ФРЕДЕРИК МАРРИЕТ

DIARY IN AMERICA, SERIES ONE

Фредерик Марриет

Diary in America, Series One

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Содержание

Frederick Marryat
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Introduction

After many years of travel, during which I had seen men under almost every variety of government, religion, and climate, I looked round to discover if there were not still new combinations under which human nature was to be investigated. I had traversed the old country until satisfied, if not satiated; and I had sailed many a weary thousand miles from west to east, and from north to south, until people, manners, and customs were looked upon by me with indifference.

The press was constantly pouring out works upon the new world, so contradictory to each other, and pronounced so unjust by the Americans, that my curiosity was excited. It appeared strange to me that travellers whose works showed evident marks of talent should view the same people through such very different mediums; and that their gleanings should, generally speaking, be of such meagre materials. Was there so little to be remarked about America, its government, its institutions, and the effect which these had upon the people, that the pages of so many writers upon that country should be filled up with how the Americans dined or drank wine, and what description of spoons and forks were used at table? Either the Americans remained purely and unchangedly English, as when they left their father-land; or the question required more investigation and deeper research than travellers in their hasty movements have been able to bestow upon it. Whether I should be capable of throwing any new light upon the subject, I knew not, but at all events I made up my mind that I would visit the country and judge for myself.

On my first arrival I perceived little difference between the city of New York and one of our principal provincial towns; and, for its people, not half so much as between the people of Devonshire or Cornwall and those of Middlesex. I had been two or three weeks in that city, and I said: There is certainly not much to write about, nor much more than what has already been continually repeated. No wonder that those who preceded me have indulged in puerilities to swell out their books. But in a short time I altered my opinion: even at New York, the English appearance of the people gradually wore away; my perception of character became more keen, my observance consequently more nice and close, and I found that there was a great deal to reflect upon and investigate, and that America and the American people were indeed an enigma; and I was no longer surprised at the incongruities which were to be detected in those works which had attempted to describe the country. I do not assert that I shall myself succeed, when so many have failed, but at any rate, this I am certain of, my remarks will be based upon a more sure foundation—an analysis of human nature.

There are many causes why those who have written upon America have fallen into error: they have represented the Americans as a nation: now they are not yet, nor will they for many years be, in the true sense of the word, a nation—they are a mass of many people cemented together to a certain degree, by a general form of government; but they are in a state of transition, and (what may at first appear strange) no amalgamation as has yet taken place: the puritan of the east, the Dutch descent of the middle states, the cavalier of the south, are nearly as marked and distinct now, as at the first occupation of the country, softened down indeed, but still distinct. Not only are the populations of the various states distinct, but even those of the cities: and it is hardly possible to make a remark which may be considered as general to a country, where the varieties of soil and of climate are so extensive. Even on that point upon which you might most safely venture to generalise, namely, the effect of a democratical form of government upon the mass, your observations must be taken with some exceptions, arising from the climate, manners, and customs, and the means of livelihood so differing in this extended country.

Indeed the habit in which travellers indulge of repeating facts which have taken place, of having taken place in America, has, perhaps unintentionally on their part, very much misled the English reader. It would hardly be considered fair, if the wilder parts of Ireland, and the disgraceful acts which are committed there, were represented as characteristic of England, or the British empire; yet between London and Connaught there is less difference than between the most civilised and intellectual portion of America, such as Boston and Philadelphia, and the wild regions, and wilder inhabitants of the west of the Mississippi, and Arkansas, where reckless beings compose a scattered population, residing too far for the law to reach; or where if it could reach, the power of the government would prove much too weak to enforce obedience to it. To do justice to all parties, America should be examined and portrayed piecemeal, every state separately, for every state is different, running down the scale from refinement to a state of barbarism almost unprecedented; but each presenting matter for investigation and research, and curious examples of cause and effect.

Many of those who have preceded me have not been able to devote sufficient time to their object, and therefore have failed. If you have passed through a strange country, totally differing in manners, and customs, and language from your own, you may give your readers some idea of the contrast, and the impressions made upon you by what you saw, even if you have travelled in haste or sojourned there but a few days; but when the similarity in manners, customs, and language is so great, that you may imagine yourself to be in your own country, it requires more research, a greater degree of acumen, and a fuller investigation of cause and effect than can be given in a few months of rapid motion. Moreover, English travellers have apparently been more active in examining the interior of houses, than the public path from which they should have drawn their conclusions; they have searched with the curiosity of a woman, instead of examining and surveying with the eye of a philosopher. Following up this wrong track has been the occasion of much indiscretion and injustice on their parts, and of justifiably indignant feeling on the part of the Americans. By many of the writers on America, the little discrepancies, the mere trifles of custom have been dwelt upon, with a sarcastic, ill-natured severity to give their works that semblance of pith, in which, in reality, they were miserably deficient; and they violated the rights of hospitality that they might increase their interest as authors.

The Americans are often themselves the cause of their being misrepresented; there is no country perhaps, in which the habit of deceiving for amusement, or what is termed hoaxing, is so common. Indeed this and the hyperbole constitute the major part of American humour. If they have the slightest suspicion that a foreigner is about to write a book, nothing appears to give them so much pleasure as to try to mislead him; this has constantly been practised upon me, and for all I know, they may in some instances have been successful; if they have, all I can say of the story is that "*se non e vero, e si ben trovato*," that it might have happened.[1]

When I was at Boston, a gentleman of my acquaintance brought me Miss Martineau's work, and was excessively delighted when he pointed out to me two pages of fallacies, which he had told her with a grave face, and which she had duly recorded and printed. This practice, added to another, that of attempting to conceal (for the Americans are aware of many of their defects), has been with me productive of good results: it has led me to much close investigation, and has made me very cautious in asserting what has not been proved to my own satisfaction to be worthy of credibility.

Another difficulty and cause of misrepresentation is, that travellers are not aware of the jealousy existing between the inhabitants of the different states and cities. The eastern states pronounce the southerners to be choleric, reckless, regardless of law, and indifferent as to religion; while the

[1] *Paragraph from a New York paper*. That old, deaf English maiden lady, Miss Martineau, who travelled through some of the states, a few years since, gives a full account of Mr Poindexter's death; unfortunately for her veracity, the gentleman still lives; but this is about as near the truth as the majority of her statements. The *loafing* English men and women who visit America, as penny-a-liners, are perfectly understood here, and Jonathan amuses himself whenever he meets them, by imposing upon their credulity the most absurd stories which he can invent, which they swallow whole, go home with their eyes sticking out of their heads with wonder, and print all they have heard for the benefit of John Bull's calves.

southerners designate the eastern states as a nursery of overreaching pedlars, selling clocks and wooden nutmegs. This running into extremes is produced from the clashing of their interests as producers and manufacturers. Again, Boston turns up her erudite nose at New York; Philadelphia, in her pride, looks down upon both New York and Boston; while New York, clinking her dollars, swears the Bostonians are a parcel of puritanical prigs, and the Philadelphians a would-be aristocracy. A western man from Kentucky, when at the Tremont House in Boston, begged me particularly not to pay attention to what they said of his state in that quarter. Both a Virginian and Tennessean, when I was at New York did the same.

At Boston, I was drinking champaign at a supper. "Are you drinking champaign?" said a young Bostonian. "That's New York—take claret; or, if you will drink champaign, pour it into a *green* glass, and they will think it *hock*; champaign is not right." How are we to distinguish between right and wrong in this queer world? At New York, they do drink a great deal of champaign; it is the small beer of the dinner-table. Champaign become associated with New York, and therefore is not *right*. I will do the New Yorkers the justice to say, that, as far as *drinks* are concerned, they are above prejudice: all's right with them, provided there's enough of it.

The above remarks will testify, that travellers in America have great difficulties to contend with, and that their channels of information have been chiefly those of the drawing-room or dinner-table. Had I worked through the same, I should have found them very difficult of access; for the Americans had determined that they would no longer extend their hospitality to those who returned it with ingratitude—nor can they be blamed. Let us reverse the case. Were not the doors of many houses in England shut against an American author, when from his want of knowledge of conventional *usage*, he published what never should have appeared in print! And should another return to England, after his tetchy, absurd remarks upon the English, is there much chance of his receiving a kind welcome? Most assuredly not; both these authors will be received with caution. The Americans, therefore, are not only not to blame, but would prove themselves very deficient in a proper respect for themselves, if they again admitted into their domestic circles those who eventually requited them with abuse.

Admitting this, of course I have no feelings of ill-will toward them for any want of hospitality toward me; on the contrary, I was pleased with the neglect, as it left me free, and unshackled from any real or fancied claims which the Americans might have made upon me on that score. Indeed, I had not been three weeks in the country before I decided upon accepting no more invitations, even charily as they were made. I found that, although invited, my presence was a restraint upon the company; every one appeared afraid to speak; and when anything ludicrous occurred, the cry would be—"Oh, now. Captain Marryat, don't put that into your book." More than once, when I happened to be in large parties, a question such as follows would be put to me by some "free and enlightened individual":—

"Now, Captain Marryat, I ask you before this company, and I trust you will give me a categorical answer, Are you, or are you not about to write a book upon this country?" I hardly need observe to the English reader, that, under such circumstances, the restraint, became mutual; I declined all farther invitations, and adhered to this determination as far as I could without cause of offence, during my whole tour through the United States.

But if I admit, that after the usage which they had received, the Americans are justified in not again tendering their hospitably to the English, I cannot, at the same time, but express my opinion as to their conduct toward me personally. They had no right to insult and annoy me in the manner they did, from nearly one end of the Union to the other, either because my predecessors had expressed an unfavourable opinion of them before my arrival, or because they expected that I would do the same upon my return to my own country, I remark upon this conduct, not from any feeling of ill-will or desire of retaliation, but to compel the Americans to admit that I am under no obligations to them: that I received from them much more of insult and outrage than of kindness; and, consequently, that the charge of ingratitude cannot be laid to my door, however offensive to them some of the remarks in this work may happen to be.

And here I must observe, that the Americans can no longer anticipate lenity from the English traveller, as latterly they have so deeply committed themselves. Once, indeed, they could say, "We admit and are hospitable to the English, who, as soon as they leave our country, turn round and abuse and revile us. We have our faults, it is true: but such conduct on their part is not kind or generous." But they can say this no longer; they have retaliated, and in their attacks they have been regardless of justice. The three last works upon the Americans, written by English authors, were, on the whole, favourable to them; Mr Power's and Mr Grund's most decidedly so; and Miss Martineau's, filled as it is with absurdities and fallacies, was *intended*, at all events to be favourable.

In opposition to them, we have Mr Cooper's remarks upon England, in which my countrymen are certainly not spared; and, since that publication, we have another of much greater importance, written by Mr Carey, of Philadelphia, not, indeed, in a strain of vituperation or ill-feeling, but asserting, and no doubt to his own satisfaction and that of his countrymen, proving, that in every important point, that is to say, under the heads of "Security of Person and Property, of Morals, Education, Religion, Industry, Invention, Credit," (and consequently Honesty,) America is in advance of England and every other nation in Europe!! The tables, then, are turned; it is no longer the English, but the Americans who are the assailants; and such being the case, I beg that it may be remembered, that many of the remarks which will subsequently appear in this work have been forced from me by the attacks made upon my nation by the American authors; and that, if I am compelled to draw comparisons, it is not with the slightest wish to annoy or humiliate the Americans, but in legitimate and justifiable defence of my own native land.

America is a wonderful country, endowed by the Omnipotent with natural advantages which no other can boast of; and the mind can hardly calculate upon the degree of perfection and power to which, whether the states are eventually separated or not, it may in the course of two centuries arrive. At present all is energy and enterprise; everything is in a state of transition, but of rapid improvement —so rapid, indeed, that those who would describe America now, would have to correct all in the short space of ten years; for ten years in America is almost equal to a century in the old continent. Now, you may pass through a wild forest, where the elk browses and the panther howls; in ten years, that very forest, with its denizens, will, most likely, have disappeared, and in their place you will find towns with thousands of inhabitants; with arts, manufactures, and machinery, all in full activity.

In reviewing America, we must look upon it as showing the development of the English character under a new aspect, arising from a new state of things. If I were to draw a comparison between the English and the Americans, I should say that there is almost as much difference between the two nations at this present time, as there has long been between the English and the Dutch. The latter are considered by us as phlegmatic and slow; and we may be considered the same, compared with our energetic descendants. Time to an American is everything,[2] and space he attempts to reduce to a mere nothing. By the steamboats, rail-roads, and the wonderful facilities of water-carriage, a journey of five hundred miles is as little considered in America, as would be here a journey from London to Brighton. "*Go ahead*" is the real motto of the country; and every man does push on, to gain in advance of his neighbour. The American lives twice as long as others; for he does twice the work during the time that he lives. He begins life sooner: at fifteen he is considered a man, plunges into the stream of enterprise, floats and struggles with his fellows. In every trifle an American shows the value he puts upon time. He rises early, eats his meals with the rapidity of a wolf, and is the whole day at his business. If he be a merchant, his money, whatever it may amount to, is seldom invested; it is all floating—his accumulations remain active; and when he dies, his wealth has to be collected from the four quarters of the globe.

[2] The clocks in America—there rendered so famous by Sam Slick—instead of the moral lessons inculcated by the dials in this country, such as "Time flies," etcetera, teach one more suited to American feeling:—"Time is money!"

Now, all this energy and activity is of English origin; and were England expanded into America, the same results would be produced. To a certain degree, the English, were in former times, what the Americans are now; and this it is which has raised our country so high in the scale of nations; but since we have become so closely packed—so crowded, that there is hardly room for the population, our activity has been proportionably cramped and subdued. But, in this vast and favoured country, the very associations and impressions of childhood foster and enlighten the intellect and precociously rouse the energies. The wide expanse of territory already occupied—the vast and magnificent rivers —the boundless regions yet remaining to be peopled—the rapidity of communication—the dispatch with which everything is effected, are evident almost to the child. To those who have rivers many thousand miles in length, the passage across the Atlantic (of 3,500 miles) appears but a trifle; and the American ladies talk of spending the winter at Paris with as much indifference as one of our landed proprietors would, of going up to London for the season.

We must always bear in mind the peculiar and wonderful advantages of *country*, when we examine America and its form of government; for the country has had more to do with upholding this democracy than people might at first imagine. Among the advantages of democracy, the greatest is, perhaps, that *all start fair*; and the boy who holds the traveller's horse, as Van Buren is said to have done, may become the president of the United States. But it is the *country*, and not the government; which has been productive of such rapid strides as have been made by America. Indeed it is a query whether the form of government would have existed down to this day, had it not been for the advantages derived from the vast extent and boundless resources of the territory in which it was established. Let the American direct his career to any goal he pleases, his energies are unshackled; and, in the race, the best man must win. There is room for all, and millions more. Let him choose his profession—his career is not checked or foiled by the excess of those who have already embarked in it. In every department there is an opening for talent; and for those inclined to work, work is always to be procured. You have no complaint in this country, that every profession is so full that it is impossible to know what to do with your children. There is a vast field, and all may receive the reward due for their labour.

In a country where the ambition and energies of man have been roused to such an extent, the great point is to find out worthy incitements for ambition to feed upon. A virtue directed into a wrong channel may, by circumstances, prove little better than (even if it does not sink down into) actual vice. Hence it is that a democratic form of government is productive of such demoralising effects. Its rewards are few. Honours of every description, which stir up the soul of man to noble deeds—worthy incitements, they have none. The only compensation they can offer for services is money; and the only distinction—the only means of raising himself above his fellows left to the American —is wealth; consequently, the acquisition of wealth has become the great spring of action. But it is not sought after with the avarice to hoard, but with the ostentation to expend. It is the effect of ambition directed into a wrong channel. Each man would surpass his neighbour; and the only great avenue open to all, and into which thousands may press without much jostling of each other, is that which leads to the shrine of Mammon. It is our nature to attempt to raise ourselves above our fellow-men; it is the main-spring of existence—the incitement to all that is great and virtuous, or great and vicious. In America, but a small portion can raise themselves, or find rewards for superior talent, but wealth is attainable by all; and having no aristocracy, no honours, no distinctions to look forward to, wealth has become the substitute, and, with very few exceptions, every man is great in proportion to his riches. The consequence is, that to leave a sum of money when they die is of little importance to the majority of the Americans. Their object is to amass it while young, and obtain the consideration which it gives them during their lifetime.

The society in the United States is that which must naturally be expected in a new country where there are few men of leisure, and the majority are working hard to obtain that wealth which almost alone gives importance under a democratic form of government. You will find intellectual

and gentlemanlike people in America, but they are scattered here and there. The circle of society is not complete: wherever you go, you will find an admixture, sudden wealth having admitted those who but a few years back were in humble circumstances; and in the constant state of transition which takes place in this country, it will be half a century, perhaps, before a select circle of society can be collected together in any one city or place. The improvement is rapid, but the vast extent of country which has to be peopled prevents that improvement from being manifest. The stream flows inland, and those who are here today are gone to-morrow, and their places in society filled up by others who ten years back had no prospect of ever being admitted. All is transition, the waves follow one another to the far west, the froth and scum, boiling in the advance.

America is, indeed, well worth the study of the philosopher. A vast nation forming, society ever changing, all in motion and activity, nothing complete, the old continent pouring in her surplus to supply the loss of the eastern states, all busy as a hive, full of energy and activity. Every year multitudes swarm off from the east, like bees: not the young only, but the old, quitting the close-built cities, society, and refinement, to settle down in some lone spot in the vast prairies, where the rich soil offers to them the certain prospect of their families and children being one day possessed of competency and wealth.

To write upon America *as a nation* would be absurd, for nation, properly speaking, it is not; but to consider it in its present chaotic state, is well worth the labour. It would not only exhibit to the living a somewhat new picture of the human mind, but, as a curious page in the Philosophy of History, it would hereafter serve as a subject of review for the Americans themselves.

It is not my intention to follow the individualising plans of the majority of those who have preceded me in this country. I did not sail across the Atlantic to ascertain whether the Americans eat their dinners with two-prong iron, or three-prong silver forks, with chopsticks, or their fingers; it is quite sufficient for me to know that they do eat and drink; if they did not, it would be a curious anomaly which I should not pass over. My object was, to examine and ascertain *what were the effects of a democratic form of government and climate upon a people which, with all its foreign admixture, may still be considered as English*.

It is a fact that our virtues and our vices depend more upon circumstances than upon ourselves, and there are no circumstances which operate so powerfully upon us as government and climate. Let it not be supposed that, in the above assertion, I mean to extenuate vice, or imply that we are not free agents. Naturally prone to vices in general, circumstances will render us more prone to one description of vice than to another; but that is no reason why we should not be answerable for it, since it is our duty to guard against the besetting sin. But as an agent in this point the form of government under which we live is, perhaps, the most powerful in its effects, and thus we constantly hear of vices peculiar to a country, when it ought rather to be said, of vices peculiar to a government.

Never, perhaps, was the foundation of a nation laid under such peculiarly favourable auspices as that of America. The capital they commenced with was industry, activity, and courage. They had, moreover, the advantage of the working of genius and wisdom, and the records of history, as a beacon and a guide; the trial of ages, as to the respective merits of the various governments to which men have submitted; the power to select the merits from the demerits in each; a boundless extent of country, rich in everything that could be of advantage to man; and they were led by those who where really giants in those days, a body of men collected and acting together, forming an aggregate of wisdom and energy, such as probably will not for centuries be seen again. Never was there such an opportunity of testing the merits of a republic, of ascertaining if such a form of government could be maintained—in fact, of proving whether an enlightened people could govern themselves. And it must be acknowledged that the work was well begun; Washington, when his career had closed, left the country a pure republic. He did all that man could do. Miss Martineau asserts that “America has solved the great problem, that a republic can exist for fifty years;” but such is not the case. America has proved that, under peculiar advantages, a people can govern themselves for fifty years; but if

you put the question to an enlightened American, and ask him, “Were Washington to rise from his grave, would he recognise the present government of America as the one bequeathed to them?” and the American will himself answer in the negative. These fifty years have afforded another proof, were it necessary, how short-sighted and fallible are men—how impossible it is to keep anything in a state of perfection here below. Washington left America as an infant nation, a pure and, I may add, a virtuous republic; but the government of the country has undergone as much change as everything else, and it has now settled down into anything but a pure democracy. Nor could it be otherwise; a republic may be formed and may continue in healthy existence when regulated by a small body of men, but as men increase and multiply so do they deteriorate; the closer they are packed the more vicious they become, and, consequently, the more vicious become their institutions. Washington and his coadjutors had no power to control the nature of man.

