met at the knees by heavy buckskin

leggings, his feet encased in strong Indian moccasins, and on his head he wore a sort of skull-cap of grey fox-skin, with the tail sewed on the left side, and hanging down on his shoulder. His breast was crossed by two fancy beaded belts of buckskin, one supporting an ox-horn so white and transparent that the dark powder could be seen through it, the other holding a fancy leather scabbard, into which was thrust a heavy hunting-knife. His waist was encircled by a stout leather belt, in which he carried his bullets and caps, and through which was thrust his small but sharp tomahawk. His rifle was of the best make, and he prided himself in keeping it in good order.

Having run from home when but eighteen years of age, he worked his way out to the western country, where he adopted the hunter's life, and joined a roving band of half-Indians and half-whites, with whom he strolled till the breaking out of the Mexican war. He then joined a company of rangers, and fought under old Zack till the close of the war, and while there, displayed that courage and daring that has always marked his life.

The war over, he came to Philadelphia,

and finding father and mother dead, and both sisters married, he went out west again, and commenced the roving life he so much liked. He wandered across the country till he reached the wilds of Pennsylvania, and being much pleased with the scenery and hunting grounds, he built himself a cabin, and there it was I formed his acquaintance.

Pardon me, kind reader, for thus intruding on your good-nature, by entering on the biography of our hero, but it is a weak failing I have to eulogize my friends. But now for the story.

Jack's only partner of his joys and sorrows was his hound, for he hated all of the woman-kind.

Last fall I visited Jack's neighbourhood, and stopped at the same tavern as when I sojourned thither in '49, and after seeing my horse well taken care of, I entered the bar-room and lighted my cigar, thinking to have a smoke. Seated by the old-fashioned wood stove, I puffed away quite leisurely, thinking, as the old song says, of "The maid I left behind me," when in stalked the tallest, thinnest, and queerest specimen of a man I had ever seen. He was in full hunting rig, and dropping the butt of his rifle heavily on the floor, he leaned on the muzzle, and looked

me full in the face. After he seemed fully satisfied, he walked towards me, and when within three feet of me, stopped and took another look; then seizing me by the hand, he shouted out—

“Harry Huntsman, as I’m a sinner! Old boy, how d’ye do?”

“Stranger,” replied I, “you certainly have a little the advantage of me.”

“Stranger!” roared he, “d——e if I don’t like that! Call me a stranger! Old Jack Wood a stranger to you! Ha, ha, ha! capital joke that! You’re the stranger!”

“Why, Jack, that aint you?” I foolishly asked.

“Yes, Harry, what’s left of me—just about three-quarters of the original.”

“Three-quarters!” replied I; “why, Jack, say one quarter, and you will be nearer the mark. But how came this great change?—been sick, or in love?”

“Love! No, sir-ee! As for sickness, I don’t know what you mean; but the cause of my being so thin is”—

“What?” I eagerly asked.

“Panthers.”

“Panthers,” laughed I, “why, Jack, they didn’t eat the best part of you away, did they?”

“No, worse than that, they scared it off. It makes my flesh crawl to think of it.”

At this, my curiosity was rized, as the Yankee says, and I was anxious for particulars.

“Come, Jack, out with it, don’t let me die in ignorance.”

“Well, Harry, here goes; but first and foremost, you know I never was a coward; and never will be. All I want is fair play, but to cut a man’s throat when he’s asleep, can be done by any coward; just such a way them panthers served me. Three days after you left, last fall—that was the fifth of December, I believe”—

I nodded assent.

“Well, three days after you left, I found my fire-wood rather low, and came to the conclusion that I’d better cut a *few* before the heavy snows came—for I don’t much fancy wood chopping in two feet of snow. So that morning, early, I shouldered my axe and put off for the swamp, about a mile to the right of my shanty—but you know where it is. I left everything at home—rifle, gun, and knife—as I never like the idea of doing anything by half and half; when I want to hunt I hunt, and when I go to chop wood, I go for that purpose only. Well, I reached

the swamp and fell to work, and chopped for about four hours, when I thought a little rest and a pull at the flask would be just the thing. So down I sat on a log, and took one or two, or perhaps three, good pulls, but not more. Then lighting my pipe, I commenced to blow a cloud. Hardly had I gave three whiffs, when I heard a rustling motion among the low brush directly to my right; this was followed up by a low growl, and before I could get my axe out, up walked two great big panthers. Here, thinks I, for a run; so off I put, and the two devils right after me. Fright seemed to lend wings to my feet, for I scarcely touched the ground I ran over, and I knew I went over an amazing quantity in a remarkably short space of time. After a hard run I came to the conclusion to climb a tree, and rather foolishly selected a small one, when there were just as many large ones.

“On they bounded to the foot of the tree, and there they treed me, and such an infernal caterwauling, growling, and half-a-dozen other noises as they kept up, made my hair rise right up. They then jumped up at me, shaking the tree at every bound. I halloed, whooped, screamed, and swore, but it was no use—there they were. Finally I

suppose they got tired and hungry, so one went away while the other stopped to keep watch, and thus they relieved each other every now and then; and, Harry, I'll be shot if they didn't keep me up there four days.

At last Bill Smith, happening to be running turkeys, came that way. I shouted as loud as I could, and he heard me, came over and shot one of the varmints, and the other mizzled. He then helped me down, and when I touched the ground, I was just as thin as you see me now, and my hair nearly white. I had sweated and fretted myself all to nothing. But now I'm just as strong and hearty as ever, but get no fatter." Here he leaned over to me, and shouted out — "But, Harry, I'm down on all panthers since that day, and I don't intend to stop hunting them till every one of them is extinct."

IX.

SAN FRANCISCO.

THE bay of San Francisco resembles a broad inland lake, communicating by a narrow channel with the ocean. The channel, as the tradition of the aborigines runs, was opened by an earthquake, which a few centuries since convulsed the continent. The town was built on the south bend of the bay, near its communication with the sea. Its site is a barren succession of sand hills, tumbled up in every variety of shape. No levelling process, on a scale of any magnitude, has been attempted. The buildings roll up and over these sand ridges like a shoal of porpoises over the swell of a wave, only the fish have much the most order in the disposal of head and tail. More incongruous combinations in architecture never danced in the dreams of men. Brick warehouses,

wooden shantees, sheet-iron huts, and shaking tents, are blended in admirable confusion.

But these grotesque habitations have as much uniformity and sobriety as the habits of those who occupy them.

Hazards are made in commercial transactions and projects of speculation that would throw Wall-street into spasms. I have seen merchants purchase cargoes without having even glanced into the invoice. The conditions of the sale were a hundred per cent. profit to the owner and costs. In one cargo, when tumbled out, were found twenty thousand dollars in the single article of red cotton handkerchiefs.

"I'll get rid of these among the wild Indians," said the purchaser, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"I've a water lot which I will sell!" cries another.

"Which way does it stretch?" inquired half a dozen.

"Right under the craft there," is the reply.

"And what do you ask for it?"

"Fifteen thousand dollars."

"I'll take it."

"Then down with your dust."

So the water-lot, which mortal eyes never yet beheld, changes its owners without changing its fish.

"I have two shares in a gold mine," cries another.

"Where are they?" inquire the crowd.

"Under the south branch of the Yuba river, which we have most turned," is the reply.

"And what will you take?"

"Fifteen thousand dollars."

"I'll give ten."

"Take them, stranger."

So the two shares of a possibility of gold under the branch of the Yuba, where the water rolls rapid and deep, are sold for ten thousand dollars, paid down. Is there anything in the Arabian Nights that surpasses this?

But glance at that large wooden building, which looks as if the winds had shingled it, and the powers of the air pinned its clapboards in a storm. Enter, and you find a great hall filled with tables, and a motley group gathered around each. Some are laying down hundreds, and others thousands, on the turn of a card. Each has a bag of grain gold in his hand, which he must double or lose, and is only anxious to reach the table

where he can make the experiment. You would advise him at least to purchase a suit of clothes, or repair his old ones, before he loses his all; but what cares he for his outward garb, when piles of the yellow dust swell and glitter in his excited imagination? Down goes his bag of gold, and is lost! But does he look around for a rope or pistol that he may end his ruin? No; the river bank, where he gathered that bag, has more; so he cheers his momentary despondency with a strong glass of brandy, and is off again for the mines. He found the gold by good fortune, and has lost it by bad; and now considers himself even with the world. Such is the moral effect of gold hunting on a man, whose principles are not as fixed and immovable as the rock. It begins in a lottery and ends in a lottery, where the blanks outnumber the prizes ten to one.

But you are hungry—want a breakfast—turn into a restaurant—call for ham, eggs, and coffee—then your bill—six dollars. Your high boots, which have never seen a brush since you first put them on, have given out. You find a pair that can replace them—they are a tolerable fit; and now what is the price? Fifty dollars! Your beard has not felt a razor since you went to the mines

—it must come off, and your frizzled hair be clipped. You find a barber; his dull shears hang in the knots of your hair, like a sheep-shearer's in a fleece matted with burrs; his razor he straps on the leg of his boot, and then hauls away, starting at every pull some new fountain of tears. You vow you will let the beard go; but then one side is partly off, and you try the agony again to get the other side something like it. And now what is the charge for this torture? Four dollars! Night is approaching, and you must have a place where you can sleep. To inquire for a bed would be as idle as to hunt a pearl in the jungle of a Greenland bear. You look around for a lee of shanty or tent, and tumble down for the night; but a thousand fleas dispute the premises with you; the contest is hopeless—you tumble out as you tumbled in, and spend the remainder of the night in finding a place not occupied by these aborigines of the soil.

See you that young man with a whip in his hand, cracking it over an ox team? He was one of the most learned geologists, for his age, in the United States, and came out here to apply his science to the discovery of gold deposits; but somehow his driving rods always dipped wrong, and now he has taken

a rod, about which there is no mistake ; so, at least, think his cattle.

But look—do you see that young gentleman with a string of fish, which he offers for sale ? He was the best Greek and Latin scholar of his class in Yale College, and subsequently one of the most promising members of the bar. But he exchanged his Blackstone for a pick ; and, instead of picking fees out of his clients' pockets, he came here to pick gold out of the mines ; but the deuce was in it, for whenever his pick struck close upon a deposit, it was no longer there ! So he exchanged his pick for a hook and line, and now angles for pike, pickerel, and can describe each fish by some apt line from Catullus. He would do well at his new piscatory profession, but for the gilded hook of the gambler. He laughs at the trout for darting at a fictitious fly, and then chases a bait himself, equally fanciful and false.

But look again—do you see that pulperia, with its gathered groups of soldiers and sailors, poets and politicians, merchants and mendicants, doctors and draymen, clerks and cobblers, trappers and tinkers. That little man who stands behind the bar, and deals to each his dram of fire, was once a preacher, and deemed almost a prophet, as he depicted

the pangs of the worm which dieth not, but now he has exchanged that worm for another, but preserved his consistency; for this worm too distilleth delirium and death. And that thick-set man, who stands in the midst of the crowd, with ruby countenance and reveling eye, whose repartee sets the whole pulperia in a roar, and who is now watching the liquor in his glass to see if it stirreth itself aright, once lectured in the west on the temptations of those who tarry late at the wine; but now his teetotalism covers all liquors as goodly gifts graciously bestowed. But one brief year and some Dame Quickly may describe his exit as that of his delirium prototype—"I saw him fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his fingers' ends."

And yet with all these drawbacks—with all these gambling-tables, grog-shops, shanties, shavers, and fleas—San Francisco is swelling into a town of the highest commercial importance. She commands the trade of the great valleys through which the Sacramento and San Joaquin, with their numerous tributaries, roll; she gathers to her bosom the products and manufactures of the United States, of England, China, the shores and islands of the Pacific.

X.

DICK HARLAN'S TENNESSEE FROLIC ;

OR, A NOB DANCE.

You may talk of your bar hunts, and your deer hunts, and knottin' tigers' tails thru the bung holes of barrels, an' cock fitin', and all that ; but if a regular-bilt frolic in the Nobs of "Old Knox" don't beat 'em all blind for fun, then I'm no judge of fun, that's all ! I said *fun*, and I say it agin, from a *kiss* that cracks like a wagin-whip up to a *fite* that rouses up all out-doors—and as to laffin, why they *invented* laffin, and the *last* laff will be hearn at a Nob dance about three in the morning ! I'm jest gettin' so I can ride arter the motions I made at one at Jo Spraggins's a few days ago.*

* This sketch will doubtless appear exaggerated and over-drawn ; it is, however, true to nature, and there are some places in the British provinces where similar scenes are still enacted, although old settlements before Tennessee was colonized at all.—*Edit.*

I'll *try* and tell you who Jo Spraggins is. He's a squire, a school comishoner, overlooker of a mile of Nob road *that leads towards Roody's still-house*,—a fiddler, a judge of a hoss, and a hoss himself! He can belt six shillins' worth of corn-juice at still-house rates and travel—can out-shute and out out-lie any feller from the Smoky Mounting to Noxville, and, if they'll bar one feller in Nox, I'll say to the old Kaintuck Line! (I'm sorter feared of him, for they say that he lied a jackass to death in two hours!)—can make more spinin'-wheels, kiss more spinners, thrash more wheat an' more men, than any one-eyed man I know on. He hates a circuit rider,* a nigger, and a shot gun—loves a woman, old sledge, and sin in eny shape. He lives in a log hous about ten yards squar; it has two rooms, one at the bottom an' one at the top of the ladder—has all out ove doors fur a yard, and all the south fur its occupants at times. He gives a frolic onst in three weeks in plowin' time, and one every Saturday-nite the balance of the year, and only axes a "fip" for a reel, and two "bits" fur what corn-juice you suck; he throws the galls in, and a bed too in the hay, if you git too hot.

* A strolling Preacher.

to locomote. The supper is made up by the fellers; every one fetches sumthin'; sum a lick of meal, sum a middlin' of bacon, sum a hen, sum a possum, sum a punkin, sum a grab of taters, or a pocket full of pease, or dried apples, an' sum only fetches a good appetite and a skin chock full of particular devilry, and if thars been a shutin' match for beef the day before, why a *leg* finds its way to Jo's sure, without eny help from the balance of the critter. He gives Jim Smith (the store-keeper over Bay's Mounting) *warnin* to fetch a skane of silk fur fiddle strings, and sum "Orleans" for sweetnin', or not to fetch himself; the silk and sugar has never failed to be thar yet. Jo then mounts Punkinslinger bar backed, about three hours afore sun down, and gives all the galls *item*. He does this a letle of the slickest—jist rides past in a peart rack, singin',

"Oh, I met a frog, with a fiddle on his back,
A axin' his way to the fro-l-i-c-k?
Wha-a-he! wha he! wha he! wha ke he-ke-he!"

That's enuf! The galls nows *that* aint a jackass, so by sun-down they come pourin' out of the woods like pissants out of an old log when tother end's afire, jest "as fine as silk" and full of fun, fixed out in all sorts

of fancy doins, from the broad-striped homespun to the sunflower calico, with the thunder-and-lightnin' ground. As for silk, if one had a silk gown, she'd be too smart to wear it to Jo Spraggins's, fur if she did she'd go home in hir petticoate *sartin*, for the homespun wud tare it off of hir quicker nor winkin'; and if the sunflowers didnt help the homespuns, they wouldn't do the silk eny good, so you see that silk is never ratlin about your ears at a Nob dance.

The sun had about sot afore I got the things fed an had Barkmill saddled (you'll larn directly why I call my poney Barkmill), but an owl couldent have cotch a rat afore I was in site of Jo's with my gall, Jule Sawyers, up behind me. She hugged me mity tite she was "*so feered of fallin off that drated poney.*" She said she didn't mind a fall, but it mought break hir leg, an then good bye frolics—she'd be fit fur nuthin but to nuss brats ollers arterwards. I now hearn the fiddle ting-tong-ding-domb. The yard was full of fellers, and two tall fine-lookin galls was standin in the door, face to face, holdin up the door posts with their backs, laffin, an castin sly looks into the house, an now an then kickin each other with their knees, an then the one kicked wud bow

so perlite, and quick at that, and then they'd laff agin. Jo was a standin in the hous helpin the galls to hold the facins up, an when they'd kick each other he'd wink at the fellers in the yard an grin. Jule, she bounced off just like a bag of wool-rolls, and I hitched my bark-machine up to a saplin that warn't skinned, so he'd git a craw-full of good fresh bark afore mornin. I giv Jule a kiss to sorter molify my natur an put her in heart like, and in we walked. "Hey! hurray!" said the boys; "My gracious!" said the galls, "if here aint Dick an Jule!" jist like we hadent been *rite thar* only last Saturday nite. "Well, I know we'll have reel now!" "Hurraw!—Go it while you'r young!" "Hurraw for the brimstone kiln—every man praise his country!" "Clar the ring!" "*Misses* Spraggins, drive out these dratted tow-headed brats of your'n—give room!" "Who-oo-whoop! whar's the crock of bald-face, and that gourd of honey? Jim Smith, hand over that spoon." "You, Jake Snyder, don't holler so!" says the old 'oman—"why you are worse nor a painter." "Holler! why I was jist *whispering* to that gall—*who-a-whoopee!* now I'm beginning to *holler!* Did you hear *that*, *Misses* Spraggins, and be darned to your bar legs? You'd make

a nice hemp-brake, you would." "Come here, Suse Thompson, and let me pin your dress. Your back looks adzactly like a blaze on a white oak!" "My *back* ain't nuffin to you, Mister Smarty!" "Bill Jones, quit a smashin that ar cat's tail!" "Well, let hir keep hir tail clar of my ant killers!" "Jim Clark has gone to the woods for fat pine, and Peggy Willet is along to take a lite for him—they've been gone a coon's age. Oh, here comes the lost 'babes in the wood,' and *no lite!*" "Whar's that lite! whar's that torch! I say, Peggy, whar *is* that bundle of lite wood?" "Why, I fell over a log an lost it, and we hunted clar to the foot of the holler for it, and never found it. It's no account, no how—nuthin but a little pine—who cares?" "Hello, thar, gin us 'Forked Deer,' old fiddle-teazer, or I'll give you forked litnin! *Ar* you a goin to tum-tum all nite on that old pine box of a fiddle, *say?*" "Give him a soak at the crock and a lick at the patent bee-hive—it'll *ile* his elbows." "Misses Spraggins, you're a hoss! cook on, don't mind me—I didnt aim to slap *you*; it was Suze Winters I *wanted* to hit." "Yes, and it's well for your good looks that you didn't hit to hurt me, old feller!" "Turn over them rashes of bacon, they're a burnin!"

“Mind your own business, Bob Proffit, I’ve cooked for frolicks afore you shed your petticoates—so jist hush, an talk to Marth Giffin! See! she is beckonin to you!” “I aint, marm! If he comes a near me I’ll unjint his dratted neck! No sech fool that, when a gall puts hir arm round his neck, will break and run shall look at *me*, that’s flat! Go an try Bet Holden!” “Thankee, marm, I don’t take your leavins,” says Bet, hir face lookin like a full cross between a gridiron and a steel-trap.

“Whoop! hurraw! Gether your galls for a break down! Give us ‘Forked Deer!’”
 “No, give us ‘Natchez-under-the-hill!’”
 “Oh, Shucks! give us ‘Rocky Mounting,’ or ‘Misses McCloud!’” “‘Misses McCloud’ be darned, and ‘Rocky Mounting’ too! jist give us

“She woudent, and she coudent, and she dident come at all!”

“Thar! that’s it! Now make a brake! *Tang!* Thar is a brake—a string’s gone!”
 “Thar’ll be a head broke afore long!”
 “Giv him goss—no, give him a horn, and every time he stops repeat the dose, and nar another string ’ill brake to nite. Tink-tong! all rite! Now go it!” and if I know what *goin it* is, we *did* go it.

About midnite, Misses Spraggins sung out “Stop that ar dancin, and come and get your supper!” It was sot in the yard on a table made of forks stuck in the ground and plank of the stable loft, with cotton tablecloths. We had danced, kissed, and drank ourselves into a perfect thrashin-machine apetite, and the vittals *hid* themselves in a way quite alarmin to tavern-keepers. Jo sung out “Nives is scase, so give what thar is to the galls, an let the balance use thar fingers—they was invented afore nives, eney how. Now, gents, jist walk into the fat of this land. I’m sorter feerd the honey wont last till daybreak, but the liquor will, *I think*, so you men when you drink your’n, look to the galls fur sweetnin—let them have the honey—it belongs to them, naturaly!”—“Hurraw, my Jo! You know how to do things rite!” “Well, I rayther think I do; I never was rong but onst in my life, an then I mistook a camp meetin for a political speechifyin, so I rid up an axed the speaker if he’d ‘*ever seed the Elephant?*’ He said no, but he had seen a *grocery walk*, and he expected to see one *rot down* from its *totterin* looks, purty soon!’ Thinks I, Jo, you’re beat at your own game; I sorter felt mean, so I spurr’d and sot old Punkinslinger to cavortin like he was

skeered, an I wheeled and twisted out of *that* crowd, and when I *did* git out of site, the way I did sail was a caution to turtles and all the other slow varmints."

Well, we danced, and hurrawed without anything of *very* perticular interest to happen, till about three o'clock, when the darndest muss was kicked up you ever did see. Jim Smith sot down alongside of Bet Holden (the steel-trap gall), and jist gave her a bar fashion. She tuck it very kind till she seed Sam Henry a looking on from behind about a dozen galls, *then* she fell to kickin', *an* a hollerin', *an* a screetchin' like all rath. Sam he come up an told Jim to let Bet go! Jim told him to go to a far off countrie whar they give away brimstone and throw in the fire to burn it. Sam hit him strate atween the eyes, an after a few licks the fitin' *started*. Oh, hush! It makes my mouth water now to think what a beautiful row we had. One feller from Cady's Cove knocked a hole in the bottom of a fryin'-pan over Dan Turner's head, and left it a hangin' round his neck, the handle flyin' about like a long que, ane thar it hung till Jabe Thurman cut it off with a cold chissel next day! That was *his share*, fur that nite, sure. Another feller got knocked into a meal-barrel; he was as mealy

as an Irish tater and as *hot* as hoss-radish; when he bursted the hoops and cum out he rared a few. Two fellers fit out of the door, down the hill, and into the creek, and thar ended it, in a quite way, all alone. A perfect mule from Stock Creek hit *me* a wipe with a pair of windin blades; he made kindlin-wood of them, an I lit on him. We had it head-and-tails fur a very long time, all over the house, but the truth must come and shame my kin, he warped me *nice*, so, jist to save his time, *I hollered!* The lickin' he gave me made me sorter oneasy and hostile like; it wakened my wolf wide awake, so I begin to look about for a man I *could* lick and *no mistake!* The little fiddler come a scrougin' past, holdin' his fiddle up over his head to keep it *in tune*, for the fitin' was gettin' tolerable brisk. You're the one, thinks I, and I jist grabbed the dough-tray and split it plump over his head! *He* rotted down, right thar, and I paddled his 'tother end with one of the pieces!—while I was a molifyin' my feelings in that way, his gall slip'd up behind me and fetcht'd me a rake with the pot-hooks. Jule Sawyer was *thar*, and jist *anexed to her* rite off, and a mity nice fite it was. Jule striped and checked her face nice, like a partridge-net hung on a

white fence. She hollered fur hir fiddler, but, oh, shaw! he coudent do hir a bit of good; he was too buisy a rubbin' first his broken head, and then his blistered extremities; so, when I thought Jule had given her a plenty, I pulled hir off, and put her in a good humour by givin' her soft sawder.

Well, I thought at last, if I had a drink I'd be *about done*, so I started for the creek; *and* the first thing I saw was more stars with my eyes shut than I ever did with them open. I looked around, and it was the little fiddler's *big brother!* *I knowed what it meant*, so we locked horns without a word, thar all alone, and I do think we fit an hour. At last some fellers hearn the jolts at the house, and they cum and *dug us out*, for we had fit into a hole whar a big pine stump had burnt out, and thar we was, up to our girths a peggin' away, face to face, and *no dodgin'!*

Well, it is new sixteen days since that fite, and last nite Jule picked gravels out of my knees as big as squirrel shot. Luck rayther run agin me that nite, fur I dident lick eny body but the fiddler, and had three fites—but Jule licked her gall, that's some comfort, and I suppose a feller can't *always* win! Arter my fite in the ground we made friends all round (except the fiddler—he's

hot yet), and danced and liquored at the tail of every reel till sun up, when them that was sober enuff went home, and them that was *wounded* staid whar they fell. *I* was in the list of wounded, but could have got away if my bark-mill hadn't *ground* off the saplin and gone home without a parting word; so Dick and Jule had to ride "Shanks' mar," and a rite peart *four-legged* nag she is. She was *weak* in *two* of her legs, but 'tother two—oh, my stars and possum dogs! they make a man wink jist to look at 'em, and feel sorter like a June bug was crawlin' up his trowses, and the waistband too tite for it to git out. I'm agoin' to marry Jule, I swar I am, and *sich* a cross! Think of the locomotive and a cotton gin! Who! whoopee!

XI.

LAUNCHING THE PINE LOGS.

LUMBERMEN not only cut and haul from clumps and communities, but reconnoitre the forest, hill, vale, and mountain side for scattering trees; and when they are deemed *worth an effort*, no location in which they may be found, however wild or daring, can oppose the skill and enterprise of our men.

For taking logs down mountain sides, we adopt various methods, according to the circumstances. Sometimes we construct what are termed dry sluice-ways, which reach from the upper edge of a precipice down to the base of the hill. This is made by laying large poles or trunks of the straight trees together the whole distance, which is so constructed as to keep the log from running off at the sides. Logs are rolled into the upper end, the descent or dip often being

very steep; the log passes on with lightning-like velocity, quite burying itself in the snow and leaves below. From the roughness of the surfaces, the friction is very great, causing the bark and smoke to fly plentifully.

