VARIOUS

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE, AUGUST, 1885

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ON THIS SIDE

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Not the least delightful of Sir Robert's qualities was his capacity for enjoying most things that came in his way, and finding some interest in all. When Mr. Ketchum joined him in the library, where he was jotting down "the *sobriquets* of the American States and cities," and told him of the Niagara plan, his ruddy visage beamed with pleasure.

"A delightful idea. Capital," he said. "I suppose I can read up a bit about it before we start, and not go there with my eyes shut. Ni-a-ga-rah,—monstrously soft and pretty name. Isn't there something on your shelves that would give me the information I want? But we can come to that presently. Just now I want to find out, if I can, how these nicknames came to be given. They must have originated in some great popular movement, eh? I thought I saw my way, as, for example, the 'Empire State' and the 'Crescent City' and some others, but this 'Sucker State,' now, and 'Buckeye' business,—what may that mean in plain English?"

Mr. Ketchum shed what light he could on these interesting questions, and Sir Robert thoughtfully ran his hands through his side-whiskers, while, with an apologetic "One moment, I beg," or "Very odd, very; that must go down verbatim," he entered the gist of Mr. Ketchum's queer remarks in his note-book.

On the following morning he rose with Niagara in his soul. He had more questions to ask at the breakfast-table than anybody could answer, and was eager to be off. Mr. Ketchum, who had that week made no less than fifty thousand dollars by a lucky investment, was in high spirits. Captain Kendall, who had been allowed to join the party, was vastly pleased by the prospect of another week in Ethel's society. Mrs. Sykes was tired of Fairfield, and longed to be "on the move" again, as she frankly said. So that, altogether, it was a merry company that finally set off.

The very first view of "the ocean unbound" increased their pleasure to enthusiasm. Mrs. Sykes, without reservation, admitted that it was "a grand spot," and felt as though she were giving the place a certificate when she added, "*Quite* up to the mark." She was out on the Suspension Bridge, making a sketch, as soon as she could get there; she took one from every other spot about the place; and when tired of her pencil, she stalked about with her hammer, chipping off bits of rock that promised geological interest. But she found her greatest amusement in the brides that "infested the place" (to quote from her letter to her sister Caroline), indulged in much satirical comment on them, and, choosing one foolish young rustic who was there as her text, wrote in her diary, "American brides like to go from the altar to some large hotel, where they can display their finery, wear their wedding-dresses every evening, and attract as much attention as possible. The national passion for display makes them delight in anything that renders them conspicuous, no matter how vulgar that display may be. If one must have a fools' paradise, generally known as a honeymoon, this is about as pleasant a place as any other for it; and, as there are several runaway couples stopping here, and the place is just on the border, this is doubtless the American Gretna Green, where silly women and temporarily-infatuated men can marry in haste, to repent at leisure."

Mr. Heathcote gave his camera enough to do, as may be imagined. He and Sir Robert traced the Niagara River from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, and photographed it at every turn, made careful estimates of its length, breadth, depth, the flow of currents, scale of descent to the mile, wear of

precipice, and time necessary for the river to retire from the falls business altogether and meander tranquilly along on a level like other rivers. They arrayed themselves in oil-skin suits and spent an unconscionable time at the back of the Horseshoe Fall, roaring out observations about it that were rarely heard, owing to the deafening din, and had more than one narrow escape from tumbling into the water in these expeditions. They carefully bottled some of it, which they afterward carefully sealed with red wax and duly labelled, intending to add it to a collection of similar phials which Sir Robert had made of famous waters in many countries. They went over the mills and factories in the neighborhood, and Sir Robert had long confabs with the managers, of whom he asked permission to "jot down" the interesting facts developed in the course of their conversations, surprising them by his knowledge of mechanics and the subjects in hand.

"Man alive! what do you want with *those*?" said he to one of them, a keen-faced young fellow, who was showing him the boiler-fires. He pointed with his stick as he spoke, and rattled it briskly about the brick-work by way of accompaniment as he went on: "Such a waste of force, of money! downright stupidity! You don't want it. You don't need it, any more than you need an hydraulic machine tacked to the back of your trains. You have got water enough running past your very door to—"

"I've told that old fool Glass that a thousand times," broke in the young man; "but if he wants to try and warm and light the world with a gas-stove when the sun is up I guess it's no business of mine, though it does rile me to see the power thrown away and good coal wasted. If I had the capital, here's what *I*'d do. Here."

Seizing Sir Robert's stick, the enthusiast drew a fondly-loved ideal mill in the coal-dust at his feet, while Sir Robert looked and listened, differed, suggested, with keen interest, and Mr. Heathcote gave but haughty and ignorant attention to the talk that followed.

"Yes, that's the way of it; but Glass has lived all his life with his head in a bag, and he can't see it. I am surprised to see you take an interest in it. Ever worked at it?" said the man in conclusion.

"A little," said Sir Robert affably, who could truthfully have said as much of anything. "Who is this Glass?"

"Oh, he's the man that owns all this; the stupidest owl that ever lived. I wish he could catch on like you. I'd like very well to work with you," was the reply.

"A bumptious fellow, that," commented Mr. Heathcote when they left. "He'd 'like to work with you,' indeed!"

"A fellow with ideas. I'd like to work with him," replied his uncle; "though he isn't burdened with respect for his employers."

Miss Noel meanwhile tied on her large straw hat, took her cane, basket, trowel, tin box, and, followed by Parsons with her sketching-apparatus, went off to hunt plants or wash in sketches, a most blissfully occupied and preoccupied old lady.

To Mr. Ketchum's great amusement, Miss Noel, Mrs. Sykes, and Mr. Heathcote all arrived at a particular spot within a few moments of each other one morning, all alike prepared and determined to get the view it commanded.

Miss Noel had said to Job *en route,* "Do you think that I shall be able to get a fly and drive about the country a bit? I should so like it. Are they to be had there?"

And he had replied, "You will have some difficulty in *not* taking 'a fly' there, I guess. The hackmen would rather drive your dead body around town for nothing than let you enjoy the luxury of walking about unmolested. But I will see to all that."

Accordingly, a carriage had been placed at their disposal, and they had taken some charming drives, in the course of which Parsons, occupying the box on one occasion, was seen to be peering very curiously about her.

"A great pity, is it not, Parsons, that we can't see all this in the autumn, when the thickets of scarlet and gold are said to be so very beautiful?" said Miss Noel, addressing her affably.

"Yes, mem," agreed Parsons. "And, if you please, mem, where are the estates of the gentry, as I 'ave been lookin' for ever since we came hover?"

"Not in this part," replied Miss Noel. "The red Indians were here not very long since. You should really get a pin-cushion of their descendants, those mild, dirty creatures that work in bark and beads. Buy of one that has been baptized: one shouldn't encourage them to remain heathens, you know. Your friends in England will like to see something made by them; and they were once very powerful and spread all over the country as far as—as—I really forget where; but I know they were very wild and dreadful, and lived in wigwams, and wore moccasins."

"Oh, indeed, mem!" responded Parsons, impressed by the extent of her mistress's information.

"A wigwam is three upright poles, such as the gypsies use for their kettles, thatched with the leaves of the palm and the plantain," Miss Noel went on. "Dear me! It is very odd! I certainly remember to have read that; but perhaps I am getting back to the Southern Americans again, which does so vex Robert. I wonder if one couldn't see a wigwam for one's self? It can't be plantain, after all: there is none growing about here."

She asked Mabel about this that evening, and the latter told her husband how Miss Noel was always mixing up the two continents.

"I don't despair, Mabel. They will find this potato-patch of ours after a while," he said good-humoredly.

But he was less amiable when Mrs. Sykes said at dinner next day, "I should like to try your maize. Quite simply boiled, and eaten with butter and salt, I am told it is quite good, really. I have heard that the Duke of Slumborough thought it excellent."

"You don't say so! I am so glad to hear it! I shall make it generally known as far as I can. Such things encourage us to go on trying to make a nation of ourselves. It would have paralyzed all growth and development in this country for twenty years if he had thought it 'nasty,'" said Job. "Foreigners can't be too particular how they express their opinions about us. Over and over again we have come within an ace of putting up the shutters and confessing that it was no use pretending that we could go on independently having a country of our own, with distinct institutions, peculiarities, customs, manners, and even productions. It would be so much better and easier to turn ourselves over to a syndicate of distinguished foreigners who would govern us properly,—stamp out ice-water and hot rolls from the first, as unlawful and not agreeing with the Constitution, give us cool summers, prevent children from teething hard, make it a penal offence to talk through the nose, and put a bunch of Bourbons in the White House, with a divine right to all the canvas-back ducks in the country. There are so many kings out of business now that they could easily give us a bankrupt one to put on our trade dollar, or something really *sweet* in emperors who have seen better days. And a standing army of a hundred thousand men, all drum-majors, in gorgeous uniforms, helmets, feathers, gold lace, would certainly scare the Mexicans into caniptious and unconditional surrender. The more I think of it, the more delightful it seems. It is mere stupid obstinacy our people keeping up this farce of self-government, when anybody can see that it is a perfect failure, and that the country has no future whatever."

"Oh, you talk in that way; but I don't think you would really like it," said Mrs. Sykes. "Americans seem to think that they know everything: they are above taking any hints from the Old World, and get as angry as possible with me when I point out a few of the more glaring defects that strike me."

"I am surprised at that. Our great complaint is that we can't get any advice from Europeans. If we only had a little, even, we might in time loom up as a fifth-rate power. But no: they leave us over here in this wilderness without one word of counsel or criticism, or so much as a suggestion, and they ought not to be surprised that we are going to the dogs. What else can they expect?" said Mr. Ketchum.

"Husband, dear, you were very sharp with my cousin to-day, and it was not like you to show temper,—at least, not temper exactly, but vexation," said Mabel to him afterward in mild rebuke.

"She has told me that you quite detest the English, so that she wonders you should have married me. And I said that you were far too intelligent and just to cherish wrong feelings toward any people, much less my people."

