VARIOUS

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Содержание

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FROM PARIS TO MARLY BY WAY OF THE RHINE

IV.—A DAY IN STRASBURG

Behold me, then, with five hours around my neck, like so many millstones, in Strasburg, on the abjured Rhine! Had I not vowed never to visit that bewitched current again? Was it not by Rhine-bank that I learned to quote the minnesingers and to unctuate my hair? From her owl-tower did not old Frau Himmelauen use to observe me, my cane, and my curls, and my gloves? Did not her gossips compare me to Wilhelm Meister? And so, when he thought he was ripe, the innocent Paul Flemming must needs proceed to pour his curls, his songs and his love into the lap of Mary Ashburton; and the discreet siren responded, "You had better go back to Heidelberg and grow: you are not the Magician."

Yet before that little disaster of my calf period I sighed for the Rhine: I used its wines more freely than was perhaps good for me, and when the smoke-colored goblet was empty would declare that if I were a German I should be proud of the grape-wreathed river too. At Bingen I once sat up to behold the bold outline of the banks crested with ruins, which in the morning proved to be a slated roof and chimneys. And when at Heidelberg I saw the Neckar open upon the broad Rhine plain like the mouth of a trumpet, I felt inspired, and built every evening on my table a perfect cathedral of slim, spire-shaped bottles—sunny pinnacles of Johannisberger.

And now, decoyed to the Rhine by a puerile conspiracy, how could I best get the small change for my five hours?

Should I sulk like a bear in the parlor of the Maison Rouge until the departure of the Paris train, or should I explore the city? Some wave from my fond, foolish past flowed over me and filled me with desire. I felt that I loved the Rhine and the Rhine cities once more. And where could I better retie myself to those old pilgrim habits than in this citadel of heroism, a place sanctified by recent woes, a city proved by its endurance through a siege which even that of Paris hardly surpassed? One draught, then, from the epic Rhine! To-morrow, at Marly, I could laugh over it all with Hohenfels.

The Münster was before me—the highest tower in Europe, if we except the hideous cast-iron abortion at Rouen. I recollected that in my younger days I had been defrauded of my fair share of tower-climbing. Hohenfels had a saying that most travelers are a sort of children, who need to touch all they see, and who will climb to every broken tooth of a castle they find on their way, getting a tiresome ascent and hot sunshine for their pains. "I trust we are wiser," he would observe, so unanswerably that I passed with him up the Rhine quite, as I may express it, on the ground floor.

I marched to the cathedral, determined to ascend, and when I saw the look of it changed my mind.

The sacristan, in fact, advised me not to go up after he had taken my fee and obtained a view of my proportions over the tube of his key, which he pretended to whistle into. We sat down together as I recovered my breath, after which I wandered through the nave with my guide, admiring the statue of the original architect, who stands looking at the interior—a kind of Wren "circumspecting" his own monument. At high noon the twelve apostles come out from the famous horologe and take up their march, and chanticleer, on one of the summits of the clock-case, opens his brazen throat and crows loud enough to fill the farthest recesses of the church with his harsh alarum.

A portly citizen was talking to the sacristan. "I hear many objections to that bird, sir," he remarked to me, "from fastidious tourists: one thinks that a peacock, spreading its jewels by mechanism, would have a richer effect. Another says that a swan, perpetually wrestling with its dying song, would be more poetical. Others, in the light of late events, would prefer a phoenix."

The dress of the stout citizen announced a sedentary man rather than a cosmopolitan. He had a shirt-front much hardened with starch; a white waistcoat, like an alabaster carving, which pushed his shirt away up round his ears; and a superb bluebottle-colored coat, with metal buttons. It was the costume of a stay-at-home, and I learned afterward that he was a local professor of geography and political science—the first by day, the last at night only in beer-gardens and places of resort.

"Nay," I said, "the barnyard bird is of all others the fittest for a timepiece: he chants the hours for the whole country-side, and an old master of English song has called him Nature's 'crested clock.'"

"With all deference," said the bourgeois, "I would still have a substitute provided for yonder cock. I would set up the Strasburg goose. Is he not our emblem, and is not our commerce swollen by the inflation of the *foie gras*? In one compartment I would show him fed with sulphur-water to increase his biliary secretion; another might represent his cage, so narrow that the pampered creature cannot even turn round on his stomach for exercise; another division might be anatomical, and present the martyr opening his breast, like some tortured saint, to display his liver, enlarged to the weight of three pounds; while the apex might be occupied by the glorified, gander in person, extending his neck and commenting on the sins of the Strasburg pastry-cooks with a cutting and sardonic hiss."

You have not forgotten, reader, the legend of the old clock?

Many years ago there lived here an aged and experienced mechanic. Buried in his arts, he forgot the ways of the world, and promised his daughter to his gallant young apprentice, instead of to the hideous old magistrate who approached the maiden with offers of gold and dignity. One day the youth and damsel found the unworldly artist weeping for joy before his completed clock, the wonder of the earth. Everybody came to see it, and the corporation bought it for the cathedral. The city of Basel bespoke another just like it. This order aroused the jealousy of the authorities, who tried to make the mechanic promise that he would never repeat his masterpiece for another town. "Heaven gave me not my talents to feed your vain ambition," said the man of craft: "the men of Basel were quicker to recognize my skill than you were. I will make no such promise." Upon that the rejected suitor, who was among the magistrates, persuaded his colleagues to put out the artist's eyes. The old man heard his fate with lofty fortitude, and only asked that he might suffer the sentence in the presence of his darling work, to which he wished to give a few final strokes. His request was granted, and he gazed long at the splendid clock, setting its wonders in motion to count off the last remaining moments of his sight. "Come, laggard," said the persecuting magistrate, who had brought a crowd of spectators, "you are taxing the patience of this kind audience." "But one touch remains," said the old mechanic, "to complete my work;" and he busied himself a moment among the wheels. While he suffered the agonies of his torture a fearful whir was heard from the clock: the weights tumbled crashing to the floor as his eyes fell from their sockets. He had removed the master-spring, and his revenge was complete. The lovers devoted their lives to the comfort of the blind clockmaker, and the wicked magistrate was hooted from society. The clock remained a ruin until 1842, when parts of it were used in the new one constructed by Schwilgué.

I found my bluebottle professor to be a Swiss, thirty years resident in the city, very accessible and talkative, and, like every citizen by adoption, more patriotic than even the native-born.

"It was a cheerless time for me, sir," said he as we contemplated together the façade of the church, "when I saw that spire printed in black against the flames of the town."

I begged frankly for his reminiscences.

"The bombardment of 1870," said the professor, "was begun purposely, in contempt of the Bonapartist tradition, on the 15th of August, the birthday of Napoleon. At half-past eleven at night, just as the fireworks are usually set off on that evening, a shell came hissing over the city and fell

upon the Bank of France, crushing through the skylight and shivering the whole staircase within: the bombardment that time lasted only half an hour, but it found means, after much killing and ruining among the private houses, to reach the buildings of the Lyceum, where we had placed the wounded from the army of Woerth. While the city was being touched off in every direction, like a vast brush heap, we had to take these poor victims down into the cellars."

"Do you think the bombs were purposely so directed?" I asked.

"Don't talk to me of stray shots!" said the burgher, hotly enough. "The enemy was better acquainted with the city than we were ourselves, and his fire was of a precision that extorted our admiration more than once. Cannons planted in Kehl sent their shells high over the citadel, like blows from a friend. An artillery that, after the third shot, found the proper curve and bent the cross on the cathedral, cannot plead extenuating circumstances and stray shots."

"Was the greatest damage done on that first night?"

"Ah no! The bombardment was addressed to us as an argument, proceeding by degrees, and always in a *crescendo*: after the 15th there was silence until the 18th; after the 18th, silence up to the 23d. The grand victim of the 23d, you know, was the city library, where lay the accumulations of centuries of patient learning—the mediæval manuscripts, the *Hortus deliciarum* of Herrade of Landsberg, the monuments of early printing, the collections of Sturm. Ah! when we gathered around our precious reliquary the next day and saw its contents in ashes, amid a scene of silence, of people hurrying away with infants and valuable objects, of firemen hopelessly playing on the burned masterpieces, there was one thought that came into every mind—one parallel! It was Omar the caliph and the library of Alexandria."

"And you imagine that this offence to civilization was quite voluntary?" I argued with some doubt.

"It is said that General Werder acted under superior orders. But, sir, you must perceive that in these discretionary situations there is no such dangerous man as the innocent executant, the martinet, the person of routine, the soldier stifled in his uniform. I saw Werder after the capitulation. A little man, lean and bilious. Such was the opponent who reversed for us successively, like the premisses of an argument, the bank, the library, the art-museum, the theatre, the prefecture, the arsenal, the palace of justice, not to speak of our churches. A man like that was quite capable of replying, as he did, to a request that he would allow a safe-conduct for non-combatants, that the presence of women and children was an element of weakness to the fortress of which he did not intend to deprive it.' The night illuminated by our burning manuscripts was followed by the day which witnessed the conflagration of the cathedral. Look at that noble front, sir, contemplating us with the hoary firmness of six hundred years! You would think it a sad experience to see it, as I have seen it, crowned with flames which leaped up and licked the spire, while the copper on the roof curled up like paper in the heat; and to hear, as I heard, the poor beadles and guards, from the height of yonder platform, calling the city to the aid of its cathedral. The next day the mighty church, now so imperfectly restored, was a piteous sight. The flames had gone out for want of fuel. We could see the sky through holes in the roof. The organ-front was leaning over, pierced with strange gaps; the clock escaped as by miracle; and the mighty saints, who had been praying for centuries in the stained windows, were scattered upon the floor. On the 25th the systematic firing of the faubourgs began, and the city was filled with the choking smell of burning goods: on the 28th the citadel was kindled."

"And what opposition," I naturally demanded, "were you able to make to all this? I believe your forces were greatly shortened?"

"We were as short as you can think, sir. Most of the garrison had been withdrawn by MacMahon. The soldiers still among us were miserably demoralized by the entrance of the fugitives from Woerth. Our defence was the strangest of mixtures. The custom-house officers were armed and mobilized: the naval captain Dupetit-Thouars happened to be in the walls, with some of the idle marine. Colonel Fiévée, with his pontoneers, hurriedly tore up the bridge of boats leading over

to Kehl, and united himself with the garrison. From the outbreak of the war we civilians had been invited to form a garde nationale, but never was there a greater farce. We were asked to choose our own grades, and when I begged to be made colonel, they inquired if I would not prefer to be lieutenant or adjutant. Most of us, those at least who had voted against the imperial candidates, never received a gun. Our artillery, worthy of the times of Louis XIV., scolded in vain from the ramparts against the finest cannons in the world, and we were obliged to watch the Prussian trenches pushing toward the town, and to hear the bullets beginning to fall where at first were only bombs."

"The capitulation was then imminent."

"There were a few incidents in the mean time. The deputation from Switzerland, of ever-blessed memory, entered the city on the eleventh of September. Angels from heaven could not have been more welcome. You know that a thousand of our inhabitants passed over into Switzerland under conduct of the delegate from Berne, Colonel Büren, and that they were received like brothers. From Colonel Büren also we learned for the first time about Sedan, the disasters of Bazaine and MacMahon, and the hopelessness of the national cause. We learned that, while they were crowning with flowers the statue of our city in Paris, they had no assistance but handsome words to send us. Finally, we learned the proclamation of the French republic—a republic engendered in desolation, and so powerless to support its distant provinces! We too had our little republican demonstration, and on the 20th of September the prefect they had sent us from Paris, M. Valentin, came dashing in like a harlequin, after running the gauntlet of a thousand dangers, and ripped out of his sleeve his official voucher from Gambetta. Alas! we were a republic for only a week, but that week of fettered freedom still dwells like an elixir in some of our hearts. For eight days I, a born Switzer, saw the Rhine a republican river."