At other times, when the descent is more gradual and not too steep, and when there is not a sufficient quantity to pay the expense of a sluice-way, we fell a large tree, sometimes the hemlock, trim out the top, and cut the largest limbs off a foot, more or less, from the trunk. This is attached to the end of the log by strong chains, and as the oxen draw the load, this drag thrusts its stumpy limbs into the snow and frozen earth, and thus prevents the load from forcing the team forward too rapidly. Should the chain give way which attaches the hold-back to the load, nothing could save the team from sudden destruction.

There is a mountain on the "west branch" of the Penobscot where pine trees of excellent quality stand far up its sides, whose tops appear to sweep the very clouds. The side which furnishes timber rises in terraces of gigantic proportions, forming a succession of abrupt precipices and shelving table-land. There are three of these giant mountain steps, each of which produces lumber which

challenges the admiration and enterprise of the log-men. The ascent of these Alpine groves is too abrupt to allow the team to ascend in harness ; we therefore unyoke and drive the oxen up winding pathways. The yokes and chains are carried up by the workmen, and also the bob-sled in pieces, after taking it apart. Ascending to the uppermost terrace, the oxen are re-yoked and the sled adjusted. The logs being cut and prepared as usual, are loaded, and hauled to the edge of the first precipice, unloaded and rolled off to the table of the second terrace, where they are again loaded, hauled and tumbled off as before, to the top of the first rise, from which they are again pitched down to the base of the mountain, where for the last time they are loaded, and hauled to the landing.

To obtain logs in such romantic locations was really as hazardous as it was laborious, varying sufficiently from the usual routine of labour to invest the occasion with no ordinary interest. It was, indeed, an exhibition well calculated to awaken thrilling emotions to witness the descent of those massive logs, breaking and shivering whatever may obstruct their giddy plunge down the steep mountain side, making the valleys

reverberate and ring merrily with the concussion.

In other instances loads are eased down hill sides by the use of "tackel and fall," or by a strong "warp," taking a "bite" round a tree, and hitching to one yoke of the oxen. In this manner the load is "tailed down" steeps where it would be impossible for the "tongue oxen" to resist the pressure of the load. Sometimes the warp parts under the test to which it is thus subjected, when the whole load plunges onward like an avalanche, subjecting the poor oxen to a shocking death.

But the circumstance which calls forth the most interest and exertion is the "rival load." When teams are located with sufficient proximity to admit of convenient intercourse, a spirit of rivalry is often rife between the different crews, on various points: The "largest tree," the "smartest chopper," the "best cook," the "greatest day's work," and a score of other superlatives, all invested with attractions, the greater from the isolated circumstances of swamp life.

The "crack" load is preceded by all needful preliminaries. All defective places in the road are repaired. New "skids" are nicely pealed by hewing off the bark smoothly, and plentifully as well as calculatingly laid along

the road. All needful repairs are made on the bob-sled, and the team put in contending plight. The trees intended for the "big load" are carefully prepared, and hauled to some convenient place on the main road singly, where they are reloaded, putting on two and sometimes three large trees. All things in readiness, the men follow up with handspikes and long levers. Then comes the "tug of war;" rod by rod, or foot by foot, the whole is moved forward, demanding every ounce of strength, both of men and oxen united, to perform the feat of getting it to the landing. Were life and fortune at stake, more could not be done under the circumstances. The surveyor applies the rule, and the result gives either the one or the other party "whereof to glory." If not "teetotallers," the vanquished "pay the bitters" when they get down river. Men love and will have excitement; with spirits never more buoyant, every thing, however trifling, adds to the stock of "fun alive" in the woods. Every crew has its "Jack," who, in the absence of other material, either from his store of "mother-wit" or "greenness," contributes to the merry shaking of sides, or allows himself to be the butt of good-natured ridicule.

XII.

AN "AWFUL PLACE."

WE have never visited the town of Madison, Indiana, but we have an "awful" curiosity to do so, from the "awful" fact that we have never heard the place mentioned without the "awful" accompaniment of this adjective! Madison is an "awful place for revivals!" an "awful place for Mesmerism!" an "awful place for Mrs. Nichols's poems!" an "awful place for politics!" and the following story will prove that it was, particularly, an "awful place for Jackson!"

It was during the weak struggle made to oppose General Jackson's re-election to the presidency, that, during his western round, it became known that he would "stop at Madison!" There was an "awful time," of course, but it happens, providentially, that in all awful times some awful genius or

other arises to assume their direction, witness Cromwell, Napoleon, Washington, Marcy, &c., &c. Now, the directing spirit called forth to ride to glory on the neck of this emergency was a certain Col. *Dash*, of the "Madisonian (not Macedonian) Phalanx," and wrapped as he was in zeal and the "Phalanx" uniform, no one thought of opposing his arrangements.

The general was to arrive by steamboat, and anxiously had the whole town, hour after hour, listened for the gun, which, placed under the directions of Col. *Dash* himself, was to summon the citizens to the landing. It was during a "bad spell of weather," and, moreover, as the day wore on, more rain fell. The crowd dispersed, and, finally, night falling, the colonel himself retired from the mill-stone on which he had taken his stand, in order to keep out of the mud, and joined the amusements of a neighbouring ten-pin alley. Games were played, and "peach" and "old rye" had suffered "some," of course, and the colonel—his "Phalanx" coat and hat hanging against the wall—was just exulting in a "spare," when word came that the boat was in sight, and forth all rushed. It was quite dark, and still drizzling; the gun wouldn't "go off,"

of course, so, the town being built on three elevations, from the highest of which the landing is not visible, a messenger was despatched to spread the news, and everything was ready for a "hurrah for Jackson," as soon as the boat should touch.

The boat *did* touch; there was a bonfire in the mud, *smoking* vigorously, by the cheering uncertainty of which the planks were shoved ashore, and Col. *Dash*, with the rest of the Macedo—beg pardon, Madisonians, rushed on board. There was "The *General*," sure enough, standing right in the middle of the cabin, his hat off, and his grizzly poll, with every inclination of the head brushing off swarms of flies—the boat a "light draught"—from the ceiling. The colonel introduced himself,—the colonel "shook hands;" the colonel introduced the Phalanx, individually,—the Phalanx, individually, shook hands; the colonel spoke,—the general replied; the enthusiasm was tremendous, when suddenly the bell rang, and, to the consternation of the entire "Madisonian Phalanx," it was announced that the boat, having put out some freight, was going right on, and, moreover, that the general did not intend to land!

"What! *not* see *Madison*, general?"

"Not see *Madison!*" exclaimed the Phalanx.

The "general" was distinctly given to understand that, if he *didn't* see Madison, Madison would, incontinently, precipitate itself from its three several platforms into the river and disappear, for ever, from the face of Indiana; to avoid which sad calamity, and the captain consenting to wait, the "general" *did* forthwith—shielded by an umbrella, and conducted by the colonel—descend the steps, slide along the lower deck, venture upon the planks,—and finally step ashore, *up to his knees*, upon the soil that adored him!

The prospect here was certainly gratifying; on one side the ten-pin alley was brilliantly illuminated, and the proprietor of it, moreover, stood in the door-way, out of the wet, discharging a pistol. On the other side was the smoke of the bonfire, and right in front, reflecting the *flicker*, whenever it could, stood a heap of mill stones, towards which safer eminence the general proceeded; and taking in at a *coup d'œil* the features of the scene, declared Madison to be "really a very pretty little town!"

"Why, general," cried the colonel, "you ain't *begun* to see Madison yet!"

“Ain’t begun to see it!” chorussed the Phalanx.

The general was now given to understand that he must mount two banks before the beauties of the place could at all strike him, and, furthermore, that, as in wet weather vehicles always *stuck fast*, it would be much better to proceed on foot. This movement, the general, “with great reluctance,” was compelled to resist; and so, as by this time a considerable crowd of stragglers had tumbled down the hill, the anxious colonel arranged that the distinguished visitor should maintain his position on the mill stone, and that the eager throng, after an individual “shake hands,” should let him off!

The general nerved himself, amid a loud “hurrah,” and the crowd “came on!” but here a sudden difficulty presented itself; the position which the old hero had taken was defended, on all sides except the front, by a *chevaux de frise* of lumber, interspersed by an occasional breastwork of barrels, and, consequently, the retiring and advancing *shakers* were walking over each other. The excitement was intense, the risk of a fight imminent, when the genius of the colonel again flashed forth.

“Stop!” cried he—there was a stop—

"General! this ain't a going to do, no how! Tention, Phalanx and citizens! Back out, the *hull* of ye, from the millstone; form a ring round the fire, and the general will *walk round to you!*"

This proposition was received with a general cheer; the crowd plunged, slid and staggered towards the fagots; the general was seized by the arm, dragged after them, and, in a few minutes, after not more than two or three slips, there he stood, in the middle of the smoke, "surrounded by free-men!" as the colonel eloquently exclaimed, at the same time giving him a *sixth* shake, by way of showing the rest how to do it, and then taking a place himself in the ring.

There can be no doubt of the general's entire satisfaction with this arrangement, his experience among the Creeks and Seminoles having made him quite easy in swamp life. He approached the circle, extended his hand, a dozen others were thrust out to grasp it, but the colonel was before any of them, and, for the *seventh* time, the general was "welcomed to Madison!" Round went the visitor,—slip and shake,—“welcome to Madison,”—drizzle—slide. Suddenly the colonel shot across the circle,—took a place,—the revered hand was extended, and for the *eighth* time,

and still more warmly was it grasped with a "welcome to Madison!" Another fourth of the circle was measured, when the colonel again, like a shooting star, flashed across, and for the *ninth* time the general was met by his grasp and "welcome." The general stopped short, the rain came down heavily, and a sudden whirl of smoke encircled him in its strangling embrace; as suddenly, a flare of flame showed a darker tempest gathered round his brow; he "broke" for the boat, the colonel at his heels, and the crowd in consternation,—he reached the deck as the colonel had gained the middle of the plank,—“General, *ain't* Madison *rather* a place?” bawled the latter.

“*Awful!* perfectly awful, by the Eternal!” muttered the former, not even turning at the cry which the colonel gave, as the end of the plank slipped, letting him souse into the river.

As we have said, we have an *awful* desire to visit Madison.

XIII.

DEATH OF MIKE FINK.

“THE Last of the Boatmen” has not become altogether a *mythic* personage. There are around us those who still remember him as one of flesh and blood, as well of proportions simply human, albeit he lacked not somewhat of the *heroic* in stature, as well as in being a “perfect terror” to people.

As regards Mike, it has not yet become that favourite question of doubt—“Did such a being really live?” Nor have we heard the sceptic inquiry—“Did such a being really die?” But his death in half a dozen different ways and places has been asserted, and this, we take it, is the first gathering of the *mythic* haze—that shadowy and indistinct enlargement of outline, which, deepening through long ages, invests distinguished mortality with the sublimer attributes of the

hero and the demi-god. Had Mike lived in "early Greece," his flat-boat feats would, doubtless, in poetry, have rivalled those of Jason, in his ship; while in Scandinavian legends, he would have been a river-god, to a certainty! The sea-kings would have sacrificed to him every time they "crossed the bar," on their return; and as for Odin himself, he would be duly advised, as far as any interference went, to "lay low and keep dark, or, *pre-haps*," &c.

In the year 1822, steam-boats having left the "keels" and "broad-horns" entirely "out of sight," and Mike having, in consequence, fallen from his high estate—that of being "a little bit the almightyest man on the river, *any* how"—after a term of idleness, frolic, and desperate rowdyism, along the different towns, he, at St. Louis, entered the service of the Mountain fur company, raised by our late fellow-citizen General W. H. Ashley, as a trapper and hunter; and in that capacity was he employed by Major Henry, in command of the fort at the mouth of Yellow Stone river, when the occurrence took place of which we write.

Mike, with many generous qualities, was always a reckless dare-devil; but, at this time, advancing in years and decayed in

influence, above all become a victim of whiskey, he was morose and desperate in the extreme. There was a government regulation which forbade the free use of alcohol at the trading posts on the Missouri river, and this was a continual source of quarrel between the men and the commandant, Major Henry, — on the part of Fink particularly. One of his freaks was to march with his rifle into the fort and demand a supply of spirits. Argument was fruitless, force not to be thought of, and when, on being positively denied, Mike drew up his rifle and sent a ball through the cask, deliberately walked up and filled his can, while his particular "boys" followed his example, all that could be done was to look upon the matter as one of his "queer ways," and that was the end of it.

This state of things continued for some time ; Mike's temper and exactions growing more unbearable every day, until, finally, a "split" took place, not only between himself and the commandant, but many others in the fort, and the unruly boatman swore he would not live among them. Followed only by a youth named Carpenter, whom he had brought up, and for whom he felt a rude but strong attachment, he prepared a sort of cave in the river's bank, furnished it with a supply of

whiskey, and, with his companion, *turned in* to pass the winter, which was then closing upon them. In this place he buried himself, sometimes unseen for weeks, his *protegé* providing what else was *necessary* beyond the whiskey. At length attempts were used, on the part of those in the fort, to withdraw Carpenter from Fink; the youth was twitted with being a mere slave, &c., all which (Fink heard of it in spite of his retirement) served to breed distrust between the two, and though they did not separate, much of their cordiality ceased.

The winter wore away in this sullen state of torpor; spring came with its reviving influences, and to celebrate the season a supply of alcohol was procured, and a number of his acquaintances from the fort coming to "rouse out" Mike, a desperate "frolic," of course, ensued.

There were river yarns, and boatmen songs, and "nigger break-downs," interspersed with wrestling-matches, jumping, laugh, and yell, the can circulating freely, until Mike became somewhat mollified.

"I tell you what it is, boys," he cried, "the fort's a skunk-hole, and I rather live with the *bars* than stay in it. Some on ye's bin trying to part me and my boy, that I

love like my own cub—but no matter. Maybe he's *pi*sioned against me; but, Carpenter (striking the youth heavily on the shoulder), I took you by the hand when it had forgotten the touch of a father's or a mother's—you know me to be a man, and you ain't a going to turn out a dog!"

Whether it was that the youth fancied something insulting in the manner of the appeal or not we can't say; but it was not responded to very warmly, and a reproach followed from Mike. However, they drank together, and the frolic went on, until Mike, filling his can, walked off some forty yards, placed it upon his head, and called to Carpenter to take his rifle.

This wild feat of shooting cans off each other's head was a favourite one with Mike—himself and "boy" generally winding up a hard frolic with this savage, but deeply-meaning proof of continued confidence;—as for risk, their eagle eyes and iron nerves defied the might of whiskey. After their recent alienation, a doubly generous impulse, without doubt, had induced Fink to propose and subject himself to the test.

Carpenter had been drinking wildly, and with a boisterous laugh snatched up his rifle. All present had seen the parties "shoot,"

and this desperate aim, instead of alarming, was merely made a matter of wild jest.

“Your grog is spilt for ever, Mike!”

“Kill the old varmint, young ’un!”

“What’ll his skin bring in St. Louis?”

&c., &c.

Amid a loud laugh, Carpenter raised his piece—even the jesters remarked that he was unsteady,—“crack!”—the can fell,—a loud shout,—but, instead of a smile of pleasure, a dark frown settled upon the face of Fink! He made no motion except to clutch his rifle as though he would have crushed it, and there he stood, gazing at the youth strangely! Various shades of passion crossed his features—surprise, rage, suspicion—but at length they composed themselves into a sad expression; the ball had grazed the top of his head, cutting the scalp, and the thought of treachery had set his heart on fire.

There was a loud call upon Mike to know what he was waiting for, in which Carpenter joined, pointing to the can upon his head and bidding him fire, if he knew how!

“Carpenter, my son,” said the boatman, “I taught you to shoot differently from that *last* shot! You’ve *missed* once, but you won’t again!”

He fired, and his ball, crashing through the forehead of the youth, laid him a corpse amid his, as suddenly hushed, companions!

Time wore on—many at the fort spoke darkly of the deed. Mike Fink had never been known to miss his aim—he had grown afraid of Carpenter—he had murdered him! While this feeling was gathering against him, the unhappy boatman lay in his cave, shunning both sympathy and sustenance. He spoke to none—when he did come forth, 'twas as a spectre, and only to haunt the grave of his “boy,” or, if he did break silence, 'twas to burst into a paroxysm of rage against the enemies who had “turned his boy’s heart from him!”

At the fort was a man by the name of Talbott, the gunsmith of the station: he was very loud and bitter in his denunciations of the “murderer,” as he called Fink, which, finally, reaching the ears of the latter, filled him with the most violent passion, and he swore that he would take the life of his defamer. This threat was almost forgotten, when one day Talbott, who was at work in his shop, saw Fink enter the fort, his first visit since the death of Carpenter. Fink approached; he was careworn, sick, and wasted; there was no anger in his bearing,

but he carried his rifle (had he ever gone without it?) and the gunsmith was not a coolly brave man; moreover, his life had been threatened.

“Fink,” cried he, snatching up a pair of pistols from his bench, “don’t approach me—if you do, you’re a dead man!”

“Talbott,” said the boatman, in a sad voice, “you needn’t be afraid; you’ve done me wrong—I’ve come to talk to you about—Carpenter—my boy!”

He continued to advance, and the gunsmith again called to him:

“Fink! I know you; if you come three steps nearer, I’ll fire, by ——!”

Mike carried his rifle across his arm, and made no hostile demonstration, except in gradually getting nearer—*if* hostile his aim was.

“Talbott, you’ve accused me of murdering—my boy—Carpenter—that I raised from a child—that I loved like a son—that I can’t live without! I’m not mad with you *now*, but you must let me show you that I *couldn’t* do it—that I’d rather died than done it—that you’ve wronged me ——”

By this time he was within a few steps of the door, and Talbott’s agitation became extreme. Both pistols were pointed at

Fink's breast, in expectation of a spring from the latter.

"By the Almighty above us, Fink, I'll fire—I don't want to speak to you now—don't put your foot on that step—don't."

Fink did put his foot on the step, and the same moment fell heavily within it, receiving the contents of both barrels in his breast! His last and only words were,

"I didn't mean to kill my boy!"

Poor Mike! we are satisfied with our senior's conviction that you did *not* mean to kill him. Suspicion of treachery, doubtless, entered his mind, but cowardice and murder never dwelt there.

A few weeks after this event, Talbott himself perished in an attempt to cross the Missouri river in a skiff.

XIV.

THE FEMALE COLLEGE.

I BEGIN to think edecation is the most surprisinst thing in the world—specially female edecation. If things goes on the way they is now, Mr. Mountgomery ses we'll have a grate moral revolution—that the wimin will turn the world up-side down with ther smartness, and men what haint got no edecation wont stand no sort of chance with 'em. Sense I went to Macon to the zamination I've altered my notion 'bout this matter. I use to think human nater was jest like the yeath 'bout cultivation. Everybody knows thar's rich land, pore land what can be made tolerable good, and some 'bominable shaller, rollin' truck what all the manure in creation wouldn't make grow cow peas. Well, there's some men whose nateral smartness helps 'em

along, first rate, some what takes a mighty site of skoolin', and some that all the education in the world wouldn't do no manner of good—they'd be nateral fools any way you could fix it. Ther minds is too shaller and rollin'; they haint got no foundation, and all the skoolin' you could put on 'em wouldn't stay no longer nor so much manure on the side of a red sandhill. Now, I used to think all the galls, or most of 'em, was jest this sort; but if anybody wants to be convinced that it's all a mistake 'bout galls not havin' as good sense as anybody else, jest let 'em go to the Macon College. I haint altered my notion 'bout the nater of human mind, but I've cum to the conclusion that ther is jest as good intellectual soil among the galls as among the boys; and I wouldn't be suprised if we *was* to have a "grate moral revolution," shore enuff; and if we was to have Georgia Washingtons and Joana Adamases and Tobitha Jeffersons, what would do as much to mortalize ther sex and elevate the character of the female race, as the heroes of the revolution did in our glorious independence war.

I had hearn so much about the Female College, and Miss Mary seemed to be so en-

tirely tuck up with it when she was home, that I termined to go to the zamination and see what kind of place it was. Well, bein' as Miss Mary was thar, I put on my best clothes, and mounted Selim and set off for Macon. You know its a dinged long ride from Pineville, and it tuck me most two days to git thar. When I got thar I put up at the Washington Hall—a monstrous fine tavern—whar ther was lots of old chaps from all parts of the State, what had cum down after ther daughters to the college. They put me in a room to sleep whar ther was two old codgers who was talkin' all nite 'bout anemel magnetism—a sort of fixen in which they sed they could carry a body all over the yeath, if they could jest git him to go to sleep. They talked a mighty site 'bout what some fellers had done—how they tuck one feller to heven where he herd the angels singin' camp-meetin' tunes by the thousand, and how they tuck him to New York, whar he read the *Herald* 'fore it was printed, and seed Fanny Elsler dance the *Cracker-over-enny* as they call it, and show her gility to the people; then they tuck him to Constantino-ple, whar he seed lots of long-bearded chaps kissin' the galls. I never hern of sich

things afore, and I couldn't go to sleep for fear they mought try some of ther projects with me. It was most day-light afore them old chaps got still 'bout edecation, modern science, and magnetism, and I didn't git more'n two hours' sleep, if I did that.

After breckfast in the mornin', which was monstrous good, considerin' they was town people, I tuck that street whar the houses has stood edgeways ever sense the grate Tippekenoo Convention—I 'spose they must been twisted round so to let the croud pass—and went up to the college on the hill. I tell you what it's a mighty stancheous looking bildin', and looks far off at a distance when you're gwine up to it. Well, when I got thar I found the zamination, and sich another lot of pretty galls aint to be seed often out of Georgia. Bless ther sweet little soles, thar they all sot on benches in one eend of the room, lookin' as smilin' and as innercent as if they never want agwine to brake nobody's hart; but I'm most certain, if I'd been in them old chaps' magnetism, I could have seed little Coopid thar with his bow and arrer, poppin' away like a Kentucky rifleman at a shootin' match. The room begun to get mighty full of people, and the presi-

dent sed he hoped the gentlemen would make room on the frunt benches for the ladys; but thar wasn't one of 'em moved. Bimeby he came back and sed he ment the *young* gentlemen, only the young gentlemen; then, if you could seen 'em scatter, you would thought ther wasn't no old men in the room—two or three old codjers with wigs on like to brake ther necks tryin' to jump over the backs of the benches, jest to be smart afore the galls. Ther was plenty of room for the ladys after that.

I sot on a back seat in the fust place, and kep lookin' out for Miss Mary; but ther was so many pretty creaturs thar that it was like lookin' for one perticeler star in the milky-way, or anywhar else, when they're all a shinin' ther best.

Bimeby the bell rung and the zamination commenced—and sich larnin' as we had thar don't grow in the piny-woods, I tell you. The master, a mighty sharp-lookin', hatchet-faced little man, with specks, talked to 'em jest like he thought they knowed everything, and he was termined to make 'em out with it. Sum of the galls looked kind o' skeer'd, and sum of 'm cryed a little; but you know galls cry so easy, it don't hurt 'em none.

After axin' 'em a' heap o' questions 'bout rithmetic and grammar, and the like, ses he, "What's Mathew Matix?"

My hart began to kick when he mentioned that feller's name. I ris up and looked over a tall feller's shoulder, so I could see him if he was thar. Jest then I cotch'd Miss Mary's eye—she was lookin' her prettyest. I felt monstrous queer.

"Mathewmatix," ses she, "is the science of quantity—magnitude—number, ——," and she went on with a heap of larnin, but I couldn't hear no more; my face got as red as fire, and Miss Mary kind of laughed, rite in the middle of her speech.

"Go to the board," said the master—and maby she didn't shine when she walked up to a grate black board what stood in the corner, and tuck hold of a peace of chawk not half so white as her pretty little hand itself.

"'Spose a cannon-ball is fired at the moon," ses the master, "how long would it take it to go thar?"

I reckon it would done you good to see her chawk slide over that board. She made figers faster than I could count, and the chawk rattled on the board like a flock of

chickins pickin' corn off a clap-board; the whole board was kivered in no time. Bimeby ses she,

“One thousand one hundred and seventy-eight years, five months, three weeks, four days, sixteen hours, twenty-three minutes and forty-two seconds and a half!”

My lord! thinks I, how could she tell it so zactly to half a second?

When Miss Mary tuck her seat, the master called 'em up, one after tother, and axed 'em the hardest questions he could find in the book, but he couldn't stump 'em no how he could fix it. Whenever one class was dun, then one of the galls went to the pianner and played a tune or two—sumtimes they sung, and I never did hear of sich good musick. If Miss Mary hadn't been thar, I would fell in love with every one what sung; bless 'em, ther sweet voices went rite to my heart so. The zamination went on for three or four days, and I don't believe the galls told more'n half ther larin' all the time. I never seed sich smart creeters; why, some of the leetle ones could tell how much three pounds and three-quarters of beef cum to at three cents and three-quarters a pound, as quick as you could say Jack Robinson,

and that's more'n sum old folks kin do. I never could do it. At nite they had a sing—all the galls tuck a part—and I haint got sum of them tunes out o' my hed yit. They sung the most diffikilt tunes jest like it cum naturel to 'em.