It may be inquired by some, what difference there is between a republic and a democracy, as the terms have been, and are often, used indifferently. I know not whether my distinction is right, but I consider that when those possessed of most talent and wisdom are selected to act for the benefit of a people, with full reliance upon their acting for the best, and without any shackle or pledge being enforced, we may consider that form of government as a republic ruled by the most enlightened and capable; but that if, on the contrary, those selected by the people to represent them are not only bound by the pledges previous to their election, but ordered by the mass how to vote after their election, then the country, is not ruled by the collected wisdom of the people, but by the majority, who are as often wrong as right, and then the governing principle sinks into a democracy, as it now is in America.[3]

It is singular to remark, notwithstanding her monarchical form of government, how much more republican England is in her institutions than America. Ask an American what he considers the necessary qualifications of a president, and, after intellectual qualification, he will tell you firmness, decision, and undaunted courage; and it is really an enigma to him, although he will not acknowledge it, how the sceptre of a country like England, subject to the monarchical sway which he detests, can be held in the hand of a young female of eighteen years of age.

But upon one point I have made up my mind, which is that, with all its imperfections, democracy is the form of government *best suited to the present condition of America*, in so far as it is the one under which the country has made, and will continue to make, the most rapid advances. That it must eventually be changed is true, but the times of its change must be determined by so many events, hidden in futurity, which may accelerate or retard the convulsion, that it would be presumptuous for any one to attempt to name a period when the present form of government shall be broken up, and the multitude shall separate and re-embody themselves under new institutions.

In the arrangement of this work, I have considered it advisable to present, first, to the reader those *portions* of my diary which may be interesting, and in which are recorded traits and incidents which will bear strongly upon the commentaries I shall subsequently make upon the institutions of the United States, and the results of those institutions as developed in the American character. Having been preceded by so many writers on America, I must occasionally tread in well-beaten tracts; but, although I shall avoid repetition as much as possible, this will not prevent me from describing what I saw or felt. Different ideas, and different associations of ideas, will strike different travellers, as the same landscape may wear a new appearance, according as it is viewed in the morning, by noon, or at night; the outlines remain the same, but the lights, and shadows, and tints, are reflected from the varying idiosyncrasy of various minds.

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[3] And in this opinion I find that I am borne out by an American writer, who says—“It is true, indeed, that the American government, which, as first set up, was properly republican—that is, representation in a course of salutary degrees, and with salutary checks upon the popular will, on the powers of legislation, of the executive, and the judiciary,—was assailed at an early period of its history, and has been assailed continuously down to the present time, by a power called democracy, and that this power has been constantly acquiring influence and gaining ascendency in the republic during the term of its history.”—(*A Voice from America to England*, by an American Gentleman, page 10.)

My readers will also find many quotations, either embodied in the work or supplied by notes. This I have considered necessary, that my opinions may be corroborated; but these quotations will not be extracted so much from the works of English as from *American* writers. The opinions relative to the United States have been so conflicting in the many works which have been written, that I consider it most important that I should be able to quote American authorities against themselves, and strengthen my opinions and arguments by their own admissions.

Volume One—Chapter One

I like to begin at the beginning; it's a good old fashion, not sufficiently adhered to in these modern times. I recollect a young gentleman who said he was thinking of going to America; on my asking him, "how he intended to go?" he replied, "I don't exactly know; but I think I shall take the fast coach." I wished him a safe passage, and said, "I was afraid he would find it very dusty." As I could not find the office to book myself by this young gentleman's conveyance, I walked down to St. Katherine's Docks; went on board a packet; was shewn into a superb cabin, fitted up with bird's-eye maple, mahogany, and looking-glasses, and communicating with certain small cabins, where there was a sleeping berth for each passenger, about as big as that allowed to a pointer in a dog-kennel. I thought that there was more finery than comfort; but it ended in my promising the captain to meet him at Portsmouth. He was to sail from London on the 1st of April, and I did not choose to sail on that day—it was ominous; so I embarked at Portsmouth on the 3rd. It is not my intention to give a description of crossing the Atlantic; but as the reader may be disappointed if I do not tell him how I got over, I shall first inform him that we were thirty-eight in the cabin, and 160 men, women, and children, literally stowed in bulk in the steerage. I shall describe what took place from the time I first went up the side at Spithead, until the ship was under weigh, and then make a very short passage of it.

At 9:30 a.m.—Embarked on board the good ship Quebec; and a good ship she proved to be, repeatedly going nine and a-half knots on a bowling, sails lifting. Captain H— quite delighted to see me—all captains of packets are to see passengers: I believed him when he said so.

At 9:50.—Sheriff's officer, as usual, came on board. Observed several of the cabin passengers hasten down below, and one who requested the captain to stow him away. But it was not a pen-and-ink affair; it was a case of burglary. The officer has found his man in the steerage—the handcuffs are on his wrists, and they are rowing him ashore. His wife and two children are on board; her lips quiver as she collects her baggage to follow her husband. One half-hour more, and he would have escaped from justice, and probably have led a better life in a far country, where his crimes were unknown. By the bye, Greenacre, the man who cut the woman up, was taken out of the ship as she went down the river: he had very nearly escaped. What cargoes of crime, folly, and recklessness do we yearly ship off to America! America ought to be very much obliged to us.

The women of the steerage are persuading the wife of the burglar not to go on shore; their arguments are strong, but not strong enough against the devoted love of a woman.—"Your husband is certain to be hung; what's the use of following him? Your passage is paid, and you will have no difficulty in supporting your children in America." But she rejects the advice—goes down the side, and presses her children to her breast, as, overcome with the agony of her feelings, she drops into the boat; and, now that she is away from the ship, you hear the sobs, which can no longer be controlled.

10 a.m.—"All hands up anchor."

I was repeating to myself some of the stanzas of Mrs Norton's "Here's a Health to the Outward-bound," when I cast my eyes forward.

I could not imagine what the seamen were about; they appeared to be *pumping*, instead of heaving, at the windlass. I forced my way through the heterogeneous mixture of human beings, animals, and baggage which crowded the decks, and discovered that they were working a patent windlass, by Dobbinson—a very ingenious and superior invention. The seamen, as usual, lightened their labour with the song and chorus, forbidden by the etiquette of a man-of-war. The one they sung was peculiarly musical, although not refined; and the chorus of "Oh! Sally Brown," was given with great emphasis by the whole crew between every line of the song, sung by an athletic young third mate. I took my seat on the knight-heads—turned my face aft—looked and listened.

"Heave away there, forward."

"Aye, aye, sir."

“‘Sally Brown—oh! my dear Sally.’” (Single voice).

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’” (Chorus).

“‘Sally Brown, of Buble Al-ly.’” (Single voice).

“‘Oh! Sal-ly Brown,’” (Chorus).

“Avast heaving there; send all aft to clear the boat.”

“Aye, aye, sir. Where are we to stow these casks, Mr Fisher?”

“Stow them! Heaven knows; get them in, at all events.”

“Captain H—! Captain H—! there’s my piano still on deck; it will be quite spoiled—indeed it will.”

“Don’t be alarmed, ma’am; as soon as we’re under weigh we’ll hoist the cow up, and get the piano down.”

“What! under the cow?”

“No, ma’am; but the cow’s over the hatchway.”

“Now, then, my lads, forward to the windlass.”

“‘I went to town to get some toddy.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“‘T’wasn’t fit for any body.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“Out there, and clear away the jib.”

“Aye, aye, sir.”

“Mr Fisher, how much cable is there out?”

“Plenty yet, sir.—Heave away, my lads.”

“‘Sally is a bright mulattar.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“‘Pretty girl, but can’t get at her.’”

“Avast heaving; send the men aft to whip the ladies in.—Now, miss, only sit down and don’t be afraid, and you’ll be in, in no time.—Whip away, my lads, handsomely; steady her with the guy; lower away.—There, miss, now you’re safely *landed*.”

“Landed am I? I thought I was *shipped*.”

“Very good, indeed—very good, miss; you’ll make an excellent sailor, I see.”

“I should make a better sailor’s *wife*, I expect, Captain H—.”

“Excellent! Allow me to hand you aft; you’ll excuse me.—Forward now, my men; heave away!”

“‘Seven years I courted Sally.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“‘Seven more of shilley-shally.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“‘She won’t wed—’”

“Avast heaving. Up there, and loose the topsails; stretch along the topsail-sheets.—Upon my soul, half these children will be killed.—Whose child are you?”

“I—don’t—know.”

“Go and find out, that’s a dear.—Let fall; sheet home; belay starboard sheet; clap on the larboard; belay all that.—Now, then, Mr Fisher.”

“Aye, aye, sir.—Heave away, my lads.”

“‘She won’t wed a Yankee sailor.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“‘For she’s in love with the nigger tailor.’”

“‘Oh! Sally Brown.’”

“Heave away, my men; heave, and in sight. Hurrah! my lads.”

“‘Sally Brown—oh! my dear Sally!’”

"'Oh! Sally Brown!'"
"'Sally Brown, of Buble Alley.'"
"'Oh! Sally Brown.'"
"'Sally has a cross old granny.'"
"'Oh—!'"
"Heave and fall—jib-halyards—hoist away."
"Oh! dear—oh! dear."
"The clumsy brute has half-killed the girl!—Don't cry, my dear."
"Pick up the child, Tom, and shove it out of the way."
"Where shall I put her?"
"Oh, any where just now; put her on the turkey-coop."
"Starboard!"
"I say, clap on, some of you *he* chaps, or else get out of the way."
"Sailor, mind my band-box."
"Starboard!"
"Starboard it is; steady so."

Thus, with the trifling matter of maiming half-a-dozen children, upsetting two or three women, smashing the lids of a few trunks, and crushing some band-boxes as flat as a muffin, the good ship Quebec was at last fairly under weigh, and standing out for St. Helen's.

3 p.m.—Off St. Helen's; ship steady; little wind; water smooth; passengers sure they won't be sick.

3:20.—Apologies from the captain for a cold dinner on this day.

4 o'clock.—Dinner over; every body pulls out a number of "Pickwick;" every body talks and reads Pickwick; weather getting up squally; passengers not quite so sure they won't be seasick.

Who can tell what the morrow may bring forth? It brought forth a heavy sea, and the passengers were quite sure that they were seasick. Only six out of thirty-eight made their appearance at the breakfast-table; and, for many days afterwards, there were Pickwicks in plenty strewed all over the cabin, but passengers were very scarce.

But we had more than sea-sickness to contend with—the influenza broke out and raged. Does not this prove that it is contagious, and not dependant on the atmosphere? It was hard, after having sniffled with it for six weeks on shore, that I should have another month of it on board. But who can control destiny? The ship was like a hospital; an elderly woman was the first victim—then a boy of twelve years of age. Fortunately, there were no more deaths.

But I have said enough of the passage. On the 4th of May, in the year of our Lord 1837, I found myself walking up Broadway, among the free and enlightened citizens of New York.

Volume One—Chapter Two

A visit, to make it agreeable to both parties, should be well timed. My appearance at New York was very much like bursting into a friend's house with a merry face when there is a death in it—with the sudden change from levity to condolence. "Any other time most happy to see you. You find us in a very unfortunate situation."

"Indeed I'm very—very sorry."

Two hundred and sixty houses have already failed, and no one knows where it is to end. Suspicion, fear, and misfortune have taken possession of the city. Had I not been aware of the cause, I should have imagined that the plague was raging, and I had the description of Defoe before me.

Not a smile on one countenance among the crowd who pass and repass; hurried steps, careworn faces, rapid exchanges of salutation, or hasty communication of anticipated ruin before the sun goes down. Here two or three are gathered on one side, whispering and watching that they are not overheard; there a solitary, with his arms folded and his hat slouched, brooding over departed affluence. Mechanics, thrown out of employment, are pacing up and down with the air of famished wolves. The violent shock has been communicated, like that of electricity, through the country to a distance of hundreds of miles. Canals, railroads, and all public works, have been discontinued, and the Irish emigrant leans against his shanty, with his spade idle in his hand, and starves, as his thoughts wander back to his own Emerald Isle.

The Americans delight in the hyperbole; in fact they hardly have a metaphor without it. During this crash, when every day fifteen or twenty merchants' names appeared in the newspapers as bankrupts, one party, not in a very good humour, was hastening down Broadway, when he was run against by another whose temper was equally unamiable. This collision roused the choler of both.

"What the devil do you mean, sir?" cried one; "I've a great mind to knock you into *the middle of next week*."

This occurring on a Saturday, the wrath of the other was checked by the recollection of how very favourable such a blow would be to his present circumstances.

"Will you! by heavens, then pray do; it's just the thing I want, for how else I am to get over next Monday and the acceptances I must take up, is more than I can tell."

All the banks have stopped payment in specie, and there is not a dollar to be had. I walked down Wall Street, and had a convincing proof of the great demand for money, for somebody picked my pocket.

The militia are under arms, as riots are expected. The banks in the country and other towns have followed the example of New York, and thus has General Jackson's currency bill been repealed without the aid of Congress. Affairs are now at their worst, and now that such is the case, the New Yorkers appear to recover their spirits. One of the newspapers humorously observes—"All Broadway is like unto a new-made widow, and don't know whether to laugh or cry." There certainly is a very remarkable energy in the American disposition; if they fall, they bound up again. Somebody has observed that the New York merchants are of that *elastic* nature, that, when fit for nothing else, they might be converted into *coach springs*, and such really appears to be their character.

Nobody refuses to take the paper of the New York banks, although they virtually have stopped payment;—they never refuse anything in New York;—but nobody will give specie in change, and great distress is occasioned by this want of a circulating medium. Some of the shopkeepers told me that they had been obliged to turn away a hundred dollars a-day, and many a Southerner, who has come up with a large supply of southern notes, has found himself a pauper, and has been indebted to a friend for a few dollars in specie to get home again.

The radicals here, for there are radicals, it appears, in a democracy—

"In the lowest depth, a lower deep—"

are very loud in their complaints. I was watching the swarming multitude in Wall Street this morning, when one of these fellows was declaiming against the banks for stopping specie payments, and "robbing a poor man in such a *w*illanous manner," when one of the merchants, who appeared to know his customer, said to him—"Well, as you say, it is hard for a poor fellow like you not to be able to get dollars for his notes; hand them out, and I'll give you specie for them myself!" The blackguard had not a cent in his pocket, and walked away looking very foolish. He reminded me of a little chimney-sweeper at the Tower Hamlets election, asking—"Vot vos my hopinions about primaginitur?"—a very important point to him certainly, he having no parents, and having been brought up by the parish.

I was in a store when a thorough-bred democrat walked in: he talked loud, and voluntarily gave it as his opinion that all this distress was the very best thing that could have happened to the country, as America would now keep all the specie and pay her English creditors with bankruptcies. There always appears to me to be a great want of moral principle in all radicals; indeed, the levelling principles of radicalism are adverse to the sacred rights of *meum et tuum*. At Philadelphia the ultra-democrats have held a large public meeting, at which one of the first resolutions brought forward and agreed to was—"That they did not owe one farthing to the English people."

"They may say the times are bad," said a young American to me, "but I think that they are excellent. A twenty dollar note used to last me but a week, but now it is as good as Fortunatus's purse, which was never empty. I eat my dinner at the hotel, and show them my twenty dollar note. The landlord turns away from it, as if it were the head of Medusa, and begs that I will pay another time. I buy every thing that I want, and I have only to offer my twenty dollar note in payment, and my credit is unbounded—that is, for any sum under twenty dollars. If they ever do give change again in New York it will make a very unfortunate change in my affairs."

A government circular, enforcing the act of Congress, which obliges all those who have to pay custom-house duties or postage to do so in specie, has created great dissatisfaction, and added much to the distress and difficulty. At the same time that they (the government) refuse to take from their debtors the notes of the banks, upon the ground that they are no longer legal tenders, they compel their creditors to take those very notes—having had a large quantity in their possession at the time that the banks suspended specie payments—an act of despotism which the English Government would not venture upon.

Miss Martineau's work is before me. How dangerous it is to prophecy. Speaking of the merchants of New York, and their recovering after the heavy losses they sustained by the calamitous fire of 1835, she says, that although eighteen millions of property were destroyed, not one merchant failed; and she continues, "It seems now as if the commercial credit of New York could stand any shock short of an earthquake like that of Lisbon." That was the prophecy of 1836. Where is the commercial credit of New York now in 1837?!!!

The distress for change has produced a curious remedy. Every man is now his own banker. Go to the theatres and places of public amusement, and, instead of change, you receive an IOU from the treasury. At the hotels and oyster-cellars it is the same thing. Call for a glass of brandy and water and the change is fifteen tickets, each "good for one glass of brandy and water." At an oyster-shop, eat a plate of oysters, and you have in return seven tickets, good for one plate of oysters each. It is the same every where.—The barbers give you tickets, good for so many shaves; and were there beggars in the streets, I presume they would give you tickets in change, good for so much philanthropy. Dealers, in general, give out their own bank-notes, or as they are called here, *shin plasters*, which are good for one dollar, and from that down to two and a-half cents, all of which are redeemable, and redeemable only upon a general return to cash payments.

Hence arises another variety of exchange in Wall Street.

"Tom, do you want any oysters for lunch to-day?"

"Yes!"

"Then here's a ticket, and give me two *shaves* in return."

The most prominent causes of this convulsion have already been laid before the English public; but there is one—that of speculating in land—which has not been sufficiently dwelt upon, nor has the importance been given to it which it deserves; as, perhaps, next to the losses occasioned by the great fire, it led, more than any other species of over-speculation and over-trading, to the distress which has ensued. Not but that the event must have taken place in the natural course of things. Cash payments produce sure but small returns; but no commerce can be carried on by this means on any extended scale. Credit, as long as it is good, is so much extra capital, in itself nominal and non-existent, but producing real returns. If any one will look back upon the commercial history of these last fifty years, he will perceive that the system of credit is always attended with a periodical *blow up*; in England, perhaps, once in twenty years; in America, once in from seven to ten. This arises from their being no safety valve—no check which can be put to it by mutual consent of all parties. One house extends its credit, and for a time, its profits; another follows the example. The facility of credit induces those who obtain it to embark in other speculations, foreign to their business; for credit thus becomes extra capital which they do not know how to employ. Such has been the case in the present instance: but this is no reason for the credit system not being continued. These occasional explosions act as warnings, and, for the time, people are more cautious: they stop for a while to repair damages, and recover from their consternation; and when they go a-head again, it is not quite so fast. The loss is severely felt, because people are not prepared to meet it; but if all the profits of the years of healthy credit were added up, and the balance sheet struck between that and the loss at the explosion, the advantage gained by the credit system would still be found to be great. The advancement of America depends wholly upon it. It is by credit alone that she has made such rapid strides, and it is by credit alone that she can continue to flourish, at the same time that she enriches those who trade with her. In this latter crisis there was more blame to be attached to the English houses, who *forced* their credit upon the Americans, than to the Americans, who, having such unlimited credit, thought that they might advantageously speculate with the capital of others.

One of the most singular affections of the human mind is a proneness to excessive speculation; and it may here be noticed that the disease for (such it may be termed) is peculiarly English and American. Men, in their race for gain, appear, like horses that have run away, to have been blinded by the rapidity of their own motion. It almost amounts to an epidemic, and is infectious—the wise and the foolish being equally liable to the disease. We had ample evidence of this in the bubble manias which took place in England in the years 1825 and 1826. A mania of this kind had infected the people of America for two or three years previous to the crash: it was that of speculating in land; and to show the extent to which it had been carried on, we may take the following examples:—

The city of New York, which is built upon a narrow island about ten miles in length, at present covers about three miles of that distance, and has a population of three hundred thousand inhabitants. Building lots were marked out for the other seven miles; and, by calculation, these lots when built upon, would contain an additional population of one million and three-quarters. They were first purchased at from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars each, but, as the epidemic raged, they rose to upwards of two thousand dollars. At Brooklyn, on Long Island, opposite to New York, and about half a mile distant from it, lots were marked out to the extent of fourteen miles, which would contain an extra population of one million, and these were as eagerly speculated in.