"Give me your hand, sir!" I cried, greatly moved. "You are talking to a republican. I am, or used to be, a citizen of free America!"

"I am happy to embrace you," said the burgher; and I believe he was on the point of doing it, literally as well as figuratively. "I, for my part, whatever they make of me, am at least an Alsatian. But I am half ashamed to talk to an American. On the 29th I went to see our troops evacuate the city by the Faubourg National. I found myself elbow to elbow in the throng with the consul from the United States: never in my life shall I forget the indignant surprise of your compatriot."

"Why should our consul be indignant at disaster?" I demanded.

"Why, sir, the throng that rolled toward the grave Prussian troops was composed of desperadoes inflamed with wine, flourishing broken guns and stumps of sabres, and insulting equally, with many a drunken oath, the conquerors and our own loyal general Uhrich. The American consul, blushing with shame for our common humanity, said, 'This is the second time I have watched the capitulation of an army. The first time it was the soldiers of General Lee, who yielded to the Northern troops. Those brave Confederates came toward us silent and dignified, bearing arms reversed, as at a funeral. We respected them as heroes, while here—' But I cannot repeat to you, sir, what your representative proceeded to add. That revolting sight," continued my informant, "was the last glimpse we had of France our protector. When we returned to the city a Prussian band played German airs to us at the foot of Kleber's statue. We are Teutonized now. At least," concluded the burgher, taking me by the shoulders to hiss the words through my ears in a safe corner, "we are Germans officially. But I, for my part, am Alsatian for ever and for ever!"

Greatly delighted to have encountered so near a witness and so minute a chronicler of the disasters of the town, I invited the professor to accompany me in exploring it, my interest having vastly increased during his recital; but he pleaded business, and, shaking both my hands and smiling upon me out of a sort of moulding formed around his face by his shirt-collars, dismissed me. So, then, once more, with a hitch to my tin box, I became a lonely lounger. I viewed the church of Saint Thomas, the public place named after Kleber, who was born here, some of the markets and a beer establishment. In the church of Saint Thomas I examined the monument to Marshal Saxe, by Pigalle. I should have expected to see a simple statue of the hero in the act of breaking a horseshoe or

rolling up a silver plate into a bouquet-holder, according to the Guy-Livingstone habits in which he appears to have passed his life, and was more surprised than edified at sight of the large allegorical family with which the sculptor has endowed him. In the same church I had the misfortune to see in the boxes a pair of horrible mummies, decked off with robes and ornaments—a count of Nassau-Saarwerden and his daughter, according to the custodian—an unhappy pair who, having escaped our common doom of corruption by some physical aridity or meagreness, have been compelled to leave their tombs and attitudinize as works of art. In Kleber's square I saw the conqueror of Heliopolis, excessively pigeon-breasted, dangling his sabre over a cowering little figure of Egypt, and looking around in amazement at the neighboring windows: in fact, Kleber began his career as an architect, and there were solecisms in the surrounding structure to have turned a better balanced head than his. In the markets I saw peasants with red waistcoats and flat faces shaded with triangles of felt, and peasant-girls bareheaded, with a gilded arrow apparently shot through their brains. I traversed the Street of the Great Arcades, and saw the statue of Gutenberg, of whom, as well as of Peter Schöffer, the natives seem to be proud, though they were but type-setters. Finally, in the Beer-hall, that of the dauphin, I tasted a thimble-ful of inimitable beer, the veritable beer of Strasburg. Already, at half-past eight on that fine May morning, I persuaded myself that I had seen everything, so painful had my feet become by pounding over the pavements.

My friend the engineer had agreed to breakfast with me at the hotel. When I entered the dining-room with the intention of waiting for him, I found two individuals sitting at table. One was no other than the red-nosed Scotchman, the Eleusinian victim whom I had watched through the bottle-rack at Épernay. Of the second I recognized the architectural back, the handsomely rolled and faced blue coat and the marble volutes of his Ionic shirt-collar: it was my good friend of the cathedral. Every trace of his civic grief had disappeared, and he wore a beaming banquet-room air, though the tear of patriotism was hardly dry upon his cheek.

As I paused to dispose of my accoutrements the red nose was saying, "Yes, my dear sir, since yesterday I am a Mason. I have the honor," he pursued, "to be First Attendant Past Grand. It will be a great thing for me at Edinburgh. Burns, I believe, was only Third Assistant, Exterior Lodge: the Rank, however, in his opinion, was but the guinea's stamp. But the advantages of Masonry are met with everywhere. Already in the train last night I struck the acquaintance of a fine fellow, a Mason like myself."

"Allow me to ask," said the cheerful bluebottle, "how you knew him for a Mason like yourself?"

"I'll tell you. I was unable to sleep, because, you see, I had to drink Moët for my initiation: as I am unaccustomed to anything livelier than whisky, it unnerved me. To pass the time I went softly over the signals."

"What signals, if I may be so indiscreet?"

"Number one, you scratch the nose, as if to chase a fly; number two, you put your thumb in your mouth; number three—"

"H'm!" said the professor doubtfully, "those are singular instructions, scratching the nose and sucking the thumb. It strikes me they have been teaching you nursery signals rather than Masonry signals."

"My good friend," said the Scot with extreme politeness, yet not without dignity, "you cannot understand it, because you were not present. I received a Light which burned my eyelashes. The sage always examines a mystery before he decides upon it. My Masonic friend will be here at breakfast to-day: he promised me. Only wait for him. He can explain these things better than I, you will see. The little experiments with our noses and thumbs, you understand, are symbols—Thummim and Urim, or something of that kind."

"Or else nonsense. You have been quizzed, I fear."

The North Briton bridled his head, knitted his brows and pushed back his chair; then, after a moment of pregnant and stormy silence, he turned suddenly around to me, who was enjoying the comedy—"Hand me the cheese."

To be taken for a waiter amused me. Never in the world would a domestic have dared to present himself in a hotel habited as I was. I was in the same clothes with which I had left Passy the morning previous: my coat was peppered with dust, my linen bruised and dingy, my tie was nodding doubtfully over my right shoulder. A waiter in my condition would have been kicked out without arrears of wages.

The professor, looking quickly around, recognized me with a ludicrous endeavor to relapse into the fiery and outraged patriot. He expended his temper on the red nose. "Take care whom you speak to," he cried in a high, portly voice, and pointing to my japanned box, which I had slung upon a curtain-hook. "Monsieur is not an attaché of the house. Monsieur is doubtless an herb-doctor."

There are charlatans who pervade the provincial parts of France, stopping a month at a time in the taverns, and curing the ignorant with samples according to the old system of *simulacra*—prescribing kepatica for liver, lentils for the eyes and green walnuts for vapors, on account of their supposed correspondence to the different organs. I settled my cravat at the mirror to contradict my resemblance to a waiter, threw my box into a wine-cooler to dispose of my identity with the equally uncongenial herbalist, and took a seat. Nodding paternally to the coat of Prussian blue, I proceeded to order Bordeaux-Léoville, capon with Tarragon sauce, compôte of nectarines in Madeira jelly—all superfluous, for I was brutally hungry, and wanted chops and coffee; but what will not an unsupported candidate for respectability do when he desires to assert his caste? I was proceeding to ruin myself in playing the eccentric millionaire when the door opened, giving entrance to a group of breakfasters.

"There he is—that's the man!" said the homoeopathist, much excited, and indicating to the blue coat a brisk, capable-looking gentleman of thirty-two in a neat silver-gray overcoat. The latter, after slightly touching his nose, nodded to the Scotchman, who in return drew himself up to his full height and formally wiped his mouth with a napkin, as if preparing himself for an ovation. Happily, he contented himself with rubbing his own nose with each hand in turn, and bowing so profoundly that he appeared ready to break at the knees.

"*Kellner*!" said the silver-gray, making a grand rattle among the plates and glasses, "some wine! some water! some ink! an omelette! a writing-pad! a *filet à la Chabrillant*!"

The last-named dish is one which Sciolists are perpetually calling *filet à la Chateaubriand*, saddling the poetic defender of Christianity with an invention in cookery of which he was never capable. I approved the new-comer, who was writing half a dozen notes with his mouth full, for his nicety in nomenclature: to get the right term, even in kitchen affairs, shows a reflective mind and tenderness of conscience. My friend the engineer arrived, and placed himself in the chair I had turned up beside my own. I was ashamed of the rate at which I advanced through my capon, but I recollected that Anne Boleyn, when she was a maid of honor, used to breakfast off a gallon of ale and a chine of beef.

My canal-maker interrupted me with a sudden appeal. "Listen—listen yonder," he said, jogging my knee, "it is very amusing. He is in a high vein to-day."

The gray coat, who had already directed four or five letters, and was cleaning his middle finger with a lemon over the glass bowl, had just opened a lofty geographical discussion with the blue-bottle. I cannot express how eagerly I, as a theorist of some pretension in Comparative Geography, awoke to a discussion in which my dearest opinions were concerned.

"Geography," the active gentleman was saying as he dipped his finger in water to attach the flaps of his envelopes—"geography, my dear professor, is the most neglected of modern sciences. Excuse me if I take from under you, for a moment, your doctoral chair, and land you on one of the forms of the primary department. I would ask a simple elementary question: How many parts of the globe are there?"

"Before the loss of Alsace and Lorraine," said the professor with plaintive humor, "I always reckoned six."

"Very well: on this point we agree."

"Six!" said the Scotchman in great surprise. "You are liberal: I make but five."

"Not one less than six," said the patriot, vastly encouraged with the support he got: "am I not right, sir? We have, first, Europe—"

"Ah, professor," said the silver-gray, interrupting him, "how is this? You, such a distinguished scholar—you still believe in Europe? Why, my dear sir, Europe no longer exists—certainly not as a quarter of the globe. It is simply, as Humboldt very truly remarks in his *Cosmos*, the septentrional point of Asia."

The surprise seemed to pass, at this point, from the face of the Scot to that of the Strasburger. After reflecting a moment, "Really," murmured he, "I recollect, in *Cosmos*—But how, then, do you reach six parts of the globe?"

"Only count, professor: Asia, one; Africa, two; Australia, three; Oceanica, four; North America, five; and South America, six."

"You cut America in two?"

"Nature has taken that responsibility. Each part of the world being necessarily an insulated continent, an enormous island, it is too much to ask me to confound the northern and southern continents of America, hung together by a thread—a thread which messieurs the engineers"—he bowed airily to my companion—"have very probably severed by this time."

The honest professor passed his hand over his forehead. "The deuce!" he said. "That is logic perhaps. Still, sir, I think it is rather hardy in you to double America and annihilate Europe, when Europe discovered America."

"The Europeans did not discover America," replied the young philosopher. "The Americans discovered Europe."

The professor of geography remained stunned: the homoeopathist gave utterance to a cry—one of admiration, doubtless.

"An American colony was settled in Norway long before the arrival of Columbus in Santo Domingo: who will contradict me when Humboldt says so? Only read your *Cosmos*!"