"Well, if *she* represented England I should drop England quietly over the rapids some day when I could no longer stand her infernal patronizing, impertinent airs, and rid the world of a nuisance," said Mr. Ketchum, with energy. "Excuse my warmth, but that woman would poison a prairie for me. Fortunately, I happen to know that she only represents a class which neither Church nor State there has the authority to shoot, *yet*, and I am not going to cry down white wool because there are black sheep. Look at Sir Robert, and Miss Noel, and all the rest of them, how different they are."

Captain Kendall certainly found Niagara delightful, for, owing to the absorption of the party in their different pursuits, he was able to see more of Ethel than he had ever done. He was so different from the men she had known that he was a continual study to her. Instead of the studied indifference, shy avoidance, shy advances, culminating in a blunt and straightforward declaration of "intentions," which she would have thought natural in an admirer, followed by transparent, honest delight in the event of acceptance, or manly submission to the inevitable in the event of rejection, Captain Kendall had surprised her by liking her immediately, or at least by showing that he did, and seeking her persistently, without any pretence of concealment. He talked to her of politics, of social questions in the broadest sense, of books, scientific discoveries, his travels, and the travels of others. He read whole volumes of poetry to her. He discoursed by the hour on the manly character, its faults, merits, peculiarities, and possibilities, and then contrasted it with the womanly one, trait for trait, and it seemed to her that women had never been praised so eloquently, enthusiastically, copiously. At no time was he in the least choked by his feelings or at a loss for a fresh word or sentiment. Such romance, such ideality, such universality, as it were, she had never met. When his admiration was most unbridled it seemed to be offered to her as the representative of a sex entirely perfect and lovely. Everything in heaven and earth, apparently, ministered to his passion and made him talk all around the beloved subject with a wealth of simile and suggestion that she had never dreamed of. But, if he gave full expression to his agitated feelings in these ways, he was extremely delicate, respectful, reserved, in others. He wrapped up his heart in so many napkins, indeed, that, being a practical woman not extraordinarily gifted in the matter of imagination, she frequently lost sight of it altogether, and she sometimes failed to follow him in a broad road of sentiment that (like the Western ones which Longfellow has described) narrowed and narrowed until it disappeared, a mere thread, up a tree. If he looked long, after one of these flights, at her sweet English face to see what impression he had made, he was often forced to see that it was not the one he had meant to make at all.

"Is anything amiss?" she asked once, in her cool, level tone, fixing upon him her sincerely honest eyes. "Are there blacks on my nose?" Although she had distinctly refused him at Kalsing, as became a girl destitute of vanity and coquetry and attached to some one else, she had not found him the less fluent, omnipresent, persuasive, at Niagara. It was diverting to see them seated side by side on Goat Island, he waving his hand toward the blue sky, apostrophizing the water, the foliage, the clouds, and what not, in prose and verse, quite content if he but got a quiet glance and assenting word now and then, she listening demurely in a state of protestant satisfaction, her fair hair very dazzling in the sunshine, an unvarying apple-blossom tint in her calm face, her fingers tatting industriously not to waste the time outright. It was very agreeable in a way, she told herself, but something must really be done to get rid of the man. And so, one morning when they chanced to be alone, and he was being unusually ethereal and beautiful in his remarks, telling her that, as Byron had said, she would be "the morning star of memory" for him, she broke in squarely, "That is all very nice; very pretty, I am sure. But I do hope you quite understand that I have not the least idea of marrying you. There is no use in going on like this, you know, and you would have a right to reproach me if I kept silent and led you to think that I was being won over by your fine speeches. You see, you don't really want a star at all. You want a wife; though military men, as a rule, are better off single. I do thank you heartily for

liking me for myself, and all that, and I shall always remember the kind things you have done, and our acquaintance, but you must put me quite out of your head as a wife. I should not suit you at all. You would have to leave the American service, and I should hate feeling I had tied you down, and I couldn't contribute a penny toward the household expenses, and, altogether, we are much better apart. It would not answer at all. So, thank you again for the honor you have conferred upon me, and be—be rather more—like other people, won't you, for the future? Auntie fancies that I am encouraging you, and is getting very vexed about it. Perhaps you had better go away? Yes, that would be best, I think."

Thus solicited, Captain Kendall went away, taking a mournfully-eloquent farewell of Ethel, which she thought final; but in this she was mistaken.

Our party did not linger long after this. Sir Robert met a titled acquaintance, who inflamed his mind so much about Manitoba that he decided to go to Canada at once, taking Miss Noel, Ethel, and Mr. Heathcote; Mrs. Sykes had taken up on her first arrival with some New York people, who asked her to visit them in the central part of the State,—which disposed of her; Mabel was secretly longing to get back to her "American child," as Mrs. Sykes called little Jared Ponsonby; and they separated, with the understanding that they should meet again before the English guests left the country, and with a warm liking for each other, the Sykes not being represented in the pleasant covenants of friendship formed.

"I am glad that we have not to bid Ketchum good-by here," said Sir Robert. "Such a hearty, genial fellow! And how kind he has been to us! His hospitality is the true one; not merely so much food and drink and moneyed outlay for some social or selfish end, but the entertainment of friends because they *are* friends, with every possible care for their pleasure and comfort, and the most unselfish willingness to do anything that can contribute to either. I am afraid he would not find many such hosts as himself with us. We entertain more than the Americans, but I do not think we have as much of the real spirit of hospitality as a nation. The relation between host and guest is less personal, there is little sense of obligation, or rather sacredness, on either side, and the convenience, interest, or amusement of the Amphitryon is more apt to be considered, as a general thing, than the pleasure of the guest: at least this has been growing more and more the case in the last twenty years, as our society has broken away from old traditions and levelled all its barriers, to the detriment of our social graces, not to speak of our morals and manners. As for that charmingly gentle, sweet woman Mrs. Ketchum, it is my opinion that we are not likely to improve on that type of Englishwoman. A modest, simple, religious creature, a thorough gentlewoman, and a devoted wife and mother. My cousin Guy Rathbone is engaged to a specimen of a new variety,—one of the 'emancipated,' forsooth; a woman who has a betting-book instead of a Bible and plays cards all day Sunday. He tells me that she is wonderfully clever, and that it is all he can do to keep her from running about the kingdom delivering lectures on Agnosticism; as if one wanted one's wife to be a trapesing, atheistical Punch-and-Judy! And the fellow seemed actually pleased and flattered. He told me that she had 'an astonishing grasp of such subjects' and was 'attracting a great deal of attention.' And I told him that if I had a wife who attracted attention in such ways I would lock her up until she came to her senses and the public had forgotten her want of modesty and discretion. This ought to be called the Age of Fireworks. The craze for notoriety is penetrating our very almshouses, and every toothless old mumbler of ninety wants to get himself palmed off as a centenarian in the papers and have a lot of stuff printed about him."

"I see what you mean, Robert," said Miss Noel, "and it certainly cannot be wholesome for women to thirst for excitement, and one would think a lady would shrink from being conspicuous in any way; but things are very much changed, as you say. And I agree with you in your estimate of the Ketchums. She is a sweet young thing, and I heartily like him. Only think! his last act was to send a great basket of fine fruits up to my room, and quite an armful of railway-novels for the journey. Such beautiful thought for our comfort as they have shown!"

"He is rather a good sort in some ways, but a very ignorant man. I showed him some of my specimens the other day, and he thought them granitic, when they were really Silurian mica schist

of some kind," put in Mrs. Sykes, who never could bear unqualified praise. "Still, on the whole, the Americans are less ignorant than might have been expected."

"*I* consider Mr. Ketchum a most kind, gentlemanly, sociable, clever man," said Miss Noel, with an emphatic nod of her head to each adjective, "geology or no geology. And I must say that it is very ungrateful of you to speak of him so sneeringly always."

Sir Robert only waited to write the usual batch of letters, including a last appeal to the editor of the "Columbia Eagle" to know whether he intended to apologize for and publicly retract a certain article, and asking "whether it was possible that any considerable or respectable portion of the Americans could be so arbitrary, illiberal, and exclusive as to wish to exclude the English from America." This done, he left for Canada with his relatives. With his stay there we have nothing to do. It consumed six weeks of exhaustive travel and study of Canadian conditions and resources, resulting ultimately in the conclusion that Manitoba was not the place he was looking for. The ladies, who had been left in Montreal, were then taken for a short tour through the country, which they all enjoyed, after which Sir Robert asked Miss Noel whether she would be willing to take Ethel back to Niagara and wait there a fortnight, or perhaps a little longer, while he and Mr. Heathcote came back by way of New England and from there went down into Maryland and Virginia, where, according to "a member of the Canadian Parliament," lands were to be had for a song.

"A fortnight? I could spend a twelve-month there," exclaimed she. "Had it not been that I was ashamed to insist upon being let off this journey, I should have stopped there as it was."

To Niagara the aunt and niece and Parsons went, as agreed, and there they found Mr. Bates wandering languidly about the place in chronic discontent with everything for not being something else. He had burned a good deal of incense on Ethel's shrine when she was at Kalsing, and now hailed their advent with some approach to enthusiasm, and attached himself to their suite, *vice* Captain Kendall, retired. He liked to be seen with them, thought the views from the Canadian side were "deucedly fine," was cruelly affected by the advertisements in the neighborhood, which he denounced as "dreadfully American," trickled out much feeble criticism of and acid comment on his surroundings, gave utterance to fervent wishes that he was "abrard," and in his own unpleasant way gave Ethel to understand that she might make a fellow-countryman happy by becoming Mrs. Samuel Bates if she liked to avail herself of a golden opportunity. "I would live in England, you know. I am really far more at home there than here," said the expatriated suitor. "I have been taken for an Englishman as often as three times in one week, do you know. Curious, isn't it? I ought to be down in Kent now, visiting Lady Simpson, a great friend of mine, who has asked me there again and again. You would like her if you knew her. She is quite the great lady down there."