The last day was the interestinest ockasion of all. The graduation class red ther speches and got ther deplomas, as they call 'em. I 'spose they're a sort of sertifikits of good behavier. Ther was twelve of 'em—all butiful as angels, and all dressed zactly alike in white. When they was dun readin' ther speches, the president called 'em round him and made a speech to 'em. Pore dear creatures, they stood thar and trembled like they was gwine to be married rite off; and when the old man told 'em they was now gwine to separate, and that they was like Tom Kimides—that love was like his lever, and the human hart was the fulcrum with which they could upset the world, they had to put ther hankerchers to ther faces to hide ther tears. A good many other folks was cryin', and I felt sort o' damp 'bout the eyes myself.

After it was all over, I started down to the tavern to git my horse, and was gwine along thinkin of Miss Mary and the female college,

and thankin my stars that Mathew Matix and Nat. Filosofy wasn't no body to be afeared of, when what should I hear but a band o' music cumin up the hill. Bein a military man myself, I was anxious to see that Macon company what fit the Ingins so, and I hurried round the corner, when—grate Laws-a-massy!—I never seed jest sich a site in all my born days. Hevens and yeath! thinks I, whar could they cum from?—they could't belong to no civilized nation, no how. Thar was Turks and Chinese, Arabs, Niggers, Hottentots, Ingins and Tartars—sum had faces as big as a cow, painted and fixed off all sorts o' fashons; one feller was ridin on the back of his grand-mammy, another feller had a nose made out of a powder-horn; one chap was ridin a big goose; all of 'em had weepons of all kinds and all shapes; sum of 'em on horses had everlastin grate long swords as much as they could toat, and one feller had watermillions, cowcumpers, simblins, corn-gourds, and every other vegetable you could think of, all strung round him. They was marchin rite up to the college, and so I felt a leetle larmed fear they was gwine to carry off the galls; so I turned back, and thinks I, I knows one leetle angel in perti-

culer what you wont git till you kill Majer Jones fust. Jest as I got close up to 'em a horse cum smashin rite bang up to me, and I never cum so near drappin in my tracks in my life—I never was so skeered afore. Ther was a chap on the horse with a grate long sharp-pinted dart in his hand, aimed rite at me! he had horns on his head, and looked jest like deth in the primer! I could see every bone in his body! I kind o' gasped for breth, and the infurnel thing rode off.

Up to the college all the galls was out on the portico hollerin and shoutin like blazes, and I run like thunder; but when I got up to 'em I found they was only laughin.

“My Lord!” ses I, “Miss Mary, aint you skeered?”

“Shaw, no, Majer,” ses she, “its only the fantastikils!”

“Fan-what-ikils?” ses I.

“The fantastikils.”

“Oh!” ses I, for jest then I saw a grate long-legged feller among 'em with a fan in his hand, fannin a nigger woman what had fainted. The chap with the fan had a dough face on, that looked as pitiful as if all his relations was ded; and every time the nigger fainted he would ketch her in his arms and

fan her, and look so sorry at her. The galls squeeled and laughed while the fantastikils marched round the college and then marched down to town agin. I soon follered, but I kep away from that chap on the horse. Down to the hall I paid my bill and cut out.

XV.

BROWN'S HOLE;

OR, GAMBLING AMONG THE TRAPPERS.

BROWN'S hole, at certain seasons of the year, becomes a place of considerable note, and presents many of the features of a western settlement on a holiday. It was interesting to us to note the avariciousness of the traders, and the careless indifference of the trappers, in disposing of their commodities. Dropping in daily—sometimes singly and sometimes in parties from two to ten, loaded with pelts and furs, in value from one to several thousand dollars—the latter would barter them for powder, lead, tobacco, alcohol, coffee, and whatever else they fancied, receiving each article at the most exorbitant price, without uttering a word of complaint. I have seen powder sold to the mountaineers

at the enormous sum of from three to four dollars a pint; alcohol at double this price, the same measure; coffee ditto; tobacco two and three dollars per plug, and every thing else in proportion. Money here was out of the question, as much as if it had never been in existence—furs, pelts, and robes, being substituted therefor. Here I witnessed gambling on every scale, from the highest to the lowest—from thousands to units—while every doubtful or mooted point was sure to result in a bet before decided. It was nothing uncommon to see a trapper “come in” with three or four mules, and furs to the amount of several thousand dollars, and within a week from his arrival, be without the value of a baubee he could call his own—furs, mules, rifle, every thing, sacrificed to his insatiable love of gambling. The mountaineer over his cups is often quarrelsome, and an angry dispute is almost certain to be settled in an honourable way (?)—that is, rifles at thirty yards—when one or the other (sometimes both) rarely fails to pay the forfeit of his life. I had not been many days in Brown’s Hole ere I witnessed a tragedy of this kind, which, even now, as I recall it, makes my blood run cold with horror.

The actors in this bloody scene were two

trappers of the better class, of intelligent and respectable appearance, neither of whom had seen over thirty years, and who as a general thing were of very sober and quiet habits. They were from the same part of the country—had been boys together—had started together upon their adventurous and perilous occupation, and were, moreover, sworn *friends*.

Some three days after our arrival, they had made their appearance, well packed with pelts and furs, which they immediately proceeded to dispose of to the traders. As their trip had been an unusually profitable one, they of course felt much elated, and taking a drink together, sat down to a friendly game of cards, to while away their leisure hours. More strict in their habits than most of their associates, they rarely gambled, and then only for diversion. On the occasion alluded to, they at once began playing for liquor, and having at length drunk more than their wont, proceeded to stake different articles. As the game progressed, they became more and more excited, until at last their stakes ran very high. One was peculiarly fortunate, and of course the luck of the other was exactly the reverse, which so mortified and vexed him, that he finally staked all his hard earnings

and lost. On this his companion took another drink, grew more and more merry at his own success, which he attributed to his superior skill in handling the cards, and finally bantered the other to put up his mules. No sooner said than done, and the result was the same as before. He was now, to use the phrase of some of the bystanders, who had crowded around the two to watch the game, "han'somely cleaned out." He had staked all, and lost all, and was of course rendered not a little desperate by the circumstance.

"Why don't you bet your body fixins?" cried one.

Like a drowning man at a straw, he caught at the idea, and the next moment he and his companion were deciding the ownership of his costume by the game of euchre. As might have been supposed, the result was against him, and he was at last completely beggared.

Seizing the half-emptied can of liquor by his side, he drained it at a draught, and in a tone of frenzy cried:

"Somebody lend me somethin! By ——! I must have my fixins back."

"Luck's agin ye now," answered one.
"Better wait till another time."

“No! now—now!—by——! now!” he fairly screamed. “I’ll show Jim yet that I’m his master at cards any day he —— pleases. Who’ll lend me somthin, I say?”

None seemed inclined, however, to assist one so signally unfortunate; and having waited a sufficient time, and finding his appeal likely to prove fruitless, the disappointed man rose, and in a great passion swore he would leave “such outlandish diggins, and the heathenish set that inhabit them.”

“Whar’ll ye go?” asked his companion, in unusual glee.

“Whar no such —— scamps as you can find me.”

“But afore you leave, I spose you’ll pay your debts!” retorted the other.

“What debts?”

“Didn’t I jest win your body fixins?”

“Well, do you claim them, too? I thought as how you’d got enough without them.”

“Claim all my property wherever I can find it,” returned the other, more in jest than earnest. “Of course ef you’re goin to leave, so as I won’t see you agin, I can’t afford to trust.”

“You’re a villain!” cried the loser, turn-

ing fiercely upon his friend: "A mean, dirty, villainous thief, and a liar!"

"Come, come, Sam—them's hard words," replied the one called Jim, in a mood of some displeasure.

"Well, they're true, you know it, and you darn't resent 'em."

"By ——!" cried the other, his eyes flashing fire, and his whole frame trembling with a newly roused passion, "I dare and will resent it, at any time and place you please."

"The time's now then, and the place hereabouts."

"And what the way?"

"Rifles—thirty paces."

"Enough, by ——!" and both proceeded to get their rifles and arrange themselves upon the ground—a spot some forty yards from the encampment—whither they were followed by a large crowd, all eager to be eager witnesses of a not-uncommon, though what often proved a bloody scene, as was the case in the present instance.

Selecting a level spot, the parties in question placed themselves back to back, and having examined their rifles, each marched forward fifteen paces, and wheeled face to his antagonist. Sam then called out,

“ All ready ? ”

“ Ready,” was the reply.

“ Somebody give the word, then,” returned the first speaker, and at the same instant both the rifles were brought to the faces of the antagonists.

For a moment a breathless silence succeeded, which was broken by the distinct, but ominous word,

“ Fire ! ”

Scarcely was it uttered, when crack went both rifles at once ; and bounding up from the earth, with a yell of pain, Sam fell back a corpse, pierced through the brain by the bullet of his friend. Jim was unharmed, though the ball of the other had passed through his hat and grazed the top of his head. Dropping his rifle, with a look of horror that haunts me still, he darted forward, and was the first to reach the side of the dead. Bending down, he raised the body in his arms, and wiping the blood from his face with its hands, called out, in the most endearing and piteous tones,

“ Sam ! Sam !—look up !—speak to me !—it’s Jim—your friend. I did not go to do it. I was mad, or drunk. Sam ! Sam ! speak to me !—for Heaven’s sake speak, if only once, and say you forgive me ! Sam,

why don't you speak? Oh! I shall go distracted! My brain seems on fire! You know, dear Sam, I would not murder you—

“He'll never speak agin,” said one of the by-standers. “His game is up.”

XVI.

LIFE IN MISSISSIPPI.

GETTING A RAILROAD SUBSCRIPTION.

HAVING seen nobody for thirty miles, night overtook me at the centre of Jones county. The road was only visible by the three "scores" on the trees, the grass growing on it rank and tall, like that in the adjacent woods. I was striking for the court house. I passed a small opening in which stood three rickety cabins, but they were untenanted. The road branched off into a dozen trails. Completely puzzled, I threw down the reins and left the matter to the instinct of my horse. He struck into one of the paths, and in fifteen minutes halted at a large farm house.

"Halloo!" cried I.

"It's halloo yourself," said the man in the gallery.

“How far to the court house?”

“Where are you from?” said the man.

“From Winchester.”

“Then,” said he, “the court house is behind, and you have come right by it there,” pointing to the deserted cabins.

“Why, I saw nobody there.”

“I reckon you didn’t,” said he. “There’s a doggery and a tavern twice a year, two days at a time, but they come with the court and go with the court.”

“And the clerk and sheriff,” said I, “where do they live?”

“Oh, the sheriff is clerk, and the clerk is squire, assessor, and tax collector in the bargain, and he lives away down on the Leaf.”

“But the lots, my friend—who owns the lots?”

“The same individual that owns the best part of Jones county—the only landlord who never sues for rent—Uncle Sam.”

“Well, sir, I am tired and hungry—can I stop with you to-night?”

“Light, stranger, light. Michael Anderson never shuts his door on man or beast.”

Having carefully housed and fed my horse, I soon sat down to a substantial supper of fried chickens and stewed venison, corn cake, peach cobbler, milk, butter and honey,

served with a welcome and abundance peculiar to the pine woods. My host was a shrewd man, well to do in the world, preferring Jones county to any place this side of Paradise, having lived there twenty years without administering a dose of medicine, and had never been crossed but once during all that time. I was curious to know what had disturbed the serenity of such a life as his.

“Why, sir,” said he, “I don’t make a practice of talking about it, but being as you’re a stranger, and I’ve taken a liking to you, I will narrate the circumstance. May be you’ve heard how the legislature chartered the Brandon bank, to build a railway through the pine woods away down the sea shore. In these parts, we go against banks—but roads sort of shuck our prejudices. Before the bank could be set agoing, the law required so much of the coin to be planked up. The managers all lived about Brandon, but the metal was mighty scarce, and the folks about there didn’t have it, or they wouldn’t trust ’em.

“They strung what little they had around the babies’ necks, to cut their teeth with. Well, it got wind that I had some of the genuine; and the managers kept sending to me for it, offering to put me in the board.

But I always answered that my money was safer in the old woman's stockings than in the bank. I heard nothing more about it for three months, when one night a big, likely-looking man rode up, and asked me for a shunk of fire.

"Squire Anderson," said he, "my men have camped a quarter of a mile down there on the creek. We are surveying the railway to Mississippi city, but have come to a dead halt, because our line runs chuck up against your clearing, and we shall have to make a bend to get round to the court house."

The big man said this with so serious an air, and seemed so mystified at having to crook his line round my field, that his words went right through me. I invited him in. We talked it over, and emptied a bottle of liquor on the strength of it. Next morning we went down to the camp. He took his compass and run the line right spang up again my smoke house, which I had just finished after six months' labour.

"Well, says he, "this is unlucky. The road will come out through your new smoke house; what's to be done?"

"You shall see," said I; so calling my boys I ordered them to tear it down. "Stranger, there lay the logs, the prettiest

timber within fifty miles, all hewed by my own hand. I have never had the heart to put them up again. Well, the big man never changed countenance. He ran on with his line, and the next day he came back on his return to Brandon. I was mightily lifted with the notion of the railroad and a stopping place right before my door. I entered six hundred and forty acres of land. My neighbours said we'd get the state-house here. The big man smiled and nodded; he pointed out where the cars would stop, and where the governor would like to have a summer seat—and when he went, he carried away three thousand dollars for me, all in two-bit pieces and picayunes."

"Well, squire," said I, "I suppose you got the value of it?"

"Stranger," solemnly replied the squire, "I never saw the big man afterwards; I heard no more of the road. Here's my smoke-house logs. My old woman's got the empty stockings. Here's what they sent me (a certificate on the Brandon bank stock) for the money, and if you've got a ten-dollar mint drop in your purse, I'm ready for a swap!"

XVII.

SUNDAY AT THE CAMP.

IF lumbermen do not love the return of the seventh day for its moral purposes, they welcome it for the rest it brings, and the opportunity it affords for various little matters of personal comfort which demand attention. On visiting our winter-quarters, one of the first things which might arrest attention, indicating a Sabbath in the logging-swamp, would be a long morning nap. Dismissing care, they court the gentle spell, until, wearied with the lengthened night, they rise, not, as on other mornings, when their hurrying feet brush the early frosts as they pass to their work, while the lingering night casts back its wasting shadows upon their path. On the Sabbath morning they recline upon their boughy couches until the

sun has travelled a long way upon his daily circuit.

Every one feels free to sleep, to lounge, or to do whatever he may choose, with a moderate abatement in behalf of the teamster and cook, whose duties require some seasonable attention on all mornings. Breakfast over, each individual disposes of himself as best accords with inclination or interest. There are a few general duties which come round every Sabbath, which some, by turns, feel the responsibility of performing. For instance, every Sabbath it is customary to replenish the bed with a fresh coat of boughs from the neighbouring evergreens. Of the healthful and invigorating influence of this practice there is no doubt. Then follow the various little duties of a personal character. Our red flannel shirts are to be washed and mended, pants to be patched, mittens and socks to be repaired, boots to be tapped and greased, &c. Our clumsy fingers, especially if unused to the needle, make most ludicrous and unwoman-like business of patching up our torn garments. Letter-writing receives attention on this day, if at all, with no other than the deacon seat, perhaps, for a writing-desk, a sheet of soiled paper, ink dried and thick, or pale from freezing, and a pen made

with a jack-knife ; letters are dictated to a wife, it may be, or to a mother by some dutiful son, or to his lady-love by some young swamper. There are some recreations to relieve the monotony of a Sabbath in the wilderness. Sometimes a short excursion in search of spruce gum ; for many a young urchin at home has had the promise of a good supply of this article, to be furnished on the return of the campers. Others go in pursuit of timber for ax-helves. As neither the white oak nor walnut grows in the latitude of pine forests in the eastern section of Maine, the white ash, rock maple, beech and elm, and sometimes the hornbeam, are in general use. Others spend, it may be, a portion of the day in short timber-hunting excursions. Where the contiguity of encampments allows it, visits are exchanged among the denizens of the camps.

Formerly, when sable were more plenty, some one or more proprietors of a line of sable-traps would take the opportunity on the Sabbath to visit them, as time from the weekly employment could not be spared for this purpose. Such traps are very simple in their construction. Some thin, flat pieces of wood, cleft from the spruce or fir-tree, are driven into the ground, forming the outline

of a small circle some nine inches in diameter, and about the same in height, with an opening of three or four inches on one side, over which is placed the trunk of a small tree some three inches through, running cross-wise, and raised about one end four inches, supported by a standard spindle, to which a small piece of meat is fastened for bait. The top of the whole is covered with light fir or spruce boughs, to prevent the sable from taking the bait from the top. Access to the bait is then had only by passing the head and shoulders into the little door or opening under the pole, when the slightest nibbling at the spindle will bring down the dead-fall and entrap them. These traps occur every few rods, and thus a line or circuit is formed for several miles.

Wild cats sometimes take the business of tending these sable traps, in which case they tear them to pieces and devour the bait. One such animal will occasionally break up an entire line, and blast the hopes of the hunter till captured himself.

Although, when circumstances favour it, some portion of Saturday is devoted to hauling up camp wood, yet the practice of devoting a few hours of the concluding part of the Sabbath is not unfrequent. Upon the whole,

we conclude that, notwithstanding the necessity of rest and recreation, and the necessary attentions to personal conveniences which the seventh day affords, the season usually wears away rather heavily than otherwise, and Monday morning, with its cheerful employments, brings not an unwelcome change. The pleasures of a forest life are, with lumbermen, found rather in the labour performed than the recreations enjoyed. Suspension from labour, without the pleasant relief which home privileges afford, leaves a vacancy of feeling not altogether free from *ennui*. The little domestic duties claiming attention—unpleasant, as indeed they are unnatural to the coarser sex—remind them strongly of the absence of *woman*, without whose amiable presence, society and services, man cannot enjoy his quota of earthly bliss.

A tramp after deer and moose is sometimes taken. We often disturb them in penetrating the deep forests for timber. In such cases they always remove to some more sequestered place, and post themselves for winter quarters again, where we sometimes follow and take them when the condition of the snow renders their flight tardy and difficult. In the summer they roam at large through the forests and on the meadows,

where they may be often seen feeding as we pass up the rivers; but in winter they confine themselves to much smaller limits, where they remain during the greater portion of the season.

The moose is the largest species of deer found in the New-England forest. Their size varies from that of a large poney to the full-grown horse. They have large branching antlers, which grow and are shed every season.

The taking of moose is sometimes quite hazardous. The most favourable time for hunting them is towards spring, when the snow is deep, and when the warmth of mid-day melts the surface, and the cold nights freeze a crust, which greatly embarrasses the moose and deer in their flight.

“ One pleasant morning, six of us started with the intention of taking deer; we had a gun and a large dog. Fatigued, at length, with several hours' travel, and meeting with no success, we concluded to give it up, and returned to camp late in the afternoon. Having been very intent in our search for game, we had taken little notice of the various courses which we had travelled, and, when the purpose was formed of returning, we found, much to our discomfort, that we

were altogether in doubt as to the direction proper to be pursued. However, we were not without our opinions on the subject; though, unfortunately, these opinions differed. We finally separated into two parties, four supposing that the camp lay in a particular direction, while two of us entertained nearly opposite views. The gun was retained by the four, while the dog followed myself and comrade. We had not separated more than five minutes, when the dog started two fine moose. The other party, being within hail, soon joined us in the pursuit.

“As the snow was deep, and crusted sufficiently hard to bear us upon snow-shoes, while the moose broke through at every leap, we were soon sufficiently near them to allow a good shot. One of the men approached within a few yards of the hindmost, and fired. The ball took effect, but did not stop him. Still pursuing, another ball was lodged in his body, when he turned at bay. It was now our turn to retreat; but, after making a few bounds towards us, he turned and fled again, when we again come up to the charge. I took the gun this time, and approached within fifteen feet of him, and fired. He dropped instantly upon the snow. Supposing him dead, we left the spot and pursued the

other with all possible dispatch, for there was not a moment to lose, as the fugitive, alarmed by the report of the gun, was redoubling his exertions to effect his escape. The dog, however, soon came upon him and retarded his flight. Emboldened in his successful encounter with the other, Rover dashed incautiously upon him, but nearly paid the forfeit of his life. The moose gave him a tremendous blow with one of his sharp hoofs, which made him cry out till the woods echoed with his piteous howl. In vain did we try to induce him to renew the encounter. His passion for the chase seemed effectually cooled; so we were obliged to abandon the pursuit, and the more readily, as the day was now quite spent. We returned to dress the one we had shot, but were astonished, on arriving at the place where we left him, to find that he, too, had made his escape. Tracking him by a trail of blood, which appeared to spirt out at every leap he made, we soon came up with him, and fired again. The ball hit, but only to enrage him the more. Five additional bullets were lodged in his perforated body, now making in all nine. Having but one shot more, we desired to make it count effectively; so, taking the gun, I approached very near upon one side,

and fired at his head. The ball passed directly into one eye and out at the other, thus rendering him completely blind. The last shot caused him to jump and plunge tremendously. He now became furious, and, guided by the sound of our footsteps, would dart at us like a catamount whenever we approached him. We had no axe to strike him down, or to cut clubs with which to dispatch him. We were at a stand what to do. We tried first to entangle him in the deep snow by approaching him, and thus induce him to spring out of the beaten into the untrodden snow; but the moment he found himself out, he worked back directly into the beaten path again.

“Our feelings became very uncomfortable, and now from pity we desired to put an end to his sufferings. To see his noble struggle for life, with nine bullets in him, and blind, inspired a painful regard towards him. What to do we knew not. It was really unsafe to approach him so as to cut his throat. We could neither entangle him in the snow, nor bring him down with the small sticks we had cut with our jack-knives. At length we hit upon the following expedient: obtaining a long stiff pole, one end of it was gently placed against his side. We found he leaned against

it, and the harder we pushed the more he opposed. Uniting our strength, we pressed it as powerfully as we were capable; he resisted with equal strength. While thus pressing, we suddenly gave way, when he fell flat upon his side. Before he had time to recover, we sprang upon him, and with a knife severed the jugular vein, when he yielded to his fate. It was nearly two hours from the commencement of our last encounter before we dispatched him. Leaving him for the night, we returned to camp, quite overcome with hunger and fatigue.

“Next morning we went out to bring in our prize. We found the other moose affectionately standing over the dead carcass of her slaughtered companion. Manifesting much reluctance to flee, she permitted our approach sufficiently near to afford a good shot, which we were not unwilling to improve; so, raising the fatal instrument to my cheek, I let go. She fell on the spot, and was soon dressed with the other. We took the carcasses into camp, and, after reserving what we wished for our own use, sent the remainder down river to our friends.”

The “bull moose” is a formidable foe when he “gets his dander up,” and specially so at particular seasons of the year; then,

unprovoked, they will make war on man, betraying none of that shrinking timidity so characteristic of the *cervine genus*. A hunter, who used to put up occasionally over night at our camp, entertained us with the following singular adventure. "Once," said he, "while out on a hunting excursion, I was pursued by a 'bull moose,' during that period when their jealousy is in full operation in behalf of the female. He approached me with his muscular neck curved, and head to the ground, in a manner not dissimilar to the attitude assumed by horned cattle when about to encounter each other. Just as he was about to make a pass at me, I sprang suddenly between his wide-spreading antlers, astride his neck. Dexterously turning round, I seized him by the horns, and, locking my feet together under his neck, I clung to him like a sloth. With a mixture of rage and terror, he dashed wildly about, endeavouring to dislodge me; but, as my life depended upon maintaining my position, I clung to him with a corresponding desperation. After making a few ineffectual attempts to disengage me, he threw out his nose, and, laying his antlers back upon his shoulders, which formed a screen for my defence, he sprang forward into a furious run, still bear-

ing me upon his neck. Now penetrating dense thickets, then leaping high "wind-falls," and struggling through swamp-mires, he finally fell through exhaustion, after carrying me about three miles. Improving the opportunity, I drew my hunter's knife from its sheath, and instantly buried it in his neck, cutting the jugular vein, which put a speedy termination to the contest and the flight."

XVIII.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURE IN THE FLORIDA
SWAMP.

NEAR the close of the year '37, as I was quietly strolling on the banks of the Susquehanna, the idea came into my cranium of taking a trip to Florida, wishing to see the land of which I had heard and read so much. A day sufficed to prepare me for the journey. A small travelling trunk was packed, containing nearly all my worldly goods, and shouldering my rifle I was soon *en route* for the land of promise. It was in the height of the famous Seminole war, but I had not the slightest idea of volunteering in Uncle Sam's service, merely going on my own hook, more for hunting than fighting.

In due course of time I arrived at Pensacola, from whence I proceeded direct to Florida *city*, which I found consisted of a

very inconsiderable number of huts. I had been at the settlement but a few days, when I received an invitation from one of my new acquaintances to accompany him in a ride some forty miles across the country, where he was going on business, which I of course very gladly accepted, and at two o'clock that afternoon, we were on our way well mounted and armed. My companion was a wild free-and-easy sort of chap, who had the reputation of being the best shot in the clearing, could run down an elk or wild Indian, and was always counted 'some in a bar fight,'—he answered to the name of Joe Peters, though more familiarly called 'Crazy Joe.'

We had started late, both to avoid the heat of the day and enjoy the cool of the evening. Our route was a pleasant one, leading through a fine country heavily stocked with timber, and sprinkled with an occasional swamps and thickets. We had got over about two thirds of our journey without starting game of any kind, when up went a bevy of some half-dozen turkeys; some stopped in the trees, and we succeeded in bagging a brace of them, and then continued leisurely on, my companion spinning yarns of border life in general, and turkey shooting in particular, and myself an at-

tentive listener, when we were suddenly awakened to a sense of our situation by the heavy report of a musket not twenty yards distant, just within the confines of a thick swamp, and at the same moment an arrow (aimed with more precision than the bullet) scraped a very familiar acquaintance with my arm. Nothing could be seen of the lurking foe, completely hidden as he was by the dense bushes. Our horses were, however, brought to a halt, and throwing ourselves from the saddle, we were on the point of entering the swamp to dislodge the redskins (for such they undoubtedly were, though at that time it was generally believed there were none in the neighbourhood), when Joe stopped short, and turning to me, said, "I guess upon the whole the shortest way out of this scrape is the best, for there's no telling how many of the red devils there may be, and they will likely lead us into the swamp, and before we get back steal our horses."