"The dickens! prodigious! prodigious!" repeated the man of blue. The young silver coat went on:

"I have been three times around the world, professor. The terrestrial globe was my only chart. I have studied in their places its divisions, continents, capes and oceans; also the customs, politics and philosophies of its inhabitants. I have a weakness for learning; I have caused myself to be initiated in all secret and philosophical societies; I have taken a degree from the Brahmans of Benares; I have received the accolade from the emir of the Druses; I have been instructed by the priests of the Grand Lama, and have joined the Society of Pure Illumination, the sole possessors of the Future Light. I have just returned from Persia, where I received the blessing of the great Bâb; and, like Solomon, I can say, *Vanitas vanitatum*!"

The red nose was by this time quite inflated and inflamed with disinterested pride. The blue was crushed, but he made a final effort, as the silver-gray made his preparations to depart and adjusted his breakfast-bill. "Pardon me, sir," he said, with a little infusion of provincial pride. "I am not a cosmopolitan, a Constantinopolitan or a Bâbist. But I enjoy your conversation, and am not entirely without the ability to sympathize in your geographical calculations. I am preparing at the present moment a small treatise on Submarine Geography; I am conducting, if that gives me any right to be heard, the geographical department in the chief gymnasium here: in addition, my youngest sister lost her ulnar bone by the explosion of an obus in the seminary on the night of August 18th, when six innocent infants were killed or maimed by the Prussians, who put a bomb in their little beds like a warming-pan."

"Never mind the warming-pan," said the traveler kindly, seeing that the professor was making himself cry, and unconsciously quoting Pickwick.

"I will not dilate on my title to trouble you for a few words more. I perceive that I shall have a good deal to modify in my modest treatise. I beg you to give us your views on some of the modifications now going on in the East, especially the Turkish question and the civilization of China."

"My dear professor," said the youthful Crichton sententiously, "do not disturb yourself with those problems, which are already disposed of. In twenty years the sultan will become a monk, to get rid of the chief sultana, who has pestered his life out with her notions of woman's rights, and who wore the Bloomer costume before the Crimean war. As for the question about China, it is better to let sleeping dogs lie: it has been a great mistake to arouse China, for it is a dog that drags after it three hundred millions of pups. Only see the effect already in Lima and San Francisco! Before a century has elapsed all Asia, with Alaska and the Pacific part of America, to say nothing of that petty extremity you persist in calling Europe, will be in the power of China. Your little girls, professor, will be more liable to lose their feet than their arms, for it is a hundred chances to one but your great-grand-nieces grow up Chinawomen."

"Astonishing!" murmured the professor of geography.

"Admirable!" cried the doctor.

I had hitherto said nothing, though I was capitally entertained. At length I ventured to take up my own parable, and, addressing the pretended disciple of the Brahmans, I asked, "Can you enlighten us, sir, on the true reason of the revolt of the slave States in America?"

The cosmopolitan, by this time standing, turned to me with a courteous motion of acquiescence; and, after having given me to understand by an agreeable smile that he did not confound me with his pair of victims, he said pompously, "The true cause was that each Northern freeholder demanded the use of two planters, now mostly octoroons, for body-servants."

"You don't say so?" said the school-teacher, profoundly impressed.

The Scotchman looked like him who digesteth a pill. I decided quickly on my own rôle, and briskly joined the conversation. Fishing up my botany-box and extracting the little flower, "Nothing is more likely when you know the country," I observed. "I have lived in Florida, gentlemen, where I undertook, as Comparative Geographer and as amateur botanist" (I looked searchingly at the professor, who had called me an herb-doctor), "to fix the location of Ponce de Leon's fountain and observe the medicinal plants to which it owes its virtue. America, I must explain to you, is a country where proportions are greatly changed. The pineapple tree there grows so very tall that it is impossible from the ground to reach the fruit. This little flower now in my hand becomes in that climate a towering and sturdy plant, the tobacco plant. The wild justice of those lawless savannahs uses it as a gibbet for the execution of criminals, whence the term 'Lynchburg tobacco.' You cannot readily imagine the scale on which life expands. It was formerly not necessary to be a great man there to have a hundred slaves. For my part, sixty domestics sufficed me" (I regarded sternly the homoeopathist, who had taken me for a waiter): "it was but a scant allowance, since my pipe alone took the whole time of four."

"Oh," said the Scotchman, "allow me to doubt. I understand the distribution of blood among the planters, because I am a homoeopathist; but what could your pipe gain by being diluted among four men?"

"The first filled it, the second lighted it, the third handed it and the fourth smoked it. I hate tobacco."

The witticism appeared generally agreeable, and I laughed with the rest. The cheerful philosopher in the gray coat passed out: as he left the room, followed subserviently by his interlocutors, he bowed very pleasantly to me and shook hands with my guardian the engineer.

"You know him?" I said to the latter.

"Just as well as you," he replied: "is it possible you don't recognize him? It is Fortnoye."

"What! Fortnoye—the Ancient of the wine-cellar at Épernay?"

"Certainly."

"In truth it is the same jolly voice. Then his white beard was a disguise?"

"What would you have?"

"I am glad he is the same: I began to think the mystifiers here were as dangerous as those of the champagne country. At any rate, he is a bright fellow."

"He is not always bright. A man with so good a heart as his must be saddened sometimes, at least with others' woes, and he does not always escape woes of his own."

This sentiment affected me, and irritated me a little besides, for I felt that it was in my own vein, and that it was I who had a right to the observation. I immediately quoted an extract from an Icelandic Saga to the effect that dead bees give a stinging quality to the very metheglin of the gods. We exchanged these remarks in crossing the vestibule of the hotel: a carriage was standing there for my friend.

"I am sorry to leave you. I have a meeting with a Prussian engineer about bridges and canals and the waterworks of Vauban, and everything that would least interest you. I must cross immediately to Kehl. I leave you to finish the geography of Strasburg."

"I know Strasburg by heart, and am burning to get out of it. I want to cross the Rhine, for the sake of boasting that I have set foot in the Baden territory. By the by, how have I managed to come so far without a passport?"

"*This* did it," said my engineer, tapping the tin box, which a waiter had restored to me in a wonderful state of polish. "I put a plan or two in it, with some tracing muslin, and allowed a spirit-level to stick out. You were asleep. I know all the officials on this route. I had only to tap the box and nod. You passed as my assistant. Nobody could have put you through but I."

"You are a vile conspirator," said I affectionately, "and have all the lower traits of the Yankee character. But I will use you to carry me to Kehl, as Faust used Mephistopheles. By the by, your carriage is a comfortable one and saves my time. I have two hours before I need return to the train."

"It is double the time you will need."

EDWARD STRAHAN.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FROM THE POTOMAC TO THE OHIO

An old writer who dearly loved excursions, Francis Rabelais, inserted in one of his fables an account of a country where the roads were in motion. He called the place the Island of Odes, from the Greek [Greek: odss], a "road," and explained: "For the roads travel, like animated things; and some are wandering roads, like planets, others passing roads, crossing roads, connecting roads. And I saw how the travelers, messengers and inhabitants of the land asked, Where does this road go to? and that? They were answered, From the south to Faverolles, to the parish, to the city, to the river. Then hoisting themselves on the proper road, without being otherwise troubled or fatigued, they found themselves at their place of destination."

This fancy sketch, thrown off by an inveterate joker three hundred years ago, is justified curiously by any of our modern railways; but to see the picture represented in startling accuracy you should find some busy "junction" among the coal-mountains. Here you may observe, from your perch upon the hill, an assemblage of roads actively reticulating and radiating, winding through the valleys, slinking off misanthropically into a tunnel, or gayly parading away elbow-in-elbow with the streams. These avenues, upon minute inspection, are seen to be obviously moving: they are crawling and creeping with an unbroken joint-work of black wagons, the rails hidden by their moving pavement, and the road throughout advancing, foot by foot, into the distance. It is hardly too fanciful—on seeing its covering slide away, its switches swinging, its turn-tables revolving, its drawbridges opening—to declare that such a road is an animal—an animal proving its nature, according to Aristotle, by the power to move itself. Nor is it at all censurable to ask of a road like this where it "goes to."

The notion of what Rabelais calls a "wayfaring way," a *chemin cheminant*, came into our thoughts at Cumberland. But Cumberland was not reached until after many miles of interesting travel along a route remarkable for beauties, both natural and improved. A coal-distributor is certain, in fact, to be a road full of attractions for the tourist; for coal, that Sleeping Beauty of our era, always chooses a pretty bed in which to perform its slumber of ages. The road which delivers the Cumberland coal, however, is truly exceptional for splendor of scenery, as well as for historical suggestiveness and engineering science. It has recently become, by means of certain lavish providences established for the blessing of travelers at every turn, a tourist route and a holiday delight.

It is all very well for the traveler of the nineteenth century to protest against the artificial and unromantic guidance of the railway: he will find, after a little experience, that the homes of true romance are discovered for him by the locomotive; that solitudes and recesses which he would never find after years of plodding in sandal shoon are silently opened to him by the engineer; and that Timon now, seeking the profoundest cave in the fissures of the earth, reaches it in a Pullman car.

The silvery Capitoline dome at Washington floats up from among its garden trees, seeming to grow higher and higher as we recede from it. Quickly dominating the low and mean buildings which encumber and try to hide it in its own neighborhood, it gradually rises superior to the whole city, growing greater as Washington grows less. The first part of the course is over the loop of road newly acquired and still improving by the company—a loop hanging downward from Baltimore, so as to sweep over Washington, and confer upon the through traveler the gift of an excursion through the capital. This loop swings southwardly from Baltimore to a point near Frederick, Washington being set upon it like a bead in the midst. The older road, like a mathematical chord, stretches still between the first points, but is occupied with the carrying of freight. The tourist notices the stout beams of the bridges, the new look of the sleepers, and the sheen of the double lines of fresh steel rail: he observes some heavy mason-work at the Monocacy River. Two hours have passed: at Frederick Junction he joins a road whose cuttings are grass-grown, whose quarried rocks are softened with lichen. He is struck by the change, and with reason, for he is now being carried under the privileges of the first railroad charter granted in America.

We may not here undertake the story of the iron track, though it is from this very road that such a story must take its departure, and though we cannot grant that that story would be exceeded by any in the range of the author's skill as a matter of popular interest. This railroad, this "Baltimore and Ohio" artery, connects, through its origin, with the very beginnings of modern progress, and indeed with feudalism; for it was opened in 1828 by Charles Carroll, the patriot who had staked his broad lands of Carrollton in 1776 against the maintenance of feudalism in this country. "I consider this," said Carroll, after his slender and aristocratic hand had relinquished the spade, "among the most important acts of my life—second only to my signing the Declaration of Independence." Railroads, excepting coal-mine trams, were as yet untried; Stephenson had not yet exhibited the Rocket; for travel and transportation the locomotive was unknown, and the Baltimoreans conceived their scheme while yet uncertain whether horse-power or *stationary* steam-engines would be the best acting force. It was opened as far as Ellicott's Mills as a horse-road, the idlers and beauties of Baltimore participating in the excursion as a novel jest. In 1830, Baron Krudener, the envoy from Russia, rode upon it in a car with sails, called the Æolus, a model of which he sent to the emperor Nicholas as something new and hopeful. Passing the Monocacy, we roll over a rich champaign country, based upon limestone—the garden of the State, and containing the ancient manor of Carrollton, through whose grounds, by one of its branches, this road passes for miles. Near by are quarries of Breccia marble—a conglomerate of cemented variegated pebbles—out of which were cut the rich pillars in the House of Representatives at Washington. The Monocacy is crossed, near whose bank lies the bucolic old Maryland town of Frederick, to attain which a twig of the road wanders off for the few necessary miles. Soon the piquant charms of Potomac scenery are at hand, the mountains are marching upon us, and the road becomes stimulating.