"A foolish little man, and evidently a great snob, or else rather daft upon some points," Ethel reported to her aunt. "And such a dull, discontented creature, with all his money!" Ethel had some trials of her own just then, and it was no great felicity to listen to Mr. Bates's endless complaints, nor could she spare much sympathy for the sufferings of the exile of Tecumseh, with his rose-leaf sensibilities, inanities, absurdities.

Meanwhile, the young gentleman who was indirectly responsible for many a sad thought of two charming girls that we know of—and who shall say how many more?—was enjoying as much happiness as ever fell to any man in the capacity of ardent sportsman. He had joined the duke and his party at St. Louis, and from there they had gone "well away from anywhere," as he said in describing his adventures to Mr. Heathcote. He had at last reached the ideal spot of all his wildest imaginations and most cherished hopes,—"the wild part,"—really the great prairies, about two hundred miles west of the Mississippi and east of the Rockies. The dream of his life was being fulfilled. He related, in a style not conspicuous for literary merit, but very well suited to the simple annals of the rich, how, having first procured guides, tents, ambulances, camp-equipage, they had pushed on briskly to a military fort, where, having made friends with "a pleasant, gentlemanly set of fellows," the commanding officer, "a friendly old buffer," had courteously given them an escort to protect them

from "those dirty, treacherous brutes, the Indians." Not a joy was wanting in this crowning bliss. The guide was "a wonderful chap named Big-Foot Williams, so called by the Indians, good all around from knocking over a rabbit to tackling a grizzly," with an amazing knowledge of woodcraft, "a nose like a bloodhound, an eye as cool as a toad's." No special mention was made of his ear; but the first time he got off his horse and applied it to the earth, listening for the tramp of distant hoofs in a hushed silence, one bosom could hardly hold all the rapture that filled Mr. Ramsay's figurative cup up to the brim. And the tales he told of savageness long drawn out were as dew to the parched herb, greedily absorbed at every pore. A portrait of "Black Eagle," a noted chief, was given when they got among the Indians,—"a great hulking slugger of a savage, awfully interesting, long, reaching step, magnificent muscles, snake eye, could thrash us all in turn if he liked. The best of the lot."

Even the noble red man was not insensible to the charms of this graceful, handsome young athlete who smiled at them perpetually and said, "*Amigo! amigo*!" at short intervals,—a phrase suggested by the redoubtable Williams and varied occasionally by a prefix of his own, "*Muchee amigo*!" The way in which he tested the elasticity of their bows, inspected their guns, the game they had killed, the other natural objects about them, aroused a certain sympathy, perhaps. At any rate, they were soon teaching him their mode of using the most picturesquely murderous of all weapons, and Black Eagle offered, through the interpreter, to give him a mustang and a fine wolf-skin. The pony was declined, the skin accepted, a *quid pro quo* being bestowed on the chief in the shape of one of Mr. Ramsay's breech-loaders, a gift that made the snake eyes glitter. But what earthly return can be made for some friendly offices? Could a thousand guns be considered as an adequate payment for the delirious thrill that Mr. Ramsay felt when he shot an arrow straight through the neck of a big buffalo, and, wheeling, galloped madly away, like the hero of one of his favorite stories? Was not the duke, who "knew a thing or two about shooting" and had hunted the noble bison in Lithuania, almost as much delighted as though he had done it himself? Is it any wonder that these intoxicating pleasures were all-sufficient for the time to Mr. Ramsay? Perhaps Thekla would have been forgotten by her Max, and Romeo would never have sighed and died for love of Juliet, if those interesting lovers had ceased from wooing and gone a-hunting of the buffalo instead. Not the most deadly and cruel pangs of the most unfortunate attachment could have taken away all the zest from such an occupation, provided they had had what the Mexican journals call the "*corazon de los sportsmans*." Youth, strength, courage, skill, exercised in a vagabondage that has all the nomadic charm without any of its drawbacks, are apt to sponge the old figures off the slate of life, leaving a teary smear, perhaps, to show where they have been, and room for fresh problems. At night over the camp-fire Mr. Ramsay gave a few pensive thoughts to the girl who regularly put two handkerchiefs under her pillow to receive the tears that welled out copiously when she was at last alone and unobserved after a day of virtuous hypocrisy. Poor child! The pain was very real, and the tears were bitter and salty enough, though they were to be dried in due time. If he had known of them, perhaps he might have kept awake a little longer; but when he wasn't sleepy he was hungry, and when he wasn't hungry he was tired, and when he wasn't tired he was too actively employed to think of anything but the business in hand. Happily, at five-and-twenty it is perfectly possible to postpone being miserable until a more convenient season; and, though he would have denied it emphatically afterward, he certainly thought only occasionally of Bijou at this period, and of Ethel not at all.

Miss Noel heard very regularly from Mrs. Sykes all this while; and that energetic traveller had not been idle. She had made her new friends "take her about tremendously," she said. She had seen all the large towns in that part of the country, and thought them "very ugly and monotonously commonplace, but prosperous-looking,—like the inhabitants." The scenery she had found "far too uninteresting to repay the bother of sketching it." But she had made a few pictures of "the views most cracked up in the White Mountains,"—where she had been,—"a sort of second-hand Switzerland of a place; really nothing after the Himalayas, but made a great fuss over by the Americans." She described with withering scorn a drive she took there.

"We came suddenly one day upon a party in a kind of Cheap-Jack van," she wrote,—"gayly-dressed people, tricked off in smart finery, and larking like a lot of Ramsgate tradesmen on the public road. One of the impudent creatures made a trumpet of his great ugly fist and spelt out the name of the hotel at which they were stopping, and then put his hand to his ear, as if to listen for the response. Expecting *me* to tell *them* anything about myself! But I flatter myself that I was a match for them. I just got out my umbrella and shot it up in their very faces as we passed, in a way not to be mistaken. And—would you believe it?—the rude wretches called out, 'The shower is over now! and 'What's the price of starch?' and roared with laughing." A highly-colored description of "a visit to a great Dissenting stronghold, Marbury Park," followed: "I was immensely curious to see one of these characteristic national exhibitions of hysteria, ignorance, superstition, and immorality, called a 'camp-meeting.' to which the Americans of all classes flock annually by the thousands, so I quite insisted upon being taken to one, though my friends would have got out of it if they could. I fancy they were very ashamed of it; and they had need to be. I will not attempt to describe it in detail here,—you will hear what I have said of it in my diary,—but a more glaringly vulgar, intensely American performance you can't fancy. I have made a number of sketches of the grounds, the tents and tent-life, with the people bathing and dressing and all that in the most exposed manner; of the pavilion, where the roaring and ranting is done; and of the great revivalist who was holding forth when I got there, and who had got such a red face and seemed so excited that it is my belief he was *regularly screwed*, though my friends denied it, of course. With such a preacher, you can 'realize,' as they say, what the people were like. A regular Derby-day crowd having a religious saturnalia,—that is what it is. It would not be allowed at home, I am sure. Disgusting! One can't wonder at the state of society in America when one sees what their religion is. An unpleasant incident occurred to me while sketching in the pavilion, that shows what I have often pointed out to you,—the radicalism and odious impertinence of this people. I was just putting the finishing-touches to my picture of the Rev. (?) 'Galusha Wickers' (the revivalist: such names as these Americans have!), when I heard a voice behind me saying, 'Lor! Why, that's splendid! perfectly splendid! Well, I declare, you've got him to a t. Lemmy see.' And, if you please, a hand was thrust over my shoulder and the sketch seized, without so much as a 'By your leave.' Can you fancy a more unwarrantable, insufferable liberty? But they are all alike over here. I turned about, and saw a woman who was examining the reverend revivalist with much satisfaction. 'Well, you *have* got him, to be sure,' she said, returning my angry glance with one of admiration, and quite unabashed. 'What'll you take for it? I've sat under him for five years; and for taking texteses from one end of the Bible to the other, and leading in prayer, and filling the mourners' bench in five minutes, I will say he hasn't got his equal in the universe. He's got a towering intellect, I tell you. I'll give you fifty cents for this, if you'll color it up nice for me and throw in a frame.' Of course I took the picture away from the brazen creature and told her what I thought of her conduct. 'Well, you air techy,' she said, and walked off leisurely." Before closing her letter, Mrs. Sykes remarked of her hostess, "Quite good for nothing physically, and absurdly romantic. She has been abroad a good deal, and bores me dreadfully with her European reminiscences. She is always talking in a foolish, rapturous sort of way about 'dear Melrose,' or 'noble Tintern Abbey,' or 'enchanting Warwick Castle;' and she has read simply libraries of books about England, and puts me through a sort of examination about dozens of places and events, as though I could carry all England about in my head. I really know less of it than of most other countries: there is nothing to be got by running about it. If one knew every foot of it, everybody would think it a matter of course; but to be able to talk of Siam and the Fiji Islands, Cambodia and Alaska, and the like, is really an advantage in society. One gets the name of being a great traveller, and all that, and is asked about tremendously and taken up to a wonderful extent. I know a man that didn't wish to go to the trouble and expense of rambling all over the world, and wanted the reputation of having done it, so he went into lodgings at intervals near the British Museum and got all the books that were to be had about a particular country, and, having read them, would come back to the West End and give out that he had been there. It answered beautifully

for a while, and he was by way of being asked to become a Fellow of the Royal Geographical, and was thought quite an authority and wonderfully clever; but somehow he got found out, which must have been a nuisance and spoiled everything. I can see that these people consider it quite an honor to have me visit them, all because of my having been around the world, I dare say. And of course I have let them see that I know who is who and what is what. They are imploring me to stay on; but I told them yesterday that it wouldn't suit my book at all to stay over two weeks longer, when I had seen all there was to see. That young Ramsay seems to be enjoying himself out there among those nasty savages; and, as hunting is about the only thing he is fit for, he had best stay out there altogether."