This would have been a decided fix, to be left without horses in such a place, and leaping into the saddle, we galloped off at a quick pace; not being very anxious to set ourselves up as a mark to be shot at, without the possibility of returning the compliment.

But we had not proceeded fifty rods when bang, bang, cracked half-a-dozen muskets, the bullets whizzing past our ears quite unceremoniously, but unluckily with more effect than the first, Joe having his thigh badly scratched by one, and my horse receiving another in the shoulder, but not being so badly wounded but that he sprang forward with a limping gait, which I was not at all anxious to restrain, and we kept on as fast as could be expected under the circumstances. At the instant of the fire we heard a whoop, and the cracking of bushes, and the next moment some dozen red-skins burst from the swamp, and commenced chase. They were within metal range, and turning in the saddle, our rifles were immediately levelled, and with a simultaneous crack, two of the rascals tumbled into the bushes, performing various feats of 'ground and lofty tumbling.' Such a hideous yelling as now burst forth from their enraged companions is past description. I can fancy it ringing in my ears at the present moment. Had a regiment of Satan's imps been let loose from the infernal regions on our heels, they could not have caused a more desperate effort on the part of the poor animal whom I bestrode to increase the distance between

himself and his persecutors. Here was an exhibition of the 'turf' not to be witnessed every day. But it was a vain effort, he made a few long strides and then fell to the ground. Joe, however, was at my side, and giving me his hand, I leaped on behind him just as three of the Indians, who were in advance of the rest, fired, two with muskets, and the other with an arrow. The bullets, as in nine cases out of ten, were harmless, but the arrow cut a deep furrow in the animal's quarter, and somewhat to my inconvenience lodging in my thigh, from which it was easily extracted, having spent its force on the poor horse, who was now so effectually blown, what with a long journey and a hard chase, that the best he could do was to keep our distance good. This state of things did not last long. The Indians, who were fresh from the chase, gained perceptibly on us, and as they drew near their infernal yells seemed more furious than ever, and each was apparently doing his best to be 'in at the death.' Joe looked over his shoulder and remarked, "Would'nt them are red devils like to get us into their clutches though!" "Perhaps they will yet," I replied, "our horse can't stand it much longer." "No, I'll be blowed if they do," he said,

with a look of defiance ; “ we’ll take to the swamp when old grey gives out, and if there’s a mother’s son among ’em as can catch us thar, then he’s welcome to my scalp, that’s all.” As he finished this sentence, a volley of arrows flew into the air, two of which struck our already broken-down horse, and after a few more leaps the poor animal, unable to carry his double load further, fell to the ground.

Seizing Joe by the shoulders, and assisting him from beneath the horse, we made tracks for the swamp, and were soon out of sight of our pursuers, who however came in close to our heels. We skulked low and made what progress we could into the swamp, keeping ahead of the red-skins for about half a mile, when finding they kept close on our rear, notwithstanding the frequent turns and twists we made, for they seemed to keep track equal to blood-hounds, we ventured to skulk under a thick clump of bushes. It was now getting quite dark, and two of the rascals passed within a dozen yards of us, and were soon out of hearing, for, as you might suppose, on entering the swamp their yelling was all over, and they commenced the game of still hunting.

After keeping quiet a few minutes, we re-

loaded our rifles, and commenced making the best way of our way out of the swamp; but after toiling through the mud and briars more than an hour, we were brought to a dead halt by a deep pool of water. How long or broad it might be we knew not, it being altogether too dark to see. We now came to the conclusion that we were not getting out of our troubles quite as speedily as was desirable. The truth suddenly flashed before our mind. We were lost in the depths of an almost impenetrable swamp. To go on was impossible, to retrace our steps equally so. There was no alternative but to bivouac where we were for the night, and when daylight appeared next morning, find our way out.

It was at least three shades darker than midnight in a coal pit, and such a concert of vocal music I never before witnessed, and trust I never shall again, under like circumstances. It seemed as if all God's creation was represented, from the annoying buzz of the musquito to the melodious notes of alligators and panthers, who made night hideous with their discordant revelries. We had most certainly witnessed a speedy transition from the land of promise to the land of varmints, and to add to the comfort of our

situation, our lower man had been drenched to the skin with mud and water, which was not very comfortable, as the night was unusually chilly; and to build a fire was unsafe, in the neighbourhood of our Indian enemies.

Finding we must make ourselves as comfortable as possible where we were, Joe drew forth a huge pocket pistol, which had been well charged when we started, but had evidently suffered severely from a leak in the neighbourhood of the cork; however, there was enough left for all practicable purposes, and placing the muzzle to his mouth, he took a stiff charge, and then passed it over to me; of course, I did it justice. We now concluded that one should watch while the other slept, and *vice versa*, I volunteering to stand the first watch, not feeling much like sleep. Joe, however, was used to such things, and in less than ten minutes was performing bass, in beautiful accompaniment with the *other* varmint. At length drowsiness got the better of my judgment, and I fell asleep. How long I slept I know not, but when I awoke my confused brain was troubled with a vague dream about panther hunting. I rose to my feet and began to rub open my eyes, and as I did so, heard the unmistakable

voice of a panther within a few yards of us. I instinctively grasped my rifle and looked in the direction of the sound; my eyes were now opened without difficulty, and I beheld a pair of the largest, brightest eyes that ever were seen in a dark night. They appeared with all the brilliancy of gas lights, though unfortunately without lighting up the surrounding darkness. In an instant the rifle was at my shoulder; it was impossible to see the barrel, much less the sight, but being accustomed to its use, I levelled for one of his glaring eyeballs and pulled. A half-smothered howl followed the sharp crack of the rifle, and all was over. The sudden report, however, disturbed the fairy dreams of Joe, and springing to his feet with one bound, he lit up to his armpits in a mud hole.

“Where’s the red devils?—look out for my rifle—bear a hand and help a fellow out of this d——d mud hole—cuss the Injins,” he repeated in hurried accents.

Notwithstanding his predicament, I could not withhold a hearty laugh at his expense, as I assured him it was nothing but a painter which had caused all the muss.

“It’s the first time one ever skeered me,” he replied. “I wouldn’t have got into this scrape for a dozen painters.”

Feeling ourselves quite refreshed, we sat down to wait for daylight, which at length began to show its dim visage. The noise and din about us gradually died away (though I almost fancy I can hear it yet), and the uncertain grey of morning apparently merged into daylight, though a heavy mist, and the dense foliage of the trees, effectually obscured the sun's rays, and gave it the appearance of twilight. Cutting the tail off the panther and tying it in my belt, as a trophy, we proceeded to find our way to dry land, which we reached after a toilsome march of about two miles, and arrived at the end of our journey about noon, without further molestation, though with the loss of two fine horses, to say nothing of the brace of turkeys; probably both contributed towards a meal for a hungry pack of wolves or flock of turkey-buzzards.

XIX.

A RIDE AND WALK AFTER CHURCH.

SUM times I think I *is* the onluckiest man in the world. Everlastingly ther's sum sarned thing happenin to me, in spite of all I kin do. Sense I cum back from Macon, and my accounnt of the zamination's ben red by most everybody bout here, I blieve my popilarity's ris considerable. Miss Mary said she wouldn't be sprised much if I turned out a perfect Lord Birum, and mortalized all the ladys of my quaintance. She was mighty proud of what I said about her buty and larnin, but she ses I didn't give the right answer to the sum bout the cannon ball and the moon; but that's no matter now. I want to tell you bout a scrape I got in tother day, as I knows you never hearn of jest sich a catasterfy before.

Last Sunday, Miss Mary and Miss Carliné

and Miss Kesiah and all of the Stallineses wer at church, and when it was out I jest rid rite up to Miss Mary and lowed I'd see her home. She didn't say nothin, and I rid long side of her a little ways, and I begun to feel mighty good ; but fore we got out of site of the church ther was a whole gang of young fellers, and a heap more young ladys, cum ridin up and reinin in, and prancin and cavortin about so that nobody could tell who was ridin with which : all gabberin and talkin and laugoin, as if they'd been to a cornshuckin more'n a meetin-house. Course cousin Pete was thar, on uncle Josh's old whitto-eyed hors, with his saddle bags on—for he always carrys 'em wharever he goes, to make folks blieve he's a doctor—and the way he tumbled the big words about was stonishin. I didn't say much, but rid monstrous close to one side of Miss Mary, so causin Pete couldn't shine much thar.

Well, we all got to old Miss Stallineses without any pertickeler accident happenin, though I spected every minit to see sum of 'em histed right in the mud, the way they kep whippin one another's horses unawars, and playing all manner of pranks with one another. When we got thar the whole crowd stopped, and sum one perposed a walk

down to the branch to git sum grapes. All hands was agreed cept old Miss Stallins, who said the galls better stay home and read the bibel. But you know it aint no use to talk bout ligion to young ladys when they aint sick nor sorry bout nothin; so away we went—but I tuck monstrous good care to git long side of Miss Mary, and thar I stuck till we got down to the branch whar the grapes wer. You know the wild grapes is jest gettin good now—and I never seed a pretty young lady yet that didn't like something sour. Ther's lots of 'em all round the plantation, but the best ones is down on the branch. Cousin Pete and Ben Biers, and all the fellers, fell to gittin grapes for the ladys, but they all had ther Sunday fixins on, and was afraid to go into the brush much.

“Oh my! what pretty grapes is on that tree!” ses Miss Mary, lookin up half-way to the top of the grate big gum that stood rite over the water—and her pretty bright eyes sparklin like dew-drops in the sunshine. “Oh, I wish I had sum.”

Cousin Pete had been tryin to make himself popler with Miss Mary, but he didn't seem to care bout them high grapes more'n sum that was lower down. But all the galls had got ther eyes on them high grapes.

"Them grapes is like the young ladys," ses Cousin Pete.

"Why is they like the galls?" asked Miss Kesiah.

"Oh, cause—cause they's sweet," ses Cousin Pete.

"I reckon it's cause they's hard to git," ses Bill Willson.

"It's cause they's more trouble to git than they's worth," ses Tom Stallins.

"Aint you shamed, brother Tom?" ses Miss Carline.

"What do you think, Majer?" ses Miss Mary, and she gin me one of them witchin side-looks of hern that almost made me jump rite out of my boots.

"Why," ses I, "I think they's like the young ladys, cause they's sour grapes to them as can't git 'em."

"Yes, Majer," ses she; "but you know they can get 'em that has the prowess to win 'em,"—and then she gin me a look that made me feel prouder than I ever did afore in my life—"and *you* can git 'em if you try, Majer; I know you kin."

When she said that last part, I seed Cousin Pete's lip sort o' drap. My hart liked to knock the buttons off my jacket, and I do believe I'd had them grapes if I'd had to dig

the tree up by the roots. My hat went off quicker than a flash, and up the old sweet-gum I went like a cat squirrel.

"Don't fall, Majer," ses Miss Mary. When she said that, I swar I like to let go, it made me feel so interestin. I wasn't no time in gittin to the very top branch, and the fust thing I done was to cut off the largest bunch, and throw it rite down to Miss Mary's feet.

"Thank you, Majer—thank you," ses she.

"Throw me sum, Majer," ses Miss Caroline—"and me too"—"and me too"—"thank you, Majer"—"throw me sum, Majer"—"aint the Majer kind?"—"it takes him to climb trees," ses all the galls.

"He's good as a coon," ses Ben Biers.

"I can beat him any time," ses Tom Stallins.

"No, y-o-u can't, brother Tom, no sich thing," ses Miss Mary.

By this time I had gin 'em more grapes than they could all eat, and carry home to boot; and if I had jest cum down then, I'd com out fust rate. But you know that's the nice pint—to know when to stop; ther is sich a thing as bein a leetle *too* smart—and that's jest whar I mist the figure.

I was standin on one vine rite over the

branch, with my hands holt of one over my head, and thinks I to myself, how it would stonish 'em all now to see me skin the cat. My spunk was up, and thinks I, I'll jest show 'em what I kin do; so up I pulls my feet and twisted 'em round through my arms over backwards, and was lettin my body down tother side foremoot, when they all hollered out, "Oh, look at Majer Jones!"—"Oh, see what he's doin!" "Oh, I'm so fraid," ses Miss Mary. That made me want to do my best, so I let myself down slow and easy, and I begun to feel with my feet for the vine below. "Oh, my gracious!" ses Miss Kesiah, "see how he is twisted his arms round." Sum how I couldn't find the vine, and my arm begun to hurt, but I didn't say nothin. "A l-e-e-t-l-e further forward, Majer," ses Tom Stallins. "No; more to the right," ses Ben Biers. The ladys were all lookin and didn't know what to say. I kep tryin to touch both ways, but cus the vine was thar. Then I tried to git back agin, but I couldn't raise myself sum how, and I begun to feel monstrous dizzy, and the water below looked sort o' yaller and green, and had sparks of fire runnin all through it, and my eyes begun to feel so tite, I thought they would bust. They was all hollerin

somethin down below, but I couldn't hear nothin but a terrible roarin sound, and the fust thing I knowd something tuck me rite under the chin, and fore I had time to breathe, kerslash I went rite in the cold water more'n six feet deep. I got my mouth chock full of muddy water, and how upon yeath I ever got out without droundin I can't see; for I was almost dead fore I drapt, and when I cum down I hit sumthing that like to broke my jaw-bone, and skinned my nose most bominable. When I got out the ladys were screamin for life, and Miss Mary was pale as her pocketankercher.

“Oh, I'm so glad you aint hurt no wurse, Majer,” ses she; “I thought you was killed.”

But, Lord! she didn't begin to know how bad I was hurt. I sot down on a log a little, and the fellers all cum round laughin like they was almost tickled to deth.

“Wasn't I rite, Majer—aint they more trouble to git than they's worth after you's got 'em?”

I didn't say nothin to Tom, cause he's Miss Mary's brother; but Cousin Pete cum up with his fine rigins on, laughin like a grate long-legged fool, as he is—says he,

“Aint you shamed to cut sich anticks

as that?—I'd had more sense—jest look at your nose—ha, ha!—aint you got yourself in a nice fix?"

The galls was gitin redy to go home; Miss Mary was lookin monstrous serious.

"Don't you think he looks like a drowded rat, Miss Mary?" axed Cousin Pete.

"I think he looks as good as you do enny time," ses she.

Pete sort of look a leetle flat, and turned round and tried to laugh.

"I wouldn't take sich a duckin for all the sour grapes nor sour galls in Georgia," says he.

Thinks I, that's sort of personally insultin to Miss Mary, and I seed her face grow sort o' red. It wouldn't never do to let Cousin Pete hurt her feelins so rite afore my face, so ses I—

"You wouldn't, wouldn't you?" and with that I jest tuck hold of the gentleman and pitched him neck and heels rite into the branch.

When he got out he lowed he'd settle it with me sum other time, when thar wasn't no ladys along to take my part. That's the way Cousin Pete settles all his accounts—some other time. Tom Stallins tuck his sisters home, and the rest of the galls and

fellers went along; but cousin Pete and I didn't show ourselves no more that day. I haint seed him sense, tho' thars been all sorts of a muss tween mother and ant Mahaly bout it. I don't think I'll ever skin the cat agin.

XX.

WORSE THAN A COON.

THAT duckin what I got tother Sunday gin me a monstrous cold, and my nose feels jest about twice as big as it used to afore. Colds is curious things any way; no wonder people always calls em *bad*, for I don't know nothin but a down right fever'n ager that makes me so out o' sorts. Why, I can't taste nothin nor smell nothin, and I do blieve I've sneezed more'n five thousand times in the last twenty-four owers. I'm all the time a hich-cheein! so, I can't do nothin, or I'd rit you afore now bout a coon hunt we had tother night, whar I cotched more cold than coons. But we had some rale fun, I tell you. It was the— (ah whew! ah whew! ah! eh! hem!)— That's the way it takes me every now and then, almost puttin my neck out o' jint every time. But to proceed, as the preachers say—

it was the fust coon hunt we'd had this season, and I reckon it tuck the starch out o' sum of the boys, so they wont want to go agin in a hurry. Cousin Pete like to catch'd his deth.

You see, I's got two of the best coon dogs in the settlement, and the fellers can't never go without 'em. Well, jest after supper I heard 'em cumin, blowin ther horns like they was gwine to tear down the walls of Jerico, and the dogs all howlin as if heaven and yeath was cumin together. I'd been layin off to go to see Miss Mary, but my nose wasn't well whar I blazed it on that dratted grape-vine, and so I thought I mought as well go long with 'em; specially as they begged so hard for my company (my patience, my nose feels jest like it was the spout of a bilin tea-kittle), and Smart and Wise wouldn't trail good without me to make 'em. So I told nigger Jim to git sum light-wood and the exe, and (——eh!——ah! plague take the cold)—and let the dogs out, and cum along.

Well, Cousin Pete—he's never said peas bout the duckin I gin him, and I wish I hadn't done it now, for he's a rite clever-harted feller after all, and, you know, taint his fault cause he aint got no better sense.

Cousin Pete was long, with two hound pups, and Tom Stallins had three or four hounds, and one grate big yaller cur, what wasn't worth shucks to trail, but was bomination to fight. Ben Biers had more dogs than you could shake a stick at; and sich another hellabeloo as they all made! why one couldn't hear himself think for 'em. It put me in mind of what Mr. Shakespear ses bout dogs—

“I never herd sich powerful discord,
Sich sweet thunder.”

Well, we soon tuck the woods down towards the branch, and ses I to Smart and Wise, “High on!” ses I, and away they went, snuffin and snortin like mad. The rest of the fellers hollered, ‘Steboy! sick 'em, Tows! hunt 'em, Troup! high on! hey!’ and part of 'em went tarein through the brush like they had a coon's tail within a inch of ther noses. But ther was two or three young hounds—and, you know, theys the biggest fools in the world—what wouldn't budge; and when anybody tried to incourage 'em to hunt, they'd begin to squall like all natur, and cum jumpin about, and one of 'em licked Ben Biers rite in the face. “Cus your imperence!” ses Ben, “I'll larn you how to

tree coons better'n that," and spang he tuck one of 'em rite side of the hed with a lighterd-not, and sich another ki-i! ki-i! ki-i-in! I never heard afore. Two or three of 'em tuck the hint and turned tale for home.

It was a bominable dark night, and every now and then it kep sprinklin a little. I and two or three more carried torches, but some of 'em had none, and was all the time gittin lost, or gittin hung in the bushes, and then they'd holler out, "Hold the lite, somebody, over here," till they got out of ther tanglement. It was a mighty sight of botherment, and we didn't go very fast, you may know.

Bimeby one of the dogs opened, and we all stop'd to listen. "Ough! ough-ough!" In bout two minits more we heerd him agin: "Ough-ough! ough-ough! ough-ough!"

"That's Majer's Smart," ses Tom Stallins.

"He's treed," ses Ben Biers; "but he's way tother side of creation."

"No, he haint treed, but he's on a warm trail," ses I; for I know'd by the way he opened.

"I wouldn't go whar he is for all the coons in Georgia," ses Cousin Pete.

"Stop," ses I, "maybe he'll bring the trail up this way."

Shore enuff, he was cumin like a steam-car, every now and then blowin off—ough-ough! ough-ough! ough-ough!—gittin faster and louder as the track warmed. Then old Wise struck in, with his voice about three pitches higher than Smart's, and Troup and Touse, and the whole of 'em jined in, keepin a most oudacious racket. On they cum, and passed rite by us, gwine up the branch towards old Mr. Mirick's corn field. We all turned and tuck after 'em, but they didn't go far before they all cum to a stop, and old Smart gin out his loud bull-dog, "ough!—ough!—ough!" which is jest as much as to say, "The coon's rite up this tree!"

When we got up to 'em, thar they all was, friskin about one of the biggest kind of poplers, rite close to the branch; all barkin and pantin and lookin up into the tree like they seed the coon run up. Sum times the young one would git in the way of the old dogs, and the fust they'd know, they'd git slung more'n six foot into the bushes; but they'd give a yelp or so and cum rite back to git sarved the same way agin. Well, I tell you what, it tuck a feller mighty wide between the eyes to tackle that tree, for it was a whopper; but at it we went, and by the time nigger Jim got his fires kindled all

round, so the coon couldn't run off without our seein him, the old tree begun to feel week in the knees. "Hold the dogs, boys, she's gwine to cave," ses Ben Biers. The next minit, kerslash! it went, rite into the branch, makin the muddy water fly in every direction. Fore the lims was all done fallin, in went the dogs. All was still for bout two minits fore anybody sed a word.

"They've got him!" ses Ben Biers, who was standin with his mouth wide open all the while; "they've got him! hurra!" then sich a nother rippin and tarein, and barkin and shoutin, and runnin mong the dogs and fellers. "Hurra! take him! bite him! sick him, Tows! lay hold of him, Wise! shake him, Smart!" and all kinds of couragement was hollered to the dogs, but every now and then one of 'em would cum out whinin, and holdin his hed a-one side with the lock-jaw, and his ears all slit to ribbins. The coon had the vantage of the dogs, for he was rite down in the brush and water, so more'n one couldn't git to him at a time nohow, and if one of 'em happened to take hold of the bitin end, in the dark, he was nearly licked to deth afore he could git loose.

Cousin Pete was on top of the log with a torch in his hand, coaxin on the dogs as hard

as he could: "Here, Wolf," ses he, "hear, hear, take hold of him, good feller, shake him!" Tom Stallinses big cur jumped on to the log, and the next thing I know'd Cousin Pete's light was out, and the dogs had him down under the log with the coon; "Oh, my lord! git out! call off the dogs! bring a light, fellers!" holler'd out Cousin Pete, but fore we could git thar the dogs like to used him up clean. The big dog he was callin knocked him off in tryin to git at the coon, and fore the other dogs found out the mistake they like to tare all his clothes off his back, they and the brush together.

By this time the coon tuck the bank and tried to make off, most of the dogs bein out of the notion of tryin him agin; but Tom Stallins' big cur gin him one more hitch. The coon had no frends in the crowd, but the other dogs was perfectly willin to show him fair fight; and if anybody don't blieve a coon's got natural pluck, he jest ought to seed that same old coon, the way he fit. Sumtimes Wolf would gether holt of him like he was gwine to swoller him whole, and mash him all into a cocked hat, but it didn't seem to have no effect, for in less than no time he'd have the dog rite by the cheek or by the ear, and he wouldn't let go till the hide gin away,

It was the hottest night's work ever old Wolf undertuck, and it tuck a mighty chance of hollerin to make him stand up to his rack as well as he did. The other dogs kep runnin round and whinin mighty anxious, but they tuck good care to keep out of reach of the coon. Bimeby I seed old Wolf drap his tail and kind o' wag it, when the coon had him by the jowl. I know'd it was all day with him then. "Shake him, Wolf! lay hold of him, old feller, bite him!" says Tom; but it want no use, the dog was clean licked, and the fust thing we knowd he was gone for home, kind o' whistlin a tune to himself as he went—and if nigger Jim hadn't fotch'd my pistols long with him, the coon would got away after all.

Cousin Pete wanted to go, so we gin nigger Jim the coon and started for home. Sum of the dogs was along, and they kep a mighty snortin like they'd cotch'd a monstrous bad cold, and every now and then they'd find sum new place bout 'em that wanted lickin. We was most up to the corner of our field when the dogs started up sumthing, and run it a little ways and stopped. Tom Stallins and Ben Biers, and one or two more, run to 'em fore I could git thar. "Thar it is—that black and white thing—on that log," ses

Tom. "Steboy; catch him!" ses he. Ben run up with his light, and the fust thing I heerd him say was, "P-e-u-g-h! oh, my lord; look out, fellers! its a pole-cat!" But it was too late for Ben, he got scent enough on him to last him for a month. The dogs got chuck full, and was rollin all about in the leaves, while Ben Biers stood and cussed more'n would blow the roof off a meetin house. It was most day fore we got home. Cousin Pete and Ben Biers say they wont never go coon huntin any more down that way, any how. My nose feels mighty queer.

XXI.

THE PRAIRIE ON FIRE.

WE all turned our eyes in the direction indicated, and beheld, stretching along the horizon, what appeared to be a dense, black, rolling cloud.

“A heavy thunder storm is approaching,” said Fitzgerald in reply, “and we stand a fair chance of being thoroughly drenched.”

“I think you are mistaken,” rejoined I; “for I have never seen a cloud of such singular appearance. See! how it gradually creeps away to the right and left!”

“And there are bright flashes, too!” exclaimed Eva, breathless with intense excitement.

“What is it? what is it?” cried Lilian, grasping my arm with a trembling hand, and gazing upon the scene with a pale, terrified look. “It is not a cloud—it cannot be a

cloud—it is something more awful. See! see! how fast it spreads! And there! there! mark you those flashes?”

Suddenly the whole horrible truth flashed upon me, and for the moment held me dumb with terror.

“You are pale with alarm!” pursued Lilian, turning to me and noting the agitated expression of my countenance.

“Speak, Francis! what is it?” screamed Eva.

“Merciful God!” I gasped, “the prairie is on fire! We are lost!—our doom is sealed!”

“Lost!” shrieked Lilian and Eva.

“Oh, God! is there no escape?” added the latter, wildly. “We must—we must escape!”