A jagged spur of the Blue Ridge, the Catoctin Mountain, strides out to the river, and the railroad, striking it, wraps itself around the promontory in a sharp curve, like a blow with the flat of an elastic Damascus sword. The broad Potomac sweeps rushing around its base: it is the celebrated Point of Rocks. The nodding precipice, cut into a rough and tortured profile by the engineers, lays its shadow to sleep on the whizzing roofs of the cars as they glitter by, (Shadows always seem to print themselves with additional distinctness upon any moving object, like a waterfall or a foaming stream.) There are a village and a bridge at the Point, and the mountain-range, broken in two by the river, recovers itself gracefully and loftily on the other side.

For half an hour more, as we rush to meet the course of the Potomac, the broad ledges that heave the bed of the river into mounds, and the ascending configuration of the shore, seem to speak of something grand, and directly we are in the cradle of romance, at Harper's Ferry.

To reach this village, perhaps the most picturesque in the country, we must cross the Potomac from Maryland into Virginia. The bridge is peculiar and artistic. It is about nine hundred feet long; its two ends are curved in opposite directions, and at its farther extremity it splits curiously into two bridge-branches, one of which supports the road running up the Shenandoah, while the other carries the main road along the Potomac. The latter fork of the bridge runs for half a mile up the course of the Potomac stream over the water, the road having been denied footing upon the shore on account of the presence there of the government arsenal buildings. The effect to the eye is very curious: the arsenal is at present razed to the level of the ground (having been fired, the reader will remember, by the Federal guard at the beginning of hostilities, and some fifteen thousand stand of arms burnt to prevent their falling into Lee's hands), and there is no topographical reason to prevent the track running comfortably on dry ground. The arrangements, however, for purchasing the right to a road-bed on the arsenal grounds, though under way, are not yet complete, and the road marches on aquatically, as aforesaid.

Harper's Ferry, a town supported of old almost entirely by the arsenal works, is a desolate little stronghold among towering mountains, the ruins being in the foreground. The precipices on either side of the river belong to the Elk Ridge, through which, at some antediluvian period, the colossal

current has hewed its way. At the base of the Virginia side of the mountains, hugged in by the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, and by Loudon and Bolivar Heights, cowers the town.

Across the river towers the mighty cupola of Maryland Height, far overtopping the other peaks, and farther down the stream, like a diminishing reflection of it, the softer swell of South Mountain. An ordinary rifle-cannon on Maryland Height can with the greatest ease play at bowls to the other summits. From this eminence one Colonel Ford, on September 13, 1862, toppled down his spiked and coward cannon: the hostile guns of the enemy quickly swarmed up the summit he had abandoned, and the Virginia crests of Loudon and Bolivar belched with rebel artillery. The town was surrendered by Colonel Miles at the very moment when McClellan, pressing forward through the passes of South Mountain from Frederick, was at hand to relieve it: Miles was killed, and the considerable military stores left in the village were bagged by Stonewall Jackson. Flushed with this temporary advantage, Jackson proceeded to join Lee, who then advanced from Sharpsburg and gave unsuccessful battle to the Union forces at Antietam Creek.

This stream pours into the Potomac just above, from the Maryland side. It gives its name to one of the most interesting actions of the war. The fields of Antietam and Gettysburg were the only two great battle grounds on which the Confederates played the rôle of invaders and left the protection of their native States. Antietam was the first, and if it could have been made for Lee a more decisive failure, might have prevented Gettysburg. It occurred September 15th to 18th, 1862. Lee had just thoroughly whipped that handsome Western braggart, General Pope, and, elated with success, thought he could assume the offensive, cross the Potomac, and collect around his banner great armies of dissatisfied secessionists to the tune of "Maryland, my Maryland." McClellan (then in the last month of his command over the army of the Potomac) pushed with unwonted vigor over the mountains, inspired, it is said, by the accidental foreknowledge of Lee's whole Maryland plan, and clashed with Lee across the bridges of this pretty highland stream. As an episode he lost Harper's Ferry; but that was a trifle. It was a murderous duel, that which raged around the Dunker church and over the road leading from Sharpsburg to Hagerstown. Lee's forty thousand men were shielded by an elbow of the Potomac; his batteries of horse-artillery under Stuart were murdering the forces of Hooker, when that general was relieved by the support of Mansfield; then Mansfield was killed and Hooker wounded; and then Sedgwick was sent up to replace Mansfield; then, when Sedgwick was getting the better of Jackson and Hood, McLaws and Walker drew up to the Confederate left, and burst completely through Sedgwick's line. Presently, Franklin and Smith came across from the stream and reinforced the Federals, driving the Southern advance back to the church, and Burnside rendered some hesitating assistance; but then rushed up the force which had received the surrender of Harper's Ferry, singing victory, and drove back Burnside; and when McClellan, on the morning of the 19th, found that Lee had withdrawn across the Potomac, he was too much discouraged with his own hurts to venture a pursuit. He had lost twelve thousand men, and Lee eight thousand. But Antietam, though for us a costly and unsatisfactory victory, was for the South a conclusive lesson. The Peter-the-Hermit excursion into Maryland lasted just two weeks, and its failure was signal and instructive. Intended as an invasion that should result in the occupation of Washington and Philadelphia, it led to nothing but to Stuart's audacious raid into Pennsylvania with his thousand troopers—a theatrical flourish to wind up an unsuccessful drama. As for Harper's Ferry, its overwhelming punishment and precipitate conquest were not without their use: the retention by the Federals of the little depot of army stores on the Virginia bank surprised and thwarted Lee. To reduce it, he had to pause, and ere the operation was complete McClellan was upon him, and cornered him before he was enabled to take up a firm position in Western Maryland and prepare for the Pennsylvania invasion. The Ferry fell into our hands again, but as a ruin. As for the elaborate bridge approaching it, its history is the history of the Potomac campaign: three times has it been destroyed by the Confederates, and twice by the Unionists. Eight times it has been carried away by freshets.

An earlier interest, yet intimately connected with the rebellion, belongs to Harper's Ferry. From the car window you see the old engine-house where John Brown fortified himself, and was wounded and captured, while these wooded hills were bathed with October red in 1859. The breaches in the walls where he stood his siege are still apparent, filled in with new brickwork. No single life could have been so effectually paid out as his was, for he cemented in the cause of the North the whole abolition sentiment of the civilized world, and gained our army unnumbered recruits. Truly said the slaves when he died, "Massa Brown is not buried: he is planted."

Of the site of all these storied ruins we can only say again and again that it is beautiful. The rocky steeps that enclose the town have a Scottish air, and traveled visitors, beholding them, are fain to allude to the Trosachs; but the river that rolls through the mountains, and has whirled them into a hollow as the potter turns a vase, is continental in its character, and plunges through the landscape with a swell of eddy and a breadth of muscle that are like nothing amid the basking Scottish waters.

On an eminence immediately overlooking Harper's Ferry, and some four hundred feet thereabove, is the enormous turtle-shaped rock, curiously blocked up over a fissure, on which Jefferson once inscribed his name. Chimney Rock, a detached column on the Shenandoah near by, is a sixty-foot high natural tower, described by Jefferson in his *Notes on Virginia*. Upon the precipice across the river, on the Maryland side, the fancy of the tourist has discovered a figure of Napoleon: it forms a bas-relief of stupendous proportions, having the broad cliff for background, and clearly defining the hair, the Corsican profile and the bust, with an epaulette on the shoulder. The Blue Ridge, as it traverses from this point the breadth of Virginia, breaks into various natural eccentricities—the Peaks of Otter, rising a mile above the sea, the Natural Bridge, Weyer's Cave, Madison's Cave—and gives issue to those rich heated and mineralized springs for which the State is famous.

The tinge of regret with which we leave Harper's Ferry is mitigated by the hope that greater wonders may lie beyond. In two miles the railroad, as if willing to carve out a picture-frame in which the heroic river may be viewed, excavates the "Potomac Tunnel," as it is named, through which the water is seen like a design in *repoussé* silver, with two or three emerald islands in it for jewel-work. The perforation is eighty feet through, but in contrast with its rocky breadth our picture-frame is not too deep: whenever we shift our position, the view seems to increase in art-beauty, and as a final comprehensive picture it recedes and crowds under the spandrels of the arch the whole mountain-pass, with the confluence of the two rivers in the finest imaginable aspect.

Poor Martinsburg! during the rebellion a mere sieve, through which the tide of war poured back and forth in the various fluctuations of our fortune! It is said to have been occupied by both armies, alternately, fifteen times. The passenger sees it as a mere foreground of big restaurant and platform, with a conglomeration of village houses in the rear—featureless as the sheep which the painter of Wakefield put in for nothing. One incident, however, supervenes. An old man, with positive voice and manners, and altogether a curious specimen in looks, gait and outfit, comes through the train with a pannier of apples and groundnuts. He is pointed out as one of the men of importance in Martinsburg, owning a row of flourishing houses. With the anxious servility which wealth always commands, we purchase an apple of this capitalist, blandly choosing a knotty and unsalable specimen.

Pretty soon, as we look over into Maryland, we have indicated for us the site of old Fort Frederick, until lately traceable, but now completely obliterated. It was an interesting relic of the old Indian wars. Shortly after Braddock's defeat on the Monongahela, when the Indians had become very bold, and had almost depopulated this part of Maryland, Fort Frederick was erected by Governor Sharpe as a menace, and garrisoned with two hundred men. It was an immediate moral victory, awing and restraining the savages, though no decided conflict is known to have occurred from its construction to its quiet rotting away within the present generation. Those were the days when Frederick in Maryland and Chambersburg in Pennsylvania were frontier points, the Alleghanies were Pillars of Hercules, and all beyond was a blank!

Still continuing our course on the Virginia side of the Potomac, through what is known in this State as the Virginia Valley, while in Pennsylvania the same intervale is called the Cumberland Valley, we admire the increasing sense of solitude, the bowery wildness of the river-banks, and the spirited freshness of the hastening water. At a station of delightful loneliness we alight.

Here Sir John's Run comes leaping from the hills to slide gurgling into the Potomac, and at this point we attain Berkeley Springs by a dragging ascent of two miles and a half in a comfortable country stage. Sir John's Run was called after Sir John Sinclair, a quartermaster in the doomed army of Braddock. The outlet into the Potomac is a scene of quiet country beauty, made dignified by the hills around the river. A hot, rustic station of two or three rooms, an abandoned factory building—tall, empty-windowed and haunted-looking—gone clean out for want of commerce, like a lamp for lack of oil. Opposite the station a pretty homespun tavern trellised with grapes, a portrait of General Lee in the sitting-room, and a fat, buxom Virginia matron for hostess. All this quiet scene was once the locality of the hot hopes and anxieties of genius, and it is for this reason we linger here.