The unwritten history of Mrs. Sykes's visit to Marbury Park would have been more interesting than the account she gave. She took with her a camp-chair, which she placed in any and every spot that suited her or commanded the pictorial situations which she wished to make her own permanently. To the horror and surprise of her friends, she plumped it down immediately in front of Mr. Wickers (after marching past an immense congregation), and, wholly unembarrassed by her conspicuous position, settled herself comfortably, took out her block and pencil, and proceeded to jot down that worthy's features line upon line, as though he had been a newly-imported animal at the "Zoo" on exhibition, paying no attention to the precept upon precept he was trying to impress upon his audience.

She walked all over the place repeatedly, went poking and prying into such tents as she chanced to find empty, nor considered this an essential requisite to the conferring of this honor. When less sociably inclined, she established herself outside, close at hand, and in this way made those valuable observations and spirited drawings which subsequently enriched her diary and delighted a discerning British public. But this is anticipating. When she tired of New York, she wrote to Sir Robert that she wished to give as much time as possible to the Mormons, and would leave at once for Salt Lake City, where she would busy herself in laying bare the domestic system as it really existed, and hold herself in readiness to join the party again when they should arrive there *en route* to the Yosemite.

Sir Robert, being an heroic creature, felt that he could bear this temporary separation with fortitude, and, being about to start for Boston when he got the news, forthwith threw himself upon the New England States in a frenzied search for all the information to be had about them,—their exact geographical position, by whom discovered, when settled, climate, productions, population, principal towns and rivers. He studied three maps of the region as he rattled along in the south-bound train, and devoted the rest of the time to getting an outline of its history: so that his nephew found him but an indifferent companion.

"I suppose there are authorized maps and charts, geographical, hydrographical, and topographical, issued by the government, and to be seen at the libraries. I must get a look at them at once. These are amateur productions, the work of irresponsible men, contradicting each other in important particulars as to the relative positions of places, and inaccurate in many respects, as I find by comparison," he said, emerging from a prolonged study of his authorities. "You don't seem to take much interest in all this. You should be at the pains to inform yourself upon every possible point in connection with this country, or any other in which you may find yourself; else why travel at all?"

Mr. Heathcote, not having his uncle's thirst for information, was reading a French novel at the time, and did not attempt to defend his position, knowing it probably to be indefensible.

Before getting to Boston the air turned very chill, and a fine, penetrating rain set in that for a while disturbed the student of American history with visions of rheumatism. "God bless my soul! I shall be laid by the heels here for weeks. Damp is the one thing that I can't stand up against. And I have not left my coat out!" he exclaimed, tugging anxiously at his side-whiskers and annoyed to find how dependent he had grown on his valet. "What shall I do? Ah! I have an idea. Damp. What resists it and is practically water-proof? *Newspapers*!" With this he stood up, seized the "Times" supplement, made a hole in the middle of the central fold, and put it over his head. "Now I have improvised a South-American *serape*" he observed, in a tone that betrayed the pleasure it gave him to exercise his ingenuity. He then took two other sheets and successively wrapped them around his legs, after the

fashion in vogue among gardeners intent upon protecting valuable plants from the rigors of winter. This done, he smoothed down the *serape*, which showed a volatile tendency to blow up a good deal, and, with a brief comment to the effect that "oilskin or india-rubber could not be better," and no staring about him to observe the effect of his action on the passengers, replaced his hat, sat down, picked up his book again, readjusted his eye-glasses, and went on with the episode he had been reading aloud to his nephew, who, mildly bored by King Philip's war, was mildly amused by the spectacle the baronet presented, and surprised to see that their fellow-travellers thought it an excellent joke. A loud "Haw! haw!" and many convulsive titters testified their appreciation of the absurd contrast between Sir Robert's highly-respectable head, his grave, absorbed air, and the remarkable way in which he was finished off below the ears; but he read on and on, in his round, agreeable voice, unconscious of the effect he was producing, until the train came to the final stop, when Mr. Porter and a very dignified, rigid style of friend came into the car to look for him.

"My dear Porter, I am delighted to see you, and I shall be with you in one moment. I shall then have ceased to be a grub and have become a most beautiful butterfly, ready to fly away home with you as soon as ever you like," he called out in greeting, and in a twinkling had torn off his wrappers, and stood there a revealed acquaintance, carefully collecting his "traps," and beaming cheerfully even upon the friend, who had not come to a pantomime and showed that he disapproved of harlequins in private life.

Mr. Porter, however, was all cordiality, and very speedily transferred his guests to his own house in the vicinity of Boston.

The season was not the one for gaining a fair idea of the society of the city and neighborhood; but if all the people who were away at the sea-side and the mountains were half as charming as those left behind and invited by Mr. Porter, to meet his friends, it is certain that Sir Robert lost a great deal. On the other hand, it is equally certain that if they had been at home Sir Robert would most likely be there now, and this chronicle of his travels would end here. As it was, he found something novel and agreeable at every step, a fresh interest every hour of his stay. He began at the beginning, and promptly found out what kind of soil the city was built on, went on to consider such questions as drainage, elevation, water-supply, wharves, quays, bridges, and worked up to libraries, museums, public and private collections of pictures, and what not. He ordered three pictures of Boston artists,—two autumnal scenes, and an interior, a negro cabin, with an hilarious sable group variously employed, called "Christmas in the Quarters." Then the questions of fisheries, maritime traffic, coast and harbor defences, light-houses, the ship-building interests, life-saving associations, and railway systems, pressed for investigation, to say nothing of the mills and manufactories, wages of operatives, trades-unions, trade problems, and all the pros and cons of free trade *versus* protective tariff. Over these he pondered and pored until all hours every night; and the diary had now to be girt about with two stout rubber bands to keep it from scattering instructive leaflets about promiscuously and prematurely. And by day there were sites literary, historical, or generally interesting to be visited, engagements with many friends to keep, endless occupations apparently.

There was so much to see and do that the place was delightful to him, and he certainly made himself vastly agreeable in return to such of its inhabitants as came in his way.

"I have added to my circle some very valuable acquaintances, whom I shall hope to retain as friends," he wrote to England, "notably a medical man who confirms my germ-propagation theory of the 'vomito,' which is now raging in the Southern part of the States (I had it, you remember, on the west coast of Africa, and studied it in the Barbadoes),—an exceptionally clever man, and, like all such men, inclined to be eccentric. I think I was never more surprised than to come upon him the other day in a side-street, where he was positively having his boots polished *in public* by a ragged gamin who offered to 'shine' me for a 'dime.' He behaved sensibly about it,—betrayed no embarrassment, though he must have felt excessively annoyed, made no apologies, and only remarked that he had been out in the country, and did not wish to be taken for a miller in the town.

"I was led to believe before coming here that I should not be able to tell that Boston was not an English town. It did not so impress me on a surface-view, but it was not long before I recognized that the warp and woof of the social fabric is that of our looms, though the pattern is a little different,—a good sort of stuff, I think, warranted *to wash* and wear. The variation, such as it is, tried by what I call my differential nationometer, gives to the place its own peculiar, delightful quality." The rigid gentleman, who was a great deal at the Porters', was rather inclined to insist upon the great purity and beauty of his English, to which he repeatedly invited attention, and, as Mr. Ramsay would have said, "went in for" certain philological refinements which Sir Robert had never heard before, and thoroughly disliked. But as there are more Scotchmen in London than in Edinburgh, and better oranges can be bought for less money in New York than in New Orleans, so it may be that if you want to find really superior English you must leave England altogether,—abandon it to its defective but firmly-rooted *patois*, and seek in more classic shades for the well—spring of Saxon undefiled. But Sir Robert was not inclined to do this. There were limits to his liberality and spirit of investigation. When the rigid gentleman instanced certain words to which he gave a pronunciation that made them bear small resemblance to the same words as spoken by any class of people laboring under the disadvantage of having been born and bred in England, Sir Robert got impatient, and testily dismissed the subject with, "Oh, come, now! I can stand a good deal, but I can't stand being told that we don't know how to speak English in England." Something, however, must be pardoned to a foreigner. If Sir Robert would not consent to set Emerson a little higher than the angels, as some other Bostonians could have wished, and had never so much as heard of Thoreau and other American celebrities not wholly insignificant, he had an immense admiration for Longfellow, and could spout "Hiawatha" or "Evangeline" with the best, associated Hawthorne with something besides his own hedges in the month of May, and was eager to be taken out to Beverly Farms, that he might "do himself the honor to call upon" the wisest, wittiest, least-dreaded, and best-loved of Autocrats. When the day fixed for his departure came, he was still revelling in what the Historical Society of Massachusetts had to show him, and actually stayed over a day that he might see the finest collection of cacti in the country, and at last tore himself away with much difficulty and lively regrets, carrying with him a collection of Indian curiosities given him by Mr. Porter, whom he considered to have behaved "most handsomely" in making him such a present. "I can't rob you outright, my dear fellow. I feel a cut-purse, almost, when I think of taking all these valuable and deeply-interesting objects illustrative of the life and civilization of the aborigines," he said. "Give me duplicates, if you will be so generous, but nothing unique, I insist." He finally accepted one gem in the collection,—a towering structure of feathers that formed "a most delightful head-dress, quite irresistibly fascinating," tried it on before a mirror that gave back faithfully the comical reflection, and incidentally delivered a lecture on the head-ornaments of many savage and civilized nations of every age, though not at all in the style of the famous Mr. Barlow.