At Staten Island, at the entrance into the Sound, an estate was purchased by some speculators for ten thousand dollars, was divided into lots, and planned as a town to be called New Brighton; and had the whole of the lots been sold at the price for which many were, previous to the crash, the original speculators would have realised three million of dollars. But the infatuation was not confined to the precincts of New York: every where it existed. Government lands, which could only be paid for in specie, were eagerly sought after; plans of new towns were puffed up; drawings made, in which

every street was laid down and named; churches, theatres, hospitals, rail-road communications, canals, steam-boats in the offing, all appeared on paper as if actually in existence, when, in fact, the very site was as yet a forest, with not a log hut within a mile of the pretended city. Lots in these visionary cities were eagerly purchased, increased daily in value, and afforded a fine harvest to those who took advantage of the credulity of others. One man would buy a lot with extensive *water privileges*, and, upon going to examine it, would find those privileges rather too extensive, the whole lot being *under water*. Even after the crisis, there was a man still going about who made a good livelihood by setting up his plan of a city, the lots of which he sold by public auction, on condition of one dollar being paid down to secure the purchase, if approved of. The mania had not yet subsided, and many paid down their dollar upon their purchase of a lot. This was all he required. He went to the next town, and sold the same lots over and over again.

To check this madness of speculation, was one reason why an act of Congress was passed, obliging all purchasers of government lands to pay in specie. Nevertheless, government received nine or ten millions in specie after the bill passed. Now, when it is considered what a large portion of the capital drawn from England was applied to these wild speculations—sums which, when they were required, could not be realised, as, when the crisis occurred, property thus purchased immediately fell to about one-tenth of what was paid for it—it will be clearly seen that, from this unfortunate mania, a great portion of the present distress must have arisen.

The attempt of General Jackson and his successors, to introduce a specie currency into a country which exists upon credit, was an act of folly, and has ended in complete failure.[4] A few weeks after he had issued from the Mint a large coinage of gold, there was hardly an eagle to be seen, and the metal might almost as well have remained in the mine from whence it had been extracted. It was still in the country, but had all been absorbed by the agriculturists; and such will ever be the case in a widely extended agricultural country. The farmers, principally Dutch, live upon a portion of their produce and sell the rest. Formerly they were content with bank bills or Mexican dollars, which they laid by for a rainy day, and they remained locked up for years before they were required. When the gold was issued, it was eagerly collected by these people, as more convenient, and laid by, by the farmers' wives, in the foot of an old worsted stocking, where the major part of it will remain. And thus has the famous gold-currency bill been upset by the hoarding propensities of a parcel of old women.[5]

[4] One single proof may be given of the ruinous policy of the Jackson administration in temporising with the credit of the country. To check the export of bullion from our country, the Bank of England had but one remedy, that of rendering money scarce: they contracted their issues, and it became so. The consequence was, that the price of cotton fell forty dollars per bale. The crop of cotton amounted to 1,600,000 bales, which, at forty dollars per bale, was a loss to the southern planters of 64,000,000 of dollars.

[5] A curious proof of this system of hoarding, which immediately took place upon the bank stopping payment, was told me by a gentleman from Baltimore. He went into a store to purchase, as he often had done, a canvas shot-bag, and to his surprise was asked three times the former price for it. Upon his expostulating, the vendors told him, that the demand for them by the farmers and other people who brought their produce to market, and who used them to put their specie in, was so great, that they could hardly supply them.

Volume One—Chapter Three

Fifty years ago, New York was little more than a village; now, it is a fine city with three hundred thousand inhabitants. I have never seen any city so admirably adapted for commerce. It is built upon a narrow island, between Long Island Sound and the Hudson River, Broadway running up it like the vertebrae of some huge animal, and the other streets diverging from it at right angles, like the ribs; each street running to the river, and presenting to the view a forest of masts.

There are some fine buildings in this city, but not many. Astor House, although of simple architecture, is, perhaps, the grandest mass; and next to that, is the City Hall, though in architecture very indifferent. In the large room of the latter are some interesting pictures and busts of the presidents, mayors of the city, and naval and military officers, who have received the thanks of Congress and the freedom of the city. Some are very fair specimens of art: the most spirited is that of Commodore Perry, leaving his sinking vessel, in the combat on the Lakes, to hoist his flag on board of another ship. Decatur's portrait is also very fine. Pity that such a man should have been sacrificed in a foolish duel!

At the corner of many of the squares, or *blocks* of buildings, as they are termed here, is erected a very high mast, with a cap of liberty upon the top. The only idea we have of the cap of liberty is, the *bonnet rouge* of the French; but the Americans will not copy the French, although they will the English; so they have a cap of their own, which (begging their pardon), with its gaudy colours and gilding, looks more like a *fool's cap* than any thing else.

New York is not equal to London, nor Broadway to Regent Street, although the Americans would compare them. Still, New York is very superior to most of our provincial towns, and, to a man who can exist out of London, Broadway will do very well for a lounge—being wide, three miles long, and the upper part composed of very handsome houses; besides which, it may almost challenge Regent Street for pretty faces, except on Sundays. (On Sundays the coloured population take possession of Broadway.) Many of the shops, or *stores*, as they are here called, (for in this land of equality nobody keeps a shop), have already been fitted up with large plate-glass fronts, similar to those in London, and but for the depression which has taken place, many more would have followed the example.

Among the few discrepancies observable between this city and London, are the undertakers' *shops*. In England they are all wooden windows below and scutcheons above; planks and shavings within—in fact, mere workshops. Here they are different: they have large glass fronts, like a millinery or cut-glass shop with us, and the shop runs back thirty or forty feet, its sides being filled with coffins standing on end, mahogany and French polished. Therein you may select as you please, from the seven feet to receive the well-grown adult, to the tiny receptacle of what Burns calls, "Wee unchristened babe." I have, however, never heard of any one choosing their own coffin; they generally leave it to their relatives to perform that office.

I may here remark, that the Americans are sensible enough not to throw away so much money in funerals as we do; still it appears strange to an Englishman to see the open hearse containing the body, drawn by only one horse, while the carriages which follow are drawn by two: to be sure, the carriages generally contain six individuals, while the hearse is a sulky, and carries but one.

The New York tradesmen do all they can, as the English do, to attract the notice of the public by hand-bills, placards, advertisements, etcetera; but in one point they have gone a-head of us. Placards, etcetera, may be read by those who look upwards or straight-forward, or to the right or to the left; but there are some people who walk with their eyes to the ground, and consequently see nothing. The New Yorkers have provided for this contingency, by having large marble tablets, like horizontal tomb-stones, let into the flag pavements of the *trottoir* in front of their shops, on which is engraven in duplicate, turning both ways, their names and business; so, whether you walk up or down Broadway,

if you cast your eyes downwards so as not to see the placards above, you cannot help reading the inscriptions below.

Every traveller who has visited this city has spoken of the numerous fires which take place in it, and the constant running, scampering, hallooing, and trumpeting of the firemen with their engines; but I do not observe that any one has attempted to investigate the causes which produce, generally speaking, three or four fires in the twenty-four hours. New York has certainly great capabilities, and every chance of improvement as a city; for, about one house in twenty is burnt down every year, and is always rebuilt in a superior manner. But, as to the causes, I have, after minute inquiry, discovered as follows. These fires are occasioned—

1st. By the notorious carelessness of black servants, and the custom of smoking cigars all the day long.

2nd. By the knavery of men without capitol, who insure to double and treble the value of their stock, and realise an honest penny by setting fire to their stores. (This is one reason why you can seldom recover from a fire-office without litigation.)

3rd. From the hasty and unsubstantial way in which houses are built up, the rafters and beams often communicating with the flues of the chimneys.

4th. Conflagrations of houses not insured, effected by agents employed by the *fire-insurance companies*, as a punishment to some, and a warning to others, who have neglected to take out policies.

These were gravely stated to me as the causes of so many fires in New York. I cannot vouch for the truth of the last, although I feel bound to mention it. I happen to be lodged opposite to two fire-engine houses, so that I always know when there is a fire. Indeed, so does every body; for the church nearest to it tolls its bell, and this tolling is repeated by all the others; and as there are more than three hundred churches in New York, if a fire takes place no one can say that he is not aware of it.

The duty of firemen is admirably performed by the young men of the city, who have privileges for a servitude of seven years; but they pay too dearly for their privileges, which are an exemption from militia and jury summons. Many of them are taken off by consumptions, fevers, and severe catarrhs, engendered by the severe trials to which they are exposed: the sudden transitions from extreme heat to extreme cold in winter, being summoned up from a warm bed, when the thermometer is below zero —then exposed to the scorching flames—and afterwards (as I have frequently seen them myself), with the water hanging in icicles upon their saturated clothes. To recruit themselves after their fatigue and exhaustion they are compelled to drink, and thus it is no wonder that their constitutions are undermined. It is nevertheless a favourite service, as the young men have an opportunity of shewing courage and determination, which raises them high in the opinion of their brother citizens.

I made a purchase at a store; an intelligent looking little boy brought it home for me. As he walked by my side, he amused me very much by putting the following questions:—

“Pray, captain, has Mr Easy left the King of England’s service?”

“I think he has,” replied I; “if you recollect, he married and went on shore.”

“Have you seen Mr Japhet lately?” was the next query.

“Not very lately,” replied I; “the last time I saw him was at the publisher’s.”

The little fellow went away, perfectly satisfied that they were both alive and well.

Volume One—Chapter Four

The dogs are all tied up, and the mosquitos have broke loose—it is high time to leave New York.

The American steam-boats have been often described. When I first saw one of the largest sweep round the battery, with her two decks, the upper one screened with snow-white awnings—the gay dresses of the ladies—the variety of colours—it reminded me of a floating garden, and I fancied that Isola Bella, on the Lake of Como, had got under weigh, and made the first steam voyage to America.

The Hudson is a noble stream, flowing rapidly through its bold and deep bed. Already it has many associations connected with it—a great many for the time which has elapsed since Henrick Hudson first explored it. Where is the race of red men who hunted on its banks, or fished and paddled their canoes in its stream? They have disappeared from the earth, and scarce a vestige remains of them, except in history. No portion of this world was ever intended to remain for ages untenanted. Beasts of prey and noxious reptiles are permitted to exist in the wild and uninhabited regions until they are swept away by the broad stream of civilisation, which, as it pours along, drives them from hold to hold, until they finally disappear. So it is with the more savage nations: they are but *tenants at will*, and never were intended to remain longer than till the time when Civilisation, with the Gospel, Arts, and Sciences, in her train, should appear, and claim as her own that portion of the universe which they occupy.

About thirty miles above New York is Tarry Town, the abode of Washington Irving, who has here embosomed himself in his own region of romance; for Sleepy Hollow lies behind his domicile. Nearly opposite to it, is the site of a mournful reality—the spot where poor Major André was hung up as a spy.

You pass the State prison, built on a spot which still retains its Indian name—Sing Sing—rather an odd name for a prison, where people are condemned to perpetual silence. It is a fine building of white marble, like a palace—very appropriate for that portion of the *sovereign* people, who may qualify themselves for a residence in it.

I had a genuine Yankee story from one of the party on deck. I was enquiring if the Hudson was frozen up or not during the winter? This led to a conversation as to the severity of the winter, when one man, by way of proving how cold it was, said—"Why; I had a cow on my lot up the river, and last winter she got in among the ice, and was carried down three miles before we could get her out again. The consequence has been that she has milked nothing but *ice-creams* ever since."

When you have ascended about fifty miles, the bed of the river becomes contracted and deeper, and it pours its waters rapidly through the high lands on each side, having at some distant time forced its passage through a chain of rocky mountains. It was quite dark long before we arrived at West Point, which I had embarked to visit. A storm hung over us, and as we passed through the broad masses piled up on each side of the river, at one moment illuminated by the lightning as it burst from the opaque clouds, and the next towering in sullen gloom, the effect was sublime.

Here I am at West Point.

West Point is famous in the short history of this country. It is the key of the Hudson river. The traitor Arnold had agreed to deliver it up to the English, and it was on his return from arranging the terms with Arnold, that André was captured and hung.

At present, a Military College is established here, which turns out about forty officers every year. Although they receive commissions in any regiment of the American army when there may be vacancies, they are all educated as engineers. The democrats have made several attempts to break up this establishment, as savouring too much of *monarchy*, but hitherto have been unsuccessful. It would be a pity if they did succeed, for such has been the demand lately for engineers to superintend railroads and canals, that a large portion of them have resigned their commissions, and found employment in the different States. This consideration alone is quite sufficient to warrant the keeping up of the

college, for civil engineers are a *sine quâ non* in a country like America, and they are always ready to serve should their military services be required. There was an inspection at the time that I was there, and it certainly was highly creditable to the students; as well as to those who superintend the various departments.

When I awoke the next morning, I threw open the blinds of my windows, which looked out upon the river, and really was surprised and delighted. A more beautiful view I never gazed upon. The Rhine was fresh in my memory; but, although the general features of the two rivers are not dissimilar, there is no one portion of the Rhine which can be compared to the Hudson at West Point. It was what you may imagine the Rhine to have been in the days of Caesar, when the lofty mountains through which it sweeps were not bared and naked as they now are, but clothed with forests, and rich in all the variety and beauty of undisturbed nature.

There is a sweet little spot not far from the college, where a tomb has been erected in honour of Kosciuscko—it is called Kosciuscko's Garden. I often sat there and talked over the events of the War of Independence. Many anecdotes were narrated to me, some of them very original. I will mention one or two which have not escaped my memory.

One of the officers who most distinguished himself in the struggle was a General Starke; and the following is the speech he is reported to have made to his men previous to an engagement:—

"Now, my men,—you see them ere Belgians; every man of them bought by the king of England at 17s. 6d. a-head, and I've a notion he'd paid too dear for them. Now, my men, we either beats them this day, or Molly Starke's a widow, by G—d." He did beat them, and in his despatch to head-quarters he wrote—"We've had a dreadful hot day of it, General; and I've lost my horse, saddle and bridle and all."

In those times, losing a *saddle* and *bridle* was as bad as losing a horse.

At the same affair, the captain commanding the outposts was very lame, and he thought proper thus to address his men:—

"Now, my lads, you see we're only an outpost, and we are not expected to beat the whole army in face of us. The duty of an outpost, when the enemy comes on, is to go in, *tree*ing it, and keeping ourselves not exposed. Now, you have my orders; and as I am a *little lame*, I'll go in first, and mind you do your duty and come in after me."

I passed several days at this beautiful spot, which is much visited by the Americans. Some future day, when America shall have become wealthy, and New York the abode of affluence and ease, what taste may not be lavished on the banks of this noble river! and what a lovely retreat will be West Point, if permitted to remain in all its present wildness and grandeur!

I re-embarked at midnight in the steam-boat descending from Albany, and which is fitted out as a night boat. When I descended into the cabin, it presented a whimsical sight: two rows of bed-places on each side of the immense cabin, running right fore and aft; three other rows in the centre, each of these five rows having three bed-places, one over the other. There were upwards of five hundred people, lying in every variety of posture, and exhibiting every state and degree of repose —from the loud uneasy snorer lying on his back, to the deep sleeper tranquil as death. I walked up and down, through these long ranges of unconsciousness, thinking how much care was for the time forgotten. But as the air below was oppressive, and the moon was beautiful in the heavens, I went on deck, and watched the swift career of the vessel, which, with a favouring tide, was flying past the shores at the rate of twenty miles an hour—one or two people only, out of so many hundreds on board of her, silently watching over the great principle of locomotion. The moon sank down, and the sun rose and gilded the verdure of the banks and the spires of the city of New York, as I revelled in my own thoughts and enjoyed the luxury of being alone—a double luxury in America, where the people are gregarious, and would think themselves very ill-bred if they allowed you one moment for meditation or self-examination.

Volume One—Chapter Five

Stepped on board of the Narangansett steam-vessel for Providence. Here is a fair specimen of American travelling:– From New York to Providence, by the Long Island Sound, is two hundred miles; and this is accomplished, under usual circumstances, in thirteen hours: from Providence to Boston, forty miles by railroad, in two hours—which makes, from New York to Boston, an average speed of sixteen miles an hour, stoppages included.

I was, I must confess, rather surprised, when in the railroad cars, to find that we were passing through a *church-yard*, with tomb-stones on both sides of us. In Rhode Island and Massachusetts, where the pilgrim-fathers first landed—the two States that take pride to themselves (and with justice) for superior morality and a strict exercise of religious observances—they look down upon the other States of the Union, especially New York, and cry out, "I thank thee, Lord, that I am not as that publican." Yet here, in Rhode Island, are the sleepers of the railway laid over the sleepers in death; here do they grind down the bones of their ancestors for the sake of gain, and consecrated earth is desecrated by the iron wheels, loaded with Mammon-seeking mortals. And this in the puritanical state of Rhode Island! Would any engineer have ventured to propose such a line in England? I think not. After all, it is but human nature. I have run over the world a long while, and have always observed that people are very religious so long as religion does not interfere with their pockets; but, with gold in one hand and godliness in the other, the tangible is always preferred to the immaterial. In America everything is sacrificed to time—for time is money. The New Yorkers would have dashed right through the church itself; but then, *they* are publicans, and don't *pretend* to be good.

Boston is a fine city, and, as a commercial one, almost as well situated as New York. It has, however, lost a large portion of its commerce, which the latter has gradually wrested from it, and it must eventually lose much more. The population of Boston is about eighty thousand, and it has probably more people of leisure in it (that is, out of business and living on their own means) than even Philadelphia; taking into the estimate the difference between the populations. They are more learned and scientific here than at New York, though not more so than at Philadelphia; but they are more English than in any other city in America. The Massachusetts people are very fond of comparing their country with that of England. The scenery is not unlike; but it is not like England in its high state of cultivation. Stone walls are bad substitutes for green hedges. Still, there are some lovely spots in the environs of Boston. Mount Auburn, laid out as a Père la Chaise, is, in natural beauties, far superior to any other place of the kind. One would almost wish to be buried there; and the proprietors, anxious to have it peopled, offer, by their arrangements as to the price of places of interment, a handsome premium to those who will soonest die and be buried—which is certainly a consideration.

Fresh Pond is also a very romantic spot. It is a lake of about two hundred acres, whose water is so pure that the ice is transparent as glass. Its proprietor clears many thousand dollars a year by the sale of it. It is cut out in blocks of three feet square, and supplies most parts of America down to New Orleans; and every winter latterly two or three ships have been loaded and sent to Calcutta, by which a very handsome profit has been realised.

Since I have been here, I have made every enquiry relative to the sea-serpent which frequents this coast alone. There are many hundreds of most respectable people, who, on other points, would be considered as incapable of falsehood, who declare they have seen the animals, and vouch for their existence. It is rather singular that in America there is but one copy of Bishop Pontoppidon's work on Norway, and in it the sea-serpent is described, and a rough wood-cut of its appearance given. In all the American newspapers a drawing was given of the animal as described by those who saw it, and it proved to be almost a *fac-simile* of the one described by the Bishop in his work.

Now that we are on marine matters, I must notice the prodigious size of the lobsters off Boston Coast: they could stow a dozen common English lobsters under their coats of mail. My very much

respected friend Sir Isaac Coffin, when he was here, once laid a wager that he would produce a lobster weighing thirty pounds. The bet was accepted, and the admiral despatched people to the proper quarter to procure one: but they were not then in season, and could not be had. The admiral, not liking to lose his money, brought up, instead of the lobster, the affidavits of certain people that they had often seen lobsters of that size and weight. The affidavits of the deponents he submitted to the other party, and pretended that he had won the wager. The case was referred to arbitration, and the admiral was cast with the following pithy reply, "*Depositions are not lobsters*."

Massachusetts is certainly very English in its scenery, and Boston essentially English as a city. The Bostonians assert that they are more English than we are, that is, that they have strictly adhered to the old English customs and manners, as handed down to them previous to the Revolution. That of sitting a very long while at their wine after dinner, is one which they certainly adhere to, and which, *I* think, would be more honoured in the breach than the observance; but their hospitality is unbounded, and you do, as an Englishman, feel at home with them. I agree with the Bostonians so far, that they certainly appear to have made no change in their manners and customs for these last hundred years. You meet here with frequent specimens of the Old English Gentleman, descendants of the best old English families who settled here long before the Revolution, and are now living on their incomes, with a town house and a country seat to retire to during the summer season. The society of Boston is very delightful; it wins upon you every day, and that is the greatest compliment that can be paid to it.