When the little harbor at the mouth of Sir John's Run was still more wild and lonely than now, James Rumsey, a working bath-tender at Berkeley Springs, launched upon it a boat that he had invented of novel principle and propulsive force. The force was steam, and Rumsey had shown his model to Washington in 1780. First discoverers of steam-locomotion are turning up every few months in embarrassing numbers, but we cannot feel that we have a right to suppress the claims of honest Rumsey, the protégé of Washington. The dates are said to be as follows: Rumsey launched his steamboat here at Sir John's Run in 1784, before the general and a throng of visitors from the Springs; in 1788, John Fitch launched another first steamboat on the Delaware, and sent it successfully up to Burlington; in 1807, Robert Fulton set a third first steamboat on the Hudson, the Clermont. Rumsey's motion was obtained by the reaction of a current *squirted* through the stern of the boat against the water of the river, the current being pumped by steam. This action, so primitive, so remote from the principle of the engine now used, seems hardly worthy to be connected with the great revolutionary invention of steam-travel; yet Washington certified his opinion that "the discovery is of vast importance, and may be of the greatest usefulness in our inland navigation." James Rumsey, with just a suspicion of the irritability of talent, accused Fitch of "coming pottering around" his Virginia work-bench and carrying off his ideas, to be afterward developed in Philadelphia. It is certain that the development was great. Rumsey died in England of apoplexy at a public lecture where he was explaining his contrivance.

A sun-burnt, dark-eyed young Virginian now guides us up the mountain-road to the Springs, where we find a full-blown Ems set in the midst of the wilderness. The Springs of Berkeley, originally included in the estates of Lord Fairfax, and by him presented to the colony, were the first fashionable baths opened in this country. One half shudders to think how primitive they were in the first ages, when the pools were used by the sexes alternately, and the skurrying nymphs hastened to retreat at the notification that their hour was out and that the gentlemen wanted to come in. They were populous and civilized in the pre-Revolutionary era when Washington began to frequent them and became part owner in the surrounding land. The general's will mentions his property in "Bath," as the settlement was then called. The Baroness de Reidesel (wife of the German general of that name taken with Burgoyne at Saratoga) spent with her invalid husband the summer of 1779 at Berkeley, making the acquaintance of Washington and his family; and whole pages of her memoirs are devoted to the quaint picture of watering-place life at that date.

Berkeley Springs are probably as enjoyable as any on the continent. There is none of that aspect of desolation and pity-my-sorrows so common at the faded resorts of the unhappy South, yet a pleasant rurality is impressed on the entertainment. The principal hotel is a vast building, curiously rambling in style: the dining-room, for instance, is a house in itself, planted in a garden. Here, when the family is somewhat small and select, will be presented the marvels of Old Dominion cooking—the marrowy flannel-cake, the cellular waffle, the chicken melting in a beatitude of cream gravy: when

the house is pressed with its hundreds of midsummer guests these choice individualities of kitchen chemistry are not attainable; but even then the bread, the roast, the coffee—a great *chef* is known by the quality of his simples—are of the true Fifth Avenue style of excellence. Captain Potts (we have come to the lands where the hotel-keepers are military officers), an old moustache of the Mexican war, broods over the large establishment like the father of a great family. With the men he is wise on a point of horseflesh or the quality of the brandy; with the matrons he is courtly, gallant, anecdotic: the young women appear to idolize him, and lean their pretty elbows on his desk half the day, for he is their protector, chevalier, entertainer, bonbon-holder, adviser and elder brother, all in one. Such is the landlord, as that rare expert is understood in the South. As for the regimen, it is the rarest kind of Pleasure made Medicinal, and that must be the reason of its efficacy. There is a superb pool of tepid water for the gentlemen to bathe in: a similar one, extremely discreet, for the ladies. Besides these, of which the larger is sixty feet long, there are individual baths, drinking fountains in arbors, sulphur and iron springs, all close to the hotel. The water, emerging all the year round at a temperature of about seventy-five degrees, remains unfrozen in winter to the distance of a mile or more along the rivulet by which it escapes. The flavor is so little nauseous that the pure issue of the spring is iced for ordinary table use; and this, coupled with the fact that we could not detect the slightest unusual taste, gave us the gravest doubts about the trustworthiness of this mineral fountain's old and unblemished reputation: another indication is, that they have never had the liquid analyzed. But the gouty, the rheumatic, the paralyzed, the dyspeptic, who draw themselves through the current, and let the current draw itself through them, are content with no such negative virtues for it, and assign

To Berkeley every virtue under heaven.

The mountain-village known to Washington as "Bath" is still a scene of fashionable revel: the over-dressed children romp, the old maids flirt, the youthful romancers spin in each other's arms to music from the band, and dowagers carefully drink at the well from the old-fashioned mug decorated with Poor Richard's maxims; but the festivities have a decorous and domestic look that would meet the pity of one of the regular ante-rebellion bloods. After the good people have retired at an early hour, we fancy the ghost of a lofty Virginia swell standing in the moonlight upon the piazza, which he decorates with gleams of phantom saliva. Attended by his teams of elegant horses, and surrounded by a general halo of gambling, racing, tourneying and cock-fighting, he seems to shake his lank hair sadly over the poor modern carnival, and say, "Their tameness is shocking to me."

There is a good deal of honest sport still to be had in the adjacent hills: the streams yield trout, and various larger prey, for which the favorite bait is a small ugly fish called helgamite. The woods contain turkeys, pheasants, quail and woodcock. The region has a valuable interpreter in the person of General David H. Strother, so agreeably known to the public as "Porte Crayon," whose father was lessee of the Springs, and who at one period himself conducted the hotel. He addicts himself now to pen and pencil solely. In the village, where he presides over a pretty cottage home, he has quite a circle of idolaters: the neighbors' houses display on their walls his sketches of the village eccentrics, attended by those accessories of dog or gun or nag which always stamp the likeness, and make the rustic critic cry out, "Them's his very features!" A large, boisterous painting in the hotel represents his impressions of the village arena in his youth; and ancient gamesters, gray-headed now, like to stroll in and contemplate their own portraits grouped around the cock-pit in all the hot blood of betting days and in the green dress-coats of 1840. Strother (now an active graybeard) was profoundly stirred by the outbreak of the rebellion. His friends were slaveholders and Confederates: he lived upon the mountain-line dividing the rich, proud, noble rebels of the eastern counties from the hungry and jealous loyalists of West Virginia. He himself loved the State as Bruce loved Scotland, but he loved country better. He shut himself up with his distracting problem for three days in utter privacy: he emerged with his mind made up, a Union soldier.

"It must have been awkward for a Virginian to cast his lot against Virginia," we observed to the stagedriver who bore us back to the station—an ex-Federal soldier and a faithful devotee of Crayon's.

"No awkwarder than for Virginia to go against her country: that's how *we* looked at it," retorted the patriot.

Bidding adieu to Berkeley and its paternal landlord, we resume the steel road (that well-worn phrase of the "iron way" is a complete misnomer) with another glance of familiarity at the beautiful confluence of Sir John's Run with the Potomac, where the sunny waters still seem to murmur of the landing of Braddock's army and the novel disturbance of James Rumsey's steamer. The mountains extending from this point, the recesses of the Blue Ridge, in their general trend south-westerly through the State, are one great pharmacy of curative waters. Jordan and Capper Springs, in the neighborhood of Winchester, lie thirty or forty miles to the south; and beneath those are imbedded the White, Black, Yellow, and we know not how many other colors in the general spectrum of Sulphurs. It would perhaps be our duty to indicate more exactly the Bethesdas of this vast natural sanitarium, to which our present course gives us the key, but that task has already been performed, in a complete and very attractive manner, by Mr. Edward A. Pollard in his little work *The Virginia Tourist*. Our present task is to attain the main wall of the Alleghany Mountains, which we do at the town of Cumberland, after passing through the grand curved tunnel at Pawpaw Ridge, and crossing Little Cacapon Creek, and traversing the South Branch, which is the larger and true Potomac, and admiring the lofty precipices, with arched and vaulted strata, on South Branch Mountain and at Kelly's Rocks and Patterson Creek.

It is but a prosaic consideration, but the bracing air of the mountain-ride from Berkeley Springs down to the railway station, and the rapid career thence to Cumberland, have given us the appetites of ogres. We carry our pilgrim scrip into the town of Cumberland without much hope of having it generously filled, for this coaly capital, lost among its mountains, had formerly the saddest of reputations for hospitality. The three or four little taverns were rivals in the art of how not to diet. Accordingly, our surprise is equal to our satisfaction when we find every secret of a grand hotel perfectly understood and put in practice at the "Queen City," the large house built and conducted by the railway company. A competent Chicago purveyor, Mr. H.M. Kinsley, who has the office of general manager of the hotels belonging to the corporation, resides here as at the head-quarters of his department, and is blessed every day by the flying guests from the railway-trains, as well as the permanent boarders who use Cumberland as a mountain-resort. The choicest dainties from the markets of Baltimore, laid tenderly on ice in that city and brought as freight in the lightning trains of the road, are cooked for the tables, and the traveler "exercised in woes," who used to groan over salt pork and dreadful dodgers, now finds the "groaning" transferred to the overloaded board. The house is now in all the charm of freshness and cleanliness, hospitably furnished, with deep piazza, a pretty croquet-lawn with fountain, and other modern attractions, the whole surrounded with what is no small gain in a muddy Maryland town—a broad Schillinger cement pavement, which, like Mr. Wopsle's acting, may be praised as "massive and concrete."

By day, Cumberland is quite given over to carbon: drawing her supplies from the neighboring mining-town of Frostburg, she dedicates herself devoutly to coals. All day long she may be seen winding around her sooty neck, like an African queen, endless chains and trains and rosaries of black diamonds, which never tire of passing through the enumeration of her jeweled fingers. At night the scene is more beautiful. We clambered up the nearest hill at sunset, while the colored light was draining into the pass of Wills' Mountain as into a vase, and the lamps of the town sprang gradually into sight beneath us. The surrounding theatre of mountains had a singularly calm and noble air, recalling the most enchanted days of Rome and the Campagna. The curves of the hills are marvels of swaying grace, depending from point to point with the elegance of draperies, and seating the village like a gem in the midst of "great laps and folds of sculptor's work." The mechanics and miners, as twilight deepened, began to lead their sweethearts over these beautiful hills, so soft in outline that no paths are necessary. The clouds of fireflies made an effect, combining with the village lights below.

Then as night deepened, as if they were the moving principle of all the enchantment, the company's rolling-mills, like witches' kettles, began to spirt enormous gouts of flame, which seemed to cause their heavy roofs to flutter like the lids of seething caldrons.

The commanding attraction of the western journey is necessarily the passage of the Alleghanies. The climb begins at Piedmont, and follows an ascent which in eleven consecutive miles presents the rare grade of one hundred and sixteen feet per mile. The first tableau of real sublimity, perhaps, occurs in following up a stream called Savage River. The railway, like a slender spider's thread, is seen hanging at an almost giddy height up the endless mountain-side, and curved hither and thither in such multiplied windings that enormous arcs of it can always be seen from the flying window of the car. The woods, green with June or crimson with November, clamber over each other's shoulders up the ascent; but as we attain the elevation of two hundred feet above the Savage, their tufted tops form a soft and mossy embroidery beneath us, diminishing in perspective far down the cleft of the ravine. As we turn the flank of the great and stolid Backbone Mountain we command the mouth of another stream, pouring in from the south-west: it is a steeply-enclosed, hill-cleaving torrent, which some lover of plays and cider, recollecting Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's slumber beneath the crabapple boughs, has named Crabtree Creek. There is a point where the woody gorges of both these streams can be commanded at once by the eye, and Nature gives us few landscape *pendants* more primitively wild and magnificent than these.

This ascent was made by the engineers of the company in the early days of railroads, and when no one knew at what angle the friction of wheels upon rails would be overcome by gravity. On the trial-trip the railroad president kept close to the door, meaning, in the case of possible discomfiture and retrogression, to take to the woods! But all went well, and in due time was reached, as we now reach it, Altamont, the alpine village perched two thousand six hundred and twenty-six feet above the tide.