Mr. Heathcote at least was not sorry to find that they were, as he said. "booked for Baltimore." The image of the beautiful Miss Bascombe had not been effaced. Perhaps he had photographed it by some private process on his heart with the lover's camera, which takes rather idealized but very charming pictures, some of which never fade. At all events, there it was, very distinct and very lovely, and always hung on the line in his mental picture-gallery. It was positively with trepidation that he presented himself before her very soon after his arrival; and an undeniable blush "mantled" his cheek—if a blush can be said with any propriety to mantle the male cheek– when he marched into the drawing-room, where she was doing a dainty bit of embroidery, and with much simplicity and directness said, "You said I might come, you know, and I have come; and I begged of Ethel to come too, but she could not leave my aunt," before he had so much as shaken hands. Of course no well-regulated and well-bred young woman—and Miss Bascombe was both—ever permits herself to remember any man until she is engaged to him; but she need not forget one that has impressed her agreeably. Miss Bascombe had not forgotten the handsome Englishman she had met at Jenny De Witt's, nor the little lecture she had given him on the duties of brothers to sisters, and it did not strike

her that his inaugural address was at all eccentric or mysterious. He had been told what he ought to do; he had tried to do it, as was quite right and proper. He deserved some reward. And he got it,—though only as an encouragement to abstract virtue, of course. The young lady was pleased to be friendly, gracious, charming. Her mother came in presently, was equally friendly and gracious, and almost as charming. Her father came home to dinner, and was friendly too, and hearty, and very hospitable. Her brothers were friendliest of all. He knew quite well that he had no claim on them, that he had not saved the life of any member of the family or laid them under any sort of obligation, individually or collectively, and no reception could have seemed more special and dangerously cordial, yet no anxieties oppressed, no fears distracted him. The weight of excessive eligibility suddenly slipped off him, like the albatross from the neck of the Ancient Mariner, leaving him a thankful and a happy man, and in a week he had established himself firmly at the Bascombes', declined to accompany his uncle to Virginia, and definitely settled in his own mind that he would take the step matrimonial,—the step from the sublime to—well, not always the ridiculous. With this resolution he naturally thought that the greatest obstacle to success had been removed; but he was soon disillusionized. He had already come to see that American girls were very much in the habit of being gracious to everybody, and saying pretty and pleasant things, with no thought of an hereafter; also that they did not live with St. George's, Hanover Square, or its American equivalent, Trinity Church, New York, stamped on the mental retina. Miss Bascombe was "very nice" to him, he told himself, but she was quite as nice to a dozen other men. She was uniformly kind, courteous, agreeable, to every one who came to the house. Her cordiality to him meant nothing whatever. Yes, he was quite free,—free as air; he saw that plainly, and perversely longed to assume the fetters he had so long and so skilfully avoided. What was the use of having serious intentions when not the slightest notice was taken of the most compromising behavior? It was true that he was perfectly at liberty to see more of Edith than an Englishman ever does of any woman not related to him, and to say and do a thousand things any one of which at home would have necessitated a proposal or instant flight. But no importance whatever seemed to be attached to them here, and he was utterly at a loss how to make his seriousness felt. Yet it was quite clear that if there was to be any wooing done, he would have to do it,—go every step of the way himself, with no assistance from Miss Bascombe. "How on earth am I to show her that I care for her?" he thought. "Other men send her dozens of bouquets, and box after box of expensive sweets, and loads of books, and music without end, and they come to see her continually, and take her about everywhere, and are entirely devoted to her. I wonder what fellows over here do when they are serious? How do they make themselves understood when they go on in this way habitually? It is a most extraordinary state of affairs! And neither party seems to feel in the least compromised by it. There is that fellow Clinch, who fairly lives at the Bascombes', and when I asked her if she was engaged to him she said, 'Engaged to George Clinch? What an idea! *No*. What put that in your head? He is a nice fellow, and I like him immensely, but there's nothing of that sort between us. What made you think there was? And when I explained, she said, 'Oh, *that's* nothing! He is just as nice to lots of other girls.' And when I suggested to him that he was attached to her, he said, 'Edith Bascombe? Oh, no! She is a great friend of mine, and a charming girl, but I have never thought of that, nor has she. I go there a good deal, but I have never paid her any marked attention.' No marked attention, indeed! Nothing seems to mean anything here: it is worse than being in England, where everything means something. No, it isn't, either. I vow that when I am at the Clintons' in Surrey I scarcely dare offer the girls so much as a muffin, and if I ask the carroty one, Beatrice, the simplest question, she blushes and stammers as if I were proposing out of hand. But what am I to do? I can't sing and take to serenading Edith on moonlit nights with a guitar and a blue ribbon around my neck. I can't push her into the river that I may pull her out again. I dare say there is nothing for it but to adopt the American method, —enter with about fifty others for a sort of sentimental steeple-chase, elbow or knock every other fellow out of the way in the running, work awfully hard to please the girl, and get in by half a length, if one wins at all. There is no feeling sure of her until one is coming back from the altar, evidently."

Some of his conversations with Edith were certainly anything but encouraging. At other times he felt morally sure that she shared that derangement of the bivalvular organ technically defined as "a muscular viscus which is the primary instrument of the blood's motion," whose worst pains are said to be worth more than the greatest pleasures. He was very much in earnest, and entirely straightforward, There were no balancing indecisions now, but the most downright affirmation of preference. His little speeches were not veiled in rosy clouds of metaphor and poetry and distant allusions, like Captain Kendall's, nor did they flow out in an unfailing stream of romantic eloquence, like that gifted warrior's. They were so honest and so clumsy, indeed, that Edith could not help laughing at them merrily sometimes, to his great discomfiture, consisting as they did chiefly of such statements as, "You know that I am most awfully fond of you. I was tremendously hard hit from the first. If you don't believe me, you can ask Ramsay. I told him all about it. You aren't in the least like any other girl that I have ever known, except Mrs. De Witt a little. I suppose you know that I would have married her at the dropping of a hat if I could have done so. But that is all over now. I care an awful lot for you now, and shall be quite frightfully cut up if you won't have anything to say to me, —I shall, really. I have got quite wrapped up in you, upon my word. And I shall be intensely glad and proud if you will consent to be my wife."

When Edith failed to take such speeches as these seriously, poor Mr. Heathcote was quite beside himself, and, in reply to her bantering accusations as to his being "a great flirt" and not "really meaning one word that he said," opposed either burly negation or a deeply-vexed silence. They looked at so many things differently that they found a piquant interest in discussing every subject that came up.

"There go May Dunbar and Fred Beach," she said to him one Sunday as they were coming home from church. "Isn't he handsome? They have been engaged *three years*. Did you ever hear of such constancy?"

"Do you call that constancy? Why, if a fellow can't wait three years for a lovely girl like that, he must be a poor stick. Why, my uncle Montgomery was engaged to his wife seventeen years, while he went out to India and shook the pagoda-tree, after which he came back, paid all his father's debts, and they married and went into the house they had picked out before he sailed," said Mr. Heathcote.

"Good gracious! what a time! I hope the poor things were happy at last. Were they?" asked Edith.

"H-m—pretty well. He is a rather fiery, tyrannical old party. She doesn't get her own way to hurt," he replied.

"I have heard that Englishwomen give way to the men in everything and are always, voluntarily or involuntarily, sacrificed to them. It must be so bad for both," said Edith sweetly.

"Oh, you go in for woman's rights and that sort of thing, I suppose," he said, in a tone of annoyance.

"Indeed I don't do anything of the kind," replied she, with warmth. "If I did, I should be aping the men when I wasn't sneering at them. But I respect your sex most when they most deserve to be respected, and I don't see anything to admire in a selfish, tyrannical man that is always imposing his will, opinions, and wishes upon the ladies of his household and expects to be the first consideration from the cradle to the grave because he happens to be a man."

"But he is the head of his house. He ought to get his own way, if anybody does, and, if he is not a coward, he will, too," said Mr. Heathcote rather hotly. "Would you have a man a molly-coddle, tied to his wife's apron-string, and not daring to call his soul his own?"

"Not at all," replied Edith. "It is the cowards that are the tyrants. 'The bravest are the tenderest, the loving are the daring,' as our American poet says. And women have souls of their own, except in the East. Why shouldn't *they* be the first consideration and do as they please, pray? They are the weaker, the more delicate and daintily bred. If there is any pampering and spoiling to be done, they should be the objects of it. And as to rights, there is no divine right of way given to man, that I

know of. I don't believe in that sort of thing at all. Of course no reasonable woman wants or expects everybody to kootoo before her and everything to give way to her."

"And no gentleman fails to show a proper respect for his wife's wishes and comfort, not to mention her happiness," said Mr. Heathcote. "But of course that sort of thing is only to be found in America. Englishmen are all selfish, and tyrants, and domestic monsters, I know."

"I didn't say anything of the kind," replied Edith quickly, her cheeks pink with excitement. "I don't know anything about Englishmen or the domestic system of England, and I never expect to. But, if what I have heard is true, it is a system that tends to make men mortally selfish; and selfish people, whether they are men or women, and whether they know it or not, are *all* monsters. But I apologize for my remarks, and, as I am not interested in the subject *in the least,* we will talk of something else, if you please."

This very feminine conclusion, delivered loftily and with sudden reserve, left Mr. Heathcote in anything but an agreeable frame of mind, and for an hour or two made him doubt the wisdom of international marriages; but this mood passed away, and he remained a fixture at the *maison* Bascombe, where the very postman came to know him and generously sympathized with the malady from which he was suffering. Nor was this the only house in which he was made very welcome. Baltimore is one of many American cities that suffer from the vague but painful accusation of being "provincial;" but, admitting this dreadful charge, it has social, gastronomic, and other charms of its own that ought to compensate for the absence of that doubtful good, cosmopolitanism. Mr. Heathcote certainly found no fault with it, and did not miss the population, pauperism, or other institutions of Paris, London, or Vienna. On the contrary, he took very kindly to the pretty place, and heartily liked the people. There was nothing oppressive or ostentatious in the attentions he received, but just the cordiality, grace, and charm of an old-established society of most refined traditions, perfect *savoir-vivre,* and chronic hospitality.

"You are making a Baltimorean of me, you are so awfully kind to me," he would say, pronouncing the *a* in Bal as he would have done in sal; but the truth was that he had become primarily a Bascomite and only very incidentally a Baltimorean. The city counts hundreds of such converts every year. He was so happy and entirely content that he would have quite forgotten what it was to be bored just at this period but for certain individuals,—a boastful, disagreeable Irishman, who fastened upon him apparently for no other reason than that he might abuse England at great length and talk of his own valor, accomplishments, and "paddygree" (as he very properly called the record that established his connection with Brian Boroo and Irish kings generally), and a lady who seemed to take the most astounding, unquenchable interest in the English nobility, as more than one lady had seemed to him to do, to his great annoyance.