Perhaps of all the Americans the Bostonians are the most sensitive to any illiberal remarks made upon the country, for they consider themselves, and pride themselves, as being peculiarly English; while, on the contrary, the majority of the Americans deny that they are English. There certainly is less intermixture of foreign blood in this city than in any other in America. It will appear strange, but so wedded are they to old customs, even to John Bullism, that it is not more than seven or eight years that French wines have been put on the Boston tables, and become in general use in this city.

It is a pity that this feeling towards England is not likely to continue; indeed, even at this moment it is gradually wearing away. Self-interest governs the world. At the declaration of the last war with England, it was the Northern States which were so opposed to it, and the Southern who were in favour of it: but now circumstances have changed; the Northern States, since the advance in prosperity and increase of produce in the Southern and Western States, feel aware that it is only as manufacturing states that they can hold their rank with the others. Their commerce has decreased since the completion of the Erie and Ohio canals, and during the war they discovered the advantage that would accrue to them, as manufacturers, to supply the Southern and Western markets. The imports of English goods have nearly ruined them. They now manufacture nothing but coarse articles, and as you travel through the Eastern countries, you are surprised to witness splendid fabrics commenced, but, for want of encouragement, not finished. This has changed the interests of the opponent States. The Southern are very anxious to remain at peace with England, that their produce may find a market; while the Northern, on the contrary, would readily consent to a war, that they might shut out the English manufactures, and have the supply entirely in their own hands. The Eastern States (I particularly refer to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) offer a proof of what can be effected by economy, prudence, and industry. Except on the borders of the rivers, the lands are generally sterile, and the climate is severe, yet, perhaps, the population is more at its ease than in any other part of the Union; but the produce of the States is not sufficient for the increasing population, or rather what the population would have been had it not migrated every year to the West and South. They set a higher value upon good connections in these poor States than they do in others; and if a daughter is to be married, they will ask what family the suitor is of, and if it bears a good name, they are quite indifferent as to whether he has a cent or not. It is remarkable, that if a man has three or four sons in these States, one will be a lawyer, another a medical man, another a clergyman, and one will remain at home to take the property; and thus, out of the proceeds of a farm, perhaps not containing more than fifty acres, all these young men shall be properly educated, and in turn sent forth to the

West and South, where they gain an honourable independence, and very often are sent to Congress as senators and representatives. Industry and frugality are the only entailed estate bequeathed from father to son. Yet this State alone manufactures to the value of 86,282,616 of dollars in the year. As a general axiom it may fairly be asserted, that the more sterile the soil, the more virtuous, industrious, and frugal are the inhabitants; and it may be added, that such a country sends out more clever and intelligent men than one that is nominally more blessed by Providence. The fact is, without frugality and industry the Eastern States could not exist; they become virtues of necessity, and are the basis of others; whilst, where there is abundance, vice springs up and idleness takes deep root.

The population of Massachusetts is by the last returns 701,331 souls. I rather think the proportion of women to men is very great.

An energetic and enterprising people are naturally anxious for an investigation into cause and effect, a search into which is, after all, nothing but curiosity well directed, and the most curious of all men is the philosopher. Curiosity, therefore, becomes a virtue or a small vice, according to the use made of it. The Americans are excessively curious, especially the mob: they cannot bear anything like a secret,—that's *unconstitutional*. It may be remembered, that the Catholic Convent near Boston, which had existed many years, was attacked by the mob and pulled down. I was enquiring into the cause of this outrage in a country where all forms of religion are tolerated; and an American gentleman told me, that although other reasons had been adduced for it, he fully believed, in his own mind, that the majority of the mob were influenced more by *curiosity* than any other feeling. The Convent was *sealed* to them, and they were determined to know what was in it. "Why, sir," continued he, "I will lay a wager that if the authorities were to nail together a dozen planks, and fix them up on the Common, with a caution to the public that they were not to go near or touch them, in twenty-four hours a mob would be raised to pull them down and ascertain what the planks contained." I mention this conversation, to shew in what a dexterous manner this American gentleman attempted to palliate one of the grossest outrages ever committed by his countrymen.

Volume One—Chapter Six

Crossed over to New Jersey, and took the railroad, to view the falls of the Passaic River, about fifteen miles from New York. This water-power has given birth to Patterson, a town with ten thousand inhabitants, where a variety of manufactures is carried on. A more beautiful wild spot can hardly be conceived; and to an European who has been accustomed to travel far in search of the picturesque, it appears singular that at so short a distance from a large city, he should at once find himself in the midst of such a strange combination of nature and art. Independent of their beauty, they are, perhaps, the most singular falls that are known to exist. The whole country is of trappe formation, and the black rocks rise up strictly vertical. The river, which at the Falls is about one hundred and twenty yards wide, pours over a bed of rock between hills covered with chestnut, walnut, pine, and sycamore, all mingled together, and descending to the edge of the bank; their bright and various foliage forming a lovely contrast to the clear rushing water. The bed of black rock over which the river runs, is, at the Fall, suddenly split in two, vertically, and across the whole width of the river. The fissure is about seventy feet deep, and not more than twelve feet wide at any part. Down into this chasm pour the whole waters of the river, escaping from it, at a right angle, into a deep basin, surrounded with perpendicular rocks from eighty to ninety feet high. You may therefore stand on the opposite side of the chasm, looking up the river, within a few feet of the Fall, and watch the roaring waters as they precipitate themselves below. In this position, with the swift, clear, but not deep waters before you, forcing their passage through the rocky bed, with the waving trees on each side, their branches feathering to the water's edge, or dipping and rising in the stream, you might imagine yourself far removed from your fellow-men, and you feel that in such a beauteous spot you could well turn anchorite, and commune with Nature alone. But turn round with your back to the Fall—look below, and all is changed: art in full activity—millions of reels whirling in their sockets—the bright polished cylinders incessantly turning, and never tiring. What formerly was the occupation of thousands of industrious females, who sat with their distaff at the cottage door, is now effected in a hundredth part of the time, and in every variety, by those compressed machines which require but the attendance of one child to several hundreds. But machinery cannot perform everything, and notwithstanding this reduction of labour, the romantic Falls of the Passaic find employment for the industry of thousands.

We walked up the banks of the river above the Fall, and met with about twenty or thirty urchins who were bathing at the mouth of the cut, made for the supply of the water-power to the manufactories below. The river is the property of an individual, and is very valuable: he receives six hundred dollars per annum for one square foot of water-power; ten years hence it will be rented at a much higher price.

We amused ourselves by throwing small pieces of money into the water, where it was about a fathom deep, for the boys to dive after; they gained them too easily; we went to another part in the *cut*, where it was much deeper, and threw in a dollar. The boys stood naked on the rocks, like so many cormorants, waiting to dart upon their prey; when the dollar had had time to sink to the bottom the word was given—they all dashed down like lightning and disappeared. About a minute elapsed ere there was any sign of their re-appearance, when they came up, one by one, breathless and flushed (like racers who had pulled up), and at last the victor appeared with the dollar between his teeth. We left these juvenile *Sam Patches*, and returned to the town. (Sam Patch, an American peripatetic, who used to amuse himself and astonish his countrymen by leaping down the different falls in America. He leaped down a portion of the Niagara without injury; but one fine day, having taken a drop too much, he took a leap too much. He went down the Genassee Fall, and since that time he has not been seen or heard of.)

There is no part of the world, perhaps, where you have more difficulty in obtaining permission to be alone, and indulge in a reverie, than in America. The Americans are as gregarious as school-boys, and think it an incivility to leave you by yourself. Every thing is done in crowds, and among

a crowd. They even prefer a double bed to a single one, and I have often had the offer to sleep with me made out of real kindness. You must go “east of sun-rise” (or west of sun-set) if you would have solitude.

I never was in a more meditative humour, more anxious to be left to my own dreamings, than when I ascended the railroad car with my companion to return to Jersey city; we were the only two in that division of the car, and my friend, who understood me, had the complaisance to go fast asleep. I made sure that, for an hour or two, I could indulge in my own castle-buildings, and allow my fleeting thoughts to pass over my brain, like the scud over the moon. At our first stoppage a third party stepped in and seated himself between us. He looked at my companion, who was fast asleep. He turned to me, and I turned away my head. Once more was I standing at the Falls of the Passaic; once more were the waters rolling down before me, the trees gracefully waving their boughs to the breeze, and the spray cooling my heated brain; my brain was, like the camera-obscura, filled with the pleasing images, which I watched as they passed before me so vividly portrayed, all in life and motion, when I was interrupted by—

“I was born in the very heart of Cheshire, sir.”

Confound the fellow! The river, falls, foliage, all vanished at once; and I found myself sitting in a railroad-car (which I had been unconscious of), with a heavy lump of humanity by my side. I wished one of the largest Cheshire cheeses down his throat.

“Indeed!” replied I, not looking at the man.

“Yes, sir—in the very heart of Cheshire.”

“Would you had staid there!” thought I, turning away to the window without replying.

“Will you oblige me with a pinch of your snuff, sir? I left my box at New York.”

I gave him the box, and, when he had helped himself, laid it down on the vacant seat opposite to him, that he might not have to apply again, and fell back and shut my eyes, as a hint to him that I did not wish to enter into conversation. A pause ensued, and I had hopes; but they were delusive.

“I have been eighteen years in this country, sir.”

“You appear to be quite *Americanised*!” thought I; but I made him no answer.

“I went up to Patterson, sir,” continued he (now turning round to me, and speaking in my ear), “thinking that I could get to Philadelphia by that route, and found that I had made a mistake; so I have come back. I am *told* there are some pretty falls there, sir.”

“Would you were beneath them!” thought I; but I could not help laughing at the idea of a man going to Patterson, and returning without seeing the falls! By this time he had awakened his companion, who, being American himself, and finding that there was to be no more sleep, took him up, in the American fashion, and put to him successively the following questions, all of which were answered without hesitation:– “What is your name? where are you from? where are you going? what is your profession? how many dollars have you made? have you a wife and children?” All these being duly responded to, he asked my companion who I might be, and was told that I was an operative artist, and one of the first cotton spinners in the country.

This communication procured for me considerable deference from our new acquaintance during the remainder of our journey. He observed in the ear of my companion, that he thought I knew a thing or two. In a country like America the Utilitarian will always command respect.

Volume One—Chapter Eight

The 4th of July, the sixty-first anniversary of American independence!

Pop—pop—bang—pop—pop—bang—bang bang! Mercy on us! how fortunate it is that anniversaries come only once a year. Well, the Americans may have great reason to be proud of this day, and of the deeds of their forefathers, but why do they get so confoundedly drunk? why, on this day of independence, should they become so *dependent* upon posts and rails for support? The day is at last over; my head aches, but there will be many more aching heads tomorrow morning!

What a combination of vowels and consonants have been put together! what strings of tropes, metaphors, and allegories, have been used on this day! what varieties and gradations of eloquence! There are at least fifty thousand cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, spread over the surface of America—in each the Declaration of Independence has been read; in all one, and in some two or three, orations have been delivered, with as much gunpowder in them as in the squibs and crackers. But let me describe what I actually saw.

The commemoration commenced, if the day did not, on the evening of the 3rd, by the municipal police going round and pasting up placards, informing the citizens of New York, that all persons letting off fireworks would be taken into custody, which notice was immediately followed up by the little boys proving their independence of the authorities, by letting off squibs, crackers, and bombs; and cannons, made out of shin bones, which flew in the face of every passenger, in the exact ratio that the little boys flew in the face of the authorities. This continued the whole night, and thus was ushered in the great and glorious day, illumined by a bright and glaring sun (as if bespoken on purpose by the mayor and corporation), with the thermometer at 90 degrees in the shade. The first sight which met the eye after sunrise, was the precipitate escape, from a city visited with the plague of gunpowder, of respectable or timorous people in coaches, carriages, waggons, and every variety of vehicle. “My kingdom for a horse!” was the general cry of all those who could not stand fire. In the mean while, the whole atmosphere was filled with independence. Such was the quantity of American flags which were hoisted on board of the vessels, hung out of windows, or carried about by little boys, that you saw more stars at noon-day than ever could be counted on the brightest night. On each side of the whole length of Broadway, were ranged booths and stands, similar to those at an English fair, and on which were displayed small plates of oysters, with a fork stuck in the board opposite to each plate; clams sweltering in the hot sun; pineapples, boiled hams, pies, puddings, barley-sugar, and many other indescribables. But what was most remarkable, Broadway being three miles long, and the booths lining each side of it, in every booth there was a roast pig, large or small, as the centre attraction. Six miles of roast pig! and that in New York city alone; and roast pig in every other city, town, hamlet, and village, in the Union. What association can there be between roast pig and independence? Let it not be supposed that there was any deficiency in the very necessary articles of potation on this auspicious day: no! the booths were loaded with porter, ale, cyder, mead, brandy, wine, ginger-beer, pop, soda-water, whiskey, rum, punch, gin slings, cocktails, mint julips, besides many other compounds, to name which nothing but the luxuriance of American-English could invent a word. Certainly the preparations in the refreshment way were most imposing, and gave you some idea of what had to be gone through on this auspicious day. Martial music sounded from a dozen quarters at once; and as you turned your head, you tacked to the first bars of a march from one band, the concluding bars of Yankee Doodle from another. At last the troops of militia and volunteers, who had been gathering in the park and other squares, made their appearance, well dressed and well equipped, and, in honour of the day, marching as independently as they well could. I did not see them go through many manoeuvres, but there was one which they appeared to excel in, and that was grounding arms and eating pies. I found that the current went towards Castle Garden, and away I went with it. There the troops were all collected on the green, shaded by the trees, and the effect was very

beautiful. The artillery and infantry were drawn up in a line pointing to the water. The officers in their regimental dresses and long white feathers, generals and aides-de-camp, colonels, commandants, majors, all galloping up and down in front of the line,—white horses and long tails appearing the most fashionable and correct. The crowds assembled were, as American crowds usually are, quiet and well behaved. I recognised many of my literary friends turned into generals, and flourishing their swords instead of their pens. The scene was very animating; the shipping at the wharfs were loaded with star-spangled banners; steamers paddling in every direction, were covered with flags; the whole beautiful Sound was alive with boats and sailing vessels, all flaunting with pennants and streamers. It was, as Ducrow would call it, "A Grand Military and Aquatic Spectacle."

Then the troops marched up into town again, and so did I follow them as I used to do the reviews in England, when a boy. All creation appeared to be independent on this day; some of the horses particularly so, for they would not keep "in no line not no how." Some preferred going sideways like crabs, others went backwards, some would not go at all, others went a great deal too fast, and not a few parted company with their riders, whom they kicked off just to shew their independence; but let them go which way they would, they could not avoid the squibs and crackers. And the women were in the same predicament: they might dance right, or dance left, it was only out of the frying-pan into the fire, for it was pop, pop; bang, bang; fiz, pop, bang, so that you literally trod upon gunpowder.

When the troops marched up Broadway, louder even than the music were to be heard the screams of delight from the children at the crowded windows on each side. "Ma! ma! there's pa!" "Oh! there's John." "Look at uncle on his big horse."

The troops did not march in very good order, because, independently of their not knowing how, there was a great deal of independence to contend with. At one time an omnibus and four would drive in and cut off the general and his staff from his division; at another, a cart would roll in and insist upon following close upon the band of music; so that it was a mixed procession—Generals, omnibus and four, music, cart-loads of bricks, troops, omnibus and pair, artillery, hackney-coach, etcetera. etcetera. Notwithstanding all this, they at last arrived at the City Hall, when those who were old enough heard the Declaration of Independence read for the sixty-first time; and then it was —"Begone, brave army, and don't kick up a row."

I was invited to dine with the mayor and corporation at the City Hall. We sat down in the Hall of Justice, and certainly, great justice was done to the dinner, which (as the wife says to her husband after a party, where the second course follows the first with unusual celerity) "went off remarkably well." The crackers popped outside, and the champagne popped in. The celerity of the Americans at a public dinner is very commendable; they speak only now and then; and the toasts follow so fast, that you have just time to empty your glass, before you are requested to fill again. Thus the arranged toasts went off rapidly, and after them, any one might withdraw. I waited till the thirteenth toast, the last on the paper, to wit, the ladies of America; and, having previously, in a speech from the recorder, bolted Bunker's Hill and New Orleans, I thought I might as well bolt myself, as I wished to see the fireworks, which were to be very splendid.

Unless you are an amateur, there is no occasion to go to the various places of public amusement where the fireworks are let off, for they are sent up every where in such quantities that you hardly know which way to turn your eyes. It is, however, advisable to go into some place of safety, for the little boys and the big boys have all got their supply of rockets, which they fire off in the streets—some running horizontally up the pavement, and sticking into the back of a passenger; and others mounting slantingdicularly and Paul-Prying into the bed-room windows on the third floor or attics, just to see how things are going on *there*. Look in any point of the compass, and you will see a shower of rockets in the sky: turn from New York to Jersey City, from Jersey City to Brooklyn, and shower is answered by shower on either side of the water. Hoboken repeats the signal: and thus it is carried on to the east, the west, the north, and the south, from Rhode Island to the Missouri, from the Canada frontier to the Gulf of Mexico. At the various gardens the combinations were very

beautiful, and exceeded anything that I had witnessed in London or Paris. What with sea-serpents, giant rockets scaling heaven, Bengal lights, Chinese fires, Italian suns, fairy bowers, crowns of Jupiter, exeranthemums, Tartar temples, Vesta's diadems, magic circles, morning glories, stars of Colombia, and temples of liberty, all America was in a blaze; and, in addition to this mode of manifesting its joy, all America was tipsy.

There is something grand in the idea of a national intoxication. In this world, vices on a grand scale dilate into virtues; he who murders one man, is strung up with ignominy; but he who murders twenty thousand has a statue to his memory, and is handed down to posterity as a hero. A staggering individual is a laughable and, sometimes, a disgusting spectacle; but the whole of a vast continent reeling, offering a holocaust of its brains for mercies vouchsafed, is an appropriate tribute of gratitude for the rights of equality and the *levelling spirit* of their institutions.

Volume One—Chapter Nine

Once more flying up the noble Hudson. After you have passed West Point, the highlands, through which the river has forced its passage, gradually diminish, and as the shore becomes level, so does the country become more fertile.

We passed the manor of Albany, as it is called, being a Dutch grant of land, now in the possession of one person, a Mr Van Rensalaer, and equal to many a German principality, being twenty miles by forty-eight miles square. Mr Van Rensalaer still retains the old title of Patroon. It is generally supposed in England that, in America, all property must be divided between the children at the decease of the parent. This is not the case. The entailing of estates was abolished by an act of Congress in 1788, but a man may will away his property entirely to his eldest son if he pleases. This is, however, seldom done; public opinion is too strong against it, and the Americans fear public opinion beyond the grave. Indeed, were a man so to act, the other claimants would probably appeal to have the will set aside upon the grounds of lunacy, and the sympathy of an American jury would decree in their favour.

As you ascend to Albany City, the banks of the river are very fertile and beautiful, and the river is spotted with many very picturesque little islands. The country seats, which fringe the whole line of shore, are all built in the same, and very bad, style. Every house or tenement, be it a palace or a cottage, has its porticos and pillars—a string of petty Parthenons which tire you by their uniformity and pretence.

I had intended to stop at Hudson, that I might proceed from thence to New Lebanon to visit the Shaking Quakers; but, as I discovered that there was a community of them not five miles from Troy, I, to avoid a fatiguing journey, left Albany, and continued on to that city.

Albany is one of the oldest Dutch settlements, and among its inhabitants are to be found many of the descendants of the Dutch aristocracy. Indeed, it may even now be considered as a Dutch city. It is the capital of the state of New York, with a population of nearly 30,000. Its commerce is very extensive, as it is here that the Erie canal communications with the Far West, as well as the Eastern States, debouche into the Hudson.

We have here a singular proof, not only of the rapidity with which cities rise in America, but also how superior energy will overcome every disadvantage. Little more than twenty years ago, Albany stood by itself, a large and populous city without a rival, but its population was chiefly Dutch. The Yankees from the Eastern States came down and settled themselves at Troy, not five miles distant, in opposition to them. It would be supposed that Albany could have crushed this city in its birth, but it could not, and Troy is now a beautiful city, with its mayor, its corporation, and a population of 20,000 souls, and divides the commerce with Albany, from which most of the eastern trade has been ravished. The inhabitants of Albany are termed Albanians, those of Troy, Trojans! In one feature these cities are very similar, being both crowded with lumber and pretty girls.