“Flight—flight alone can save us!” shouted Fitzgerald. “Perchance we may reach yonder hill. It is our only hope.”

As he spoke, he spurred his steed, struck Eva’s with his bridle rein, and away bounded both with all the speed in their power.

“Follow!” cried I to Lilian, imitating the example of the other, and in the wild excitement of the moment completely losing all my wonted presence of mind. “Follow hard—strain every nerve—and God vouchsafe us victory!”

It was no longer a race of pleasure, but one of fearful agony—our lives the stake, and heavy odds against us. Can I describe it, reader?—describe our feelings in those awful moments of horrible suspense? No! it is beyond the strength of my pen—the power of language—and must be left to your imagination.

Four miles, at the least—four long and seemingly interminable miles—intervene between us and our destination. Can we reach it? We have but little hope. On, on we urge, with whip and spur, our already drooping horses—and on, on comes the mighty destroyer, as if sent to execute the long-pent-up vengeance of an offended God.

Away to the east, and away to the west, and rushing towards the north, with the fury of the devastating tornado, comes this terrific avenger, sweeping all in his course, making all black and desolate which a few minutes since had seemed so lovely, rolling up to the very dome of heaven his huge volumes of smoke, of gigantic and hideous shapes, with red sheets of flame issuing from its appalling blackness, as they were the burning tongues and eyes of hell's unchained demons, so shaped by our wild and distorted imaginations. On, on!—how our horses snort, and

foam, and tremble! They have caught our fears, and are doing their utmost to save us and themselves. On, on, on!—two miles, thank God! are passed—but, alas! there are two more before us, and our gallant beasts are already beginning to falter with fatigue. On, on!—behold our terrible foe advance! his fiery banners streaming up brighter, redder, and more bright as he nears us—his ten thousand scorching and blasting tongues, hissing, roaring, and destroying every living thing that comes within their reach.

Oh! how sublime—how awfully sublime this spectacle! on which we rivet our fascinated eyes, while our hearts leap to our throats, and our lips are compressed with an indescribable fear.

Now listen to these apparently unearthly sounds! The prairie is alive with millions of voices, which fancy would give to the fiery tongues of this rushing monster, as the cheering song of his death-dealing advance—but which stern reality tells us are the frantic cries of droves and herds of wild animals, of all species, mad with affright, all pressing forward together, pell-mell, to escape one common, but ever-conquering enemy.

Look yonder ! There goes a stampede of buffalo. Yonder ! Another of wild horses. How they tear ahead, with foaming mouths, expanded nostrils, dilated eyes, and a tread that makes the very earth tremble beneath them !

Look closer—nearer ! Here—here they come !—above us, before us, behind us, beneath us—on all and every side—birds, beasts, reptiles, and insects. How they dart past us now with lolling tongues, and fiery eyes half starting from their sockets, entangling the very legs of our horses, and causing them to rear, and plunge, and snort, and shriek, with appalling terror ! Here are wolves, and wolverines, and rabbits, and boars, and serpents—each and all howling, shrieking, and hissing their fears.

God of heaven ! what a scene !

On, on, for our only hope ! Another mile is passed—oh ! that it were another—the last ! We near the haven of our safety. Can we—shall we ever reach it ? Behold the destroyer, where he comes ! Up, up to the mid-heaven now rolls the smoke of his conquest ! and the sun grows dark behind it, as he were mourning for the destruction he is forced to look upon.

Hark ! what sound is that ?—that roaring

sound? It is the voice of the Fire-Spirit, as he were mocking our hopes. Must we die now, with safety almost within our grasp! Why do our horses stagger and reel? Have they not strength for this last effort! See! we are almost saved. Yon hill looms up invitingly before us. Oh! for strength of another five minutes' duration! Five minutes—only five—an eternity to us!

Ha! the dense smoke is lowering upon us, and we shall be suffocated! No! that breeze drives it back. All thanks to God for that! There is still hope.

On, on! still on! How swift is the flame, and how tardy our horses! They have no spirit, seemingly. They only creep and crawl like snails. My fortune all, to hold out another two minutes!

Ha! God help us now! Lilian's steed reels—totters—stumbles—falls! She is down. I hear her shriek for help. How strangely that shriek mingles with the roaring and crackling of this great prairie fire! Now on my feet I seize her hand. Now my horse staggers under a double weight. But he is a gallant beast; and plunging forward, with a dying effort, falls at the base of the knoll, which Elmer and Eva have gained in advance of us. One desperate effort more,

and Lilian, all unconscious of fear or danger, is borne in my arms into a dense thicket, where I sink upon the earth, and, half stifled with smoke, amid the roaring of a mighty conflagration, thank God its flames can neither reach me nor the being I love.

XXII.

MY FIRST AND LAST DAY ON DISMAL LAKE.

DURING the last summer I accepted an oft-repeated invitation of an old friend, and accompanied him to his plantation, "Chicorea," where we spent a week very pleasantly, notwithstanding the heat, in hunting and fishing. This place is situated on the celebrated Deer Creek, and extremely isolated, being the first above its confluence with the Yazoo River, and by the sinuous course of the creek, sixty miles below the next plantation. The surrounding forests are celebrated for game. Bear and panther, and especially the latter, are, or have been, more numerous here than in the vicinity of any other place known in in this singular and wild region of country. I had long promised myself the pleasure of following a good "team" of *dogs* through these unex-

plored wilds, and of slaying at least one bear and panther before I left. You can therefore imagine the pleasure I experienced, when, after repeated disappointments, I found myself at the close of a day's hard ride entering the "quarter" yard at Chicorea, and in doing so, rousing from their evening slumbers a famous pack, that had assisted in hurrying the spirit of many a gallant old *he* to "kingdom come."

I have had it in anticipation frequently to write an account of the week's sport, but I have deferred it so often and long that I am apprehensive I have forgotten some of the most exciting scenes. One *incident*, however, was so ludicrous that I will give it, and if it is deficient in soul-stirring interest, it may serve as a warning to some of my readers.

Our success had been neither good nor indifferent. We had hunted four days, and killed a bear, several deer, turkey, and wild-fowl; the evening of the fourth day found hunters and dogs worn out with constant labour, and debilitated by the extreme heat of the weather, and that evening, while sipping our coffee, discussing and laughing over the mishaps of the day, it was concluded to spend the morrow with the rod at a cele-

brated lake about three miles distant. To this arrangement I yielded a reluctant consent, not only because I was very much fatigued, but fishing is a description of sport that never had any charms for me. I found it impossible, however, to decline the polite solicitations of those who had laboured so hard at my *line*, and the next morning at day-light all hands, properly equipped, were in motion for the lake, where our sport—if such it *must* be called—was of the most successful and exciting character; at least, so I found it, and the balance of the company were too well bred to complain of their luck because mine for once had been more marked than theirs.

It is impossible to describe this singular sheet of water. I have visited many of the large lakes lying between the Sunflower and Deer Creeks, but none of them will compare with this in wild and dreary scenery. It is from one to three miles wide, and is formed by the overflow; its banks are flat and muddy, and covered with decaying trees, limbs, and the water fringed by coarse grass and weeds. Huge trees grow upon its banks, invariably leaning over the lake, and from their branches grow in profusion the Spanish long moss, drooping to the surface of the water. Many

of these trees, after attaining a certain size—owing to the weight of the moss, or the light and saturated soil in which they grow—fall into the lake, and as they decay, grass and weeds grow upon them. Their mass of roots, woven together and cleansed of soil by the rains, afford a secure retreat for reptiles and insects, myriads of which breed here. The bark of the trees, the moss, vines, old logs, and decaying leaves, are all blackened by the overflow as far up as the water rises, some thirty or forty feet. Back from and parallel with the banks of the lake, there are ridges or drifts of sand; between these grow dense thickets of willow, all of the same sombre colour, and the lower limbs decaying, whilst the surface of the earth is covered by the falling branches, that crack and rattle under your feet. The whole scene is dreary, desolate, and offensive—the very atmosphere, loaded with unpleasant odours, falls with a chilling influence on the spirits. There are found here no gay-plumaged birds warbling among the trees—always a bright feature in southern forests—no noisy kingfisher, dashing over the water. The only representatives of the feathered tribe were, an eagle, dreaming on a dead branch projecting from the surface of the water, and the foul birds that feed upon the noisome shore.

After carefully depositing our rifles in the boat, we embarked, and were rowed out and down the lake to a famous "stand"—a raft, formed of a mass of logs that had drifted against the roots of a sunken tree; here I was deposited, whilst the balance of the company continued on about three-quarters of a mile below, to another and similar place. The water out here was of a different colour, and looked less offensive than near the shore. Very unexpectedly I soon found myself deeply interested,—the trout and white perch bit beautifully, and kept me industriously employed in pulling them out.

I had been absorbed by the excitement over an hour, by which time the sun had become oppressively warm, and satisfied with my success I wound up my line, and looked for my companions. They, however, had left the first raft, and proceeded further down the lake, where I could see them intent upon their sport, and, from appearances, profitably employed.

Whilst watching my companions and making signals for their return, I saw an immense alligator "*locomoting*" across the water slightly in direction of my "*location*." I had neglected to take my rifle out of the boat, and I regretted it very much, as he

would probably approach near enough to give me a shot, and I had not killed an alligator. Whilst watching his motions I was nearly thrown into the lake by the plunge of a monster alligator, who was near enough to dash the water over the log on which I was standing. These gar attain an immense size in the lakes—from seven to ten feet long, and strong and bold as a shark. This little incident made me nervous, and the more anxious to get to the shore; I therefore continued my signals, and whilst so employed I was sensible of the approach of something in the water, communicated I presume by the swell, and turning round, beheld within ten feet of me a very large alligator. The log on which I was standing was a large cotton wood, and attached to the raft by its roots. I was some thirty feet from it, and the alligator midway between me and that; I could not therefore reach it without passing close to the alligator, an experiment which I was not inclined to attempt. It would be a very difficult matter for me to describe my feelings at this moment. I will not deny that I was very much alarmed, and commenced retreating towards the top of the tree, from which there was a large strong prong projecting some ten feet above the

water ; but it was a difficult matter to reach it, as a point of the log between me and the prong was submerged, owing, I presume, to a bend in the tree, and here from the rotting bark was growing a clump of tall reeds ; I moved along, however, cautiously and lightly as possible, passed over a portion of the sunken point, and had reached the reeds and considered myself safe, when I discovered a large water moccasin, coiled up and almost under my feet. He lay there basking his loathsome scales in the "noon-tide sultriness," his round diamond-like eyes fixed upon me in a very unequivocal manner, and his long, fiery, and purple-pointed tongue hissing defiance. I was too near to use my fishing-rod, and stepped back to club it and strike. As I did so the snake uncoiled and moved towards me ; this accelerated my retreat, but in an instant I was ready for him, and, throwing myself back, was stung on the calf of my leg by something that made me involuntarily spring forward, and in attempting to leap over the snake in front, my foot slipped and I fell, and snake and all went into the lake together. "There, by — !" was the first thing I said, or rather thought ; "this is what you get by fishing in such a hole as this ! You are now in the

same bed with an alligator, an alligator gar, and at least two snakes !” This, or something near akin to it, crossed my mind as I was going down, not unmingled with a sense of my dangerous and ludicrous situation. I had very little time for reflection, but I knew it would not do to come up in the same place, because if I missed being “gobbled up” by the alligator, I would find a snake ready to twine round my neck as soon as my head appeared above the water, or sink its fangs in my hand if I attempted to keep it off, so I attempted to reach the shore. I swam as far and as long as I could without coming to the surface, and when I did you may rest assured I did not throw away much time. Under I went again, and soon had in some degree recovered my self-possession, when my foot was struck by a large body that made me shrink, and for a moment give up all hope, expecting to be torn to pieces every moment by the alligator ; but in an instant I summoned more resolution, and, straining every nerve, pushed on, and soon reached the shore, half strangled with the thick water, and covered with mud and slime. I presume I must have struck a log with my foot, instead of being struck by the alligator, as I never saw it afterwards. I sat

down on the bank, trying to collect my scattered senses, and in a few moments was joined by my companions, who had discovered something wrong—the boat was despatched for my hat, seen floating near the raft, and for my handkerchief, tied round a small limb on the tree where I had been standing, and with which no doubt I came in contact, when I thought myself “stung on the calf of the leg.” My tale was soon given to my companions in its most frightful form; instead of commiserating my misfortunes, they scarcely retained their gravity long enough for me to finish. This I then thought not only rude, but unfeeling, and I returned to our quarters that night in a very unpleasant mood in consequence.

Soon after our arrival I was introduced with marked ceremony to the “stranger,” and in my familiar intercourse with him soon forgot the vicissitudes of the day—and so endeth my first and last day with the rod on Dismal Lake.

XXIII.

A YANKEE PEDLAR.

YES! I have laughed this morning, and that heartily, but I fear I shall scarce be able to amuse you at second-hand with what depends altogether on certain *un-writable* turns of countenance and manner. The hero of the occasion was an old pedlar, who came jogging along in his hearse-shaped cart, soon after breakfast, and before this dripping humour beset the weather. He stopped his cart on seeing several men at work, and it was not long before the laughter of the men, who usually pursue their business in solemn silence, drew my attention. The aspect of the pedlar secured it, for he was a personification of Momus. His face was very red, and of a most grotesque turn, and his nut-cracker nose and chin were like nobody but Punch. His grey eyes twinkled through a

pair of mock spectacles made of a strip of tin twisted into the requisite form and placed far down his nose, so that he was obliged to throw his head back in order to look through them. When I went to the window, he was enumerating the contents of his covered cart with a bewildering rapidity, but as soon as he observed me, he stopped short, pulled off the remains of an old straw hat, and made a very low bow in the style of Sir Pertinax, who thought the world was to be won by "booing."

"My dear beautiful lady," said he, "could I sell you anything this morning? I sell things for nothing, and I've got most every thing you ever heard tell on. Here's fashionable calicoes,"—holding up a piece of bright scarlet,— "splendid French work collars and capes,"—and here he displayed some hideous things, the flowers on which were distinctly traceable from where I stood,— "elegant milk pans, and Harrison skimmers, and *ne plus ultry* dippers! patent pills, cure anything you like—ague bitters—Shaker yarbs—essences, winter green, peppermint, lobely—tapes, pins, needles, hooks and eyes—broaches and brasslets—smelling bottles—castor ile—corn-plaster—mustard—garding seeds—silver spoons—pocket combs—tea-

pots—green tea—saleratus—tracts, song-books—thimbles—babies' whistles—copy-books, slates, playin' cards—puddin' sticks—butter-prints—baskets—wooden bowls——”

“Any wooden nutmegs, daddy?” said one of the men.

“No, but as I come past I see your father a turnin' some out o' that piece o' lignum vitæ you got him last week,” said the pedlar quietly; then turning again to the window—“Can I suit you to-day, ma'am? I've all sorts o' notions—powder and shot, (but I 'spose you do all your shootin' at home), but may be your old man goes a gunnin'—I sha'n't offer you lucifers, for ladies with sich eyes never buys matches,—but you can't ask me for any thing I havn't got, I guess.”

While I was considering my wants, one of the men must try a fall with this professed wit.

“Any goose-yokes, mister?” said he.

“I'm afraid I've sold the last, sir; there is so many wanted in this section of the country. But I'll take your measure, and fetch you a supply next time I come along.” This of course produced a laugh.

“Well! I want a pair o' boots, any how,” said the prostrate hero, rallying, to show that he was not discomfited. “These here old

ones o' mine lets in gravel, but won't let it out again. If you've got any to fit me, I'll look at 'em." And thus saying he stretched out a leg of curious wire-drawn appearance. "Any to fit, old boss?"

"Fit you like a whistle, sir," said the pedlar, fumbling among his wares, and at length drawing forth a pair of *candle moulds*, much to the amusement of the bystanders.

The rain which had begun to fall now cut short our conference. I bought a few trifles, and the pedlar received his pay with a bow which was almost a salaam. Mounting his blue hearse, he drove off in triumph, not minding the rain, from which he was completely sheltered by a screen of boughs fitted in the sides of his wagon, and meeting over his head,—a protection against sun and rain which I much admired.

XXIV.

“NOT A DROP MORE, MAJOR, UNLESS IT'S
SWEETEN'D.”

IN a small village,* in the southern section of Missouri, resides a certain major, who keeps a small, *cosey*, comfortable little inn, famous for its *sweeten'd drinks*, as well as jovial landlord; and few of the surrounding farmers visit the neighbourhood, without giving the major a friendly call, to taste his *mixtur'*. The gay host, with jolly phiz, round person, bright eye, and military air, deals out the rations, spiced with jokes, which, if they are not funny, are at least laughed at, for the major enjoys them so vastly himself, that his auditors are forced to laugh, out of pure sympathy.

A good old couple, who resided about six

* A very similar story is told of people in a higher class of life in Cumberland, (England), but which is the original I shall not attempt to decide.—*Edit.*

miles from the major's, for a long period had been in the habit of visiting him once a month, and as regularly went home dreadfully *sweeten'd* with the favourite *mixtur'*; but of late, we learn, the amicable relations existing between the major and his old visitors have been broken off by green-eyed jealousy. On the last visit, good cause was given for an end being put to any more “sweet drinking.”

“Uncle Merril, how *are* you, *any* how?” was the major's greeting; “and I *declare* if the missus aint with you, *too*”—just as if he expected she wouldn't come. “What'll you take, missus? shall I *sweeten* you a little of about *the* best Cincinnati rectified that ever was *toted* into these 'ere parts?—it jest looks as bright as your eyes!” and here the major winked and looked so sweet there was no resisting, and she *did* take a little sweeten'd.

The hours flew *merril*-ly by, and evening found the old couple so overloaded with sweets, that it was with great difficulty they could be seated on the old grey mare, to return home; but, after many a kind shake from the host, and just another drop of his sweeten'd, off they jogged, see-sawing from side to side on the critter, the old lady muttering her happiness, and the old man too full to find words to express himself.

“Sich another man as that major,” says she, “ain’t nowhere—and sich a mixtur’ as he *does* make is temptin’ to temperance lecturers. He is an amazin’ nice man, and, if anything, he sweetens the last drop better than the first. Good gracious! what a pleasin’ critter he is!”

Ever and anon these encomiums on the major and his mixture broke from the old lady, until of a sudden, on passing a small rivulet, a jolt of the mare’s silenced them, and the old man rode on a short distance in perfect quietness. At length he broke out with—

“Old woman, you and that ’ere major’s conduct, to day, war *rayther* unbecomin’—his *formalities* war too sweet to be mistook, and you ain’t goin’ *thar* agin in a hurry.”

Silence was the only answer.

“Oh, you’re huffy, are you?” continued the old man. “Well, I guess you can stay so till you give in,” and on he jogged in a silently jealous mood. On arriving at the farm, he called to a negro to lift the old woman off, but *Sam*, the nigger, stood gazing at him in silent astonishment.

“Lift her off, you Sam, do you hear?—and do it carefully, or some of her wrath’ll bile out. In spite of the major’s sweetenin’ she’s mad as thunder.”

“Why, de lor’, massa, de ole ’oman aint dar,” replied Sam, his eyes standing out of his countenance. “Jest turn round, massa, and satisfy you’self dat de ole ’oman clar gone an missin—*de lor’!*”

And sure enough, on a minute examination by the old man, she *was* “found missing.” The major was charged at once with abduction, instant measures were taken for pursuit, and a party despatched to scour the roads. On proceeding about two miles on the road to the major’s, the party were suddenly halted at the small rivulet, by finding the missus with her head lying partly in the little stream, its waters laving her lips, and softly murmuring—“Not a drop more, major, *unless it’s sweeten’d!*”

XXV.

THE INDIAN DEVIL.

OUR winter quarters and employments when lumbering frequently bring us into collision with wild animals of a formidable character. Of these the "Indian devil," or a species of the catamount, is chief. We often track animals of whom we have never gained sight.

Passing along one day in pursuit of timber, my attention was arrested by a track of uncommon size and appearance. It was round, and about the size of a hat crown, and penetrated the snow where it would bear me. I noticed where the creature stepped over a large fallen tree about two feet and a half high. A light snow several inches deep covered the log, which he did not even brush with his belly as he passed over it. From the nature of the track, I knew he did not jump.

His legs could not have been less than three feet in length. After this discovery, I made my way to where the rest of the crew were at work with right good will. A similar track, of probably this same animal, has been seen by many different persons and parties, at places quite remote from each other, for several winters; but no one, that I am aware of, is satisfied that he has yet been seen, unless, indeed, by two or three lads while on the shore of the Grand Lake, who were fishing out of holes cut in the ice near the shore. About half a mile from them a long point made out into the lake, running parallel with the shore, which formed the boundary of a deep cove. The ice had become quite weak; still, it bore them with safety. While busily engaged with their fishing-tackle, their attention was suddenly arrested by a loud, splashing noise, as though some one was struggling in the water; and, on looking for the cause, they saw a large animal endeavouring to make the main land, crossing directly from the point towards them. He continued to break in every few rods, when he would spring out again with the agility of a cat. After getting out, he would stand and look round, then venture forward, and break through as before. The description

they gave of his appearance was that he looked just like an immense cat; appeared to be about four feet high, and five or six feet long, thick set about the head and shoulders, resembling somewhat in this particular the bull-dog. His general colour was quite like that of a mouse, or, to use the boys' own words, "bluish," with light breast and belly. His tail was very long, reaching down quite to the ice, and curled up at the end; this he moved about just as a cat moves its tail. Waiting but a moment to gain this general view, they made for home with all possible dispatch, about one mile distant. Several men, with guns and axes, immediately started for the lake, but nothing further was seen of him. The manner in which the ice was broken fully confirmed the statement made by the boys respecting the size of this unknown creature.

There is an animal in the deep recesses of our forests, evidently belonging to the feline race, which, on account of its ferocity, is significantly called "*Indian devil*"—in the Indian language, "the Lunk Soos;" a terror to the Indians, and the only animal in New England of which they stand in dread. You may speak of the moose, the bear, and the wolf even, and the red man is ready for the

chase and the encounter. But name the object of his dread, and he will significantly shake his head, while he exclaims, "*He all one debil !*"

An individual by the name of Smith met with the following adventure in an encounter with one of these animals on the Arromucto, while on his way to join a crew engaged in timber-making in the woods.

He had nearly reached the place of encampment, when he came suddenly upon one of these ferocious animals. There was no chance for retreat, neither had he time for reflection on the best method of defence or escape. As he had no arms or other weapons of defence, the first impulse, in this truly fearful position, unfortunately perhaps, was to spring into a small tree near by; but he had scarcely ascended his length when the desperate creature, probably rendered still more fierce by the promptings of hunger, sprang upon and seized him by the heel. Smith, however, after having his foot badly bitten, disengaged it from the shoe, which was firmly clinched in the creature's teeth, and let him drop. The moment he was disengaged, Smith sprang for a more secure position, and the animal at the same time leaped to another large tree, about ten feet distant, up which

he ascended to an elevation equal to that of his victim, from which he threw himself upon him, firmly fixing his teeth in the calf of his leg. Hanging suspended thus until the flesh, insufficient to sustain the weight, gave way, he dropped again to the ground, carrying a portion of flesh in his mouth. Having greedily devoured this morsel, he bounded again up the opposite tree, and from thence upon Smith, in this manner renewing his attacks, and tearing away the flesh in mouthfuls from his legs. During this agonizing operation, Smith contrived to cut a limb from the tree, to which he managed to bind his jack-knife, with which he could now assail his enemy at every leap. He succeeded thus in wounding him so badly that at length his attacks were discontinued, and he finally disappeared in the dense forest.

During the encounter, Smith had exerted his voice to the utmost to alarm the crew, who, he hoped, might be within hail. He was heard, and in a short time several of the crew reached the place, but not in time to save him from the dreadful encounter. The sight was truly appalling. His garments were not only rent from him, but the flesh literally torn from his legs, exposing even the bone and sinews. It was with the greatest

difficulty he made the descent of the tree. Exhausted through loss of blood, and overcome by fright and exertion, he sank upon the ground and immediately fainted; but the application of snow restored him to consciousness. Preparing a litter from poles and boughs, they conveyed him to the camp, washed and dressed his wounds as well as circumstances would allow, and, as soon as possible, removed him to the settlement, where medical aid was secured. After a protracted period of confinement, he gradually recovered from his wounds, though still carrying terrible scars, and sustaining irreparable injury. Such desperate encounters are, however, of rare occurrence, though collisions less sanguinary are not unfrequent.

On one occasion, we tracked one of those animals where we had the day before been at work. From appearances, he seemed to have something unusual attached to one of his fore feet, which we judged to be a common steel trap. Returning to the camp for the gun and a lunch, two men started in pursuit. They followed him three days before overtaking him. In one place on the route they measured a bound of fifteen feet, which he made to take a rabbit, which he caught and devoured, leaving only small por-

tions of the hide and fur of his victim. From the course travelled, it was evident that he was aware of his pursuers, whom he unquestionably desired to avoid. On the third day they came in sight of him for the first time. No longer retreating before his pursuers, he now turned upon them. Aware that they could have but one shot, it being impossible to reload before he would be upon them, they suffered him to approach very near, to make their aim more certain. The forest echoed with the report of the discharge; the shot took effect, and a furious scuffle followed. The snow flew, while the enraged and furious growl and gnashing teeth mingled with the clattering trap, and the echo of the powerful blows inflicted upon his head with the shivered breach of the gun, under which he yielded his life to his superior pursuers.

But there is no animal among us with whom encounters are so frequent as the common black bear. Their superior strength, the skill with which they ward off blows, and even wrench an instrument from the hand of an assailant, and their tenacity of life, render them really a formidable antagonist. We have sometimes been diverted, as well as severely annoyed, by their thievish tricks.