The interest of the staircase we have run up depends greatly on its pioneer character. No mountain-chain had been crossed by a locomotive before the Alleghanies were outraged, as we see them, here and by this track. As the railroad we follow was the first to take existence in this country, excepting some short mining roads, so the grade here used was the first of equal steepness, saving on some English roads of inferior length and no mountainous prestige. Here the engineer, like Van Arnburgh in the lion's den, first planted his conqueror's foot upon the mane of the wilderness; and 'in this spot modern science first claimed the right to reapply that grand word of a French monarch, "*Il n'y a plus de Pyrenées*!"

We are on the crest of the Alleghanies. On either side of the mountain-pass we have threaded rise the higher summits of the range; but, though we seem from the configuration of the land to be in a valley, we are met at every turn by the indications familiar to mountain-tops—indications that are not without a special desolation and pathos. Though all is green with summer, we can see that the vegetation has had a dolorous struggle for existence, and that the triumph of certain sparse trees here and there is but the survival of the strongest. They stand scattered and scraggy, like individual bristles on a bald pate. Their spring has been borrowed from summer, for the leafage here does not begin until late in June. The whole scenery seems to array itself for the tourist like a country wife, with many an incompleteness in its toilet, and with a kind of haggard apology for being late. Rough log-houses stand here and there among the laurels. The tanned gentlemen standing about look like California miners, as you see them in the illustrations to Bret Harte's stories. Through this landscape, roughly blocked out, and covered still with Nature's chips and shavings—and seeming for that very reason singularly fresh and close to her mighty hand—we fly for twenty miles. We are still ascending, and the true apex of our path is only reached at the twentieth. This was the climax which poet Willis came out to reach in a spirit of intense curiosity, intent to peer over and see what was on the other side of the mountains, and with some idea, as he says, of hanging his hat on the evening star. His disgust, as a bard, when he found that the highest point was only named "Cranberry Summit," was sublime.

"Willis was particularly struck," said the landlord of the Glades Hotel, "with a quality of whisky we had hereabouts at the time of his visit. In those days, before the 'revenue,' an article of rich corn whisky was made in small quantities by these Maryland farmers. Mr. Willis found it agree with him particularly well, for it's as pure as water, and slips through your teeth like flaxseed tea. I explained to him how it gained in quality by being kept a few years, becoming like noble old brandy. Mr. Willis was fired with the idea, and took a barrel along home with him, in the ambitious intention of ripening it. In less than six months," pursued the Boniface with a humorous twinkle in his eyes, "he sent for another barrel."

The region where we now find ourselves among these mountain-tops is known as the Glades—a range of elevated plateaux marked with all the signs of a high latitude, but flat enough to be spread with occasional patches of discouraged farms. The streams make their way into the Youghiogheny, and so into the Ohio and Gulf of Mexico, for we have mounted the great watershed, and have long ago crossed both branches of the sun-seeking Potomac! We are in a region that particularly justifies the claim of the locomotive to be the great discoverer of hidden retreats, for never will you come upon a place more obviously disconcerted at being found out. The screams of the whistle day by day have inserted no modern ideas into this mountain-cranium, which, like Lord John Russell's, must be trepanned before it can be enlightened. The Glades are sacred to deer, bears, trout. But the fatal rails guide to them an unceasing procession of staring citizens, and they are filled in the fine season with visitors from Cincinnati and Baltimore. For the comfort of these we find established in the Glades two dissimilar hotels.

The first hostelry is the Deer Park Hotel, just finished, and really admirable in accommodations. It is a large and very tasteful structure, with the general air of a watering-place sojourn of the highest type—a civilized-looking fountain playing, and the familiar thunder of the bowling-alley forming bass to the click of the billiard-room. Here, as in Cumberland, we find an artificial forwardness of the dinner-table in the midst of the most unpromising circumstances. The daintiest meats and cates are served by the deftest waiters. The fact is, the hotel is owned by the company, and the dinners are wafted over, in Arabian Nights fashion, from the opulent markets of Baltimore. To prepare a feast, in this desolation, fit for the nuptials of kings and emperors, would be a very simple matter of the telegraph. Altogether, the aspect of this ornate, audacious-looking summer palace is the strangest thing, just where it is, to be seen on the mountains. The supreme sweetness of the air, the breath of pine and hemlock, the coolness of midsummer nights, make the retreat a boon for July and August. In autumn, among the resplendent and tinted mountain-scenery, with first-rate sport in following the Alleghany deer, the charms are perhaps greater.

The other resting-place of which we spoke is at the Glades Hotel in the town of Oakland—the same in which Mr. Willis quenched his poetic thirst. Oakland, looking already old and quaint, though it is a creation of the railroad, sits immediately under the sky in its mountain, in a general dress and equipage of whitewashed wooden houses. A fine stone church, however, of aspiring Gothic, forms a contrast to the whole encampment, and seems to have been quickly caught up out of a wealthy city: it is a monumental tribute by the road-president, Mr. Garrett, to a deceased brother; the county, too, in its name of Garrett, bears testimony to the same powerful and intelligent family. As for the "Glades," it is kept by Mr. Dailey in the grand old Southern style, and the visitor, very likely for the first time in his life, feels that he is *at home*. It is a curious thing that the sentiment of the English inn, the priceless and matchless feeling of comfort, has now completely left the mother-country to take refuge with some fine old Maryland or Virginia landlord, whose ideas were formed before the war. We have at the "Glades" a specimen. In Captain Potts of Berkeley we found another. This kind of landlord, in fact, should be a captain, a general or a major, in order to fill his rôle perfectly. He is the patron and companion of his guests, looking to their amusement with all the solicitude of a private householder. His manners are filled with a beaming, sympathetic and exquisite courtesy. He is necessarily a gentleman in his manners, having all his life lived that sporting, playful, supervisory

and white-handed existence proper at once to the master of a plantation and the owner of a hotel. His society is constantly sought, his table is pounced upon by ladies with backgammon in the morning, by gentlemen with decks of cards at night. Always handsome, sunburnt, and with unaffected good-breeding, he is the king of his delicious realm, the beloved despot of his domain. We have left ourselves, in sketching the general character, no space to descend to particulars on Mr. Dailey; but he was all the time before us as a sitter when we made the portrait. A stroll with him around his farm, and to his limpid little chalybeate spring, after one of his famously-cooked, breakfasts of trout and venison, leaves an impression of amity that you would not take away from many private country-houses.

The affluents of the Little and Great Yok (so the Youghiogheny is locally called) are still stocked with trout, while a gentleman of Oakland has abundance of the fish artificially breeding in his "ladders," and sells the privilege of netting them at a dollar the pound. As for the wild fish, we were informed by a sharp boy who volunteered to show us the chalybeate spring, and who guided us through the woods barefoot, making himself ill with "sarvice" berries as he went,—we were instructed by this naturalist that the trout were eaten away from the streams "by the alligators." This we regarded as a sun-myth, or some other form of aboriginal superstition, until we were informed by several of the gravest and most trustworthy gentlemen of several different localities on the mountains that there really is a creature infesting these streams supposed by them to be a young alligator, reaching a length of twelve inches, and doubtless subsisting on fish. An alligator as a mountain-reptile had not entered into our conception: can these voracious saurians, playing in the alpine affluents of the Mississippi, possibly be identical with the vast and ugly beasts of the lower bayous and the Gulf? We leave the identification for some reptile-loving philosopher.

Descending the western slope of the mountains, we prick up our attention, although the grade is gradual and easy. We know that we are coming to the crowning glory of the ride, the region celebrated for its more than Arcadian beauty, and consecrated by the earliest glories of our war—by the mountain Iliad of McClellan, the initial action at Philippi, and the prompt trampling out of West Virginia secession by the victories of Cheat River. This tameless, mountain-lapped, hemlock-tinted river had long been our fancied cynosure. "Each mortal has his Carcassonne," said, after a French poet, the late lamented John R. Thompson, using the term for what is long desired and never attained; and Mr. Matthew Arnold, in writing of a "French Eton," says, "Whatever you miss, do not miss seeing Carcassonne." As Carcassonne exists in French landscape, exists in the tourist's mind and desire, a standard of beauty and historic suggestion, such to us had become this swart and noble river. Now it happens that Thompson has left a description, in his most polished prose, of glorious Cheat River. As our own powers of description are very inferior, we make no scruple of borrowing, or, as Reade calls it, "jewel-setting:" "The grandest achievement of the engineer (whose name, Benjamin H. Latrobe, should always be stated in connection with the road) is to be found, however, in the region of Cheat River, where to the unscientific eye it would appear almost impossible that a road-bed could ever have been built. For two miles beyond Rowlesburg, where the Cheat River is crossed on a massive bridge of iron, there is a continuous succession of marvels in railway-work, of which the Tray Run viaduct is a dream of lightness and grace, yet so firm in its welded strength that thousands of tons of merchandise pass over it daily without causing, the slightest oscillation of its airy arches. Here, too, the wonders of mechanical skill are placed in striking juxtaposition with the wonders of Nature, whose obduracy has been so signally overcome. The sense of security was heightened in our case by a furious storm which burst upon us. We were seated on the fender or' cow-catcher,' watching the majestic marshaling of the thunder-clouds over the mountain-tops, and enjoying to the full the excitement of the moment, when suddenly the wind blew a terrific gust, filling the air with dust and dry leaves, and threatening to carry us individually over the precipice. The train was stopped, and we sought shelter in the comfortable car, which then moved on through the driving floods that continued to descend for half an hour, forming cataracts on every side of us. But the water ran off harmlessly

from the solid track, and our engine bade defiance to the tempest, which hurled huge branches of the trees into the angry abyss beneath. The triumph of Science over Nature was complete; and as the sinking sun threw a glow over the Glades where the clouds had parted, I think my companions caught some inspirations of the 'Poetry of the Rail-way.'"

At Grafton we have choice of two routes: one, to Wheeling, leads us by the beautiful scenery of the Tygart, where the Valley River Falls are laughing and glistening all day and all night, and by the stupendous Bollman bridge at Bellaire, almost two miles long, to Wheeling. But we continue on a straight course to Cincinnati, having promised ourselves to see the contrast between the City of Monuments and the Metropolis of Pork. Grafton offers us the accommodations of another of the company's hotels, where, as at Cumberland, we are daintily and tenderly fed. At Parkersburg we find another superb bridge, over a mile in length; at Athens an imposing insane asylum, to take care of us if all these engineering wonders have deprived us of our senses; and finally in Cincinnati, just a day after our departure from Baltimore, the gleam of the Ohio River and the fulfillment of our intention.

AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A STRONG-MINDED WOMAN

Extracts from a Journal

November 1, 18–. It is just three years to-day since I began to keep this journal. I am so glad now that I persisted in doing so, in spite of the temptations that have often assailed me to throw it aside. How else could I realize, bring home to myself, these past three years, strong and vivid as my remembrance of them is? No effort of mere recollection could have preserved for me as this book has done a record of my struggles and failures, and of my victories. Yes, I write the word proudly, *victories*, for I have been beyond my hopes successful. How well I remember my dear mother's distress at my queer notions, as she called them—her entreaties, her tender illogical protests against my making myself "conspicuous"! Dear mother! I can see now that it was very natural she should have disliked and dreaded my becoming a "strong-minded woman," for anything narrower than her ideas of a woman's education and sphere one cannot imagine. She was an excellent specimen of the old-fashioned mother and wife, and I believe sincerely thought her whole duty in life and the intention of her creation was "to suckle fools and chronicle small beer."