I went out to see the Shakers at Niskayuna. So much has already been said about their tenets that I shall not repeat them, further than to observe that all their goods are in common, and that, although the sexes mix together, they profess the vows of celibacy and chastity. Their lands are in excellent order, and they are said to be very rich. (I should be very sorry to take away the character of any community, but, as I was a little sceptical as to the possibility of the vow of chastity being observed under circumstances above alluded to, I made some inquiries, and having met with one who had seceded from the fraternity, I discovered that my opinion of human nature was correct, and the conduct of the Shakers not altogether so. I must not enter into details, as they would be unfit for publication.)

We were admitted into a long room on the ground-floors where the Shakers were seated on forms, the men opposite to the women, and apart from each other. The men were in their waistcoats

and shirt-sleeves, twiddling their thumbs, and looking awfully puritanical. The women were attired in dresses of very light striped cotton, which hung about them like full dressing-gowns, and concealed all shape and proportions. A plain mob cap on their heads, and a thick muslin handkerchief in many folds over their shoulders, completed their attire. They each held in their hands a pocket-handkerchief as large as a towel, and of almost the same substance. But the appearance of the women was melancholy and unnatural; I say unnatural because it required to be accounted for. They had all the advantages of exercise and labour in the open air, good food, and good clothing; they were not overworked, for they are not required to work more than they please; and yet there was something so pallid, so unearthly in their complexions, that it gave you the idea that they had been taken up from their coffins a few hours after their decease: not a hue of health, not a vestige of colour in any cheek or lip;—one cadaverous yellow tinge prevailed. And yet there were to be seen many faces very beautiful, as far as regarded outline, but they were the features of the beautiful in death. The men, on the contrary, were ruddy, strong, and vigorous. Why, then, this difference between the sexes, where they each performed the same duties, where none were taxed beyond their strength, and all were well fed and clothed?

After a silence of ten minutes, one of the men of the community, evidently a coarse illiterate person, rose and addressed a few words to the spectators, requesting them not to laugh at what they saw, but to behave themselves properly, etcetera, and then he sat down.

One of the leaders then burst out into a hymn, to a jigging sort of tune, and all the others joined chorus. After the hymn was sung they all rose, put away the forms on which they had been seated, and stood in lines, eight in a row, men and women separate, facing each other, and about ten feet apart—the ranks of men being flanked by the boys, and those of the women by the girls. They commenced their dancing by advancing in rows, just about as far as profane people do in *L'été* when they dance quadrilles, and then retreated the same distance, all keeping regular time, and turning back to back after every third advance. The movement was rather quick, and they danced to their own singing of the following beautiful composition:—

Law, law, de lawdel law,
Law, law, de law,
Law, law, de lawdel law,
Lawdel, lawdel, law—

keeping time also with the hands as well as feet, the former raised up to the chest, and hanging down like the fore-paws of a dancing bear. After a quarter of an hour they sat down again, and the women made use of their large towel pocket-handkerchiefs to wipe off the perspiration. Another hymn was sung, and then the same person addressed the spectators, requesting them not to laugh, and inquiring if any of them felt a wish to be saved—adding, "Not one of you, I don't think." He looked round at all of us with the most ineffable contempt, and then sat down; and they sang another hymn, the burden of which was—

"Our souls are saved, and we are free
From vice and all in-i-qui-ty."

which was a very comfortable delusion, at all events.

They then rose again, put away the forms as before, and danced in another fashion. Instead of *L'été*, it was *Grande ronde*. About ten men and women stood in two lines in the centre of the room, as a vocal band of music, while all the others, two and two, women first and men following, promenaded round, with a short quick step, to the tune chaunted in the centre. As they went round and round, shaking their paws up and down before them, the scene was very absurd, and I could have laughed had I not felt disgusted at such a degradation of rational and immortal beings. This dance lasted a long

while, until the music turned to croaking, and the perspiration was abundant; they stopped at last, and then announced that their exercise was finished. I waited a little while after the main body had dispersed, to speak with one of the elders. “I will be with you directly,” replied he, walking hastily away; but he never came back.

I never heard the principle upon which they dance. David danced before the ark; but it is to be presumed that David danced as well as he sung. At least he thought so; for when his wife Michal laughed at him, he made her conduct a ground of divorce.

Every community which works in common, and is provided for in the mass, must become *rich*, especially when it has no children to maintain. It is like receiving a person’s labour in exchange for victuals and clothing only, and this is all I can perceive that can be said in favour of these people. Suffice it to say, I have a very bad opinion of them: and were I disposed to dilate on the subject, I should feel no inclination to treat them with the lenity shewn to them by other travellers.

From this mockery, I went to see what had a real tendency to make you feel religious—the Falls of the Mohawk, about three miles from Troy. Picturesque and beautiful as all falling water is, to describe it is extremely difficult, unless, indeed by a forced simile; the flow of language is too tame for the flow of water; but if the reader can imagine a ledge of black rocks, about sixty or seventy feet high, and that over this ledge was poured simultaneously the milk of some millions of cows, he will then have some idea of the beauty of the creaming Falls of the Mohawk, imbedded as they are in their wild and luxuriant scenery.

Close to the Falls, I perceived a few small wooden shealings, appearing, under the majestic trees which overshadowed them, more like dog-kennels than the habitations of men: they were tenanted by Irish emigrants, who had taken work at the new locks forming on the Erie canal. I went up to them. In a tenement about fourteen feet by ten, lived an Irishman, his wife, and family, and seven boys as he called them, young men from twenty to thirty years of age, who boarded with him. There was but one bed, on which slept the man, his wife, and family. Above the bed were some planks, extending half way the length of the shealing, and there slept the seven boys, without any mattress, or even straw, to lie upon. I entered into conversation with them: they complained bitterly of the times, saying that their pay was not 2 shillings 6 pence of our money per day, and that they could not live upon it. This was true, but the distress had been communicated to all parts, and they were fortunate in finding work at all, as most of the public works had been discontinued. I mentioned to them that the price of labour in Ohio, Illinois, and the West, was said to be two dollars a-day, and asked them, why they did not go there? They replied, that such were the price quoted, to induce people to go, but that they never could find it when they arrived; that the clearing of new lands was attended with ague and fever; and that if once down with these diseases there was no one to help them to rise again. I looked for the pig, and there he was, sure enough, under the bed.

Volume One—Chapter Ten

Troy, like a modern academy, is classical, as well as commercial, having Mount Olympus on one side, and Mount Ida in its rear. The panorama from the summit of the latter is splendid. A few years back a portion of Mount Ida made a slip, and the avalanche destroyed several cottages and five or six individuals. The avalanche took place on a dark night and in a heavy snow storm. Two brick kilns were lighted at the time, and, as the mountain swept them away, the blaze of the disturbed fires called out the fire engines, otherwise more lives would have been lost. Houses, stables, and sheds, were all hurled away together. Horses, children, and women, rolled together in confusion. One child had a very strange escape. It had been forced out of its bed, and was found on the top of a huge mass of clay, weighing forty or fifty tons; he was crying, and asking who had put him there. Had all the inhabitants of the cottages been within, at least forty must have perished; but notwithstanding the severity of the weather, the day being Sunday, they had all gone to evening meeting, and thus, being good Christians, they were for once rewarded for it on this side of the grave.

As I surveyed the busy scene below me, the gentleman who accompanied me to the summit of the mountain, informed me that forty-three years ago his father was the first settler, and that then there was but his one hut in the place where now stood the splendid town.

But signs of the times were manifest here also. Commerce had stopped for the present, and a long line of canal boats was laid up for want of employment.

I remained two hours perched upon the top of the mountain. I should not have staid so long, perhaps, had they not brought me a basket of cherries, so that I could gratify more senses than one. I felt becomingly classical whilst sitting on the precise birth-place of Jupiter, attended by Pomona, with Troy at my feet, and Mount Olympus in the distance; but I was obliged to descend to lumber and gin-slings, and I set off for Albany, where I had an engagement, having been invited to attend at the examination of the young ladies at the seminary.

Here again is a rivalry between Albany and Troy, each of them glorying in possessing the largest seminary for the education of young ladies, who are sent from every State of the Union, to be finished off at one or the other of them. Here, and indeed in many other establishments, the young ladies now quitting it have diplomas given to them, if they pass their examinations satisfactorily. They are educated upon a system which would satisfy even Miss Martineau, and prepared to exercise the rights of which she complains that women have been so unjustly deprived. Conceive three hundred modern Portias, who regularly take their degrees, and emerge from the portico of the seminary full of algebra, equality, and the theory of the constitution! The quantity and variety crammed into them is beyond all calculation. The examination takes place yearly, to prove to the parents that the preceptors have, done their duty, and is in itself very innocent, as it only causes the young ladies to blush a little.

This afternoon they were examined in algebra, and their performance was very creditable. Under a certain age girls are certainly much quicker than boys, and I presume would retain what they learnt if it were not for their subsequent duties in making puddings, and nursing babies. Yet there are affairs which must be performed by one sex or the other, and of what use can algebra and other abstruse matters be to a woman in her present state of domestic thraldom.

The theory of the American constitution was the next subject on which they were examined; by their replies, this appeared to be to them more abstruse than algebra: but the fact is, women are born tories, and admit no other than petticoat government as legitimate.

The next day we again repaired to the hall, and French was the language in which they were to be examined, and the examination afforded us much amusement.

The young ladies sat down in rows on one side of the room. In the centre, towards the end, was an easel, on which was placed a large black board on which they worked with chalk the questions in algebra, etcetera,—a towel hanging to it, that they might wipe out and correct. The French preceptor,

an old Emigré Count, sat down with the examiners before the board, the visitors (chiefly composed of anxious papas and mammas) being seated on benches behind them. As it happened, I had taken my seat close to the examining board, and at some little distance from the other persons who were deputed or invited to attend. I don't knew how I came there. I believe I had come in too late; but there I was, within three feet of every young lady who came up to the board.

"Now, messieurs, have the kindness to ask any question you please," said the old Count. "Mademoiselle, you will have the goodness to step forward." A question was proposed in English, which the young lady had to write down in French. The very first went wrong: I perceived it, and without looking at her, pronounced the right word, so that she could hear it. She caught it, rubbed out the wrong word with the towel, and rectified it. This was carried on through the whole sentence, and then she retreated from the board that her work might be examined. "Very well, very well, indeed, Miss, c'est parfaitement bien;" and the young lady sat down blushing. Thus were they all called up, and one after another prompted by me; and the old Count was delighted at the success of his pupils.

Now, what amused me in this was the little bit of human nature; the *tact* displayed by the sex, which appears to be innate, and which never deserts them. Had I prompted a boy, he would most likely have turned his head round towards me, and thus have revealed what I was about; but not one of the whole class was guilty of such indiscretion. They heard me, rubbed out, corrected, waited for the word when they did not know it, but never by any look or sign made it appear that there was any understanding between us. Their eyes were constantly fixed on the board, and they appeared not to know that I was in the room. It was really beautiful. When the examination was over, I received a look from them all, half comic, half serious, which amply repaid me for my assistance.

As young ladies are assembled here from every State of the Union, it was a *fair* criterion of American beauty, and it must be acknowledged that the American women are the *prettiest* in the whole world.

Volume One—Chapter Eleven

Saratoga Springs.—Watering places all over the world are much alike: they must be well filled with company, and full of bustle, and then they answer the purpose for which they are intended—a general muster, under the banner of folly, to drive care and common sense out of the field. Like assembly-rooms, unless lighted up and full of people, they look desolate and forlorn: so it was with Saratoga: a beautiful spot, beautiful hotels, and beautiful water; but all these beauties were thrown away, and the water ran away unheeded, because the place was empty. People's pockets were empty, and Saratoga was to let. The consequence was that I remained a week there, and should have remained much longer had I not been warned, by repeated arrivals, that the visitors were increasing, and that I should be no longer alone.

The weariness of solitude, as described by Alexander Selkirk and the Anti-Zimmermanns, can surely not be equal to the misery of never being alone; of feeling that your thoughts and ideas, rapidly accumulating, are in a state of chaos and confusion, and that you have not a moment to put them into any lucid order; of finding yourself, against your will, continually in society, bandied from one person to the other, to make the same bows, extend the same hand to be grasped, and reply to the same eternal questions; until, like a man borne down by sleep after long vigils, and at each moment roused to reply, you either are not aware of what you do say, or are dead beat into an unmeaning smile. Since I have been in this country, I have suffered this to such a degree as at last to become quite nervous on the subject; and I might reply in the words of the spirit summoned by Lochiel—

> "Now my weary lips I close;
> Leave, oh! leave me to repose."

It would be a strange account, had it been possible to keep one, of the number of introductions which I have had since I came into this country. Mr A introduces Mr B and C, Mr B and C introduce Mr D, E, F, and G. Messrs D, E, F, and G introduce Messrs H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, and so it goes on, *ad infinitum* during the whole of the day; and this to me who never could remember either a face or a name.

At introduction it is invariably the custom to shake hands; and thus you go on shaking hands here, there, and everywhere, and with everybody; for it is impossible to know who is who, in this land of equality.

But one shake of the hand will not do; if twenty times during the same day you meet a person to whom you have been introduced, the hand is every where extended with—"Well, captain, how do you find yourself by this time?" and, in their good-will, when they seize your hand, they follow the apothecary's advice—"When taken, to be well shaken." As for the constant query—"How do you like our country?"—that is natural enough. I should ask the same of an American in England, but to reply to it is not the less tedious. It is all well meant, all kindness, but it really requires fortitude and patience to endure it. Every one throws in his voluntary tribute of compliments and good-will, but the accumulated mass is too great for any one individual to bear. How I long for the ocean prairies, or the wild forests. Subsequently, I begged hard to be shut up for six months in the Penitentiary at Philadelphia, but Sammy Wood said it was against the regulations. He comforted me with a *tête-à-tête* dinner, which was so agreeable, that at the time I quite forgot I wished to be alone.

When I left Saratoga, I found no one, as I thought, in the car, who knew me; and I determined, if possible, they should, in the Indian phrase, *lose my trail*. I arrived at Schenectady, and was put down there. I amused myself until the train started for Utica, which was to be in a few hours, in walking about the engine-house, and examining the locomotives; and having satisfied myself, set out for a solitary walk in the country. There was no name on my luggage, and I had not given my name when I

took my ticket for the railroad. "At last," said I to myself, "*I am incog*." I had walked out of the engine-house, looked round the compass, and resolved in which direction I would bend my steps, when a young man came up to me, and very politely taking off his hat, said, "I believe I have the pleasure of speaking to Captain M—." Had he known my indignation when he mentioned my name, poor fellow! but there was no help for it, and I replied in the affirmative. After apologising, he introduced himself, and then requested the liberty of introducing his friend. "Well, if ever," thought I; and, "no never," followed afterwards as a matter of course, and as a matter of course his friend was introduced. It reminded me of old times, when, midshipmen at balls, we used to introduce each other to ladies we had none of us seen before in our lives. Well, there I was, between two overpowering civilities, but they meant it kindly, and I could not be angry. These were students of Schenectady College: would I like to see it? a beautiful location, not half a mile off. I requested to know if there was any thing to be seen there, as I did not like to take a hot walk for nothing, instead of the shady one I had proposed for myself. "Yes, there was Professor Nott"—I had of course heard of Professor Nott.—Professor Nott, who governed by moral influence and paternal sway, and who had written so largely on stones and anthracite coal. I had never before heard of moral influence, stones, or anthracite coal. Then there were more professors, and a cabinet of minerals—the last was an inducement, and I went.

I saw Professor Nott, but not the cabinet of minerals, for Professor Savage had the key. With Professor Nott I had rather a hot argument about anthracite coal, and then escaped before he was cool again. The students walked back with me to the hotel, and, with many apologies for leaving me, informed me that dinner was ready. I would not tax their politeness any longer, and they departed.

Schenectady College, like most of the buildings in America, was commenced on a grand scale, but has never been finished; the two wings are finished, and the centre is lithographed, which looks very imposing in the plate. There is a peculiarity in this college: it is called the Botany Bay, from its receiving young men who have been expelled from other colleges, and who are kept in order by moral influence and paternal sway, the only means certainly by which wild young men are to be reclaimed. Seriously speaking Professor Nott is a very clever man, and I suspect this college will turn out more clever men than any other in the Union. It differs from the other colleges in another point. It upholds no peculiar sect of religion, which almost all the rest do. For instance, Yule (Yale), William's Town, and Amherst Colleges, are under presbyterian influence; Washington episcopal; Cambridge, in Massachusets, unitarian.

There is one disadvantage generally attending railroads. Travellers proceed more rapidly, but they lose all the beauty of the country. Railroads of course run through the most level portions of the States; and the levels, except they happen to be on the banks of a river, are invariably uninteresting. The road from Schenectady to Utica is one of the exceptions to this rule: there is not perhaps a more beautiful variety of scenery to be found anywhere. You run the whole way through the lovely valley of the Mohawk, on the banks of the Mohawk river. It was really delightful, but the motion was so rapid that you lamented passing by so fast. The Utica railroad is one of the best in America; the eighty miles are performed in four hours and a-half, stoppages for taking in water, passengers, and refreshments, included. The locomotive was of great power, and as it snorted along with a train of carriages of half a mile long in tow, it threw out such showers of fire, that we were constantly in danger of conflagration. The weather was too warm to admit of the windows being closed, and the ladies, assisted by the gentlemen, were constantly employed in putting out the sparks which settled on their clothes—the first time I ever heard ladies complain of having too many *sparks* about them. As the evening closed in we actually were whirled along through a stream of fiery threads—a beautiful, although humble imitation of the tail of a comet.

I had not been recognised in the rail car, and I again flattered myself that I was unknown. I proceeded, on my arrival at Utica, to the hotel, and asking at the bar for a bed, the book was handed to me, and I was requested to write my name. Wherever you stop in America, they generally produce a book and demand your name, not on account of any police regulations, but merely because they will

not allow secrets in America, and because they choose to know who you may be. Of course, you may frustrate this espionage by putting down any name you please; and I had the pen in my hand, and was just thinking whether I should be Mr Snooks or Mr Smith, when I received a slap on the shoulder, accompanied with—"Well, captain, how are you by this time?" In despair I let the pen drop out of my hand, and instead of my name I left on the book a large blot. It was an old acquaintance from Albany, and before I had been ten minutes in the hotel, I was recognised by at least ten more. The Americans are such locomotives themselves, that it is useless to attempt the incognito in any part except the west side of the Missisippi, or the Rocky Mountains. Once known at New York, and you are known every where, for in every place you will meet with some one whom you have met walking in Broadway.

A tremendous thunder-storm, with torrents of rain, prevented my leaving Utica for Trenton Falls until late in the afternoon. The roads, ploughed up by the rain, were any thing but democratic; there was no level in them; and we were jolted and shaken like peas in a rattle, until we were silent from absolute suffering.

I rose the next morning at four o'clock. There was a heavy fog in the air, and you could not distinguish more than one hundred yards before you. I followed the path pointed out to me the night before, through a forest of majestic trees, and descending a long flight of steps found myself below the Falls. The scene impressed you with awe—the waters roared through deep chasms, between two walls of rock, one hundred and fifty feet high, perpendicular on each side, and the width between the two varying from forty to fifty feet. The high rocks were of black carbonate of lime in perfectly horizontal strata, so equally divided that they appeared like solid masonry. For fifty or sixty feet above the rushing waters they were smooth and bare; above that line vegetation commenced with small bushes, until you arrived at their summits, which were crowned with splendid forest trees, some of them inclining over the chasm, as if they would peep into the abyss below and witness the wild tumult of the waters.