In one instance we were followed several days by one of them on our passage up river, who seemed equally bent on mischief and plunder. The first of our acquaintance with him occurred while encamped at the mouth of a small stream, whose channel we were improving by the removal of large rocks which obstructed log-driving. Our camp was merely temporary, so that all our goods were exposed. While we were asleep during the night, he came upon our premises, and selected from the baggage a bundle containing all the winter clothing of one of the men—boots, shaving tools, &c.

His curiosity was too great to allow of a far removal of the pack without an examination of its contents; and never did deputy inspector or constable perform a more thorough search. Duties on the package were inadmissible; the goods were esteemed contraband, and were accordingly confiscated. The wearing apparel was torn into shreds. There was a pair of stout cow-hide boots, of which he tried the flavour; they were chewed up and spoiled. The razor did not escape his inquisitiveness. Whether he attempted to shave we say not, but he tested its palatableness by chewing up the handle.

From this position we removed a few

miles further up stream, where we were to construct a dam, the object of which was to flow the lake, to obtain a good head of water for spring driving. This job being somewhat lengthy, we erected a more permanent camp for our convenience. A few evenings after our settlement at this point, while all hands were in camp, we heard some one moving about on the roof, where a ten-gallon keg of molasses was deposited. At first it was supposed to be a trick by some one of the crew; but on looking round there was no one missing.

Suspecting with more certainty the character of our visitor, we seized a fire-brand or two, and sallied forth like a disturbed garrison of ants, when we discovered that we were minus a keg of molasses. Following in the direction of the retreating thief, we found the keg but a few rods distant, set on one end, with the other torn out. He evidently had intended a feast, but, intimidated by the fire-brands and the hallooing, he had retreated precipitately into his native haunts; but only, as it would seem, to plan another theft. About two hours afterward, when all was still, a noise was again heard in the doorway, similar to that of a hog rooting among the chips, where the cook had thrown his

potato parings. Peering through the crack of the camp door, sure enough, there was Bruin again, apparently as much at home as a house-dog.

We had a gun, but improvidently had left our ammunition at another place of deposit, about a hundred yards distant. Resolved upon chastising him for his insolence in the event of another visit, the lantern was lighted, and the ammunition soon brought to camp.

The gun was now charged with powder and two bullets. We waited some time for his return, first removing a strip from the camp door for a port-hole. Hearing nothing of him, all hands turned in again. About twelve o'clock at night he made us his third visit in the door-yard, as before, and directly in front of the camp, offering a most inviting shot. Creeping softly to the door, and passing the muzzle of the gun through the prepared aperture, our eye glanced along the barrel, thence to a dark object not thirty feet distant. A gentle but nervous pressure upon the trigger, a flash, a sheet of fire, and the very woods shook with the reverberating report, which sent Bruin away upon a plunging gallop. The copious effusion of warm blood which spirted on the chips was evidence that the leaden messenger had faith-

fully done its duty, convincing us that he was mortally wounded, and that it would not be possible for him to run far. Seizing as many fire-brands as could be procured, with axes, and the gun reloaded, all hands dashed into the forest after him, half-naked, just as they had risen from the bed, leaping, yelling, and swinging their fire-brands like so many wild spirits from the regions of fire.

Guided in the pursuit by the cracking of rotten limbs and the rustling of leaves as he heavily plunged on, we pursued him through a dense swamp. From the increased distinctness with which we heard his step, it was evident we were gaining upon him. Soon we heard his laboured breathing. Just before we overtook him, he merged from the swamp, and with much exertion ascended a slight elevation, covered with a fine growth of canoe birch, where, from exhaustion and loss of blood, he lay down, and suffered us to surround him. The inflammable bark of the birch was instantly ignited all round us, presenting a brilliant and wild illumination, which lent its influence to a most unbounded enthusiasm, while our war-dance was performed around the captured and slain marauder. Taken altogether, the scene presented one of the most lively collections of

material for the pencil that we have ever contemplated. There were uncommon brilliancy, life, and animation, in the group. After dispatching, we strung him up and dressed him on the spot, taking only one quarter of his carcass, with the hide, back to camp.

A portion of this was served up next morning for breakfast; but while the sinewy, human-like appearance of the fore leg might have whetted the appetite of a cannibal, a contrary influence was exerted on ours.

More sanguinary was the following encounter, which took place in the vicinity of Tara-height, on the Madawaska River:—
“A trap had been set by one of the men, named Jacob Harrison, who, being out in search of a yoke of oxen on the evening in question, saw a young bear fast in the trap, and three others close at hand in a very angry mood, a fact which rendered it necessary for him to make tracks immediately. On arriving at the farm, he gave the alarm, and, seizing an old dragoon sabre, he was followed to the scene of action by Mr. James Burke, armed with a gun, and the other man with an axe.

“They proceeded direct to the trap, supplied with a rope, intending to take the

young bear alive. It being a short time after dark, objects could not be distinctly seen; but, on approaching close to the scene of action, a crashing among the leaves and dry branches, with sundry other indications, warned them of the proximity of the old animals. When within a few steps of the spot, a dark mass was seen on the ground—a growl was heard—and the confined beast made a furious leap on Jacob, who was in advance, catching him by the legs. The infuriated animal inflicted a severe wound on his knee, upon which he drew his sword, and defended himself with great coolness.

“ Upon receiving several wounds from the sabre, the cub commenced to growl and cry in a frightful and peculiar manner, when the old she-bear, attracted to the spot, rushed on the adventurous Harrison, and attacked him from behind with great ferocity. Jacob turned upon the new foe, and wielded his trusty weapon with such energy and success, that in a short time he deprived her of one of her fore paws by a lucky stroke, and completely disabled her eventually by a desperate cut across the neck, which divided the tendons and severed the spinal vertebræ. Having completed his conquest (in achieving which he found the sword a better weapon

than the axe, the animal being unable to knock it from his hand, every attempt to do so being followed by a wound), he had ample time to dispatch the imprisoned cub at leisure.

“ During the time this stirring and dangerous scene we have related was enacting, war was going on in equally bloody and vigorous style at a short distance. Mr. Burke, having discharged his gun at the other old bear, only slightly wounded him ; the enraged Bruin sprang at him with a furious howl. He was met with a blow from the butt-end of the fowling-piece. At the first stroke the stock flew in pieces, and the next the heavy barrel was hurled a distance of twenty feet among the underwood by a side blow from the dexterous paw of the bear. Mr. Burke then retreated a few feet and placed his back against a large hemlock, followed the while closely by the bear, but, being acquainted with the nature of the animal and his mode of attack, he drew a large hunting-knife from his belt, and, placing his arms by his side, coolly awaited the onset.

“ The maddened brute approached, growling and gnashing his teeth, and with a savage spring encircled the body of the hunter

and the tree in his iron gripe. The next moment the flashing blade of the *couteau chasse* tore his abdomen, and his smoking entrails rolled upon the ground. At this exciting crisis of the struggle, the other man, accompanied by the dog, came up in time to witness the triumphal close of the conflict.

“Two old bears and a cub were the fruits of this dangerous adventure—all extremely fat—the largest of which, it is computed, would weigh upwards of two hundred and fifty pounds. We have seldom heard of a more dangerous encounter with bears, and we are happy to say that Mr. Burke received no injury; and Mr. Jacob Harrison, although torn severely, and having three ribs broken, recovered under the care of an Indian doctor of the Algonquin tribe.

XXVI.

SKETCHES OF CHARACTER IN FLORIDA.

ON a late passage up the Chattahoochee river, I met with a few choice spirits that could relate an occasional anecdote, which may be as well recorded for future use where they will keep. The first I will call the

FAT TURKEY.

One of my fellow passengers was a planter of East Florida, by the name of Cole—a gentleman of great humour, and a fund of anecdote. He was out one day with one of that remarkable genus of people who fill up a space in the piney woods of this world, who have a dialect peculiar to the race; some particular items of which were new to Mr. C., and one word knocked him entirely off his feet.

After getting a first-rate location, the

native undertook to call up a turkey for my unpractised friend to shoot. The call had not been continued long before a fine glossy old gobbler walked up in fair range, and my friend was drawing a fine bead on him, when the Cracker tapped him on the shoulder, and said, in a sort of patronising tone—"My God! Mr. Cole, he is *miserably fat*." The time, tone, and peculiar phrase, took him so unawares that he yielded to impulse, dropped his gun, and rolled over in a convulsion of laughter, so provoking to his companion at the loss of the shot and the *miserably fat* turkey, that he was ready to whip him on the spot.

OUT OF SOAP.

It is well known that pine wood will not make ashes that afford any potash, and therefore it is necessary, before the good wife can make that indispensable article of household economy, soft soap—so much used by neat ladies and polite politicians—that the head of the house, who is universally designated by the wife as *him* or *he*, should provide a supply of hard wood—always designated as *ash-wood*, whether oak or hickory.

My friend and a companion called one day at one of those piney woods mansions of

health and happiness (in a horn), and found the lady and upwards of seven children in the doorway; she hastily rose, dragging a lot of the dirty little responsibilities out of the way, saying—"Du come in, if you can git in for the nastiness—but I can't help it, for *he* won't git any *ash-wood*, and I'm clean out of soap."

Wonder if all the dirty houses are chargeable to the same cause, that the *he* one of the family won't get any *ash-wood*.

PRECISION.

"Mrs. Wood, are your daughters at home?"

"Wal, they ain't, stranger—I can tell that, for sure."

"Can you tell me where they are gone, Mrs. Wood?"

"Wal, I can that! They are gone to *old* Mr. Oliver's, to a *ball*—and that is where they are gone precisely."

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

A gentleman was once travelling through Alabama when water was not the most abundant article, when he discovered a specimen of a one-mule cart—such as some of the good citizens of North Carolina use for pur-

poses of emigration, when they are necessitated to seek a new location, in consequence of the supply of material for the manufacture of tar failing in the old homestead. Every appearance indicated a camp for the night, though the only person moving was a "right smart chunk of a boy," who was evidently in trouble. The inside of the cart gave a constant strain of baby music, and a succession of groans, indicating deep distress. This, and the grief of the boy, aroused the kind sympathy of the traveller, and he rode up and inquired if anything was the matter.

"Is anything the matter?" replied the boy—"I should think there was. Do you see that old feller lying there, drunk as thunder?—that's dad. Do you hear them groanings?—that's the old woman; got the ague like blazes! Brother John he's gone off in the woods to play poker for the mule, with an *entire* stranger. Sister Sal has gone scooting through the bushes with a half-bred Ingen, and —— if *I* know what *they* are up to; and do you hear that baby? don't he go it with a looseness!—well he does that—and he is in a bad fix at that, and it is a mile to water, and there isn't the first drop of licker in the jug; and ain't that matter enough? Won't you light, stranger?—Dad 'll get

sober, and Sal will be back arter a bit. Darn'd if this ain't moving, though. *Is anything the matter?*—shouldn't think there was much, no how. Give us a chaw of ter-backer, will ye, stranger?

WHO HAS SEEN BILL JEWITT?

“I say, mister, is your name Judge Mays? 'cause as how if 'tis, you are just the man for my money,” said a tall specimen of the linsey-woolsey order, as he walked into the judge's office one day, in Madison county, Florida, whip in hand, with a general expression of the immigrant from *ferrin* parts, and wearing a very easy devil-may-care sort of expression.

The judge gave him to understand he was that same.

“Well, I thought as how, seeing you had right smart of law books about, for they told me you was a powerful high larnt man, and knew more about these Floridays than any other man in 'em, and if any man living could tell me about my brother-in-law, you jist could, and no mistake.”

“I shall be very happy to serve you. Who is your brother-in-law?”

“Who is he? why Bill Jewitt, to be sure. I married a Jewitt—Sally Jewitt—daughter

of old Joe Jewitt, you knew him, I reckon—he lived in South Carolina. Didn't you come from there, squire? Well, I married old Joe's daughter—miserable fine woman, she is. Do you see that wagon, judge? well, squire, she is in that wagon, she is—unless may be she's gone out with some of the children arter water, or something of that sort; got four powerful fine boys, colonel; and now if you will tell me where to find Bill Jewitt, we'll just light down on him, for my wife is right smart tired of moving—come all the way from South Carolina, Abbeville district, in that machine, and my critters are nigh upon't gin out. I tell you what it is, mister, 'tween you and me, some of them Georgians are mighty hard cases, and when corn is a dollar a bushel they don't feed free, that's a fact; and I 'spect Bill Jewitt has got right smart of corn, for he *fotched* off some powerful likely nigger fellers, and he had a mighty big chance of money, and I expect he's right well off for corn, as well as all sorts of roughness, and I du wont to jist ungear my animals, and get them in his lot, and the old woman sorter under cover like. And so you see, stranger, I'm powerful anxious to find Bill Jewitt, that are a fact, and if you've got any carnal knowledge of

the critter, let it out, and I'll be mighty obleeged, for my old woman is gitting sorter oneasy like, that we shan't find the tarnal varmint, now we've got here arter such a sight of trouble."

The judge saw he had *a case*, if not a fee.

"And so you are brother-in-law to Bill, are you?"

"Well, I am that. So you do know him, then—I thought so."

"And you married old Joe Jewitt's daughter of Abbeville district?"

"Well, I didn't marry anybody else. Well, now, I reckoned as how you must knowed him, for they told me over to the grocery there, that if any man on this yarth could tell me where to find Bill Jewitt, that Judge Mays was jist that man, and no mistake. I must holler over to the old woman, for I see she is sticking her hand out of the wagon, sort of impatient like, and let her know we have found her brother, my brother-in-law, Bill Jewitt. Hurrah!"

"Wait a little. Let us make out the case quite clear."

"Precisely, stranger. I'll vote for you any way you can fix it."

"And your wife's name is Sally, the eldest daughter of old Joe Jewitt?"

“Why how on earth did you know her name? Why you are acquainted with the family, that’s a fact. Yes, she is the oldest darter, and Bill is next—that’s all the old man ever had, except young Joe, and he was by a another woman like. Bad business, stranger, this marrying a second time. Now, then, my wife and Bill would had all the old man’s estate, if hadn’t been for that second marriage; six likely nigger fellers, and right smart of women and children, and some powerful fine mules, besides all the housel plunder, and then the land is some account, any how.”

“And you’ve been five weeks on the road, and are getting tired?”

“We are that, and we want to drive right spang into Bill Jewitt’s lot. I don’t care how quick. Is it far?”

“Let us see. We must be sure we have made out the case before we decide. Bill moved here in the year eighteen hundred and thirty——”

“Seven. Yes, sir. Why, you remember the very time.”

“That is, he left South Carolina that year?”

“Yes, sir, and said he was going right straight down to them Floridays, and he had

the money to do it. He onderstood horses mighty well, and, more'n that, he'd shave a note as quick as any man."

"And he wrote you that he had settled in the —— "

"Promised land! Yes, he did; that is, he got somebody to do that thing. I reckon as how you must have writ that letter, squire, as you seem to know all about Bill Jewitt, just as well as those that made him."

"And you are very anxious to find your respected brother-in-law, William Jewitt, Esquire?"

"Why, thunder, gin'ral, you don't say Bill has got to be squire down here in these Floridays. I must tell the old woman."

"Wait a moment; I am just about to decide upon your case. You have given us a very interesting statement of facts in the case, from which we learn that *old Joe Jewitt*, of *Abbeville* district, South Carolina, had two children, the eldest of which, who was known by the soft and euphonious name of *Sal*, is now your old woman. The youngest was his son *Bill*, who emigrated to the *Floridays*—the promised land—in the year 1837, with sundry negroes, plenty of money, a good understanding of horses, and a disposition to shave notes. As to yourself, the evidence is

conclusive, that you married the aforesaid Sal, and that you are now yourself just entering upon this promised land in the *Floridays*, in anxious pursuit of the aforesaid Bill Jewitt, and you have been referred to me for information."

"Well, now, judge, I 'spose that is all according to law, but I don't exactly understand all the high larnt terms, though there is no mistake; but I do want to know some information about Bill Jewitt, so I can drive right straight there and feed my critters, for not the first bite of corn have they had a smell at to-day, and I have only had one half-pint of any kind of drink myself; and it's contrary to human natur that any team can stand such feed."

"Woll! as you are anxious to finish your long journey, I won't detain you. Do you see that road? That leads directly towards the promised land of South Florida. I think that must be where Bill Jewitt lives, as I never heard of such a Bill among all the bills in chancery, chance, or equity, including some tavern-bills without equity, in all the Eastern, Middle, or Western *Floridays*, and if your Bill is anywhere in these days, he must be in South *Floriday*. At any rate, if you don't find Bill Jewitt there, you will

be sure to find Bill Borolegs, and I have no doubt he can feed your critters, and will be as ready to shave your notes as your honoured brother-in-law, whom, I am very sorry to say, I never saw and never heard of, except from yourself."

If a small chunk of thunder had dropped suddenly upon the astonished brother-in-law of Bill Jewitt, it would probably have astonished him less than this speech; the only part of which he fully understood was, that with all the legal knowledge of the judge, he did not know "Where is Bill Jewitt."

XXVII.

A SACONDAGA DEER HUNT.

THE September dawn broke brilliantly upon Sacondaga Lake. The morning did not slowly awake with a yellow light that gradually warmed into the flush of day ; but rudely and abrupt, the bold streaks shot from behind the mountains high in the heavens, spreading themselves on their path like the fires of the aurora borealis, and dyeing the lake, in which they were reflected, with hues as vivid as those of the pointed forests that walled its waters. We had left our camp, however, long before the stars grew dim.

The hunt was divided into three parties, each with different duties assigned to them by one who took the direction.

The first, who were the drivers, had the hounds in charge ; they were to take three

different routes, and slip their leashes, after a certain time had elapsed, wherever they might find themselves. They had light guns, and from knowing every creek and swamp in the country, could follow the dogs to advantage, even when on a fresh track. The second party, who were all armed with long rifles, were to go on the stations; these were old foresters, who knew every run away for miles about, and each of whom might be relied upon as staunch at his post should the chase last for hours. The third party took the skiffs and canoes; a number of the latter being easily shifted to the adjacent waters, so that every lake within several miles of our rendezvous had two or more boats upon it. Lastly, upon a hill overlooking the cluster of lakes, was placed a keen-eyed lad, furnished with a horn, whose duty it was to blow a signal, the moment he saw the deer take the water.

My friend and myself were attached to the boat party; a skiff with light sculls fell to my lot alone, but my companion, more fortunate, was assigned to a bark canoe with one of the Indians. These arrangements having been made the night before, were put in action in a very few moments. The strand seemed alive with figures for a

minute only, as we emerged from the thicket wherein our wigwam was secreted, and then while some plunged into the forest, and others glided in their gray shallops around the dusky headlands, the scene of our last night's revels became as silent as if nothing but the chirp of the squirrel or the scream of the jay had ever wakened its echoes. So still indeed was it at that early hour in the morning, when the birds had hardly begun to rouse themselves, that I was almost startled by the click of my own oars in the rowlocks as they broke the glassy surface of the lake, while I pulled with an easy stroke for a little islet, which I had ample leisure to gain before the dogs would be let slip. Here the drooping boughs of a tall hemlock, which seemed to flourish not less luxuriantly because the towering stem above them was scathed and blasted, screened my boat from view as I ran her under the rocky bank. Having deposited my gun in the bow, with the breech still so near me that I could reach it from midships in so small a craft, I arranged the wooden yoke, or halter, with the pole at my feet and the noose hanging over the stern, so that I was prepared for action in any way that might offer itself. This yoke is nothing more nor less than a forked sapling

with a noose of rope or grape-vine at the end, to throw over a wounded deer's horns when your shot does not stop his swimming. If unskilfully managed, the animal is likely to upset your boat in the effort to take him thus ; but there are men upon these lakes so adroit in the use of this rude weapon, that they prefer it to fire-arms when the hunting knife is at hand to give the game the *coup de grace*.

There is nothing in the world like being a few hours on a hunting station, with every sense upon the alert to familiarize one with the innumerable sounds and noises that steal up in such "creeping murmurs" from the stillest forest. A man may walk the woods for years and be conscious only of the call of birds or the cry of some of the larger animals making themselves heard above the rustling of his own footsteps. But watching thus for your quarry, in a country abounding in game, and when it may steal upon you at any moment, interest approaches almost to anxiety; and intense eagerness for sport makes the hearing as nice as when fear itself lends its unhappy instinct to the senses.

Myriads of unseen insects appear to be grating their wings beneath the bark of every tree around you, and the "piled

leaves," too damp to rustle in the breeze, give out a sound as if a hundred rills were creeping beneath their plaited matting. It is, in fact, no exaggeration to say that the first bay of a hound at such a moment breaks almost like thunder upon the ear. So, at least, did it come now upon mine, as a long, deep-mouthed yell was pealed from a valley opposite, and echoed back from hill to hill around me. The sharp crack of a rifle followed, and then cry after cry, as some fresh dog opened, the stirring chorus came swelling on the breeze. Each second I expected to hear the signal-horn, or see the chase emerging from the forest wherever the indented shore indicated the mouth of a brook along its margin.

Not a bush, however, moved near the water, the mountains were alive around, but the lake was as untroubled as ever, save when a flock of ducks feeding near me flapped their wings once or twice at the first outcry, and then resumed their unmolested employment. The sudden burst had died away in the distance, the chase had probably been turned by the single piece that was discharged; and now leading over the farther hills, its sounds became fainter and fainter, until, at last, they died away entirely.

An hour had elapsed, and, damp, chilly, and somewhat dispirited, I still maintained my motionless position. A slight breeze had arisen upon the lake, and the little waves, rippling against my boat, made a monotonous flapping sound that almost lulled me asleep. I was indeed, I believe, fairly verging upon a most inglorious nap upon my post, when a sharp, eager yell started me from my doze, and made me seize our oars in a moment. It came from a broad deep bay locked in by two headlands on my right. The farther side of the bay was a marsh, and there, bounding through the tall sedges, I beheld a noble buck, with a single hound about a gunshot behind him. Strangely enough, he seemed to have no disposition to take the water, but, leaping with prodigious strides over the long grass, he kept the margin for a few moments, and then struck into a tamarack swamp that fringed the opening. It was but an instant that he was lost, however; a simultaneous cry from half-a-dozen hounds told that he was turned in that direction. He appeared again upon a rocky ledge where some lofty pines, with no underwood, were the only cover to screen him. But now his route carried him unavoidably out of the line of my station. I knew that there were

those beyond who would care for him, but in the vexation of my heart at losing my shot, I could hardly help cursing the poor animal as I saw him hurry to destruction. The height of the cliffs seemed alone to prevent him from taking the water; and I could almost fancy that he looked hurriedly around, while bounding from crag to crag, for a spot where he might best make his plunge. The dogs were now silent—they had not yet issued from the covert—but the moment they emerged from the wood and caught sight of the game, they opened with a yell which made the deer spring from the high bank as if he was leaping from the very jaws of his pursuers. Now came my first moment of action; I might even yet, I thought, be not too late; I seized my oars, and the tough ash quivered in my hands as I sent the skiff flying over the water.

The buck was swimming from me, but he had a broad bay to cross before he could gain the opposite side of the lake. In this bay, and between me and his direct track, was a wooded islet, and by taking an oblique direction I tried, as well as possible, to keep it between myself and the hard-pressed animal, in order that, not seeing me, he might still keep on the same course. I must have been

nearly abreast of the islet. The route of the deer was only a few hundred yards in advance, and directly at right angles to that which I was steering—I might yet cut him off from the opposite shore—the dogs would prevent him returning from that he had left, and I would certainly overtake him should he attempt to make for the bottom of the bay, which was still distant. The moisture started thick upon my brow from exertion, and the knees of my frail shallop cracked as I impelled her through the water.

But there were other players in the game beside myself—cooler, more experienced, equally alert, and better situated for winning. The canoe in which was my friend “The Barrister,” with the Indian, was concealed on the opposite side of the islet, and, having watched the whole progress of the chase, waited only for the buck to come in a line with it before launching in a pursuit sure to be successful. The moment for striking arrived just as I passed the islet, and then, swift as a falcon on the stoop, the arrowy bark shot from its covert and darted across the water. The effect was more like a vision than any scene I can recall. My friend was nearly concealed from view as he lay on his breast, with his piece levelled directly over

the prow of the canoe, waiting for the Indian to give the word to fire ; but the person of the latter was fully exposed, and with the most striking effect, as he stood erect in the stern, stripped to the waist, and with every muscle in his swarthy frame brought into action as he plied his flashing paddle. His long hair streamed on the wind, and with piercing eyes and features, strained with eager and intense excitement, gave an almost unearthly aspect to his countenance. The dogged and listless look which characterized him a few hours before, seemed to have been thrown off with the tattered garb that disguised without covering his person ; and the keen-eyed, clean-limbed hunter now revealed to view, bore no more resemblance to the sullen and shabby vagrant of yesterday, than does a thorough-bred and mettlesome racer, spurning the green turf with glowing hoof, to the rickety and broken-down hackney that steals through the dirty suburbs of a city. The ludicrous cries, however, that broke from him at him every moment, afforded a most whimsical contrast to his picturesque appearance. “ Yarrh ! whiteman ! ” — “ San Marie ! no fire ! ” — “ Howh ! diable Poagun ! ” — “ Dame de Lorette ! Corlaer, be ready — Sacre — Weenuc ! ” and a dozen other

epithets and exclamations, catholic and heathen, Indian, English, and Canadian, burst in a torrent from his lips. Suddenly, however, discovering he had gained sufficiently upon the buck, he stopped paddling, and, in good calm English, gave his directions to his companion as coolly as if now certain of the prize.