"I don't know a bit about them, I assure you," he said to her; "but I have the 'Peerage.' If you would like to see that, I will send it you with pleasure."

This only diverted her conversation into a different but equally distasteful channel,—the great distinction and antiquity of her own family. It really seemed as though she had a dread of Mr. Heathcote's leaving the country with some wrong impression on this important subject and was determined that he should be put in possession of all the information she had or imagined herself to have about it. She talked to him about it so much that the poor man was at incredible pains to keep out of her way.

"I don't care a brass copper about her," he complained to Edith; "and if the family has been producing women like her as long as she says, and is going on at it, all I can say is that it is a pity they have lasted this long, and the sooner they die out the better. What do I care about her family, pray? I never heard as much about family in all my life, I give you my word, as I have done since I came to America. The stories told me are something wonderful,—all about the two brothers that left England, and all that, you know. They seem all to have come away in pairs, like the animals in the ark. I said to one fellow that was beginning with those two brothers, '*Couldn't you make it three*, don't you think?'

And you'll not believe me, but I speak quite without exaggeration, when I say that one woman out in Raising assured me gravely that she was descended from the houses of York and Lancaster!"

"*She didn't!"* exclaimed Edith. "That is, if she did, she must have been *crazy*; and I won't have you going back to England and giving false impressions of us by repeating such stories. Promise me that you will never repeat it there."

"Oh, that's all right," he replied soothingly. "It's an extreme case, I grant, and I'll say no more about it if it vexes you, but it is a true tale all the same. Howe was her name, I remember; and I felt like saying,—I'll eat my hand if I understand Howe this can possibly be,'—that's in the Bab Ballads, —but I didn't."

Sir Robert had small opportunity of making acquaintance with Baltimore. He was very eager to get down into Virginia, and stayed there but two days. On the second of these he attended a gentleman's dinner-party, the annual mile-stone of a military society composed of men who had worn the gray and marked the well-known tendency of tempus to fugit in this agreeable fashion. Their ex-enemies of the blue were also there, but not in the original overwhelming numbers, and the battle was now to one party, now to the other, the race to the best *raconteur*, rivers of champagne flowed instead of brave blood, and the smoke of cannon was exchanged for that of Havanas. Sir Robert's face beamed more and more brightly as the evening wore on, and reminiscences, anecdotes, stories, jests, songs, were fluently and cleverly poured out in rapid succession by the hilarious company. The fun was at its height, when he suddenly leaned forward with his body at an insinuating angle and smilingly addressed an officer opposite: "You must really let me say that I have been delighted by all that I have heard here to-night, and appreciate the compliment you have paid me in permitting me to join you. And now I am going to ask a great favor. Could you, would you, give me some idea of 'the rebel yell,' as it was called? We heard so much about that. I am most curious to hear it. It is always spoken of as perfectly terrifying, almost unearthly."

The gentleman whom he addressed looked down the table and rapped to call attention to what he had to say: "Boys, this English gentleman is asking whether we can't give him some idea of what the rebel yell is like. What do you say? If our Federal friends are afraid, they can get under the table, where they will be perfectly safe, and a good deal more comfortable than they used to be behind trees or in baggage-wagons," he called out.

A hearty laugh followed, and, their blood having got bubbles in it by this time, a general assenting murmur was heard.

The next instant a shriek, sky-rending, blood-curdling, savage beyond description, went up,—a truly terrific yell in peace, and enough to create a panic, one would think, in the Old Guard in time of war.

"Thank you, thank you. *I am entirely satisfied"* said Sir Robert, in a comically rueful tone, as soon as he could say anything for the uproar. "I never imagined anything like it, never. Where did you get it? Who invented it? Is it an adaptation of some war-cry of the North American Indians? It sounds like what one would fancy their cries might be, doesn't it? It has got all the beasts of the forest in it; and I confess that I for one, would have fled before it and stayed in the wagons as long as there was the slightest danger of hearing it. By Jove! it must have been heard in Boston when given in Virginia. It is curious how very ancient the practice of—"

But the company heard no more of curious practices, for their yell had been heard, if not in Boston, in a far more remarkable quarter,—namely, by the police, who now rushed in, prepared to club, arrest, and carry off any and all disorderly and dreadful disturbers of the peace.

If Sir Robert had been in any danger of being murdered, all experience goes to show that no policeman could have been found before the following morning, and then only in the remotest part of the city. As he was merely being wined, dined, and amused, quite a formidable body of these devoted but easily-misled guardians of respectability and innocence poured into the room, where at first they could see nothing for the smoke. Matters were explained, they were invited to "take

something" before they went, and took it, and, quite placated, filed out into the passage again, and from thence into the street.

Sir Robert sat up late that night, or rather began early on the following day, to copy the stories he had most relished into the diary, and do what justice he could to "the rebel yell," and, having added an admirably discriminating chapter on "the present political situation in the States," concluded with, "How striking is the good sense, the good feeling, that both the conquerors and the conquered have shown, on the whole! In other countries, how often has a war far less bloody and protracted left in its wake evils far greater than the original one, in guerilla warfare, murders, ceaseless revolt, and smouldering hatred lasting for centuries on one side, and centuries of tyranny, oppression, executions, confiscations, on the other! A brave and fine race this, not made of the stuff that goes to keep up vendettas, shoot landlords, blow up rulers, assassinate enemies. They can fight as well as any, and they have shown that they can forgive better than most,—taken together, true manliness. It may be that they are influenced by a consideration which is said to be always present to an American,—'Will it pay?' and of course so practical a people as this see that anarchy doesn't pay; but I would rather attribute their conduct to nobler, more generous motives, and in doing this seem to myself to be doing them no more than justice."

F.C. BAYLOR.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

OUR VILLE

The picturesqueness of France in our day is confined almost exclusively to its humble life. The Renaissance and the Revolution swept away in most parts of the country moated castle, abbaye, grange, and chateau, to replace them with luxurious but conventional piles and ruins humbly restored and humbly inhabited. Many a farmhouse with unkempt *cour* and dishevelled *pelouse* is the relic of a turreted château, stables are often desecrated churches, seigneurial *colombiers* shelter swine, and battlemented portals to fortified walls serve, as does the one of our ville, to house hideously-uniformed *douaniers* watching the luggage of arriving travellers.

Our ville was never an aristocratic one, and to this day very few of our names are preceded by the idealizing particle *de*. We have an ancient history, however,—so ancient that all historians place our origin at *un temps trèsrecule*. We had houses and walls when Rouen yonder was a marsh, and we saw Havre spring up like a mushroom only two little centuries and a half ago. Besieged and taken, burned and ravaged, alternately by Protestant and Catholic, no wonder our ville has not even ruins to show that we are older than the fifteen hundreds. Still, ancient though we are, we have always been a ville of humble folk,—hardy sailors, brave fishers, and thrifty bourgeois,—and to-day, as always, our highest families buy and sell and build their philistine homes back toward the *côte*, while our humble ones picturesquely haunt the *quais*.

The town is exquisitely situated at the foot of abrupt *côtes*, just where the broad and tranquil river shudders with mysterious deep heavings and meets its dolphin-hued death in the all-devouring sea. Away off in the shimmering distance is the second seaport city of France. On still days,—and our gray or golden Norman days are almost always still,—faint muffled sounds of life, the throbbing of factories, the farewell boom of cannon from ships setting forth across the Atlantic, even the musical notes of the Angelus, float across the water to us as dreamily vague as perhaps our earth-throbs and passion-pulses reach a world beyond the clouds. This city is our metropolis, with which we are connected by small steamers crossing to and fro with the tide, and where all our shopping is done, our own ville being too thoroughly limited and *roturier* in taste to merit many of our shekels.

In fact, such of our shopping as is done in our ville is in the quaint marketplace, where black house-walls are beetling and bent, and Sainte-Cathérine's ancient wooden tower stands the whole width of the Place away from its Gothic church. Here we bargain and chaffer with towering *bonnets blancs* for peasant pottery and faïence, paintable half-worn stuffs, and delicious ancestral odds and ends of broken peasant households.

We have many streets over which wide eaves meet, and within which twilight dwells at noonday. Some of the hand-wide streets run straight up the *côte*, and are a succession of steep stairs climbing beside crouching, timber-skeletoned houses perforated by narrow windows opening upon vistas of shadow. Others seem only to run down from the *côte* to the sea as steeply as black planks set against a high building. Upon the very apex of the *côte*, visible miles away at sea, lives our richest citizen. His house smiles serenely modern even if only pseudo-classic contempt on all the quaint duskiness and irregularity below, and is pillared, corniced, entablatured, and friezed, with lines severely straight, although the building itself is as round as any mediæval campanile and surmounted with a Gothic bell-turret, while the entrance-gate is turreted, machicolated, castellated, like the fortress-castles of the Goths.

Lower down the *côte*, convent walls raise themselves above red-tiled and lichen-grown roofs. In one of these convents, behind eyeless grim walls, are hidden cloistered nuns; from others the Sisters go freely forth upon errands of both business and mercy. The convent of cloisters, Couvent des Augustines, is passing rich, and has houses and lands to let. Once upon a time an *Américaine* coveted one of these picturesque houses. She entered the convent and interviewed the business-manager, a veiled nun behind close bars.

"Madame may occupy the house," said *ma Soeur*, "by paying five hundred francs a year, by observing every fast and feast of the Church, by attending either matins or vespers every day, and by attending confession and partaking of the holy sacrament every month."

Madame is a zealous Catholic, therefore the terms, although peculiar, did not seem too severe. She was about to remove into the house, when, lo! she received word that, it having come to the knowledge of the convent that the husband of Madame was a heretic, he could not be allowed to occupy any tenement of the Communauté.