From the narrowness of the pass, the height of the rocks, and the superadded towering of the trees above, but a small portion of the heavens was to be seen, and this was not blue, but of a misty murky grey. The first sensation was that of dizziness and confusion, from the unusual absence of the sky above, and the dashing frantic speed of the angry boiling waters. The rocks on each side have been blasted so as to form a path by which you may walk up to the first fall; but this path was at times very narrow and you have to cling to the chain which is let into the rock. The heavy storm of the day before had swelled the torrent so that it rose nearly a foot above this path; and before I had proceeded far, I found that the flood swept between my legs with a force which would have taken some people off their feet. The rapids below the Falls are much grander than the Falls themselves; there was one down in a chasm between two riven rocks which it was painful to look long upon, and watch with what a deep plunge—what irresistible force—the waters dashed down and then returned to their own surface, as if struggling and out of breath. As I stood over them in their wild career, listening to their roaring as if in anger, and watching the madness of their speed, I felt a sensation of awe—an inward acknowledgment of the tremendous power of Nature; and, after a time, I departed with feelings of gladness to escape from thought which became painful when so near to danger.

I gained the lower falls, which now covered the whole width of the rock, which they seldom do except during the freshets. They were extraordinary from their variety. On the side where I stood, poured down a rapid column of water about one-half of the width of the fall; on the other, it was running over a clear thin stream, as gentle and amiable as water could be. That part of the fall reminded me of ladies' hair in flowing ringlets, and the one nearest me of the Lord Chancellor Eldon, in all the pomposity and frowning dignity of his full-bottomed wig. And then I thought of the lion and the lamb, not lying down, but falling down together; and then I thought that I was wet through, which was a fact; so I climbed up a ladder, and came to a wooden bridge above the fall, which conveyed me to the other side. The bridge posses over a staircase of little falls, sometimes diagonally, sometimes at right angles with the sites, and is very picturesque. On the other side you climb up a ladder of one

hundred feet, and arrive at a little building with a portico, where travellers are refreshed. Here you have a view of all the upper falls, but these seem tame after witnessing the savage impetuosity of the rapids below. You ascend another ladder of one hundred feet, and you arrive at a path pointed out to you by the broad chips of the woodman's axe. Follow the chips and you will arrive four or five hundred feet above both the bridge and the level of the upper fall. This scene is splendid. The black perpendicular rocks on the other side; the succession of falls; the rapids roaring below; the forest trees rising to the clouds and spreading with their majestic boughs the vapour ascending from the falling waters; together with the occasional glimpses of the skies here and there—all this induces you to wander with your eyes from one point of view to another, never tiring with its beauty, wildness, and vastness: and, if you do not exclaim with the Mussulman, God is great! you *feel* it through every sense, and at every pulsation of the heart.

The mountain was still above me, and I continued my ascent; but the chips now disappeared, and, like Tom Thumb, I lost my way. I attempted to retreat, but in vain; I was no longer amongst forest trees, but in a maze of young mountain ash, from which I could not extricate myself: so I stood still to think what I should do. I recollected that the usual course of proceeding on such occasions, was either to sit down and cry, or attempt to get out of your scrape. Tom Thumb did both; but I had no time to indulge in the former luxury, so I pushed and pushed, till I pushed myself out of my scrape, and found myself in a more respectable part of the woods. I then stopped to take breath. I heard a rustling behind me, and made sure it was a panther:– it was a beautiful little palm squirrel, who came close to me, as if to say "Who are you?" I took off my hat and told him my name, when, very contemptuously, as I thought, he turned short round, cocked his tail over his back, and skipped away. "Free, but not enlightened," thought I; "hasn't a soul above nuts." I also beat a retreat, and on my arrival at the hotel, found that, although I had no guides to pay, Nature had made a very considerable levy upon my wardrobe: my boots were bursting, my trowsers torn to fragments, and my hat was spoilt; and, moreover, I sat shivering in the garments which remained. So I, in my turn, levied upon a cow that was milking, and having improved her juice very much by the addition of some rum, I sat down under the portico, and smoked the cigar of meditation.

The walls of the portico were, as usual, scribbled over by those who would obtain cheap celebrity. I always read these productions; they are pages of human life. The majority of the scribblers leave a name and nothing more: beyond that, some few of their productions are witty, some sententious, mostly gross. My thoughts, as I read over the rubbish, were happily expressed by the following distich which I came to:—

Les Fenêtres et les Murailles,
Sont le papier des Canailles.

A little farther on, I found the lie given to this remark by some philosophic Spaniard:

Amigo quien quiera que seas, piensa que si acqui
Pones tu nombre, pronto il tiempo lo borrara
Escribe lo pues en il libro de Dio en donde.
Permancera eternamente—
In Amigo.

Volume One—Chapter Twelve

Returning to Utica, I fell in with a horse bridled and saddled, that was taking his way home without his master, every now and then cropping the grass at the road-side, and then walking on in a most independent manner. His master had given him a certificate of leave, by chalking in large letters on the saddle-flaps on each side, "*Let him go*." This was a very primitive proceeding; but I am not quite sure that it could be ventured upon in Yorkshire, or in Virginia either, where they know a good horse, and are particularly careful of it. It is a fact, that wherever they breed horses they invariably learn to steal them.

Set off for Oswego in a canal boat; it was called a packet-boat because it did not carry merchandise, but was a very small affair, about fifty feet long by eight wide. The captain of her was, however, in his own opinion, no small affair; he puffed and swelled until he looked larger than his boat. This personage, as soon as we were under weigh, sat down in the narrow cabin, before a small table; sent for this writing-desk, which was about the size of street organ, and, like himself, no small affair; ordered a bell to be rung in our ears to summon the passengers; and, then, taking down the names of four or five people, received the enormous sum of ten dollars passage-money. He then locked his desk with a key large enough for a street-door, ordered his steward to remove it, and went on deck to walk just three feet and return again. After all, there is nothing like being a captain.

Although many of the boats are laid up, there is still considerable traffic on this canal. We passed Rome, a village of two thousand inhabitants, at which number it has for many years been nearly stationary. This branch of the canal is, of course, cut through the levels, and we passed through swamps and wild forests; here and there some few acres were cleared, and a log-house was erected, looking very solitary and forlorn, surrounded by the stumps of the trees which had been felled, and which now lay corded up on the banks of the canal, ready to be disposed of. Wild and dreary as the country is, the mass of forest is gradually receding, and occasionally some solitary tree is left standing, throwing out its wide arms, and appearing as if in lamentation at its separation from its companions, with whom for centuries it had been in close fellowship.

Extremes meet: as I looked down from the roof of the boat upon the giants of the forest, which had for so many centuries reared their heads undisturbed, but now lay prostrate before civilisation, the same feelings were conjured up in my mind as when I have, in my wanderings, surveyed such fragments of dismembered empires as the ruins of Carthage or of Rome. There the reign of Art was over, and Nature had resumed her sway—here Nature was deposed, and about to resign her throne to the usurper Art. By the bye, the mosquitoes of this district have reaped some benefit from the cutting of the canal here. Before these impervious forest retreats were thus pierced, they could not have tasted human blood; for ages it must have been unknown to them, even by tradition; and if they taxed all other boats on the canal as they did, ours, a *canal share* with them must be considerably above par, and highly profitable.

At five o'clock we arrived at Syracuse. I do detest these old names vamped up. Why do not the Americans take the Indian names? They need not be so very scrupulous about it; they have robbed the Indians of everything else.

After you pass Syracuse, the country wears a more populous and inviting appearance. Salina is a village built upon a salt spring, which has the greatest flow of water yet known, and this salt spring is the cause of the improved appearance of the country; the banks of the canal, for three miles, are lined with buildings for the boiling down of the salt water, which is supplied by a double row of wooden pipes. Boats are constantly employed up and down the canal, transporting wood for the supply of the furnaces. It is calculated that two hundred thousand cord of wood are required every year for the present produce; and as they estimate upon an average about sixty cord of wood per acre in these parts, those salt works are the means of yearly clearing away upwards of three thousand acres of land.

Two million of bushels of salt are boiled down every year: it is packed in barrels, and transported by the canals and lakes to Canada, Michigan, Chicago, and the far West. When we reflect upon the number of people employed in the manufactories, and in cutting wood, and making barrels, and engaged on the lakes and canals in transporting the produce so many thousand miles, we must admire the spring to industry which has been created by this little, but bounteous, spring presented by nature.

The first sixty miles of this canal (I get on very slow with my description, but canal travelling is very slow), which is through a flat swampy forest, is without a lock; but after you pass Syracuse, you have to descend by locks to the Oswego river, and the same at every rapid of the river; in all, there is a fall of one hundred and sixty feet. Simple as locks are, I could not help reverting to the wild rapids at Trenton Falls, and reflecting upon how the ingenuity of man had so easily been able to overcome and control Nature! The locks did not detain us long—they never lose time in America. When the boat had entered the lock, and the gate was closed upon her, the water was let off with a rapidity which considerably affected her level, and her bows pointed downwards. I timed one lock with a fall of fifteen feet. From the time the gate was closed behind us until the lower one was opened for our egress, was exactly one minute and a quarter; and the boat sank down in the lock so rapidly as to give you the idea that she was scuttled and sinking.

The country round the Oswego is fertile and beautiful, and the river, with its islands, falls, and rapids, very picturesque. At one p.m. we arrived at the town of Oswego, on Lake Ontario; I was pleased with the journey, although, what with ducking to bridges, bites from mosquitoes, and the constant blowing of their unearthly horn with only one note, and which one must have been borrowed from the gamut of the infernal regions, I had had enough of it.

For the first time since my arrival in the country, no one—that is to say, on board the canal-boat—knew who I was. As we tracked above the Oswego river, I fell into conversation with a very agreeable person, who had joined us at Syracuse. We conversed the whole day, and I obtained much valuable information from him about the country: when we parted, he expressed a wish that we should meet again. He gave me his name and address, and when I gave my card in return, he looked at it, and then said, “I am most happy to make your acquaintance, sir; but I will confess that had I known with whom I had been conversing, I should not have *spoken so freely* upon certain points connected with the government and institutions of this country.” This was American all over; they would conceal the truth, and then blame us because we do not find it out. I met him afterwards, but he never would enter into any detailed conversation with me.

Volume One—Chapter Thirteen

Niagara Falls.—Perhaps the wisest, if not the best description of the Falls of Niagara, is in the simple ejaculation of Mrs Butler; for it is almost useless to attempt to describe when you feel that language fails; but if the falls cannot be described, the ideas which are conjured up in the mind, when we contemplate this wonderful combination of grandeur and beauty, are often worth recording. The lines of Mrs Sigourney, the American poetess, please me most.

Flow on for ever, in thy glorious robe
Of terror and of beauty; God hath set
His rainbow on thy forehead, and the cloud
Mantles around thy feet. And he doth give
Thy voice of thunder power to speak of him
Eternally—bidding the lip of man
Keep silence, and upon thy rocky altar pour
Incense of awe-struck praise.

When the Indian first looked upon the falls, he declared them to be the dwelling of the Great Spirit. The savage could not imagine that the Great Spirit dwelt also in the leaf which he bruised in his hand; but here it appealed to his senses in thunder and awful majesty, and he was compelled to acknowledge it.

The effects which the contemplation of these glorious waters produce, are of course very different, according to one's temperament and disposition. As I stood on the brink above the falls, continuing for a considerable time to watch the great mass of water tumbling, dancing, capering, and rushing wildly along, as if in a hurry to take the leap and, delighted at it, I could not help wishing that I too had been made of such stuff as would have enabled me to have joined it; with it to have rushed innocuously down the precipice; to have rolled uninjured into the deep unfathomable gulf below, or to have gambolled in the atmosphere of spray, which rose again in a dense cloud from its recesses. For about half an hour more I continued to watch the rolling waters, and then I felt a slight dizziness and a creeping sensation come over me—that sensation arising from strong excitement, and the same, probably, that occasions the bird to fall into the jaws of the snake. This is a feeling which, if too long indulged in, becomes irresistible, and occasions a craving desire to leap into the flood of rushing waters. It increased upon me every minute; and retreating from the brink, I turned my eyes to the surrounding foliage, until the effect of the excitement had passed away. I looked upon the waters a second time, and then my thoughts were directed into a very different channel. I wished myself a magician, that I might transport the falls to Italy, and pour their whole volume of waters into the crater of Mount Vesuvius; witness the terrible conflict between the contending elements, and create the largest steam-boiler that ever entered into the imagination of man.

I have no doubt that the opinion that these falls have receded a distance of seven miles is correct; but what time must have passed before even this tremendous power could have sawed away such a mass of solid rock! Within the memory of man it has receded but a few feet—changed but little. How many thousand years must these waters have been flowing and falling, unvarying in their career, and throwing up their sheets of spray to heaven.

It is impossible for either the eye or the mind to compass the whole mass of falling water; you cannot measure, cannot estimate its enormous volume; and this is the reason, perhaps, why travellers often express themselves disappointed by it. But fix your eye upon one portion—one falling and heaving wave out of the millions, as they turn over the edge of the rocks; watch, I say, this fragment for a few minutes, its regular time-beating motion never varying or changing; pursuing the laws of

nature with a regularity never ceasing and never tiring; minute after minute; hour after hour; day after day; year after year, until time recedes into creation: then cast your eyes over the whole multitudinous mass which is, and has been, performing the same and coeval duty, and you feel its vastness! Still the majesty of the whole is far too great for the mind to compass—too stupendous for its limited powers of reception.

Sunday.—I had intended to have passed the whole day at the Falls; but an old gentleman whose acquaintance I had made in the steam boat on Lake Ontario, asked me to go to church; and as I felt he would be annoyed if I did not, I accompanied him to a Presbyterian meeting not far from the Falls, which sounded like distant thunder. The sermon was upon temperance—a favourite topic in America; and the minister rather quaintly observed, that "alcohol was not sealed by the hand of God." It was astonishing to me that he did not allude to the Falls, point out that the seal of God was there, and shew how feeble was the voice of man when compared to the thunder of the Almighty so close at hand. But the fact was, he had been accustomed to preach every Sunday with the Falls roaring in his ear, and (when the wind was in a certain quarter,) with the spray damping the leaves of his sermon: he therefore did not feel as we did, and, no doubt, thought his sermon better than that from the God of the elements.

Yes, it is through the elements that the Almighty has ever deigned to commune with man, or to execute his supreme will, whether it has been by the wild waters to destroy an impious race—by the fire hurled upon the doomed cities—by seas divided, that the chosen might pass through them—by the thunders on Sinai's Mount when his laws were given to man—by the pillar of fire or the gushing rock, or by the rushing of mighty winds. And it is still through the elements that the Almighty speaks to man, to warn, to terrify, to chasten; to raise him up to wonder, to praise, and adore. The forked and blinding lightning which, with the rapidity of thought, dissolves the union between the body and the soul; the pealing thunder, announcing that the bolt has sped; the fierce tornado, sweeping away everything in its career, like a besom of wrath; the howling storm; the mountain waves; the earth quaking, and yawning wide, in a second overthrowing the work and pride of centuries, and burying thousands in a living tomb; the fierce vomiting of the crater, pouring out its flames of liquid fire, and changing fertility to the arid rock: it is through these that the Deity still speaks to man; yet what can inspire more awe of him, more reverence, and more love, than the contemplation of thy falling waters, great Niagara!

Volume One—Chapter Fourteen

Two gentlemen have left their cards, and will be happy to see me on my route; one lives at Batavia, the other at Pekin. I recollect going over the ferry to Brooklyn to visit the Commodore at the Navy Yard; I walked to where the omnibuses started from, to see if one was going my way. There were but two on the stand: one was bound to *Babylon*, the other to *Jericho*. Buffalo is one of the wonders of America. It is hardly to be credited that such a beautiful city could have risen up in the wilderness in so short a period. In the year 1814 it was burnt down, being then only a village; only one house was left standing, and now it is a city with twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The Americans are very judicious in planning their new towns; the streets are laid out so wide that there will never be any occasion to pull down to widen and improve, as we do in England. The city of Buffalo is remarkably well built; all the houses in the principal streets are lofty and substantial, and are either of brick or granite. The main street is wider, and the stores handsomer, than the majority of those in New York. It has five or six very fine churches, a handsome theatre, town-hall, and market, and three or four hotels, one of which is superior to most others in America; and to these we must add a fine stone pier, with a lighthouse, and a harbour full of shipping and magnificent steam-boats. It is almost incomprehensible, that all this should have been accomplished since the year 1814. And what has occasioned this springing up of a city in so short a time as to remind you of Aladdin's magic palace? —the Erie Canal, which here joins the Hudson River with the Lake, passing through the centre of the most populous and fertile States.

At present, however, the business of Buffalo, as well as of every other city, is nearly at a stand-still; the machinery of America is under repair, and until that repair is completed, the country will remain paralysed. America may just now be compared to one of her own steamboats, which, under too high pressure, has burst her boiler. Some of her passengers have (in a commercial point of view) been killed outright, others severely injured, and her progress has for a time been stopped: but she will soon be enabled to go a-head again as fast as ever, and will then probably pay a little more attention to her safety-valve.

I went out to the Indian reservation, granted to the remnant of the Seneca tribe of Indians, once a portion of the Mohawks, and all that now remains in the United States of the famed six nations. The chief of them (Red Jacket), lately dead, might be considered as the last of the Mohicans. I had some conversation with his daughter, who was very busily employed in the ornamenting of a pair of mocassins, and then visited the tomb, or rather the spot, where her father was buried, without name or record. This omission has since been repaired, and a tablet is now raised over his grave. It is creditable to the profession that the "poor player," as Shakespeare hath it, should be the foremost to pay tribute to worth. Cooke, the tragedian, was lying without a stone to mark his resting-place, when Kean came to America, found out the spot, and raised a handsome cenotaph to his memory; and it is to Mr Placide, one of the very best of American actors, that Red Jacket is indebted for the tablet which has been raised to rescue his narrow home from oblivion.

Red Jacket was a great chief and a great man, but, like most of the Indians, he could not resist the temptations of alcohol, and was during the latter part of his life very intemperate. When Red Jacket was sober, he was the proudest chief that ever walked, and never would communicate even with the highest of the American authorities but through his interpreter; but when intoxicated, he would speak English and French fluently, and then the proud Indian warrior, the most eloquent of his race, the last chief of the six nations, would demean himself by begging for a sixpence to buy more rum.

I must now revert to the singular causes by which, independent of others, such as locality, etcetera, Buffalo was so rapidly brought to a state of perfection—not like many other towns which, commencing with wooden houses, gradually supersede them by brick and stone. The person who was the cause of this unusual rise was a Mr Rathbun, who now lies incarcerated in a gaol of his own

building. It was he who built all the hotels, churches, and other public edifices; in fact, every structure worthy of observation in the whole town was projected, contracted for, and executed by Mr Rathbun. His history is singular. Of quiet, unassuming manners, Quaker in his dress, moderate in all his expenses, (except in charity, wherein, assisted by an amiable wife, he was very liberal) he concealed under this apparent simplicity and goodness a mind capable of the vastest conceptions, united with the greatest powers of execution. He undertook contracts, and embarked in building speculations, to an amount almost incredible. Rathbun undertook every thing, and every thing undertaken by Rathbun was well done. Not only at Buffalo, but at Niagara and other places, he was engaged in raising vast buildings, when the great crash occurred, and Rathbun, with others, was unable to meet his liabilities. Then, for the first time, it was discovered that for more than five years he had been conniving at a system of forgery, to the amount of two millions of dollars: the forgery consisted in putting to his bills the names of responsible parties as indorsers, that they might be more current. It does not appear that he ever intended to defraud, for he took up all his notes as fast as they became due; and it was this extreme regularity on his part which prevented the discovery of his fraud for so unusually long a period. It is surmised, that had not the general failure taken place, he would have eventually withdrawn all these forged bills from the market, and have paid all his creditors, reserving for himself a handsome fortune. It is a singular event in the annals of forgery, that this should have been carried on undiscovered for so unprecedented a time. Mr Rathbun is to be tried as an accessory, as it was his brother who forged the names. As soon as it was discovered, the latter made his escape, and he is said to have died miserably in a hovel on the confines of Texas.

Embarked on board of the Sandusky, for Detroit. As we were steering clear of the pier, a small brig of about two hundred tons burthen was pointed out to me as having been the *flag-ship* of Commodore Barclay, in the action upon Lake Erie. The appearance of Buffalo from the Lake is very imposing. Stopped at Dunkirk to put some emigrants on shore. As they were landing, I watched them carefully counting over their little property, from the iron tea-kettle to the heavy chest. It was their whole fortune, and invaluable to them; the nest-egg by which, with industry, their children were to rise to affluence. They remained on the wharf as we shoved off, and no wonder that they seemed embarrassed and at a loss. There was the baby in the cradle, the young children holding fast to their mother's skirt, while the elder had seated themselves on a log, and watched the departure of the steam-vessel;—the bedding, cooking utensils, etcetera, all lying in confusion, and all to be housed before night. Weary did they look, and weary indeed they were, and most joyful would they be when they at last should gain their resting-place. It appears from the reports sent in, that upwards of 100,000 emigrants pass to the west every year by the route of the Lakes, of which it is estimated that about 30,000 are from Europe, the remainder migrating from the eastern States of the Union.