The other then covered the deer's head with his rifle as he swam directly from him, but still he waited for the proper moment. It came just as the buck touched the ground with his fore feet; a projecting rock received him, and he reared his antlers high above the water, while his hinder parts were yet submerged in making good his landing. "Fire!" cried the hunter, and at that instant the ball struck him in the spine, a few inches behind the ears. The animal bent forward beneath the blow, and then, endeavouring to raise his head, he toppled over backwards, and slipped off the rock into the lake, an unresisting carcass.

My skiff shot alongside the canoe at that instant; but, though within hearing of all that passed, I was, of course, too late for a shot. The buck, which proved a noble fellow, was soon lifted into the boat, while together we pulled leisurely for the rendez-

vous on the opposite side of the lake. There the different members of the hunt came gradually dropping in one after another. A yearling, with his horns yet in the velvet, and a doe in tolerable condition, were the only other fruits of the hunt. But all were loud in praising the buck as the finest and fattest that had been taken near the lake during the season. For several hours the woods rang with merriment, as, kindling our fires upon a broad rock, we feasted upon the spoils of the chase; and our revel was only brought to an end by the close of the day, when, embarking leisurely to steer for our camp, the echoing halloo of the last loiterer faded over the hills as his boat rounded the nearest headland, and finally left the shore to solitude and silence.

XXVIII.

THE TRAPPERS' STORY.

“YE see, strangers,” said the old man, “or Bossoners (though I spect it don’t make no pertikelar dif’rence what I calls ye, so it don’t hurt your feelins none), as I sez afore, I was raised down to Arkansaw, or thereabouts, and it’s nigh on to sixty year now sence I fust tuk a center-shot at daylight, and in course I’ve forgot all the feelins a fust sight gin me. Howsomever, that’s nothin here nor tother.—(I say, Will, *ef* you’ve got that thar bottle about you, I doesn’t mind a taste, jest to grease this here bacca—augh! Thankee, Will, you’re some *you* is.)

“ Well, strangers, you needn’t ’spect I’m agoin to gin ye my whole hist’ry, case I isn’t, and don’t know’s I could *ef* I wanted to, case most on’t’s forgot. So now I’ll jest jump o’er a card o’ time, and come down to ’bout four

year ago come next Feberry, when it was so all-fired cold, it froze icykels on to the star rays, and stoped 'em comin down; and the sun froze so he couldn't shine; and the moon didn't git up at all, *she* didn't; and this here arth was as dark nor a stack o' chowdered niggers."

Here the Irishman, unable to stand it longer, roared out—

"Howly saints! ye're not spaking truth, now, Misther Black George?"

"Aint I, though?" answered the old trapper, gravely, slyly tipping the wink to one of his companions. "D'ye think I'd lie 'bout it? You remembers the time, Will?"

"Well I does, hoss," replied Will, with a grin.

"In course ye does, and so doos everybody that knowed anything 'bout it. I may hev exaggerted a leetle 'bout the stars and them things, but I jest tell ye what was fact and no mistake, and I'll be dog-gone ef I doesn't stake my v'racity on its bein true's preachin!"

Here the old man made a pause.

"Well, well, go on!" cried I.

"Ay, ay!" echoed Huntly.

"Well," said Black George, "a leetle drap more o' that critter—jest a taste—case the truth makes me so infernal dry, you can't

tell. Augh! thankee—(returning the bottle)—feel myself agin now. But let's see, whar was I?"

"You were speaking about the weather."

"So I was, that's a fact; I'll be dog-gone ef I wasn't! Well, as I's a sayin, it got so cold that when you throwed water up in the air, it all froze afore it could git down, and acterly had to stay thar, case it froze right on to the atmospheric."

"On to what?"

"The atmospheric."

"What is that?"

"You doesn't know what atmospheric is? Well, I'll be dog-gone ef I'm goin to 'lighten nobody; much's I ken do to understand for myself. But I knows the water froze to that article, for that's what I hearn a schollard call it, and I reckon he knowd a heap any how."

"Well, well, the story," cried I.

"Yes, well, I haint got through tellin how cold it was yit. Not only the water froze to the atmospheric, but the animals as used to run o'nights all quit the business, and you could walk right up to one and pat him han'some; case why—his eye-sight was all froze right up tight to his head. Fact! I'll be dog-gone ef it wasn't!

“ Well, I’d bin out trappin, and had made a purty good lick at it, and was comin down to Bent’s Fort, to make a lounge for the winter—leastwise for what was left on’t—when jest as I crossed Cherry Creek, arter having left the Sothe Platte, I wish I may be smashed, ef I didn’t see ’bout a dozen cussed Rapahos (Arrapahoes) coming toward me on hosses, as ef old Nick himself was arter ’em. I looked around me, and darned o’ a thing could I see but snow and ice—and the snow was froze so hard that the hosses’ and muleys’ feet didn’t make no impression on’t. I was all alone, hoss-back, with three good muleys, all packed han’some; for Jim Davis—him as travelled with me—and Andy Forsker, another chap that made our party—had gone round another way, jest for fear o’ them same painted heathen as was now comin up. But ye see I’d bin bolder nor them, and now I was a-goin to pay for’t, sartin; for I seed by thar looks they was bound to ‘raise hair’* ef I didn’t do somethin for my country quicker. I looked all around me, and thought I was a gone beaver fast enough. I had a purty good hoss under me, and I knowed he only *could* save me, and a mighty slim chance he’d have on’t at that. However, I reckoned it wasn’t best to say die

* Take my scalp.

ef I could live, and I didn't like the notion o' bein 'rubbed out'* by sich a dog-gone, scrimptious lookin set o' half humans as them thar Rapahos. I cast around me, and seed that old Sweetlove (rifle), and her pups (pistols), and my butchers (knife and tomahawk), was all about; and so I jest swore I'd set my traps and make one on 'em 'come,' ef I 'went a wolfin' for it.

"I said thar was 'bout a dozen—maybe more—and they was ticklin thar hosses' ribs mighty han'some, you'd better believe, and a comin for me with a perfect looseness, every one on 'em carryin a bow, and every bow bent with an arrer in it. I knowed my muleys was gone sartin, and all iny traps and furs; but jest then I felt so all-fired mad, that I thought ef I could throw a couple, I wouldn' care a kick. So instead o' trying to run away, I hollered 'Whoa' to the animals, and waited for the redskins to come up—(Jest a drap more o' that, Rash, ef you please; for this here hoss is as dry to-night as a dog-woried skunk).

"Well, on they comes, thunderin away like a newly invented arthquake, and I 'spected for sartin I was a gone beaver. Jest afore they got up so as they could let thar shafts riddle me, the infernal cowards seein

* Killed.

as how I didn't budge, had the oudaciousness to come to a halt, and stare at me as ef I was a kangaroo. I raised Sweetlove, and told her to tell 'em I's about, and 'some in a bar fight.' She answered right han'some, did Sweetlove, and down the for'ard one drapped right purty, *he* did. Well, this sot the rest on 'em in a rage, and afore I knowed it they was all round me, yellin like the old Scratch. Half-a-dozen shafts come hiss in through my buckskins, and two on 'em stuck right in my meat-bag, and made me feel all over in spots like a Guinea nigger. Instanter I pulled out Sweetlove's pups, and set 'em to barkin, and two more o' the humans drapped down to see how the snow felt. Knowin it wasn't no use to be foolin my time, I jerked the ropes, and told Skinflint to travel afore my hair was raised, leavin the muleys to do what they liked.

"Seein me a-goin, the oudacious Rapahos thought they'd stop me; but I did right through 'em purty, and got another arrer in my back for it.

"Arter I'd got away, I looked round and seed two on 'em a-comin like all possessed, with thar lariats doubled for a throw. I knowed ef they got near enough, I'd be snaked off like a dead nigger, and my hair

raised afore I could say Jack Robinson. Maybe I didn't ax Skinflint to do his purtiest, and maybe he didn't, hey! Why he left a trail o' fire behind him, as he went over that frozen snow, that looked for all nater like a streak o' big lightnin. But it didn't seem to be o' no use; for the infernal scamps come thunderin on, jest about so far behind, and I seed thar hosses was all o' the right stuff. The sun was about a two hour up, and thar he stayed, *he* did; for it was so almighty cold, as I said afore, he couldn't git down to hide.

“ Well, on we run, and run, and run, till the hosses smoked and puffed like a Massassip steamer, and still we run. I made tracks as nigh as I could calculate for the mountains in the direction o' Pike's Peak, and on we went, as ef old Brimstone was arter us. I calculated my chasers 'ud git tired and gin in; but they was the real grit, and didn't seem to mind it. At last they begun to gain on me, and I knowed from 'the signs' o' Skinflint, that he'd hev to go under, sure's guns, ef I didn't come to a rest purty soon. You'd better believe I felt queer jest then, and thought over all my sins, with the arrers stickin in my belly and back like all git out. I tried to pray; but

I'd never larnt no prayers when a pup, and now I was too old a dog to ketch new tricks; besides, it was so all-fired cold, that my thoughts stuck in my head like they was pinned thar with icykels. I'd bin chased afore by the Commanches and Blackfoot, by the Pawnees and Kickapoos, by the Crows and Chickasaws, but I'd never had sich feelins as now. The short on't is, boys, I was gittin the squaw into me, and I knowed it; but I'll be dog-gone ef I could help it, to save my hair, that stood up so stiff and straight as to raise my hat and let the atmospheric in about a feet. I was gittin outrageous cold too, and could feel my heart pumpin up icykels by the sack full, and I knowed death was about sartin as daylight.

“ ‘Well,’ sez I to myself, ‘old hoss, you’ve got to go under and lose your top-knot, so what’s the use a kickin?’ ”

“ ‘Howsomever,’ I answered, ‘sposin I has, I reckon’s best to die game, aint it?’— and with this I pulled old Sweetlove round and commenced fodderin her as best I could. She knowed what was wanted, did Sweetlove, and looked right sassy, I’ll be dog-gone ef she didn’t.

“ ‘You’re a few, aint you?’ ” sez I, as I rammed home an all-fired charge of powder, that made her grunt like forty.

“Well, I turned round, fetched her up to her face, and ‘drawin a bead’* on to the nearest, pulled the trigger.

“Now you needn’t believe it without ye take a notion, but I’ll be rumfuzzled (Stir that fire, Ned, or this here meat won’t git toasted till midnight) ef she didn’t hold shoot about a minnet, and I all the time squintin away too, afore the fire could melt the ice round the powder and let her off. That’s a fact!—I’ll be dog-gone ef it wasn’t!

“Well, she went off at last, *she* did, with a whoosss-k cheeesss-cup cho-bang, and I hope I may be dogged for a possum, ef one o’ my chasers didn’t hev to pile himself on a level with his moccasin right han’some. Now I thought as how this ’ud start the wind out o’ t’other, and put him on the back’ard track. But it didn’t. He didn’t seem to mind it no more’n’s ef it was the commonest thing out.

“‘Well,’ thinks I to myself, ‘maybe you’ll ketch a few ef you keep foolin your time that-a-ways;’ and so I set to work and foddered Sweetlove agin.

“By this time poor Skinflint, I seed, was gittin top-heavy right smart, and I knowed ef I done anything, it ’ud hev to be did afore

* Taking close sight.

the beginnin o' next month, or 'twouldn't be o' no use, not a darned bid. Well, I tuk squint agin, plum-center, and blazed away; but hang me up for bar's meat, ef it made the least dif'rence with the skunk of a Rapaho. I was perfect dumfouzled; complete used up; for I'd never missed a target o' that size afore, sence I was big enough to shoot pop-guns to flies. I felt sort a chawed up. Never felt so all of a heap afore but once't, and that was when I axed Suke Harris to hev me, and she said 'No.'

"Now you'd better calculate I hadn't no great deal o' time to think, for thar he was—the cussed Injin—jest as plain as the nose on your face, and a-comin full split right at me, with his rope quirled in his hand, jest ready for a throw. Quicker as winkin I foddered Sweetlove agin, and gin him another plum-center, which in course I spected would knock the hindsights off on him. Did it? Now you ken take my possibles, traps and muleys, ef it did. Did it? No! reckons it didn't. Thar he sot, straight up and down, a thunderin on jest as ef the arth was made for his special purpose. I begun to git skeered in arnest, and thought maybe it was the devil deformed into a Injin; and I'd a notion to put in a silver bullet, only I didn't happen to have none 'bout me.

“ On he come, the scamp, and on I bolted—or tried to rayther—for Skinflint had got used up, and down he pitched, sending me right plum over his noddle on to my back, whar I lay sprawlin like a bottle o’ spilt whiskey.

“ ‘It’s all up now, and I’m a gone possum,’ sez I, as I seed the Injin come tearin ahead; and I drewed the old butcher, and tried to feed one o’ the pups, but my fingers was so numb I couldn’t.

“ Well up rides old Rapaho, lookin as savage nor a meat-axe, his black eyes shinin like two coals o’ fire. Well now, what d’ye think he did? Did he shoot me? No! Did he rope (lasso) me? No! Did he try to? No, I’ll be dog-gone ef he did!”

“ What did he do?” inquired I quickly.

“ Ay, ay, what did he do?” echoed Huntly.

“ Howly Mary! if ye knows what he did, Misther George, spaak it jist, an relave yer mind now,” put in the Irishman.

The old trapper smiled.

“ Rash,” he said, “ ef that thar bottle isn’t empty, I’ll jist take another pull.”

“ Taint all gone yet,” answered Rash Will; “ ’spect ’twill be soon; but go it, old hoss, and gin us the rest o’ that — Rapahos affair.”

The old man drank, smacked his lips, smiled, and remarked,

“How comfortable deer meat smells!”

“But the Rapaho,” cried I, “what did he do?”

“Do!” answered black George, with a singular expression that I could not define; “Do! why he rid up to my hoss and stopped, *he* did; and didn’t do nothin else, *he* didn’t.”

“How so?”

“Case he was done for.”

“Dead?”

“As dog meat—augh!”

“Ah! you had killed him, then?” cried I.

“No, I hadn’t, though.”

“What then?”

“He’d died himself, *he* had.”

“How, died?”

“Froze, young Bossons, froze as stiff nor a white oak.”

“Froze!” echoed two or three voices, mine among the rest.

“Yes, blaze my old carcass and send me a wolfin, ef he hadn’t! and I, like a —— fool, had bin runnin away from a dead nigger. Maybe I didn’t swear some, and say a few that aint spoke in the pulpit. You’d jest better believe, strangers, I felt soft as a chowdered possum.”

“But how had he followed you, if he was dead?”

“He hadn't, not pertikerlarly; but his hoss had; for in course he didn't know his rider was rubbed out, and so he kept on arter mine, till the divin o' old Skinflint fetched him up a-standin.”

“Of course you were rejoiced at your escape?”

“Why, sort o' so, and sort o' not; for I felt so all-fired mean, to think I'd bin runnin from and shootin to a dead Injin, that for a long spell I couldn't git wind enough to say nothin.

“At last I sez, sez I, ‘This here's purty business now, aint it? I reckons, old beaver, you've had little to do, to be foolin your time and burnin your powder this way;’ and then I outs with old butcher, and swore I'd raise his hair.

“Well, I coaxed my way up to his old hoss, and got hold on himself; but it wasn't a darned bit o' use; he was froze tight to the saddle. I tried to cut into him, but I'll be dog-gone ef my knife 'ud enter more'n 'twould into a stone. Jest then I tuk a look round, and may I be rumbuzzled, ef the sun hadn't got thaw'd a leetle, and arter strainin so hard, had gone down with a jump right behind a big ridge.

“ ‘Well,’ sez I, ‘this nigger’d better be making tracks somewhar, or he’ll spile, sure.’

“So wishin ald Rapaho a pleasant time on’t, I tried Skinflint, but findin it wasn’t no go, I gathered up sich things from my possibles as I couldn’t do without, pulled the arrers out o’ me, and off I sot for a ridge ’bout five mile away.”

XXIX.

OPERATIVE DEMOCRACY;

OR, GIRL HUNTING.

“CAN’T you let our folks have some eggs?” said Daniel Webster Larkins, opening the door, and putting in a little straw-coloured head and a pair of very mild blue eyes just far enough to reconnoitre; “can’t you let our folks have some eggs? Our old hen don’t lay nothing but chickens now, and mother can’t eat pork, and she a’n’t had no breakfast, and the baby a’n’t drest, nor nothin’!”

“What’s the matter, Webster? Where’s your girl?”

“Oh! we ha’n’t no girl but father, and he’s had to go ’way to-day to a raisin’—and mother wants to know if you can’t tell her where to get a girl.”

Poor Mrs. Larkins! Her husband makes

but an indifferent "girl," being a remarkable public-spirited person. The good lady is in very delicate health, and having an incredible number of little blue eyes constantly making fresh demands upon her time and strength, she usually keeps a girl when can get one. When she cannot, which is unfortunately the larger part of the time, her husband dresses the children—mixes stir-cakes for the eldest blue eyes to bake on a griddle, which is never at rest—milks the cow—feeds the pigs—and then goes to his "business," which we have supposed to consist principally in helping at raisings, wood-bees, huskings, and such like important affairs; and "girl" hunting—the most important and arduous and profitless of all.

Yet it must be owned that Mr. Larkins is a tolerable carpenter, and that he buys as many comforts for his family as most of his neighbours. The main difficulty seems to be that "help" is not often purchasable. the very small portion of our damsels who will consent to enter anybody's doors for pay, makes the chase after them quite interesting from its uncertainty; and the damsels themselves, subject to a well-known foible of their sex, become very coy from being over-courted. Such racing and chasing, and

begging and praying, to get a girl for a month! They are often got for life with half the trouble. But to return.

Having an esteem for Mrs Larkins, and a sincere experimental pity for the forlorn condition of "no girl but father," I set out at once to try if female tact and perseverance might not prove effectual in ferreting out a "help," though mere industry had not succeeded. For this purpose I made a list in my mind of those neighbours, in the first place, whose daughters sometimes condescended to be girls; and, secondly, of the few who were enabled by good luck, good management, and good pay, to keep them. If I failed in my attempts upon one class, I hoped for some new lights from the other. When the object is of such importance, it is well to string one's bow double.

In the first category stood Mrs. Lowndes, whose forlorn log-house had never known door or window; a blanket supplying the place of the one, and the other being represented by a crevice between the logs. Lifting the sooty curtain with some timidity, I found the dame with a sort of reel before her, trying to wind some dirty tangled yarn; and ever and anon kicking at a basket which hung suspended from the beam over-

head by means of a strip of hickory bark. This basket contained a nest of rags and an indescribable baby; and in the ashes on the rough hearth played several dingy objects, which I suppose had once been babies.

“Is your daughter at home now, Mrs. Lowndes?”

“Well, yes! M’randy’s to hum, but she’s out now. Did you want her?”

“I came to see if she could go to Mrs. Larkins, who is very unwell, and sadly in want of help.”

“Miss Larkins! why, do tell! I want to know! Is she sick agin? and is her gal gone? Why! I want to know! I thought she had Lo-i-sy Paddon! Is Lo-i-sy gone?”

“I suppose so. You will let Miranda go to Mrs. Larkins, will you?”

“Well, I donnow but I would let her go for a spell, just to ’commodate ’em. M’randy may go if she’s a mind ter. She needn’t live out unless she chooses. She’s got a comfortable home, and no thanks to nobody. What wages do they give?”

“A dollar a week.”

“Eat at the table?”

“Oh! certainly.”

“Have Sundays?”

“Why no—I believe not the whole of Sunday—the children, you know—”

“Oh ho!” interrupted Mrs. Lowndes, with a most disdainful toss of the head, giving at the same time a vigorous impulse to the cradle, “if that’s how it is, M’randy don’t stir a step! She don’t live nowhere if she can’t come home Saturday night and stay till Monday morning.”

I took my leave without farther parley, having often found this point the *sine quá non* in such negotiations.

My next effort was at a pretty-looking cottage, whose overhanging roof and neat outer arrangements spoke of English ownership. The interior by no means corresponded with the exterior aspect, being even more bare than usual, and far from neat. The presiding power was a prodigious creature, who looked like a man in woman’s clothes, and whose blazing face, ornamented here and there by great hair moles, spoke very intelligibly of the beer-barrel, if of nothing more exciting. A daughter of this virago had once lived in my family, and the mother met me with an air of defiance, as if she thought I had come with an accusation. When I unfolded my errand, her *abord* softened a little, but she scornfully rejected the idea of her Lucy living with any more Yankees.

“ You pretend to think everybody alike,” said she, “ but when it comes to the pint, you’re a sight more uppish and saucy than ra’al quality at home ; and I’ll see the whole Yankee race to —— ”

I made my exit without waiting for the conclusion of this complimentary observation ; and the less reluctantly for having observed on the table the lower part of one of my teaspoons, the top of which had been violently wrenched off. This spoon was a well-remembered loss during Lucy’s administration, and I knew that Mrs. Larkins had none to spare.

Unsuccessful thus far among the arbiters of our destiny, I thought I would stop at the house of a friend, and make some inquiries which might spare me further rebuffs. On making my way by the garden gate to the little library where I usually saw Mrs. Stayner, I was surprised to find it silent and uninhabited. The windows were closed ; a half-finished cap lay on the sofa, and a bunch of yesterday’s wild flowers upon the table. All spoke of desolation. The cradle—not exactly an appropriate adjunct of a library scene elsewhere, but quite so at the west—was gone, and the little rocking-chair was nowhere to be seen. I went on through

parlour and hall, finding no sign of life, save the breakfast-table still standing with crumbs undisturbed. Where bells are not known, ceremony is out of the question; so I penetrated even to the kitchen, where at length I caught the sight of the fair face of my friend. She was bending over the bread-tray, and at the same time telling nursery stories as fast as possible, by way of coaxing her little boy of four years old to rock the cradle which contained his baby sister.

“What *does* this mean?”

“Oh! nothing more than usual. My Polly took herself off yesterday without a moment’s warning, saying she thought she had lived out about long enough; and poor Tom, our factotum, has the ague. Mr. Stayner has gone to some place sixteen miles off, where he was told he might hear of a girl, and I am sole representative of the family energies. But you’ve no idea what capital bread I can make.”

This looked rather discouraging for my quest; but, knowing that the main point of table-companionship was the source of most of Mrs. Stayner’s difficulties, I still hoped for Mrs. Larkins, who loved the closed intimacy with her “help,” and always took them visiting with her. So I passed on for another

effort at Mrs. Randall's, whose three daughters had sometimes been known to lay aside their dignity long enough to obtain some much-coveted article of dress. Here the mop was in full play; and Mrs. Randall, with her gown tied up, was splashing diluted mud on the walls and furniture, in the received mode of these regions, where "stained-glass windows" are made without a patent. I did not venture in, but asked from the door, with my best diplomacy, whether Mrs. Randall *knew* of a girl.

"A gal! no; who wants a gal?"

"Mrs. Larkins."

"She! why don't she get up and do her own work?"

"She is too feeble."

"Law sakes! too feeble! she'd be able as anybody to thrash round, if her old man didn't spile her by waitin' on ——"

We think Mrs. Larkins deserves small blame on this score.

"But, Mrs. Randall, the poor woman is really ill, and unable to do anything for her children. Couldn't you spare Rachel for a few days to help her?"

This was said in a most guarded and deprecatory tone, and with a manner carefully moulded between indifference and undue solicitude.

“My galls has got enough to do. They a'n't able to do their own work. Cur'line hasn't been worth the fust red cent for hard work ever since she went to school to A ——.”

“Oh! I did not expect to get Caroline. I understand she is going to get married.”

“What! to Bill Green? She wouldn't let him walk where she walked last year!”

Here I saw I had made a misstep. Resolving to be more cautious, I left the selection to the lady herself, and only begged for one of the girls. But my eloquence was wasted. The Miss Randalls had been a whole quarter at a select school, and will not live out again until their present stock of finery is unwearable. Miss Rachel, whose company I had hoped to secure, was even then paying attention to a branch of the fine arts.

“Rachel Amandy!” cried Mrs. Randall at the foot of the ladder which gave access to the upper regions—“fetch that thing down here! It's the prettiest thing you ever see in your life!” turning to me. And the educated young lady brought down a doleful-looking compound of card-board and many-coloured waters, which had, it seems, occupied her mind and fingers for some days.

“There!” said the mother, proudly, “a gall that’s learnt to make sich baskets as that, a’n’t a goin’ to be nobody’s help, I guess!”

I thought the boast likely to be verified as a prediction, and went my way, crest-fallen and weary. Girl-hunting is certainly among our most formidable “chores.”

XXX.

HOW BOB WENT TO A WASHINGTON BALL,
AND WHAT HE DID AFTERWARDS.

Not many days ago, I had the good fortune, or misfortune, whichever you think proper, to be seated in the New York cars directly behind two personages whose conversation was somewhat of the loudest, and therefore, "*no lens volens*," fell upon my ear. One of the gentlemen, who answered to the beautifully euphonious, though brief appellation of Bob, appeared to be in a slight degree more happy and contented than was exactly consistent with the time of day, only sufficiently so, however, as to make him very talkative, and in high good humour with himself.

I trust my so declaiming will not ruffle the happy temper of the gentleman, nor bring disquiet to his mind ; but, on the con-

trary, should he ever be rash enough to read his story here in print, that it will call up pleasant memories, and cause him to "smile and smile, and be a *smiler* still."