Although this cloistered sisterhood is vowed to perpetual seclusion, once a year even heretics may gaze upon their pale faces. This annual occasion is the prize-day of the school they teach, when the school-room is decorated with white cloth and paper roses, the *curés* of neighboring parishes and the Maire of our ville, with invited distinguished guests, occupy the platform, and the floor below is free to everybody furnished with invitation-cards.

I had always longed to enter these prison-like walls and gaze from my tempestuous distance upon those peaceful lives set apart from earth's rush and turmoil in a fair and blessed haven of the Lord. I longed to see those pure visionaries, pale spouses of Christ, and read upon illumined faces the unspeakable rapture of mystic union with the Lamb of God.

Monsieur le Docteur S–, our family physician, is also physician of the convent.

"You will see nobody," he said, remarking my sentimental curiosity concerning cloistered nuns, —"you will see nobody but a lot of lace-mending and stocking-knitting old maids who failed to get husbands."

I had already heard queer stories of our old doctor's forty years of attendance upon the convent, and I was not so easily discouraged. I was especially anxious to see the Mother Superior, having many times heard the story of her flight in slippers and dressing-gown from the breakfast-table to bury herself forever within the walls that have held her now these twenty-five years. In all these years her unforgiving father has never seen her face, nor she his, although they live within stone's throw of each other.

"Know about him? of course she does," answered Victoire to my question. "She knows all about him, and more too. Do you suppose there is an item of news in the whole town that those cloistered nuns do not hear? If you had been educated by them, as we were, and pumped dry every day as to what went on in our own and our neighbors' families, you would not ask that question."

Victoire and I penetrated into the convent that very same day. We followed a crowd of women, *paysannes* and *citoyennes*, into a sunny court paved with large stones and arched by the noontide sky, but unsoftened by tree or flower, and surrounded by the open windows of dormitories. Over the threshold we had just crossed the nuns pass but once after their vows,—pass outward, feet foremost, deaf and unseeing, to a closer, darker home than even their cloistered one. Some of them have seen nothing beyond their convent walls for forty years, while one has here worn away sixty years.

Sixty years without one single glimpse of sweet dawn or fair sunset, without one single vision of the sea in winter majesty of storm or summer glory! *Sixty years* without sound of lisping music running through tall grass, without one single whisper of the æolian pines, or glimpse of blooming orchards against pure skies! *Sixty years*!

Beside me in the school-room sat a buxom peasant-woman, who, as a little girl crowned with a gaudy tinsel wreath descended from the platform, confidentially informed me, "*C'est ma fille.* She has taken the prize for good conduct, and there isn't a worse *coquine* in our whole commune."

I saw the pale visionaries, a circle of black-robed figures, with dead-white bands, like coffin-cerements, across their brows. I saw them almost unanimously fat, with pendulous jowls and black and broken teeth, as remote from any expression of mystic fervors and spiritual espousals as could be well imagined, *"Vieilles commères*!" grunted my *paysanne,* who was evidently neither amiable nor saintly.

Mother Mary-of-the-Angels, once Elise Gautier, was short, fat, and bustling, with large round-eyed spectacles upon her nose, and the pasty complexion and premature flaccid wrinkles that come

with long seclusion from sunshine and exercise. She marched about like one who had chosen Martha's rather than Mary's manner of serving her Lord, and we saw her chat a full half-hour with the wife of the Maire, bowing, smiling, gesticulating meantime with all the florid grace of a French woman of the world.

"The Maire's wife was her former intimate friend," whispered Victoire. "See how much younger and healthier she looks than the Mother Superior, and how much happier. *On dit* that it was chagrin at the marriage of this friend that caused Élise Gautier to desert her widowed father and dependent little brothers and sisters to bury herself in a convent."

A more interesting story than Élise Gautier's is told in our ville. Some years ago a nun left the Couvent des Augustines in open day, passing out from the central door in her nun's garb, and meeting there a foreign-looking man accompanied by a posse of gendarmes. The couple, followed by a half-hooting, half-cheering mob, drove directly to the hôtel-de-ville, where they were united in marriage. Then they went away from our ville, where both were born, to the husband's home in Spain. When those convent doors had closed upon her, a quarter of a century before, and the lovers believed themselves eternally separated, she was a lovely girl of twenty, he a bright youth of twenty-five. She passed away from his despairing sight, fair and fresh as a spring flower, with beautiful golden hair and violet eyes; she came out from that fatal portal a woman of forty-five, stout, spectacled, with faded, thin hair beneath her nun's cowl, to meet a portly gray-haired man of fifty, in whom not even love's eye could detect the faintest vestige of the slender bright-eyed lover of her youth.

The unhappy Laure had been forced to unwilling vows to keep her from this beggarly lover, and, when he fled to Spain, both became dead to our ville for long years. Twenty-two years after Laure became Soeur Angelica it was known in the convent that the machinery of the civil law, which had only lately forbidden eternal religious vows, had been set in motion to secure her release; but it remained a mystery who the spring of the movement was, her parents having long been dead. Soeur Angelica herself seemed almost more terrified than otherwise at the knowledge, for every conventual influence was brought to bear upon her morbid conscience to assure her that eternal damnation follows broken vows. It seems, however, that amid all her spiritual stress she never confessed, even to her spiritual director, what desecration had come upon that dovecote by her constant correspondence with the lover of her youth, now a wealthy wine-merchant in Spain. When she left the convent, some of these love-letters were left behind; and to this day those scandalized doves, to whom Soeur Angelica is forever a lost soul, wonder futilely how those emissaries of Satan penetrated their holy walls.

"How *did* they, do you suppose?" I asked.

Victoire and Clarice smiled curiously, while Émile, with an expression savoring of paganism and pig-tails, squinted obliquely toward our doctor.

"*Nous n'en savons rien*" they answered me.

The social amusements of our ville are few, as must naturally be the case in a provincial town ruled by the Draconian law that a *jeune fille à marier* must be no more than an animated puppet, while *jeunes gens* must have their coarse fling before they are fit for refined society. Occasionally an ambulant theatrical troupe gives an entertainment in our little theatre. Once a year Talbot comes, during vacation at the Francais, and gives us "L'Avare" or "Le Roi s'amuse;" but such are small events, to our provincial taste, compared with the vaulting and grimacing of the more frequent English and American circus troupes in our Place Thiers.

Perhaps the chief distraction of our young people is going to early mass, whither our young ladies go accompanied by *bonnes*, Maman having not yet emerged from the French mamma's chrysalis condition of morning crimping-pins, petticoat and short gown, and list slippers. The *bonnes* who thus serve as chaperons are often as young as or even younger than the demoiselles whose virginal modesty they are supposed to protect. That they are anything more than a mere form of guardian, a figment of the social fiction that a young French girl never leaves her mother's side till she goes to her husband's, it is unnecessary to observe. Human nature, especially French human nature, is

human nature all the world over, and Romeo will woo and Juliet be won during early mass or twilight vespers as well as from a balcony, in spite of all the Montagues and Capulets. Girl-chaperons are oftener in sympathy with ardent daughters than with worldly mothers, while even the oldest and most sedate of French *bonnes* are malleable to other influences than those of their legitimate employers. It was across our river, yonder from whence the sound of the Angelus comes across the summer water like the music of dreams, that Balzac's Modest Mignon carried on her intrigues of hifalutin gush, by means of a facile *bonne*, with a man whom she had never seen, and who deceived her by personating the poet she wished him to be. Modest Mignons are not rare in our ville, and the Gothic vaults of Saint-Léonard and the pillared aisles of Sainte-Cathérine witness almost as many little intrigues, as many heart-beats and blushes, as does "evenin' meetin'" in our own bucolic regions.

Désirée, our *femme-de-chambre,* before she came to us, lived in a wealthy *roturier* family.

"It was a good place, and I was sorry to lose it when Mademoiselle Eugénie was married," said she. "The little gifts the *jeunes gens* slipped into my panier as I came with mademoiselle from mass almost equalled my wages. Mademoiselle had a good *dot* as well as beauty, and *ces jeunes gens* expected to lose nothing by what they gave me. Mademoiselle herself often said, 'Désirée, walk a few steps behind me, and, while I keep my eyes upon the pavement, tell me all the young men who turn to look after me. If you hear any of them say, "*Comme elle est jolie!"* (How pretty she is!) you shall have my *batiste mouchoirs*.'"

On Sunday afternoons all the bourgeois world of our ville disports itself upon the jetty. Not only then do all the mothers of the town with daughters "to marry" bring those daughters to the weekly matrimonial mart, but many of the mothers and chaperons of the near country round about come in from rural *propriété* and rustic *chalet* to exhibit their candidates. The method of procedure is eminently French, of course, and eminently naïve, as even the intrigues and machinations of Balzac's *bourgeoisie*, although intended as marvels of finesse, seem so often naïveté itself to our blunter and less-plotting minds. The mothers and daughters, or chaperons and charges, walk slowly arm in arm up and down one side the jetty, facing the counter-current of young men and men not young who have not lost interest in feminine attractions. Back and forth, back and forth, for hours, move the two separate streams, never for one instant commingling, each discussing the other's prospects, characters, appearance, and, above all, *dots* and *rentes*, till twilight falls and all the world goes home to dinner.

Once upon a time a retired man of business came to our ville, accompanied by his son. He was one of the class known in England as "Commys," and so obnoxious in France as *commis-voyageurs.* He stopped at the Cheval Blanc, and in conversation with mine host inquired if it might chance that some café-keeper in the town desired to sell his café and marry his daughter. Monsieur Brissom mentioned to him our café-keepers blessed with marriageable daughters, and "Commy" made the rounds among them, announcing that he had a son whom he wished to marry to some charming demoiselle *dot*ed with a café. One of the café-keepers had "*précisément votre affaire*." It was arranged that Mademoiselle Clothilde should be promenaded by her mother the next Sunday on the jetty, where the young man should join the counter-current, and thus each take observations of the other.