I may keep a log now.—5 AM Light breezes and clear weather, land trending from South to South South West. Five sail in the offing.

At 6 AM, ran into Grand River. Within these last two years, three towns have sprung up here, containing between them about three thousand inhabitants.

How little are they aware, in Europe, of the vastness and extent of commerce carried on in these inland seas whose coasts are now lined with flourishing towns and cities, and whose waters are ploughed by magnificent steam-boats, and hundreds of vessels laden with merchandise. Even the Americans themselves are not fully aware of the rising importance of these Lakes as connected with the West. Since the completion of the Ohio Canal, which enters the Lake Erie at Cleveland, that town has risen almost as rapidly as Buffalo. It is beautifully situated. It is about six years back that it may be said to have commenced its start, and it now contains more than ten thousand inhabitants. The buildings are upon the same scale as those of Buffalo, and it is conjectured with good reason, that it will become even a larger city than the other, as the ice breaks up here and the navigation is open in the spring, six weeks sooner than it is at Buffalo; abreast of which town the ice is driven down and collected, previous to its forcing its passage over the falls.

Erie, which was the American naval depôt during the war, has a fine bay, but it is now falling into insignificance: it has a population of about one thousand.

Sandusky is a fast-rising town, beautifully situated upon the verge of a small prairie; it is between Sandusky and Huron that the prairie lands commence. The bay of Sandusky is very picturesque, being studded with small verdant islands. On one of these are buried in the same grave all those who fell in the hard-fought battle of the Lakes, between Perry and Barclay, both of whom have since followed their companions.

Toledo is the next town of consequence on the Lake. It is situated at the mouth of the Miami River; and as a railroad has already been commenced across the isthmus, so as to avoid going round the whole peninsula of Michigan, it is fast rising into importance. Three years ago the land was purchased at a dollar and a-half per acre; now, it is selling for building lots at one hundred dollars per foot. They handed me a paper printed in this town called “The Toledo Blade;” a not inappropriate title, though rather a bold one for an editor to write up to, as his writings ought to be very *sharp*, and, at the same time, extremely *well-tempered*.

The American government have paid every attention to their inland waters. The harbours, light-houses, piers, etcetera, have all been built at the expense of government, and every precaution has been taken to make the navigation of the Lakes as safe as possible.

In speaking of the new towns rising so fast in America, I wish the reader to understand that, if he compares them with the country towns of the same population in England, he will not do them. In the smaller towns of England you can procure but little, and you have to send to London for any thing good: in the larger towns, such as Norwich, etcetera, you may procure most things; but, still, luxuries must usually be obtained from the metropolis. But in such places as Buffalo and Cleveland, every thing is to be had that you can procure at New York or Boston. In those two towns on Lake Erie are stores better furnished, and handsomer, than any shops at Norwich, in England; and you will find, in either of them, articles for which, at Norwich, you would be obliged to send to London. It is the same thing at almost every town in America with which communication is easy. Would you furnish a house in one of them, you will find every article of furniture—carpets, stoves, grates, marble chimney-pieces, pier-glasses, pianos, lamps, candelabra, glass, china, etcetera, in twice the quantity, and in greater variety, than at any provincial town in England.

This arises from the system of credit extended through every vein and artery of the country, and by which English goods are forced, as if with a force-pump, into every available depôt in the Union; and thus, in a town so newly raised, that the stumps of the forest-trees are not only still surrounding the houses, but remain standing in the cellars, you will find every luxury that can be required. It may be asked what becomes of all these goods. It must be recollected that hundreds of new houses spring up every year in the towns, and that the surrounding country is populous and wealthy. In the farmhouses —mean-looking and often built of logs—is to be found not only comfort, but very often luxury.

Volume One—Chapter Fifteen

The French never have succeeded as colonists, and their want of success can only be ascribed to an amiable want of energy. When located at any spot, if a Frenchman has enough, he seeks no more; and, instead of working as the Englishman or the American does, he will pass his time away, and spend his little surplus in social amusements. The town of Detroit was founded as early as the city of Philadelphia, but, favourably as it is situated, it never until lately rose to any thing more than, properly speaking, a large village. There is not a paved street in it, or even a foot-path for a pedestrian. In winter, in rainy weather, you are up to your knees in mud; in summer, invisible from dust: indeed, until lately, there was not a practicable road for thirty miles round Detroit. The muddy and impassable state of the streets has given rise to a very curious system of making morning or evening calls. A small one-horse cart is backed against the door of a house; the ladies dressed get into it, and seat themselves upon a buffalo skin at the bottom of it; they are carried to the residence of the party upon whom they wish to call; the cart is backed in again, and they are landed dry and clean. An old inhabitant of Detroit complained to me that people were now getting so proud, that many of them refused to visit in that way any longer. But owing to the rise of the other towns on the lake, the great increase of commerce, and Michigan having been admitted as a State into the Union, with Detroit as its capital, a large Eastern population has now poured into it, and Detroit will soon present an appearance very different from its present, and become one of the most flourishing cities of America. Within these last six years it has increased its population from two to ten thousand. The climate here is the very best in America, although the State itself is unhealthy. The land near the town is fertile. A railroad from Detroit already extends thirty miles through the State; and now that the work has commenced, it will be carried on with the usual energy of the Americans.

Left Detroit in the Michigan steam-vessel for Mackinaw; passed through the Lake St. Clair, and entered Lake Huron; stopped at a solitary wharf to take in wood, and met there with a specimen of American politeness or (if you please) independence in the gentleman who cut down and sold it. Without any assignable motive, he called out to me, “You are a damned fool of an Englishman;” for which, I suppose, I ought to have been very much obliged to him.

Miss Martineau has not been too lavish in her praises of Mackinaw. It has the appearance of a fairy isle floating on the water, which is so pure and transparent that you may see down to almost any depth; and the air above is as pure as the water, so that you feel invigorated as you breathe it. The first reminiscence brought to my mind after I had landed, was the description by Walter Scott of the island and residence of Magnus Troil and his daughters Minna and Brenda, in the novel of the “Pirate.”

The low buildings, long stores, and out-houses full of nets, barrels, masts, sails, and cordage; the abundance of fish lying about; the rafters of the houses laden with dried and smoked meat; and the full and jolly proportions of most of the inhabitants, who would have rivalled Scott’s worthy in height and obesity, immediately struck my eye; and I might have imagined myself transported to the Shetland isle, had it not been for the lodges of the Indians on the beach, and the Indians themselves either running about, or lying stripped in the porches before the whisky stores.

I inquired of one of the islanders, why all the white residents were generally such large portly men, which they are at a very early age; he replied, “We have good air, good water, and what we eat agrees with us.” This was very conclusive.

I enquired of another, if people lived to a good old age in the island; his reply was quite American—“I guess they do; if people want to die, they can’t die here—they’re obliged to go elsewhere.”

Wandering among the Indian lodges (wigwams is a term not used now-a-days), I heard a sort of flute played in one of them, and I entered. The young Indian who was blowing on it, handed it to me. It was an imperfect instrument, something between a flute and a clarionet, but the sound which it

gave out was soft and musical. An islander informed me that it was the only sort of musical instrument which the Northern tribes possessed, and that it was played upon by the young men only when they were *in love*. I suspected at first that he was bantering me, but I afterwards found that what he said was true. The young Indian must have been very deeply smitten, for he continued to play all day and all night, during the time that I was there.

"If music be the food of love, play on."

Started in a birch canoe for Sault St. Marie, a small town built under the rapids of that name, which pour out a portion of the waters of Lake Superior. Two American gentlemen, one a member of Congress, and the other belonging to the American Fur Company, were of the party. Our crew consisted of five Canadian half-breeds—a mixture between the Indian and the white, which spoils both. It was a lovely morning; not a breath of air stirred the wide expanse of the Huron, as far as the eye could scan; and the canoe, as it floated along side of the landing-place, appeared as if it were poised in the air, so light did it float, and so clear and transparent are these northern waters. We started, and in two hours arrived at Goose Island, unpoetical in its name, but in itself full of beauty. As you stand on the beach, you can look down through the water on to the shelving bottom, bright with its variety of pebbles, and trace it almost as far off as if it had not been covered with water at all. The island was small, but gay as the gayest of parterres, covered with the sweet wild rose in full bloom (certainly the most fragrant rose in the world), blue campanellos, yellow exeranthemums, and white ox-eyed daisies. Underneath there was a perfect carpet of strawberries, ripe, and inviting you to eat them, which we did, while our Canadian brutes swallowed long strings of raw salt pork. And yet, in two months hence, this lovely little spot will be but one mass of snow—a mound rising above to serve as a guide to the chilled traveller who would find his way over the frozen expanse of the wide Huron Lake.

As soon as our Canadians had filled themselves to repletion with raw pork, we continued our route that we might cross the lake and gain the detour, or point which forms the entrance of the river St. Marie, before it was dark. We arrived a little before sunset, when we landed, put up our light boat, and bivouacked for the night. As soon as we put our feet on shore, we were assailed by the mosquitoes in myriads. They congregated from all quarters in such numbers, that you could only see as if through a black veil, and you could not speak without having your mouth filled with them. But in ten minutes we had a large fire, made, not of logs or branches, but of a dozen small trees. The wind eddied, and the flame and smoke, as they rose in masses, whirled about the mosquitoes right and left, and in every quarter of the compass, until they were fairly beaten off to a respectable distance. We supped upon lake-trout and fried ham; and rolling ourselves up in our Mackinaw blankets, we were soon fast asleep.

There was no occasion to call us the next morning. The Canadians were still snoring, and had let the fires go down. The mosquitoes, taking advantage of this neglect, had forced their way into the tent, and sounded the reveillé in our ears with their petty trumpets; following up the summons with the pricking of pins, as the fairies of Queen Mab are reported to have done to lazy housemaids. We kicked up our half-breeds, who gave us our breakfast, stowed away the usual quantity of raw pork, and once more did we float on the water in a piece of birch bark. The heat of the sun was oppressive, and we were broiled; but we dipped our hands in the clear cool stream as we skimmed along, listening to the whistling of the solitary loon as it paddled away from us, or watching the serrated back of the sturgeon, as he rolled lazily over and showed above the water. Now and then we stopped, and the silence of the desert was broken by the report of our fowling-pieces, and a pigeon or two was added to our larder. At noon a breeze sprung up, and we hoisted our sail, and the Canadians who had paddled dropped asleep as we glided quietly along under the guidance of the "timonier."

After you have passed through the river St. Clair, and entered the Huron lake, the fertility of the country gradually disappears. Here and there indeed, especially on the Canadian side, a spot more rich than the soil in general is shewn by the large growth of the timber; but the northern part of the Lake Huron shores is certainly little fit for cultivation. The spruce fir now begins to be plentiful; for, until you come to the upper end of the lake, they are scarce, although very abundant in Upper Canada. The country wears the same appearance all the way up to the Sault St. Marie, shewing maple and black poplar intermingled with fir: the oak but rarely appearing. The whole lake from Mackinaw to the Detour is studded with islands. A large one at the entrance of the river is called St. Joseph's. The Hudson Bay Company had a station there, which is now abandoned, and the island has been purchased, or granted, to an English officer, who has partly settled it. It is said to be the best land in this region, but still hardly fit for cultivation. It was late before our arrival at the Sault, and we were obliged to have recourse to our paddles, for the wind had died away. As the sun went down, we observed a very curious effect from the refraction of tints, the water changing to a bright violet every time that it was disturbed by the paddles. I have witnessed something like this just after sunset on the Lake of Geneva.

We landed at dusk, much fatigued; but the Aurora Borealis flashed in the heavens, spreading out like a vast plume of ostrich feathers across the sky, every minute changing its beautiful and fanciful forms. Tired as we were, we watched it for hours before we could make up our minds to go to bed.

Volume One—Chapter Sixteen

Sault St. Marie—Our landlord is a very strange being. It appears that he has been annoyed by some traveller, who has published a work in which he has found fault with the accommodations at Sault St. Marie, and spoken very disrespectfully of our host's beds and bed-furniture. I have never read the work, but I am so well aware how frequently travellers fill up their pages with fleas, and "such small gear," that I presume the one in question was short of matter to furnish out his book; yet it was neither just nor liberal on his part to expect at Sault St. Marie, where, perhaps, not five travellers arrive in the course of a year, the same accommodations as at New York. The bedsteads certainly were a little rickety, but every thing was very clean and comfortable. The house was not an inn, nor, indeed, did it pretend to be one, but the fare was good and well cooked, and you were waited upon by the host's two pretty modest daughters—not only pretty, but well-informed girls; and, considering that this village is the Ultima Thule of this portion of America, I think that a traveller might have been very well content with things as they were. In two instances, I found in the log-houses of this village complete editions of Lord Byron's works.

Sault St. Marie contains, perhaps, fifty houses, mostly built of logs, and has a palisade put up to repel any attack of the Indians.

There are two companies of soldiers quartered here. The rapids from which the village takes its name are just above it; they are not strong or dangerous, and the canoes descend them twenty times a day. At the foot of the rapids the men are constantly employed in taking the white fish in scoop nets, as they attempt to force their way up into Lake Superior. The majority of the inhabitants here are half-breeds. It is remarkable that the females generally improve, and the males degenerate, from the admixture of blood. Indian wives are here preferred to white, and perhaps with reason—they make the best wives for poor men; they labour hard, never complain, and a day of severe toil is amply recompensed by a smile from their lord and master in the evening. They are always faithful and devoted, and very sparing of their talk, all which qualities are considered as recommendations in this part of the world.

It is remarkable, that although the Americans treat the negro with contumely, they have a respect for the red Indian: a well-educated half-bred Indian is not debarred from entering into society; indeed, they are generally received with great attention. The daughter of a celebrated Indian chief brings heraldry into the family, for the Indians are as proud of their descent (and with good reason) as we, in Europe, are of ours. The Randolph family in Virginia still boast of their descent from Pocahontas, the heroine of one of the most remarkable romances in real life which was ever heard of.

The whole of this region appears to be incapable of cultivation, and must remain in its present state, perhaps, for centuries to come. The chief produce is from the lakes; trout and white fish are caught in large quantities, salted down, and sent to the west and south. At Mackinaw alone they cure about two thousand barrels, which sell for ten dollars the barrel; at the Sault, about the same quantity; and on Lake Superior, at the station of the American Fur Company, they have commenced the fishing, to lessen the expenses of the establishment, and they now salt down about four thousand barrels; but this traffic is still in its infancy, and will become more profitable as the west becomes more populous. Be it here observed that, although the Canadians have the same rights and the same capabilities of fishing, I do not believe that one barrel is cured on the Canadian side. As the American fish is prohibited in England, it might really become an article of exportation from the Canadas to a considerable amount.

There is another source of profit, which is the collecting of the maple sugar; and this staple, if I may use the term, is rapidly increasing. At an average, the full grown maple-tree will yield about five pounds of sugar each tapping, and, if carefully treated, will last forty years. All the State of Michigan is supplied from this quarter with this sugar, which is good in quality, and refines well. At Mackinaw

they receive about three hundred thousand pounds every year. It may be collected in any quantity from their vast wildernesses of forests, and although the notion may appear strange, it is not impossible that one day the Northern sugar may supersede that of the Tropics. The island of St. Joseph, which I have mentioned, is covered with large maple trees, and they make a great quantity upon that spot alone.

I was amused by a reply given me by an American in office here. I asked how much his office was worth, and his answer was six hundred dollars, besides *stealings*. This was, at all events, frank and honest; in England the word would have been softened down to perquisites. I afterwards found that it was a common expression in the States to say a place was worth so much besides cheatage.

In all this country, from Mackinaw to the Sault, hay is very scarce; and, during the short summer season, the people go twenty or thirty miles in their canoes to any known patch of prairie or grass land to collect it. Nevertheless, they are very often obliged, during the winter, to feed their cattle upon fish, and, strange to say, they acquire a taste for it. You will see the horses and cows disputing for the offal; and our landlord told me that he has often witnessed a particular horse wait very quietly while they were landing the fish from the canoes, watch his opportunity, dart in, steal one, and *run away with it in his mouth*.

A mutiny among our lazzaroni of half-breeds, they refuse to work today, because they are tired, they say, and we are obliged to procure others. Carried our canoe over the pasturage into the canal, and in five minutes were on the vast inland sea of Lake Superior. The waters of this lake are, if possible, more transparent than those of the Huron, or rather the variety and bright colours of the pebbles and agates which lie at the bottom, make them appear so. The appearance of the coast, and the growth of timber, are much the same as on Lake Huron, until you arrive at Gros Cape, a bold promontory, about three hundred feet high. We ascended this cape, to have a full view of the expanse of water: this was a severe task, as it was nearly perpendicular, and we were forced to cling from tree to tree to make the ascent. In addition to this difficulty, we were unremittingly pursued by the mosquitoes, which blinded us so as to impede our progress, being moreover assisted in their malevolent attacks by a sort of sand-fly, that made triangular incisions behind our ears, exactly like a small leech bite, from which the blood trickled down two or three inches as soon as the little wretch let go his hold. This variety of stinging made us almost mad, and we descended quite exhausted, the blood trickling down our faces and necks. We threw off our clothes, and plunged into the lake; the water was too cold; the agates at the bottom cut our feet severely, and thus were we phlebotomised from head to foot.

There is a singular geological feature at this cape; you do not perceive it until you have forced your way through a belt of firs, which grow at the bottom and screen it from sight. It is a ravine in which the rocks are pouring down from the top to the bottom, all so equal in size, and so arranged, as to wear the appearance of a cascade of stones; and when, half blinded by the mosquitoes, you look upon them, they appear as if they are actually in motion, and falling down in one continued stream. We embarked again, and after an hour's paddling landed upon a small island, where was the tomb of an Indian chief or warrior. It was in a beautiful spot, surrounded by the wild rose, blue peas, and campanellas. The kinnakinnee, or weed which the Indians smoke as tobacco, grew plentifully about it. The mound of earth was surrounded by a low palisade, about four feet wide and seven feet long, and at the head of it was the warrior's pole, with eagle feathers, and notches denoting the number of scalps he had taken from the enemy.

The Hudson Bay and American Fur Companies both have stations on Lake Superior, on their respective sides of the lake, and the Americans have a small schooner which navigates it. There is one question which the traveller cannot help asking himself as he surveys the vast mass of water, into which so many rivers pour their contributions, which is—In what manner is all this accumulation of water carried off? Except by a very small evaporation in the summer time, and the outlet at Sault St. Marie, where the water which escapes is not much more than equal to two or three of the rivers which feed the lake, there is no apparent means by which the water is carried off. The only conclusion that

can be arrived at is, that when the lake rises above a certain height, as the soil around is sandy and porous, the surplus waters find their way through it; and such I believe to be the case.

We saw no bears. They do not come down to the shores, (or travel, as they term it here,) until the huckleberries are ripe. We were told that a month later there would be plenty of them. It is an ascertained fact, that the bears from this region migrate to the west every autumn, but it is not known when they return. They come down to the eastern shores of the Lakes Superior and Huron, swim the lakes and rivers from island to island, never deviating from their course, till they pass through by Wisconsin to the Missisippi. Nothing stops them; the sight of a canoe will not prevent their taking the water; and the Indians in the River St. Marie have been known to kill fifteen in one day. It is singular that the bears on the other side of the Missisippi are said to migrate to the east, exactly in the contrary direction. Perhaps the Missisippi is their fashionable watering-place.

A gathering storm induced us to return, instead of continuing our progress on the lake. A birch canoe in a gale of wind on Lake Superior, would not be a very insurable risk. On our return, we found our half-breeds very penitent, for had we not taken them back, they would have stood a good chance of wintering there. But we had had advice as to the treatment of these lazy gluttonous scoundrels, who swallowed long pieces of raw pork the whole of the day, and towards evening were, from repletion, hanging their heads over the sides of the canoe and quite ill. They had been regaled with pork and whisky going up; we gave them salt fish and a broomstick by way of variety on their return, and they behaved very well under the latter fare.