Let me see: yes, here it is at the very beginning—November 1, 18–. How faded the ink looks! Let me read it: "To-day I told mother I meant to attend a course of medical lectures: we had a scene, and she called in Cousin Jane to reason with me. How I detest Cousin Jane! She is nothing but a mass of orthodox dogmatism. Of course we quarreled over it, and she ended by telling me I was disgracing the family, and was no true woman. Well, we shall see which of us has the truer comprehension of a woman's sphere."

It is three years since I wrote that. Those lectures were my first step, and, like all first steps, cost me more of a struggle than anything I have done since. As I look back over these three years, I see that every hope and aspiration I then cherished has been more than realized. I can trace the steady progress of my intellect. I can go back to the days when I started to earn my own living—when I thought it a great thing to have gained a few dollars by my own labor. Yes, I am very glad to have this record of the past: it makes me strong and hopeful of the future. I have never regretted my decision to make an independent life for myself. I have sought only to do that for which Nature had gifted me, and from which nothing but custom and prejudice debarred me; and in claiming my own position I am conscious of having helped other women, and of having led the way for those who may be less courageous than I am.

All this might sound very conceited and self-confident to any one who should read it, but I do not write to be read by other eyes than my own: my journal is the reflex of my thoughts and feelings; so I may be frank with myself. And why should I *not* be proud of my independence, as well as any other human creature?

But I must prepare my speech for to-morrow. They say they can't do without me, and I really believe they mean it; for though some women besides myself have opinions, and can put them into words, they mostly lack the courage that I certainly possess. What a delicious sense of freedom and unfettered action I have in my life! I don't think I have laid down the special powers of my sex in asserting my freedom; but you must wait, little book, for the confession that is on the tip of my pen. Work first: that is my motto.

Nov. 10. Ten days since I opened my journal, and such busy days as they have been! Three speeches, and half a pamphlet written! I have done what people commonly term "a man's work" this week. How I despise all these time-honored phrases, which, dead letters as they are, act as links to

strengthen the chain that binds women in a state of inferiority. Why not say "a *woman's* work"? But that is a different sort of thing, I should be told: a woman should stay at home and take care of her house and children. Why so, say I, if she has no house, and does not wish for husband and children, feeling that they would impede her in her work? All women are not born to be wives and mothers: some have other work to do. But I need not argue with my journal: it is of my way of thinking; my ideas meet no opposition here. "But this is not at all womanly," my critic would say, had I one, which I have not: "you have not said a word of the really important event of the week." Dare I say that I had half forgotten it? A man has asked me to marry him! The great event of a woman's life has been within my reach, and I refused it. Mr. Whitaker is a very nice fellow, but too adoring by half. I want an equal, not a slave—a friend, a companion, not a man drawn to me by his imagination and desiring to put me on a pedestal before marriage, that he may reverse our position afterward. And then, too, marriage would hamper and restrict me. I must not give up to mankind what is meant for a party. But here I have a reflection to make, the result of my three years' experience since I became a "strong-minded woman." It is always maintained that a woman who chooses the life and holds the views that I do destroys her attraction and charm for the other sex, and that no man, however clever and successful she may be, will want to marry a woman who puts her intellect into trousers instead of petticoats. There was never a greater mistake. I have had four offers of marriage since I "unsexed" myself (that's the proper expression, I believe), and all from most respectable, well-to-do, worthy men; and I really think they all cared for me. I cannot help having a certain sense of gratified vanity about this, for, in spite of my critics, I am a woman still. I have earned a rest to-night, so I'll stop writing and go to bed.

Nov. 16. I feel lonely to-night. I am not often lonely: perhaps my little book will comfort me. Sometimes I have said to myself that my motto was that of a star: "Einsam bin ich, nicht allein." To-night it is not so. That Mr. Lawrence who was introduced to me to-night had a striking face, but there was a sort of masculine manner about him that I don't fancy. Manliness I like, but he seemed to be so sure that I was not his equal; and yet he treated me with perfect respect and courtesy. Some one whispered in my ear, "He is a great society swell." I have never seen anything of what is called society: I was not born with a title to admission within its circle, and I have always been too proud to seek it; yet I confess I have a curiosity to see what it is like. I suppose I should see the best result that the old way of looking at women can produce—the pink-cotton system, I call it. I don't believe that man would ever dream of contradicting me in a question of fact, or of using his strongest logical weapons against me in a discussion: he would only play with me mentally. How angry the very thought makes me! And yet he would defer to my opinion, and pay me all respect, and listen to everything I said, however silly, because I am a woman. What a strange, inconsistent mingling of discordant ideas! A toy and a divinity! His manners were, however, very agreeable: I suppose he is what is called a man of the world. Rather a poor thing to be: his manners are dearly bought. He said something about his cousin Mrs. Fordyce calling on me. Well, if she does, I shall perhaps have a glimpse at the *beau monde*. I wonder if all the men in society look as high-bred as he does? He is probably narrow-minded naturally, but he is one result of our scheme of civilization, which has its good as well as its bad points. Dear me! I certainly did not mean to make an analysis of Mr. Lawrence's character. Good-night, my little book!

Nov. 20. I cannot write to-night, and yet I must, I must. My head is bursting with thoughts and visions, my heart is swelling with new sensations. What an evening I have had! I shall never, never think myself courageous again. I, who have faced crowds with calmness, to quail before forty or fifty men and women, not one of whom was more intelligent or better educated than myself! But let me write it out if I can. I accepted Mrs. Fordyce's invitation to a little party. It was graciously given, and I, fool that I was, thought it was to do me honor that I was asked. I did not know then that these women of society will commit a baseness for a new sensation or to gratify an emotion of curiosity. I have been so admired, so looked up to by the men who have surrounded me, I never dreamed of being the object of mere curiosity or amusement. Well, I went. The room was half full of men and

women, talking, laughing, moving about. I was alone, and from the moment of my entrance into that blaze of light I felt lonely and weak; but I crossed the room and spoke to my hostess. She greeted me graciously, and then some one else came up, and I stood aside. Suddenly the sense of eyes upon me came over me. How those women stared! Never before had I been among women and felt no bond of sisterhood. How was it? was I unsexed, or they? There seemed a gulf between us: I read it in their eyes, it came to me in the air, a subtle but keen conviction. And how exquisite they were!—so soft and smooth and white, with no lines on their foreheads or creases round their mouths. I had never had such a sense of beauty given me before by anything but pictures. I wondered the men did not kneel to them: I felt as if I could myself if they would let me. As I stood there, my heart beating quick, and something in my throat beginning to choke me, dazzled and bewildered by the scene, a voice said—oh how gently!—in my ear, "Miss Linton, will you let me take you into the other rooms? There are one or two pictures you will enjoy." I tried not to start, but I trembled in spite of myself, the relief was so great. There we stood—he, Henry Lawrence, taller and handsomer and prouder-looking than any man in the room, looking down upon me and offering me his arm! I think I felt as I should if a lifeboat came to take me off a wreck—in a modified degree, I mean. I took his arm with a few rather inarticulate words of thanks, and we strolled through the other rooms, he listening to me with such earnest attentiveness, bending his head at every word, seeming so absorbed in me, so forgetful of the women who gazed at me as if I were a pariah, and the men who smiled on them as they did so. I confess it, I felt as if he stood between me and the mocking, coldly scrutinizing glances about me. I felt guarded, protected, and I could not struggle against the feeling, weak though I knew it was: it seemed irresistible. I suppose, being a woman like other women, I inherit traditional weakness, and cannot break the bonds of former generations in a day. Be it as it may, he did not seem to know or notice that I was not myself: he only seemed interested and absorbed. I did not feel as if I were taxing his courtesy, and soon I recovered my self-possession and talked naturally: my spirits rose, and my natural self-assertion returned to me. I enjoyed looking at the women, watching their ways and listening to the sound of their voices. It was a revelation of a new world to me, and I said as much to him.

"What in particular is it," he said, "that strikes you so?"

"I think," I answered, "it is the harmony of the whole effect."

"A thorough-bred woman always produces an harmonious effect," he said.

Something in his tone jarred me, and I said hastily, "I don't think development should be sacrificed to harmony: incompleteness is better than perfection sometimes."

He smiled sweetly: "Yes, but I am afraid we should hardly agree about the development of women, though I should like to hear you talk of it."

"Why should we not discuss and disagree?"

"I do not like to disagree with a woman at all, especially with a woman whom I admire," he said, bending his blue eyes on me with a look such as I had never seen before in a man's eyes. It was what I suppose would be called a chivalric look; and yet chivalry was only an improved barbarism.

Mrs. Fordyce came up just then, and introduced some gentlemen to me; and while they were talking Mr. Lawrence turned away. In a few moments he was back again with a lovely-looking young girl on his arm, blushing and yet self-possessed, with the same exquisite simplicity of manner he has himself. "My cousin Alice Wilton asks me to introduce her to you, Miss Linton," he said.

I have always—shall I confess it?—patted young girls on the head: this one I could no more have patronized than I could a statue of Diana. She was very charming to look at as she stood beside her cousin, and yet—No, I will make no exception: she was charming in every way, and I felt more at my ease that a woman had been presented to me.

Mr. Lawrence put me in my carriage. As he closed the door he said, "Your maid is not with you?"

I replied that I had none; on which he said to the driver, "Drive slowly: I mean to walk as far as the hotel with the carriage."

"Won't you get in?" I cried from the window.

He seemed not to hear me, but started off at a rapid pace, and I gave up the attempt, wondering at what seemed to me an eccentric choice. It was unnecessary for him to go with me at all, but I thought, "He has been, I suppose, brought up to think no woman can take care of herself." He was ready to open the door as I got out, and I longed to ask him why he had not driven with me; but I hesitated: something tied my tongue, and in a moment he had said "Good-night," and was gone with hasty steps into the darkness. I must stop, I am so tired.

December 3. It seems to me I am growing to be a dreadful egotist. I put nothing down now in this little book but just what concerns myself—nothing of the great subjects of universal interest which have always absorbed most of my thoughts, but just my own doings and sayings. At this very moment I desire only to write about my afternoon, and the way in which I spent it. I will indulge myself, and the record may serve me. How it had snowed all day! how it did snow this afternoon when I started out, wrapped in my waterproof, accoutred to encounter the storm, and rejoicing in the absence of long skirts and hooped petticoats! With my India-rubber boots I felt I could plod through any snow-drift, and I gained a pervading sense of exhilaration from the beating of the storm in my face. I chose a certain street I had come to know, which ran straight through the town and on into a more thinly-settled suburb. It was a good, clear path, and I should be able to have a splendid walk without meeting probably more than a dozen people in the course of it. Just as I passed the last square of closely-built town-houses, and began to come upon the stretching white landscape before me, as I trudged along, turning my head a little aside to escape the brunt of the driving snow, I heard an exclamation of surprise, and a man's voice said, "You *here*, Miss Linton?"

It was he, Mr. Lawrence. There he stood, his eyes brilliant with the excitement of the storm, his cheek aglow with exercise, looking, as the old women say, "the very picture of a man." I am very sensitive to beauty, and his seems to me very great: it draws me to him.

"Yes it is I," I said (we had both stopped). "I wanted exercise and air, and something to change my frame of mind; so I came out for a tramp."

He turned with me, and we walked on. In a moment more he said, "Will you take my arm? It will be easier to keep step and walk fast then."

I took it, and he looked down at me and said, with an inscrutable smile, which haunts me yet, I suppose because I can't make out its meaning, "Do you believe in fate?"

"If you mean by fate something which the will is powerless to resist, against which it is unavailing to struggle, I do not," I answered. "Do you, Mr. Lawrence?"