Bob, I imagine from his conversation, considered himself a sporting character: perhaps, he was a retired cabman, living upon the interest of what he owed, and enjoying the delightful society to be found upon the tops of omnibuses on racing days, and also about steam-boat landings. He had been to Washington—for what, I am not prepared to say—maybe under the delusion that there was "a good time coming," and that he would be made state-coachman, or at any rate be allowed to look after Old Whitey. But Bob was disappointed; his friends hadn't stood up to the rack, fodder or no fodder, nor done the clean thing by him, as he feelingly expressed it; and now he was returning to the good old city of Gotham, disgusted with the world in general, and constant only to his old intimates good liquor and tobacco.

But didn't he have a "bustin' time" in the city of mud and magnificent distances? Didn't he "raise some of them ere stuck-up fellers outen their patent-leathers, and show 'em that he could talk at a mark with the best of 'em?" Well, you'd better believe

he did! He went to a ball there too, and the head and front, and t'other end of that, is the tale I would unfold to you.

"Drot the thing!" said Bob. "I didn't want to go to it, nohow. I don't go in for makin' a tetotum of myself, nor for dancin' in any shape, without it is a regular built hoe-down, an' then I'm about—I am! you may bet your life on it. But a lot of fellers said *go*, an' I *did* go, an' what's more, I've just been a goin' ever since, an' makin' about as good time at that as Bryan an' the old lady ever did. An' ain't *she* one of 'em! I tell you, Jim, she can pick her feet up faster, an' set 'em down quicker, than—"

"Yes, I know she can," broke in Jim, "but I want to hear about the ball."

"Well, we all started down," continued Bob,—“there was five of us altogether. Bill Simms—you know Bill? Well, Bill, he had the tickets, and put us right through like a thousand o' bricks. There was an almighty big crowd there, but after we'd got our blankets off, and warmed up a little with a plug or two of gin an' sugar, we jist *shashcheyed* in among the gals, and stood up for a dance. Hoop! didn't we put in the big licks? didn't we show 'em how the thing was done? Well, we did, hoss! an' you

may jist bet your life them gals was around too! Bless their little souls, they went right into it as if they'd never done nothin' else. One feller come up, an' wanted to pick a muss with me fur takin' his young woman down to supper; 'ger-l-o-n-g!' says I, 'don't come foolin' round here, or I'll have to lam you.' 'You'd better try it on,' says he. So I jist smacked him right across the mouth, an' was a-goin' in, but Bill Simms, he held on to me, an' said there wasn't no use makin' a row; an' the gal she begin to make a fuss, an' said she didn't want to see a fight, and all the fellers came around, so we 'shook hands an' went out an' took a drink."

According to his own account, Bob continued to crook his legs and his elbow until the hands of watches began to point to the small hours, when he started to gather up his friends, who were scattered about the room. Like most other individuals in his situation, however, he stumbled against every man but the right one, and at last found himself in the street, where he was seized upon by a negro hackney coachman, who was, if anything, farther gone in the delights of gin and sugar than himself. Him, with true drunken waywardness, he took to his bosom as a very dear friend—hired his hack, went

in next door and got a drink, and then solemnly insisted upon the coloured gentleman getting inside and allowing him to tool the animals.

After much affectionate combatting, and arguing of the matter in the most approved congressional style, his sable friend consented to the arrangement, and the door was shut upon him with the slam bang that of course distinguishes the true artist, amid the laughs and hurrahs of the other drivers there assembled.

The night was very dark and foggy, more especially so to Bob, who viewed things with great indistinctness, and had an idea that the lamps were all doubled and perpetually turning round. Besides, he knew nothing of the place, or streets, or of where he wanted to go, but "vere's the hodds so long as you're 'appy!" So, after some cursing, swaying backwards and forwards, climbing and scrambling, he gained the box and reins, drew the hickory upon the tired, nodding, and unsuspecting nags, and waked the echoes and the watchmen (very wrong, that latter proceeding) with a regular Third Avenue "g'l-a-n-g!"

"There was a sound of revelry by night"
—a sudden springing forward of the astonished horses—a kind of *kersugging* noise

inside, and the hack started down the street at a rate considerably over 2:40.*

But I must let Bob speak for himself, unaccustomed as he may be to the business, or, perhaps, he will say I am not dealing fairly with him. I only came on while he was wooding up behind the scenes, and now we'll trot him out again.

“ ‘H-a-y! g'lang!’ says I, flinging in the gad to kill, and *liftin' 'em over the heavy places!* ‘What'er yer 'bout?’ An' didn't they go to it? the critters felt a *man* was drivin' 'em, an' they was a puttin' in the biggest licks, an' doin' all they knowed, like Tally-ho and Free-trade comin' in the last quarter! I didn't know where I was a goin', but that didn't make no difference—the nigger was almost skeered to death, hollerin' from the bottom of the coach—‘Gorra mighty! massa debil, let me out!’ The old hack was a jerkin' an' jumpin' about, when I kinder thought there was something ahead, an' pulled up, jist in time to keep an all-fired big house from runnin' right over us.

“ ‘Hello! Nig, where are we?’ says I, gettin' down an' openin' the door—but the darkie couldn't say nothin', for he'd been a joggin' an' bumpin' inside there till the wind was knocked clean outen him. ‘S-a-y!

* *i. e.* A mile in two minutes, forty seconds.

where are we?' says I, grabbin' him by the wool, an' pullin' him out.

" 'Bless de Lor! massa, le' me up!' hollered the darkie, comin' to a little, and tryin' to get upon his pins—'I dun ax you only half a dollar—s'help me! massa, I dun only ax you half a dollar!'"

" 'Drot your half a dollar,' says I, 'who said anything about half a dollar? I want to know where we are.'

" 'Gorra mighty! massa, I do no, it am so powerful dark I can't see noffin!'"

" 'Hoop!' says I, 'you black imp, if you don't tell me where we are, I'll lam you right outen your hide—I will!'"

" But jist as I hollered 'Hoop!' the horses give a start, an' the old nigger jerked away from me an' broke after 'em, as if he never knowed what drunk was.

" Wasn't I in a nice fix then, Jim?—clear away t'other side o' nowhere, an' not knowin' which way to git home! But, thinks I, I'll jist edge up alongside this fence, an' keep straight along till I meet somebody; an' I *did* keep straight along till I got so tired that I went to sleep."

" Did you stay there all night?" asked Jim, smiling.

" Why, I waked up there," answered Bob,

demurely, "an' from the looks of one shoulder of my coat, I guess I'd been a walkin' round the Capitol grounds, leanin' against the railin', an' *thinkin' I was a goin' straight up the street all the while!*"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Jim, "but did you see the nigger again?"

"No," answered Bob, "I didn't see him, but I heered two darkies talkin' about him down to the cars. 'You see Jake to-day?' says one. 'Yes, I seed him dis mornin'; he dun git drunk lass night, an' loss his horses, an' de nigger's head so big when he git up, he hab to pull his shirt on ober his feet! Yah! yah! yah!'

"I come right on, then, Jim, an' I hain't heered nothin' of him since."

XXXI.

CAT FISHING IN THE OHIO.

It is with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that I recall to my mind the many pleasant days I have spent on the shores of the Ohio. The visions of former years crowd on my view, as I picture to myself the fertile soil and genial atmosphere of our great western garden, Kentucky, and view the placid waters of the fair stream that flows along its western boundary. Methinks I am now on the banks of the noble river. Twenty years of my life have returned to me; my sinews are strong, and the "bowstring of my spirit is not slack;" bright visions of the future float before me, as I sit on a grassy bank, gazing on the glittering waters. Around me are dense forests of lofty trees and thickly tangled under-growth, amid which are heard the songs of feathered cho-

risters, and from whose boughs hang clusters of glowing fruits and beautiful flowers. Reader, I am very happy. But now the dream has vanished, and here I am in the British Athens, penning an episode for my Ornithological Biography, and having before me sundry well-thumbed and weather-beaten folios, from which I expect to be able to extract some interesting particulars respecting the methods employed in those days in catching cat-fish.

But, before entering on my subject, I will present you with a brief description of the place of my residence on the banks of the Ohio. When first I landed at Henderson, Kentucky, my family, like the village, was quite small. The latter consisted of six or eight houses; the former of my wife, myself, and a young child. Few as the houses were, we fortunately found one empty. It was a *log-cabin*, not a *log-house*; but, as better could not be had, we were pleased. Well, then, we were located. The country around was thinly peopled, and all purchasable provisions rather scarce; but our neighbours were friendly, and we had brought with us flour and bacon-hams. Our pleasures were those of young people not long married, and full of life and merriment; a single smile

from our infant was, I assure you, more valued by us than all the treasures of a modern Cræsus would have been. The woods were amply stocked with game, the river with fish; and, now and then, the hoarded sweets of the industrious bees were brought from some hollow tree to our little table. Our child's cradle was our richest piece of furniture, our guns and fishing-lines our most serviceable implements; for, although we began to cultivate a garden, the rankness of the soil kept the seeds we planted far beneath the tall weeds that sprang up the first year. I had then a partner, a "man of business," and there was also with me a Kentucky youth, who much preferred the sports of the forest and river to either day-book or ledger. He was naturally, as I may say, a good woodsman, hunter, and angler, and, like me, thought chiefly of procuring supplies of fish and fowl. To the task accordingly we directed all our energies.

Quantity as well as quality was an object with us, and although we well knew that three species of cat-fish existed in the Ohio, and that all were sufficiently good, we were not sure as to the best method of procuring them. We determined, however, to work on a large scale, and immediately com-

menced making a famous "trot-line." Now, reader, as you may probably know nothing about this engine, I shall describe it to you.

A trot-line is one of considerable length and thickness, both qualities however varying according to the extent of water, and the size of the fish you expect to catch. As the Ohio, at Henderson, is rather more than half a mile in breadth, and as cat-fishes weigh from one to a hundred pounds, we manufactured a line which measured about two hundred yards in length, as thick as the little-finger of some fair one yet in her teens, and as white as the damsel's finger well could be, for it was wholly of Kentucky cotton, just let me tell you, because that substance stands the water better than either hemp or flax. The main line finished, we made a hundred smaller ones, about five feet in length, to each of which we fastened a capital hook of Kirby and Co.'s manufacture. Now for the bait!

It was in the month of May. Nature had brought abroad myriads of living beings; they covered the earth, glided through the water, and swarmed in the air. The cat-fish is a voracious creature, not at all nice in feeding, but one which, like the vulture,

contents himself with carrion when nothing better can be had. A few experiments proved to us that, of the dainties with which we tried to allure them to our hooks, they gave a decided preference, at that season, to live toads. These animals were very abundant about Henderson. They ramble or feed, whether by instinct or reason, during early or late twilight more than at any other time, especially after a shower, and are unable to bear the heat of the sun's rays for several hours before and after noon. We have a good number of these crawling things in America, particularly in the southern and western parts of the Union, and are very well supplied with frogs, snakes, lizards, and even crocodiles, which we call alligators; but there is enough of food for them all, and we generally suffer them to creep about, to leap or to flounder as they please, or in accordance with the habits which have been given them by the great Conductor of all.

During the month of May, and indeed until autumn, we found an abundant supply of toads. Many "fine ladies," no doubt, would have swooned, or at least screamed and gone into hysterics, had they seen one of our baskets filled with these animals, all alive and plump. Fortunately, we had no

tragedy queen or sentimental spinster at Henderson. Our Kentucky ladies mind their own affairs, and seldom meddle with those of others, further than to do all they can for their comfort. The toads, collected one by one, and brought home in baskets, were deposited in a barrel for use. And now that night is over, and as it is the first trial we are going to give our trot-line, just watch our movements from that high bank beside the stream. There, sit down under the large cotton-wood tree. You are in no danger of catching cold at this season.

My assistant follows me with a gaff-hook, while I carry the paddle of our canoe; a boy bears on his back a hundred toads, as good as ever hopped. Our line—oh, I forgot to inform you that we had set it last night, but without the small ones you now see on my arm. Fastening one end to yon sycamore, we paddled our canoe, with the rest nicely coiled in the stern, and soon reached its extremity, when I threw over the side the heavy stone fastened to it as a sinker. All this was done that it might be thoroughly soaked, and without kinks or snarls in the morning. Now, you observe, we launch our light bark, the toads in the basket are placed next to my feet in the bow; I have the small lines across

my knees, all ready looped at the end. Nat, with the paddle, and assisted by the current, keeps the stern of our boat directly down stream; and David fixes, by the skin of the back and hind parts, the living bait to the hook. I hold the main line all the while, and now, having fixed one linelet to it, over goes the latter. Can you see the poor toad kicking and flouncing in the water? "No." Well, I do. You observe, at length, that all the lines, one after another, have been fixed, baited, and dropped. We now return swiftly to the shore.

"What a delightful thing is fishing!" have I more than once heard some knowing angler exclaim, who, with the patience of Job, stands or slowly moves along some rivulet twenty feet wide, and three or four feet deep, with a sham fly to allure a trout, which when at length caught weighs half a pound. Reader, I never had such patience. Although I have waited ten years, and yet see only three fourths of the birds of America engraved, although some of the drawings of that work were patiently made so long ago as 1805, and although I have to wait with patience two years more before I see the end of it, I never could hold a line or a rod for many minutes, unless I had—not a "nibble,"

but a hearty bite, and could throw the fish at once over my head on the ground. No, no—if I fish for trout, I must soon give it up, or catch, as I have done in Pennsylvania's Lehigh, or the streams of Maine, fifty or more in a couple of hours. But the trot-line is in the river, and there it may patiently wait until I visit it towards night. Now I take up my gun and note-book, and, accompanied by my dog, intend to ramble through the woods until breakfast. Who knows but I may shoot a turkey or a deer? It is barely four o'clock; and see what delightful mornings we have at this season in Kentucky!

Evening has returned. The heavens have already opened their twinkling eyes, although the orb of day has yet scarcely withdrawn itself from our view. How calm is the air! The nocturnal insects and quadrupeds are abroad; the bear is moving through the dark canebrake, the land crows are flying towards their roosts, their aquatic brethren towards the interior of the forests, the squirrel is barking his adieu, and the barred owl glides silently and swiftly from his retreat, to seize upon the gay and noisy animal. The boat is pushed off from the shore; the main-line is in my hands; now it shakes; surely some fish have been hooked. Hand over hand I

proceed to the first hook. Nothing there! But now I feel several jerks, strong and more frequent than before. Several hooks I pass; but see, what a fine catfish is twisting round and round the little line to which he is fast! Nat, look to your gaff—hook him close to the tail. Keep it up, my dear fellow!—there, now we have him. More are on, and we proceed. When we have reached the end, many goodly fishes are lying in the bottom of our skiff. New bait has been put on, and, as we return, I congratulate myself and my companions on the success of our efforts; for there lie fish enough for ourselves and our neighbours.

A trot-line at this period was perfectly safe at Henderson, should I have allowed it to remain for weeks at a time. The navigation was mostly performed by flat-bottomed boats, which during calm nights floated in the middle current of the river, so that the people on board could not observe the fish that had been hooked. Not a single steamer had as yet ever gone down the Ohio; now and then, it is true, a barge or keel-boat was propelled by poles and oars; but the nature of the river is such at that place that these boats, when ascending, were obliged to keep near the Indiana shore, until above the

landing of the village (below which I always fixed my lines), when they pulled across the stream.

Several species or varieties of catfish are found in the Ohio, namely, the blue, the white, and the mud cats, which differ considerably in their form and colour, as well as in their habits. The mud cat is the best, although it seldom attains so great a size as the rest. The blue cat is the coarsest, but when not exceeding from four to six pounds, it affords tolerable eating. The white cat is preferable to the last, but not so common; and the yellow mud cat is the best and the rarest. Of the blue kind, some have been caught that weighed a hundred pounds. Such fishes, however, are looked upon as monsters.

The form in all the varieties inclines to the conical, the head being disproportionately large, while the body tapers away to the root of the tail. The eyes, which are small, are placed far apart, and situated as it were on the top of the forehead, but laterally. Their mouth is wide, and armed with numerous small and very sharp teeth, while it is defended by single-sided spines, which, when the fish is in the agonies of death, stand out at right angles, and are so firmly fixed as

sometimes to break before you can loosen them. The catfish has also feelers of proportionate length, apparently intended to guide its motions over the bottom, whilst its eyes are watching the objects passing above.

Trot-lines cannot be used with much success, unless during the middle stages of the water. When very low, it is too clear, and the fish, although extremely voracious, will rarely risk its life for a toad. When the waters are rising rapidly, your trot-lines are likely to be carried away by one of the numerous trees that float in the stream. A "happy medium" is therefore best.

When the waters are rising fast and have become muddy, a single line is used for catching cat-fish. It is fastened to the elastic branch of some willow several feet above the water, and must be twenty or thirty feet in length. The entrails of a wild turkey, or a piece of fresh venison, furnish good bait; and if, when you visit your line the next morning after you have set it, the water has not risen too much, the swinging of the willow indicates that a fish has been hooked, and you have only to haul the prize ashore.

One evening I saw that the river was rising at a great rate, although it was still within its banks. I knew that the white

perch were running, that is, ascending the river from the sea, and, anxious to have a tasting of that fine fish, I baited a line with a cray-fish, and fastened it to the bough of a tree. Next morning, as I pulled in the line, it felt as if fast to the bottom, yet on drawing it slowly I found that it came. Presently I felt a strong pull, the line slipped through my fingers, and the next instant a large cat-fish leaped out of the water. I played it for a while, until it became exhausted, when I drew it ashore. It had swallowed the hook, and I cut off the line close to its head. Then, passing a stick through one of the gills, I and the servant tugged the fish home. On cutting it open, we, to our surprise, found in its stomach a fine white perch, dead, but not in the least injured. The perch had been lightly hooked, and the cat-fish, after swallowing it, had been hooked in the stomach, so that, although the instrument was small, the torture caused by it no doubt tended to disable the cat-fish. The perch we ate, and the cat, which was fine, we divided into four parts, and distributed among our neighbours. My most worthy friend and relative, Nicholas Berthoud, Esq., who formerly resided at Shippingport, in Kentucky, but now in New York, a better

fisher than whom I never knew, once placed a trot-line in the "basin" below "Tarascon's Mills," at the foot of the rapids of the Ohio. I cannot recollect the bait which was used; but on taking up the line we obtained a remarkably fine cat-fish, in which was found the greater part of a sucking pig!

XXXII.

SOUTH WESTERN LIFE.

EXTRACT from a sketch of Colonel Archibald Yell, of Arkansas. The judge had taken his seat for the first time.

The first case on the docket was called, and the plaintiff stood ready. It was a case that had been in litigation for five years. General Smoot arose for the defendant, and remarked in an overbearing tone,

“Our witnesses are absent, and therefore I demand that the case be continued until the next term, in course.”

“Let the affidavit be filed, for not till then can I entertain a motion for continuance,” was the mild reply of the judge.

“Do you doubt my word as to the facts?” General Smoot exclaimed, and involuntarily raised his huge sword-cane.

“Not at all,” replied the judge, with his

oland smile ; “ but the law requires that the facts justifying a continuance must appear on record, and the court has no power to annul the law, nor will they see it annulled.”

The judge’s calm and business-like tone and manner only served to irritate the bully, and he retorted, shaking his sword in the direction of the bench, “ Whatever may be the law, I, for one, will not learn it from the lips of an upstart demagogue and coward !”

Judge Yell’s blue eyes shot like lightning ; but he only turned to the clerk and said, “ Clerk, you will enter a fine of fifty dollars against General Smoot, as I see him named on my docket, for gross contempt of court ; and be sure you issue an immediate execution.”

He had hardly communicated the order when General Smoot was seen rushing towards him brandishing the sword-cane, all his features writhing murderous wrath and pallid as a corpse.

Every glance was fixed on the countenance of the judge, for all wished to know how he would brook the coming shock of the duellist’s fierce assault. None, however, could detect the slightest change in his appearance. His cheek grew neither red nor white, not a nerve seemed to tremble ; his calm eye surveyed

the advancing foe with as little sign of perturbation as a chemist might show, while scrutinizing the effervescence of some novel mixture. He sat perfectly still, with a little staff of painted iron in his right hand.

Smoot ascended the platform, and immediately aimed a tremendous blow with his enormous sword-cane full at the head of his foe. At that blow five hundred hearts shuddered, and more than a dozen voices shrieked, for all expected to see the victim's skull shivered into atoms. The general astonishment then may be conceived, when they beheld the little iron staff describe a quick curve, as the great sword-cane flew from Smoot's fingers and fell with a loud clatter at the distance of twenty feet into the hall. The baffled bully uttered a cry of wrath, wild as that of some wounded beast of prey, and snatched the bowie-knife from his sheath, but ere it was poised for the desperate plunge, the little iron staff cut another curve, and the big knife followed the sword-cane. He then hastily drew a revolving pistol, but before he had time to touch the trigger his arm was struck powerless by his side.

And then for the first time did Judge Yell betray perceptible emotion. He stamped his foot till the platform shook beneath it, and

shouted in trumpet tones—"Mr. Clerk, you will blot this ruffian's name as a foul disgrace from the roll of attorneys. Mr. Sheriff, take this criminal to jail."

The latter officer sprang to obey the mandate, and immediately a scene of confusion ensued that no pen can describe. The bravoes and myrmidon friends of General Smoot gathered round to obstruct the sheriff, while many of the citizens lent their aid to sustain the authority of the court. Menaces, screams, and horrid curses, the ring of impinging and crossing steel, alternate cries of rage and pain, all commingled with the awful explosion of firearms, blended together, a vivid idea of Pandemonium.

But throughout all the tempestuous strife, two individuals might be observed as leaders in the whirlwind and riders of the storm. The new judge used his little iron cane with terrible efficiency, crippling limbs yet sparing life. Bill Buffon, imitating the clemency of his honoured friend, disdaining the employment of either knife or pistol, actually trampled down all opposition, roaring at every furious blow—"This is the way to preserve order in court,"—a sentiment which he accompanied with peals of laughter. In less than two minutes the party of the judge

triumphed, the clique of General Smoot suffered disastrous defeat, and the bully himself was borne away to prison.

Such was the debut of Archibald Yell, of Arkansas : and from that day his popularity as a man, as a judge, as a hero, and as a politician, went on rapidly and brilliantly increasing, till it eclipsed all the oldest and most powerful names.

XXXIII.

RAISING A MILL.

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

It was vain to question the trees or the chip-monks, and our own wits offered no satisfactory solution; so we drove on. A few yards more, and we came to a similar trap, and from this time onward they became

more and more frequent. They were the oddest thing that could be, in this out-of-the-way place, seeming freshly dug and without conceivable aim or purpose. We discussed the point without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion, till we became sensible of a new wonder—a distant sound of “Yo heave!” recurring at regular intervals, and transporting one’s mind at once to the borders of the well-beloved sea, whose various music was far more familiar to our youthful ears than the murmur of the forest.

“Yo heave! Yo heave!” the mingled sound of many voices, became more and more distinctly audible as we ascended a high bank broken everywhere by the holes I have mentioned. When we reached its summit, from which the road descended suddenly into a deep, woody dell, a scene of strange beauty met our eyes, and explained all. Over a small stream in the bottom of the dell—a mere brooklet as it seemed from that distance—some eighty or perhaps a hundred men were erecting the frame-work of a large mill—an object which seemed almost as much out of place in this primeval solitude as would the apparition of a three-decker upon the stocks, which indeed it much resembled. Nothing could be more striking than the

contrast between this intricate specimen of human skill, and the majestic simplicity of nature around it. The trees which had been felled to make room for it, lay in their yet unfaded green on every side, and so scanty allowance had been made for the gigantic intruder, that the still living forest hung over its symmetrical spars. An immense *bent* was about to be raised (borrowed learning this), and as many men as could find hands-breadths on its edge were applying their united energies to the task, bringing to mind inevitably the sleeping Gulliver under the efforts of his Lilliputians. As the huge mass left the ground, poles and handspikes assisted its ascent, and the "Yo heave!" was repeated as a signal for every fresh effort, as on shipboard. When it had reached its place high in the air, it made one's heart stand still to see men perched upon it, and leaning over to drive its corners home with heavy mallets; those below tossing up the requisite pins, which were caught with unerring precision.

When we could withdraw our attention from this part of the scene, we found much to attract it below. The spectacle of a "raising," though so commonplace an affair elsewhere, is something worth seeing in the

woods ; and accordingly there were almost as many boys and idlers as efficient hands present on this occasion. These were making the most of their time in various games of skill or strength—wrestling, running, leaping ;—and shouts of merry laughter mingled with the cheering song of the workmen. Not a few lounged around the door of a temporary building or “shanty,” as we say—erected for the refreshment of the guests ! for be it known that on these occasions neighbours one and all leave their own business, if possible, and lend their aid for love, and not for money—expecting only some good cheer, and, in case of need, a reciprocation of the kindness.

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

constitute almost the sole attempt at merry-making in which the men of the country take part.

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

“’Ta’n’t play-spell, boys!” said the “boss.”

“Law! I tho’t ’twas! I seen the master out o’ doors,” replied one of the pickles.

“Well, now you know it a’n’t, you’d better keep your teeth warm,” shouted the master in return; “put your tongue in your elbow, and then maybe you’ll work!”

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

Nothing now remained but to name the structure according to the formula invariably

used on such occasions, let the terms suit as they may.

“ Upon this plain
Stands a fair frame—
Who'll give it a name ? ”

To which a voice from a distant corner responded,

“ We'll call it ‘ the miller's delight, ’—
To take toll all day and count the cash at night.”

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

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

Sir Walter Scott observes that he always found “ something fearful, or at least melancholy, about a mill.” He had never seen one “ raised,” I am sure. Perhaps he had

owned one when wheat, having stood at twelve shillings, fell to six—and after some fluctuation settled at four. This would account for his impression.

END VOL. II.