We started again down with the stream, and the first night took up our quarters on a prairie spot, where they had been making hay, which was lying in cocks about us. To have a soft bed we carried quantities into our tent, forgetting that we disturbed the mosquitoes who had gone to bed in the hay. We smoked the tent to drive them out again; but in smoking the tent we set fire to the hay, and it ended in a conflagration. We were burnt out, and had to re-pitch our tent.

I was sauntering by the side of the river when I heard a rustling in the grass, and perceived a garter snake, an elegant and harmless little creature, about a foot and a half long. It had a small toad in its mouth, which it had seized by the head: but it was much too large for the snake to swallow, without leisure and preparation. I was amused at the precaution, I may say invention of the toad, to prevent its being swallowed: it had inflated itself, till it was as round as a bladder, and upon this, issue was joined—the snake would not let go, the toad would not be swallowed. I lifted up the snake by the tail and threw them three or four yards into the river. The snake rose to the surface, as majestic as the great sea serpent in miniature, carrying his head well out of the water, with the toad still in his mouth, reminding me of Caesar with his Commentaries. He landed close to my feet; I threw him in again, and this time he let go the toad, which remained floating and inanimate an the water; but after a time he discharged his superfluous gas, and made for the shore; while the snake, to avoid me, swam away down with the current.

The next morning it blew hard, and as we opened upon Lake Huron, we had to encounter a heavy sea; fortunately, the wind was fair for the island of Mackinaw, or we might have been delayed for some days. As soon as we were in the Lake we made sail, having fifty-six miles to run before it was dark. The gale increased, but the canoe flew over the water, skimming it like a sea bird. It was beautiful, but not quite so pleasant, to watch it, as, upon the least carelessness on the part of the helmsman, it would immediately have filled. As it was, we shipped some heavy seas, but the blankets at the bottom being saturated, gave us the extra ballast which we required. Before we were clear of the islands, we were joined by a whole fleet of Indian canoes, with their dirty blankets spread to the storm, running, as we were, for Mackinaw, being on their return from Maniton Islands, where they had congregated to receive presents from the Governor of Upper Canada. Their canoes were, most of them, smaller than ours, which had been built for speed, but they were much higher in the gunnel. It was interesting to behold so many hundreds of beings trusting themselves to such fragile conveyances, in a heavy gale and running sea; but the harder it blew, the faster we went; and at last,

much to my satisfaction, we found ourselves in smooth water again, alongside of the landing wharf at Mackinaw. I had had some wish to see a freshwater gale of wind, but in a birch canoe I never wish to try the experiment again.

Volume One—Chapter Seventeen

Mackinaw.—I mentioned that, in my trip to Lake Superior, I was accompanied by a gentleman attached to the American Fur Company, who have a station at this island. I was amusing myself in their establishment, superintending the unpacking and cleaning of about forty or fifty bales of skins, and during the time collected the following information. It is an average computation of the furs obtained every year, and the value of each to the American Fur Company. The Hudson Bay Company are supposed to average about the same quantity, or rather more; and they have a larger proportion of valuable furs, such as beaver and sable, but they have few deer and no buffalo. When we consider how sterile and unfit for cultivation are these wild northern regions, it certainly appears better that they should remain as they are:—

Skins.		Average value.
Deer, four varieties	150,000	45 cents per lb.
Buffalo	35,000	5 dollars per skin
Elk	200	
Beaver	15,000	4.5 dollars per lb.
Musk Rat	500,000	12 cents per skin
Otters	5,000	6.5 dollars per skin
	2,500	2 do.
Martin or Sable	12,000	2 do. or more
Mink	10,000	
Silver and Black Fox	15	
Crop Fox	100	4 dollars per skin
Red Fox	3,000	1 do.
Grey Fox	1,000	1.5 do.
Prairie Fox	5,000	.5 do.
Bears	4,000	4.5 do.
Lynx	500	2.5 do.
Wild Cat	2,000	2.5 do.
Racoon	70,000	.5 do.
Wolves	12,000	.5 do.
Wolverein	50	2.5 do.
Panthers	50	
Badgers	250	.25 do.

besides skunks, ground-hogs, hares, and many others. These are priced at the lowest: in proportion as the skins are finer, so do they yield higher profit. The two companies may be said to receive, between them, skins yearly to the amount of from two to three millions of dollars.

Fable apropos to the subject

A hare and a fox met one day on the vast prairie, and after a long conversation, they prepared to start upon their several routes. The hare, pleased with the fox, lamented that they would in all probability separate for ever. "No, no," replied the fox, "we shall meet again, never fear." "Where?" inquired his companion. "In the *hatter's shop*, to be sure," rejoined the fox, tripping lightly away.

Detroit.—There are some pleasant people in this town, and the society is quite equal to that of the eastern cities. From the constant change and transition which take place in this country, go where you will you are sure to fall in with a certain portion of intelligent, educated people. This is not the case in the remoter portions of the Old Continent, where every thing is settled, and generation succeeds generation, as in some obscure country town. But in America, where all is new, and the country has to be peopled from the other parts, there is a proportion of intelligence and education transplanted with the inferior classes, either from the Eastern States or from the Old World, in whatever quarter you may happen to find yourself.

Left my friends at Detroit with regret, and returned to Buffalo. There is a marked difference between the behaviour of the lower people of the eastern cities and those whom you fall in with in this town: they are much less civil in their behaviour here; indeed, they appear to think rudeness a proof of independence. I went to the theatre, and the behaviour of the majority of the company just reminded me of the Portsmouth and Plymouth theatres. I had forgotten that Buffalo was a fresh-water sea-port town.

Returning to Niagara, I took possession of the roof of the rail-coach, that I might enjoy the prospect. I had not travelled three miles before I perceived a strong smell of burning; at last the pocket of my coat, which was of cotton, burst out into flames, a spark having found its way into it: fortunately (not being insured) there was no property on the premises.

When the celebrated Colonel David Crocket first saw a locomotive, with the train smoking along the rail-road, he exclaimed, as it flew past him, "Hell in harness, by the 'tarnel!"

I may, in juxtaposition with this, mention an Indian idea. Nothing surprised the Indians so much at first, as the percussion for guns: they thought them the *ne plus ultra* of invention: when, therefore, an Indian was first shewn a locomotive, he reflected a little while, and then said, "I see—*percussion*."

There is a beautiful island, dividing the Falls of Niagara, called Goat Island: they have thrown a bridge across the rapids, so that you can now go over. A mill has already been erected there, which is a great pity; it is a contemptible disfigurement of nature's grandest work.

At the head of the island, which is surrounded by the rapids, exactly where the waters divide to run on each side of it, there is a small triangular portion of still or slack water. I perceived this, and went in to bathe. The line of the current on each side of it is plainly marked, and runs at the speed of nine or ten miles an hour; if you put your hand or foot a little way outside this line, they are immediately borne away by its force; if you went into it yourself, nothing could prevent your going down the falls. As I returned, I observed an ugly snake in my path, and I killed it. An American, who came up, exclaimed, "I reckon that's a *copper-head*, stranger! I never knew that they were in this island." I found out that I had killed a snake quite as venomous, if not more so, than a rattlesnake.

One never tires with these falls; indeed, it takes a week at least to find out all their varieties and beauties. There are some sweet spots on Goat Island, where you can meditate and be alone.

I witnessed, during my short stay here, that indifference to the destruction of life, so very remarkable in this country. The rail-car crushed the head of a child of about seven years old, as it was

going into the engine-house; the other children ran to the father, a blacksmith, who was at work at his forge close by, crying out, “Father, Billy killed.” The man put down his hammer, walked leisurely to where the boy lay, in a pool of his own blood, took up the body, and returned with it under his arm to his house. In a short time, the hammer rang upon the anvil as before.

The game of nine-pins is a favourite game in America, and very superior to what it is in England. In America, the ground is always covered properly over, and the balls are rolled upon a wooden floor, as correctly levelled as a billiard table. The ladies join in the game, which here becomes an agreeable and not too fatiguing (an) exercise. I was very fond of frequenting their alleys, not only for the exercise, but because, among the various ways of estimating character, I had made up my mind that there was none more likely to be correct, than the estimate formed by the manner in which people roll the balls, especially the ladies. There were some very delightful specimens of American females when I was this time at Niagara. We sauntered about the falls and wood in the day time, or else played at nine-pins; in the evening we looked at the moon, spouted verses, and drank mint juleps. But all that was too pleasant to last long: I felt that I had not come to America to play at nine-pins; so I tore myself away, and within the next twenty-four hours found myself at Toronto, in Upper Canada.

Toronto, which is the present capital and seat of government of Upper Canada, is, from its want of spires and steeples, by no means an imposing town, as you view it on entering the harbour. The harbour itself is landlocked, and when deepened will be very good. A great deal of money has been expended by the English government upon the Canadian provinces, but not very wisely. The Rideau and Willend canals are splendid works; they have nothing to compare with them in the United States; but they are too much in advance of the country, and will be of but little use for a long period, if the provinces do not go a-head faster than they do now. One half the money spent in making good roads through the provinces would have done more good, and would have much increased the value of property. The proposed rail-road from Hamilton to Detroit would be of greater importance; and if more money is to be expended on Upper Canada, it cannot be better disposed of than in this undertaking.

The minute you put your foot on shore, you feel that you are no longer in the United States; you are at once struck with the difference between the English and the American population, systems, and ideas. On the other side of the Lake you have much more apparent property, but much less real solidity and security. The houses and stores at Toronto are not to be compared with those of the American towns opposite. But the Englishman has built according to his means—the American, according to his expectations. The hotels and inns at Toronto are very bad; at Buffalo they are splendid: for the Englishman travels little; the American is ever on the move. The private houses of Toronto are built, according to the English taste and desire of exclusiveness, away from the road, and are embowered in trees; the American, let his house be ever so large, or his plot of ground however extensive, builds within a few feet of the road, that he may see and know what is going on. You do not perceive the bustle, the energy, and activity at Toronto, that you do at Buffalo, nor the profusion of articles in the stores; but it should be remembered that the Americans procure their articles upon credit, whilst at Toronto they proceed more cautiously. The Englishman builds his house and furnishes his store according to his means and fair expectations of being able to meet his acceptances. If an American has money sufficient to build a two-story house, he will raise it up to four stories on speculation. We must not, on one side, be dazzled with the effects of the credit system in America, nor yet be too hasty in condemning it. It certainly is the occasion of much over-speculation; but if the parties who speculate are ruined, provided the money has been laid out, as it usually is in America, upon real property—such as wharfs, houses, etcetera.—a new country becomes a gainer, as the improvements are made and remain, although they fall into other hands. And it should be further pointed out, that the Americans are justified in their speculations from the fact, that property improved rises so fast in value, that they are soon able to meet all claims and realise a handsome profit. They speculate on the future; but the future with them is not distant as it is with us, ten years in America being, as I

have before observed, equal to a century in Europe: they are therefore warranted in so speculating. The property in Buffalo is now worth one hundred times what it was when the first speculators commenced; for as the country and cities become peopled, and the communication becomes easy, so does the value of every thing increase.

Why, then, does not Toronto vie with Buffalo? Because the Canadas cannot obtain the credit which is given to the United States, and of which Buffalo has her portion. America has returns to make to England in her cotton crops: Canada has nothing; for her timber would be nothing, if it were not protected. She cannot, therefore, obtain credit as America does. What, then, do the Canadas require, in order to become prosperous? Capital!

I must not, however, omit to inform my readers that at Toronto I received a letter from a "Brother Author," who was polite enough to send me several specimens of his poetry; stating the remarkable fact, that he had never written a verse until he was past forty-five years of age; and that, as to the unfair accusation of his having plagiarised from Byron, it was not true, for he never had read Byron in his life. Having put the reader in possession of these facts, I shall now select one of his printed poems for his gratification:—

From the Regard the Author has for the
Ladies of Toronto,
He presents them with the following
Ode.
To the Ladies of the City of Toronto.

1.
How famed is our city
For the beauty and talents
Of our ladies, that's pretty
And *chaste* in their *sentiments.*

2.
The ladies of Toronto
Are fine, noble, and charming,
And are a great memento
To all, most fascinating.

3.
Our ladies are the best kind,
Of all others the most fine;
In their manners and their minds
Most refined and *genuine*.

4.
We are proud of our ladies,
For they are superior
To all other beauties
And others are inferior.

5.
How favoured is our land
To be honoured with the fair,

That is so majestic grand!
And to please them is our care.

6.

Who would not choose them before
All others that's to be found,
And think of others no more?
Their like is not in the world round.

*TS **Toronto**, 21st Jan. 1837.*

Volume One—Chapter Eighteen

Through Lake Ontario to Montreal, by rail road to Lake Champlain, and then by steamboat to Burlington.

Burlington is a pretty county town on the border of the Lake Champlain; there is a large establishment for the education of boys kept here by the Bishop of Vermont, a clever man: it is said to be well conducted, and one of the best in the Union. The bishop's salary, as bishop, is only five hundred dollars; as a preacher of the established church he receives seven hundred; whilst as a schoolmaster his revenue becomes very handsome. The bishop is just now in bad odour with the *majority*, for having published some very sensible objections to the Revivals and Temperance Societies.

Plattsburg.—This was the scene of an American triumph. I was talking with a States officer, who was present during the whole affair, and was much amused with his description of it. There appeared to be some fatality attending almost all our attacks upon America during the last war; and it should be remarked, that whenever the Americans entered upon our territory, they met with similar defeat. Much allowance must at course be made for ignorance of the country, and of the strength and disposition of the enemy's force; but certainly there was no excuse for the indecision shewn by the British general, with such a force as he had under his command.

Now that the real facts are known, one hardly knows whether to laugh or feel indignant. The person from whom I had the information is of undoubted respectability. At the time that our general advanced with an army of 7,000 Peninsular troops, there were but 1,000 militia at Plattsburg, those ordered out from the interior of the State not having arrived. It is true that there were 2,000 of the Vermont militia at Burlington opposite to Plattsburg, but when they were sent for, they refused to go there; they were alarmed at the preponderating force of the British, and they stood upon their State rights—i.e., militia raised in a State are not bound to leave it, being raised for the defence of that State alone. The small force at Plattsburg hardly knew whether to retreat or not; they expected large reinforcements under General McCoomb, but did not know when they would come. At last it was proposed and agreed to that they should spread themselves and keep up an incessant firing, but out of distance, so as to make the British believe they had a much larger force than they really possessed; and on this judicious plan they acted, and succeeded.

In the mean time, the British general was anxious for the assistance of the squadron on the lakes, under Commodore Downie, and pressed him to the attack of the American squadron then off Plattsburg. Some sharp remarks from the General proved fatal to our cause by water. Downie, stung by his insinuations, rushed inconsiderately into a *close* engagement. Now, Commodore Downie's vessels had all long guns. McDonough's vessels had only carronades. Had, therefore, Downie not thrown away this advantage, by engaging at close quarters, there is fair reason to suppose that the victory would have been ours, as he could have chosen his distance, and the fire of the American vessels would have been comparatively harmless; but he ran down close to McDonough's fleet, and engaged them broadside to broadside, and then the carronades of the Americans, being of heavy calibre, threw the advantage on their side. Downie was killed by the wind of a shot a few minutes after the commencement of the action. Still it was the hardest contested action of the war; Pring being well worthy to take Downie's place.

It was impossible to have done more on either side; and the gentleman who gave me this information added, that McDonough told him that so nicely balanced were the chances, that he took out his watch just before the British colours were hauled down, and observed, "If they hold out ten minutes more, it will be more than, I am afraid, we can do." As soon as the victory was decided on the part of the Americans, the British general commenced his retreat, and was followed by this handful of militia. In a day or two afterwards, General McCoomb came up, and a large force was poured in from all quarters.

There was something very similar and quite as ridiculous in the affair at Sackett's harbour. Our forces advancing would have cut off some hundreds of the American militia, who were *really* retreating, but by a road which led in such a direction as for a time to make the English commandant suppose that they were intending to take him in flank. This made him imagine that they must be advancing in large numbers, when, the fact was, they were running away from his superior force. He made a retreat; upon ascertaining which, the Americans turned back and followed him, harassing his rear.

I was told, at Baltimore, that had the English advanced, the American militia was quite ready to run away, not having the idea of opposing themselves to trained soldiers. It really was very absurd; but in many instances during the war, which have come to my knowledge, it was exactly this,—"If you don't run, I will; but if you will, I won't!"

The name given by the French to Vermont, designates the features of the country, which is composed of small mountains, covered with verdure to their summits; but the land is by no means good.

At the bottoms, on the banks of the rivers, the alluvial soil is rich, and, generally speaking, the land in this State admits of cultivation about half-way up the mountains; after which, it is fit for nothing but sheep-walks, or to grow small timber upon. I have travelled much in the Eastern States, and have been surprised to find how very small a portion of all of them is under cultivation, considering how long they have been settled; nor will there be more of the land taken up, I presume, for a long period; that is to say, not until the West is so over-peopled that a reflux is compelled to fall back into the Eastern States, and the crowded masses, like the Gulf-stream, find vent to the northward and eastward.

Set off by coach, long before day-light. There is something very gratifying when once you *are up*, in finding yourself up before the sun; you can repeat to yourself, "How doth the little busy bee," with such satisfaction. Some few stars still twinkled in the sky, winking like the eyelids of tired sentinels, but soon they were relieved, one after another, by the light of morning.

It was still dark when we started, and off we went, up hill and down hill—short steep *pitches*, as they term them here—at a furious rate. There was no level ground; it was all undulating, and very trying to the springs. But an American driver stops at nothing; he will flog away with six horses in hand; and it is wonderful how few accidents happen: but it is very fatiguing, and one hundred miles of American travelling by stage, is equal to four hundred in England.

There is much amusement to be extracted from the drivers of these stages, if you will take your seat with them on the front, which few Americans do, as they prefer the inside. One of the drivers, soon after we had changed our team, called out to the off-leader, as he flanked her with his whip. "Go along, you *no-tongued* crittur!"

"Why *no-tongued*?" enquired I.

"Well, I reckon she has no tongue, having bitten it off herself, I was going to say—but it wasn't exactly that, neither."

"How was it, then?"

"Well now, the fact is, that she is awful ugly," (ill-tempered); "she bites like a badger, and kicks up as high as the church-steeple. She's an almighty crittur to handle. I was trying to hitch her under-jaw like, with the halter, but she worretted so, that I could only hitch her tongue: she ran back, the end of the halter was fast to the ring, and so she left her tongue in the hitch—that's a *fact*!"

"I wonder it did not kill her; didn't she bleed very much? How does she contrive to eat her corn?"

"Well, now, she bled pretty considerable—but not to speak off. I did keep her *one day* in the stable, because I thought she might feel *queer*; since that she has worked in the team every day; and she'll eat her peck of corn with any horse in the stable. But her tongue is out, that's certain—so *she'll tell no more lies*!"

Not the least doubting my friend's veracity I, nevertheless, took an opportunity, when we changed, of ascertaining the fact; and her tongue was *half* of it out, that *is* the fact.

When we stopped, we had to shift the luggage to another coach. The driver, who was a slight man, was, for some time, looking rather puzzled at the trunks which lay on the road, and which he had to put on the coach: he tried to lift one of the largest, let it down again, and then beckoned to me:—

"I say, captain, them four large trunks be rather overmuch for me; but I guess you can master them, so just lift them up on the hind board for me."

I complied; and as I had to lift them as high as my head, they required all my strength.

"Thank ye, captain; don't trouble yourself any more, the rest be all right, and I can manage them myself."

The Americans never refuse to assist each other in such difficulties as this. In a young country they must assist each other, if they wish to be assisted themselves—and there always will be a mutual dependence. If a man is in a *fix* in America, every one stops to assist him, and expects the same for himself.

Bellows Falls, a beautiful, romantic spot on the Connecticut River, which separates the States of New Hampshire and Vermont. The masses of rocks through which the river forces its way at the Falls, are very grand and imposing; and the surrounding hills, rich with the autumnal tints, rivet the eye. On these masses of rocks are many faces, cut out by the tribe of Pequod Indians, who formerly used to fish in their waters. Being informed that there was to be a militia muster, I resolved to attend it.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.