He laughed, not a pleasant laugh, albeit musical, but as if his smile had been one with some hidden meaning in it: "I hardly know what I believe. Certainly some power seems to lay traps for our wills at times, and waylay us when they are off duty. As, for instance," he went on, "I wanted to see you to-day, and I did not go to see you: my will acted perfectly well, and I seemed able to resist any temptation. I came out here to walk alone, thinking that I should be even farther away from you here than elsewhere, when, lo! you start up in my path, and here we are together. It is just as if some malicious spirit had mocked me with an idea of my own strength, only to betray me the better through my weakness." He spoke with an intensity which seemed out of place, and strangely unlike his usual calm manner. Somehow, a feeling of great delight had come over me as he spoke. I felt pleased—why I do not know—at his evident impatience and annoyance.

"But why," said I, "did you turn with me? *There* would have been the moment for your will to act."

"You think so? That is hardly fair, Miss Linton. Does one brand a soldier as a coward and a laggard who has fought and won a battle, and has sunk exhausted upon his arms to sleep, if he is

discomfited and dismayed when, just as slumber has him in its arms, a fresh foe sets upon him? No, I *could* not turn back."

His eyes were bent on me again, and something in them stirred my soul to its depths. Such a delicious feeling seemed stealing over me—a feeling of mixed power and weakness. I felt my color rise, but I looked ahead over the snowfields and said, "I don't see why you should have turned back. Why should you want to be with me and not be with me? I wanted to see you too."

I started as he spoke again, for his voice and manner were both changed—all the quiver and intensity gone out of them. "The 'reason why' of a mood is hard to find sometimes, and when found one has a conviction that no one but one's self would see its reasonableness," he said with a laugh cold and musical. "Let us talk of something we can both be sure to understand."

He seemed far away again. For a moment he had seemed so near—nearer, I think, than I ever remember to have felt a man to be. Then he talked, and talked very well, and made me talk, though it was not as easy as it usually is to me, and though we spoke of things that are generally to me like the sound of a trumpet to the war-horse. My spirit did not rise: the words would hardly come. I wanted to be alone and think it over—think over his words, his manner, his voice, the look in his eyes, and see what they meant, and, if I could, why he had changed so suddenly to me.

When we had walked some distance farther he himself proposed turning back, and took me home. As we neared the hotel I could not resist asking him why he had not come home with me that night in the carriage instead of walking, or running rather, beside it.

Such a strange look came over his face as I asked him, and his lips set with a stern expression as he said stiffly, icily, "I had realized, Miss Linton, how utterly different our ways of looking at life must be; or else perhaps it is that you do not hold me to be enough of a knight to consider a woman's position before my own comfort and pleasure."

"I don't understand you," said I, bewildered. "I *asked* you to get into the carriage."

"I know it," he replied; "but in such matters no gentleman can allow a woman's kindly impulse of courtesy to compromise her in any way: he must think first of her, and all the more because she has thought of him."

"What do you mean by compromise?" I exclaimed. "I am quite independent enough of public opinion to be a free agent in such matters: you must not forget that I am a very different woman from a society belle."

"Quite true," he answered, stung by my tone, "but I do not claim to be unsexed because—because—" He stammered.

"Because I am? You are very right to live according to your lights, Mr. Lawrence, but I must decline to see life by them. Good-night!" His tone was more than I could bear, and I turned abruptly from him: we had reached the hotel, and without a word more I ran up stairs to my parlor. The door was ajar: I entered hastily and pushed it to, but he had followed me on the instant, and now stood with it in his hand.

"I cannot let you send me away without saying one word," he said. "I never meant to say that you were unsexed. I beg you will forgive me if I offended you. I had no right in the world to judge for you. It was a presumptuous impulse to protect, to guard you that prompted my action the other night—my words just now. Forgive me. As for my prejudices, they shall not displease you again: only remember as my excuse that a man of my class has but one way of looking at a woman whom—he—" He drew a long breath, hesitated, and then said with an effort—"admires."

The word was cold and formal, but his voice and manner were warm and earnest. His mood seemed changed: he seemed again near me, and an irresistible attraction toward him possessed me, body and soul. There was something in his very attitude, as he stood by the door with his head bent down, that seemed to win me. What was it that came over me? What subtle power is it by which one nature draws another without any apparent or audible summons? I do not know; but this I know, that

as he said the words I have just written down a floodgate within me seemed raised, and with a mighty rush my spirit bounded toward him. And yet I did not move.

"Forgive you?" I said. "Yes, a thousand times!"

He looked up, said, "Thank you!" very softly, and turned to the door. When he reached it he stopped, turned again, and came up to me. "Will you give me your hand in token of forgiveness and friendship?" he said.

I said nothing, but held out my hand. He took it in both of his, and then in a moment more my arms were about his neck, and our lips had met. He kissed me again and again, held me very close for an instant, and then, untwining my arms from their hold, he abruptly left the room. That was three hours ago, and I have sat here thinking, thinking, ever since. What does it all mean? Writing it out has helped me, as I thought it would. Two things have become clear to me: I am quite conscious that I have sought Mr. Lawrence at least as much as he has me. I have always believed it to be as natural for a woman who was once freed from the foolish prejudices of education and tradition to hold out her hand to any one who attracted her as for a man to seek a woman. Now I have proved it to be true. He does attract me. Why deny it, either to myself or him? I do not, I will not. This I see and know to be true. The other thing which seems clear to me is, that he is only drawn by one side of his nature —that he does not want to love me, perhaps can only half love me. Then, if that be so, I have done wrong to show him my feelings. With his ideas about women, he would feel it to be almost unmanly to fold his arms on his breast if a woman put hers about his neck, as I did; and I fear I forced my love upon him. I feel as I should think a man feels who has taken an unfair advantage of a woman's fancy for him, and got from her graces and favors to which her whole heart does not assent. I am not ashamed of loving him: bear me witness, little book, I am not ashamed of loving him, nor indeed of telling him so; only I would not "betray his will," as he said this afternoon. No, no: if he comes to me, it must be with a whole and willing heart. Now that's resolved, what next? Write to him of course, and tell him I am sorry to have led him into this position, and say, "I won't do so again." Did a woman ever write to a man before and beg his pardon for letting him kiss her? for throwing her arms about his neck? I doubt it, but what does that matter? I belong to the new era, and I will be the "Coming Woman." I laugh, but I feel, after all, more like crying. Good-night, little book. I will write to Mr. Lawrence in the morning. Now for bed.

Dec. 4. I wrote to him this morning, and sent my note by a messenger. I could not work, I could neither think nor write, till his answer came. He had made the bearer of my note wait, and wrote me just a few words to ask if he might not see me to-night. I wrote back "Yes," and now it is only four o'clock: he will not come till eight. It seems an impossible time to wait, and I must not waste the afternoon as I did the morning. Let me see: shall I finish that article on English love-poetry, past and present, in which I mean to show how the germ of degradation and decay always existed, even in the chivalric idea of woman's nature and sphere, and how it has gone on developing itself in the poetry which is its truest expression, till we have got its different stages from the ideal of the school which really had a gloss of elevation and fine sentiment about it—the woman of Herrick and Ben Jonson, and later on of Lovelace and Montrose, to the woman of Owen Meredith and Swinburne, who, instead of inspiring men to die for her honor, makes them rather wish her to live to be the instrument of their pleasure? It was not a bad idea, and I think I could have traced the gradations very well. But I cannot write, I cannot think. Let me recall my letter to him. Ah, here is one of the dozen copies I made before I could make it what I wanted:

> "MY DEAR MR. LAWRENCE: I must ask you to forgive me, for I am conscious of having been thoughtless and selfish. I yielded to an impulse yesterday,

and I put you in an unfair position. I never meant to do it, and I will never do it again. I trust we may be friends, and I am

"Yours truly,

"MARGARET LINTON."

That was all I said: I wish now I had said more. Ah me! will evening never come?

Before I go to bed I must write a word or two. Ah, how much happier I am than I was last night! He came at eight punctually. I trembled all over when I shook hands with him: I think he must have seen it, but he said nothing. What a wonderful thing this thing they call high breeding is! One feels it in a moment, and yet it seems intangible, indescribable. He has it, I should think, in perfection, and he is the only person I have ever known who possessed it, except, perhaps that young girl, his cousin, whom he presented to me at the party. For a while we talked—at least he did—easily and pleasantly, and then suddenly he said, smiling at me, "Do you know, I think you are a very generous woman?"

"Do you? Why?" said I.

"Because you are willing to shoulder other people's peccadilloes. Don't you know a woman should never do that, especially for a man, who is naturally selfish and can always take care of himself?"

I did not like the word *peccadilloes*, but I only said, "So can a woman take care of herself."

"Do you really believe that?" he said with a gleam in his blue eyes.

"Really, I do. I am sure, at least, that I can take care of myself."

"Are you?" said he. We were sitting beside each other on the sofa, and in another moment he had put his arm about me and drawn me to him. I could not resist him—his voice, his eyes, his sweet words. I loved him and was happy. It was a heaven of delight to be so near him; and how natural it seemed! He said little, nor did I speak many words: he held me in his arms, kissed me many times on my hands, cheeks and lips; and then suddenly, almost abruptly, he left me, pleading an engagement. But my happiness did not go with him. I am happy in the conviction that he loves me, and I feel strong to make him all my own. He will come again to-morrow. He did not say so: no need to say so—he will surely come. He is poor, I know. What of that? I earn a good income, and together we can defy the world. I shall be able to convert him from his prejudices and narrow notions, now that he loves me. What an acquisition to our cause! He loves me as I am. I have yielded nothing, I have sacrificed nothing—not one iota of principle, not an inch of ground. He has come to me because he loves me. I can influence him to think as I do of woman's nature and sphere. My single life will convince him of the justice of my ideas, and having known me, he can never "decline on a lower range of feelings and a narrower sphere than mine."

I am triumphant, I am successful: I could sing a song of rejoicing. Have I not always felt sure that a woman's true attraction does not depend on the false attitude in which she is placed by men? This man has seen me as I am, and I have drawn him to me.

Dec. 11. It seems scarcely possible that it is but one week since I wrote those words above, yet the date stares me in the face, and tells me that but seven days and seven nights have passed since then. It seems to me as if all my past life held less of emotion, of sensation, less of *living*, than this one week; and what absolute, uncompromising pain it has all been! It seems to me as if I had been through every stage of suffering in succession; yet to what does it all amount? what has caused it all? what has racked me with all these various gradations of torture? Just this: since that night, that triumphant, happy night, I have neither heard from nor seen Mr. Lawrence. Silence, unbroken silence, has been between us. I have borne it, but oh how badly!—not calmly or with quiet self-control and strength; but I have borne it with passionate out-cry and restless struggles. I have sobbed myself to sleep at night: I have roamed aimlessly about during the day, or lain on a lounge, book in hand, pretending to read, but in reality listening, waiting, longing to hear his step, his knock, to have some message, some sign, come to me from him. Then it has seemed to me as if there was but one other human creature in the world, and that was he—as if all the manifold needs and wants, losses and gains, of

humanity had no longer the slightest meaning for me. I have no sense of any ambition, any aim, any obligation pressing upon me. I find nothing within myself to feed upon but a few pale memories of him, and my whole future seems concentred in his existence. I do not think I can bear to live as I am now. It is all profoundly dark to me. Why does he not come? I can think of no possible explanation —none. I am resolved to think it out to an end, and then act: it is this passiveness which is killing me.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.