As said, so done. Monsieur Henri and Mademoiselle Clothilde declared themselves enchanted with each other.

"*Très-bien*," said the reflective parents. "Now fall in love as fast as ever you please."

Monsieur and mademoiselle not only "fell," but plunged.

Two weeks afterward, however, the papas fell out. Cafétier exacted more than Commis could promise, and Commis declared Mademoiselle Clothilde *pas grand' chose*: her eyebrows were too white, and her toes turned in.

The marriage was declared "off," and the young people were ordered to fall out of love the quickest possible.

"Too late!" they cried.

"You have seen each other but four times."

"Quite enough," declared the lovers.

"You shall not marry," shouted the parents.

"We *will*!" screamed their offspring.

Nevertheless they could not, for the French law gives almost absolute power to parents. Mademoiselle would have no *dot* unless her father chose to give her one, and no French marriage is legal without paternal consent or the almost disgraceful expedient of *sommations respectueuses*. Mademoiselle threatened to enter a convent. Cafétier assured her that no convent opens cordial doors to *dot*less girls.

Juliet was ready to defy all the Capulets when she had seen Romeo but once; Corinne was ready to fling all her laurels at Oswald's feet at their second interview; Rosamond Vincy planned her house-furnishing during her second meeting with Lydgate; even Dorothea Brooke felt a "trembling hope" the very next day after her first sight of Mr. Casaubon. How, then, could one expect poor Clothilde to yield up her undersized, thin-moustached, and very unheroic-looking Henri, having seen him *four* times?

There was one way out of her troubles,—that to which Alphonse Daudet's and André Theuriet's people gravitate as needles to their pole. She walked one dark midnight upon the jetty alone. Nobody saw the end; but the next Sunday, three weeks to a day from the one when the two had countermarched in matrimonial procession, Mademoiselle Clothilde was laid in her grave.

The whole French social system revolves around the *dot*.

"How dare you speak to my father so!" I once heard a daughter reproach her mother. "How dare you, who brought him no *dot*!"

"It is a pity Madame Marais has no more influence in her family," I heard remarked in a social company. "It is a pity, for she is a good woman, and her husband and sons are all going to the bad."

"Yes, it is a pity," answered another; "but, then, what else can she expect? She brought no *dot* into the family."

Once upon a time a young man made a friendly call upon a family in our ville, he a distant relative of the family. He sat in the *salon* with mother and daughter, when suddenly the mother was called away a moment. When she returned, not more than two minutes later,—horror! *she could not enter the room!* In closing the door she had somehow disarranged the handles; screws had dropped out and could not be found; the knob would not turn. What a situation! A young girl shut up in a locked room with a young man! What a scandal if the story got out in the town! and what could the poor, distracted mamma do to release her daughter from that damning situation without the knowledge of the servants? She dared not even summon a locksmith, for locksmith tongues are free; and who would not shoot out the lip at poor Jeanne, hearing the miserable story at breakfast-tables to-morrow?

"You must marry Jeanne, *mon cousin*," cried mamma through the keyhole.

"Impossible, *ma cousine*. You know I am *fiancé*," laughed he.

Nevertheless he did!

For when papa heard that Jeanne had remained two whole hours shut up with Cousin Pierre in a brilliantly-lighted *salon*, with a frantic mother at the keyhole and all the servants grinning upon their knees searching for the missing screws, he added twenty thousand francs to her *dot* on the spot, and Pierre wrote to his other *fiancée* that he had "changed his intentions."

"Mamma's *tapage* was too funny," laughed Madame Pierre, telling me this story herself. "Pierre and I laughed well on our side of the door, although we were careful not to let maman hear us. For we had often been alone together before when *nobody knew it*."

Which makes all the difference in the world in our ville, as well as elsewhere.

Pierre's funny experience did not end with his betrothal. In relating the adventure which follows, I wish it distinctly to be understood that I do it in all respect, admiration, and reverence for the Church which is the mother of all Churches calling themselves Christian. The Holy Roman Catholic Church is no less holy that her servants are so often base and vile and that her livery is so often stolen to serve

evil in. What wickedness and hypocrisy have we not in our own Protestant clergy, and without even the tremendous excuse for it which the conditions of European society give for the occasional levity of its priesthood! In France the Church is a recognized profession, to which parents destine and for which they educate their sons without waiting for them to exhibit any special bias toward a religious life. In spite of themselves, many young men are even forced into the priesthood, not only by strong family influence, but through having been educated so as to be absolutely unfitted for any other walk of life. With us the priesthood is a matter of deliberate and perfectly voluntary choice, and he who wears it as a cloak is ten thousand times the hypocrite his Catholic brother is.

It happened that our *curé* of Saint-Étienne was a jolly good fellow, somewhat given to wine-bibbing, and much given to Rabelaisian stories. He was also hail-fellow-well-met with Pierre, and Pierre, like most of the young men of France, prided himself upon his entire freedom from the "superstitious." Père Duhaut lived by teaching and preaching.

In France the church sacrament of marriage cannot be performed unless both the contracting parties furnish certificates of having made confession within three weeks. To secure his certificate it would be necessary for Pierre to confess to the *curé* of Saint-Étienne, Père Duhaut.

"*I* confess to Duhaut!" he laughed in our house. "I'll be—what's-his-named first. Old Duhaut might as well confess to me. I shall simply give him six francs and get my certificate without any more ado, just as the other fellows get theirs."

That very afternoon Père Duhaut took tea with us, and Émile was mean enough to betray Pierre's intentions.

"We'll see," said our *curé*.

The next day Pierre passed our windows. He bowed gayly, and called up that he was going for his six francs' worth of ante-nuptial absolution. An hour later he passed again, but he did not look up. In the evening Père Duhaut came, bursting with laughter.

"Ask Pierre how he got his certificate," he guffawed. Then he told us the story. Pierre, it seems, had offered the six francs, which offer the confessor had rejected with scorn.

"In to the confessional," he cried, "and make your confession like a penitent!"

"I'll make it fifteen," grinned Pierre.

"Not for a thousand. In! *in*!"

"Come, now, Duhaut, this is all humbug. You know I'm not penitent, and I'll be– if I'll confess to you."

Without more words, the burly priest seized the recalcitrant and grabbed him by the neck, trying to force him into the confession-box. Pierre resisted, and, as the *curé* told us bursting with laughter, the two wrestled and waltzed half around the church. Finally Pierre was brought to his knees.

"*Eh bien, allez*! What am I to confess?" he grumbled.

"Every sin you have committed since your last confession."

How malicious was Père Duhaut in this! for he knew Pierre had not kept the observances of the Church since he left home at seventeen, and had not been an anchorite either.

"I'll make it an even hundred," begged the now exasperated yet humbled Pierre. "Come, now, do be reasonable; that's a jolly old boy."

"Confess! confess!" roared the confessor, dealing the kneeling impenitent a sounding cuff on the ear.

"Ask Pierre how he got his certificate," roared Père Duhaut. "*Demandez-lui! Demandez-lui!*"

But we never did.

Until his grave received him, only a few weeks ago, a marked character of our ville was a stooping old man, of a ghastly paleness, noted through all the region for avarice and for speaking every one of his many languages each with worse accent than the other. His Spanish sounded like German, his German had the strongest possible American accent, his English was vividly Teutonic, and after forty years of marriage his Norman wife never ceased to mock at his atrociously-mouthed

French. He was wine-merchant and banker combined, and, though his social position was among the best in our bourgeoise ville, all the world smiled with the knowledge that the rich old *banquier*, whose nose had a strong Hebraic curve, delivered his own merchandise at night from under his long coat, in order to escape the tax on every bottle of wine transported from one domicile to another.

The stately gate-post of "Père S–'s" pretentious and philistine mansion is decorated with the coats-of-arms of several nations. England's is there, Germany's, Spain's, Portugal's, as well as our own Eagle; while upon days when our own exiled hearts beat most proudly—4th of July and 22d of February—our star-spangled banner floats from his roof-top as well as from our own, the only two, of course, in our ville. Our ville, so important to us, has scarcely an existence for our home government, and administrative changes there float over us like clouds of heaven, without touching us in their changefulness. Thus Père S–, though so courteous and cordial to Americans, has been long years forgotten at Washington, whence every living servitor of the administration that appointed him our consul here has long since passed away forever. He was born in Pennsylvania, of German parents, nearly eighty years ago. He received his appointment in 1837, and held it through fourteen administrations since Van Buren, without ever returning to America, till he faded away one little month ago and was buried in the parish cemetery of Saint-Léonard by a Lutheran pastor brought over for the occasion from Havre. No church-bells tolled for his death, and the street-children did not go on their way singing, as they always do, to the sound of funeral bells.

"*Viens, corps, ta fosse t'attend!*" for Pere S– was a heretic, and could not have slept in consecrated ground had he died before the République Française removed religious restrictions from all burial-places. All the consular corps in all the region round about followed the old man to his long home, all our public buildings hung their flags half-mast high, all our little world told queer stories of the dead old man. But our own hearts grew tender with thoughts of this life finished at fourscore years with its longing of almost half a century unfulfilled. "Philip Nolan" we often called the old man, who sometimes said to us, with yearning, pathetic voice,—

> "I am an American; I am here only till I make my fortune. When I am rich enough I shall go *Home*. I shall die and be buried at Home,—when I am rich enough."

Temperament is Fate. Père S–'s temperament of Harpagon fated him to die as he had lived, —a man without a country.

MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.

THE PRIMITIVE COUPLE

I. PARADISE

The island in Magog Lake was like a world by itself. Though there were but fifteen or twenty acres of land in it, that land was so diversified by dense woods, rocks, verdant open spots, and smooth shore-rims that it seemed many places in one.

Adam's tent was set in the arena of an amphitheatre of hills, upon close, smooth sward sloping down to the lake-margin of milk-white sand. Beyond the lake stood up a picture as heavenly to man's vision as the New Jerusalem appearing in the clouds.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.