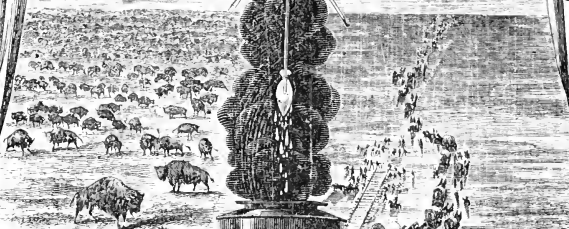


BUFFALO



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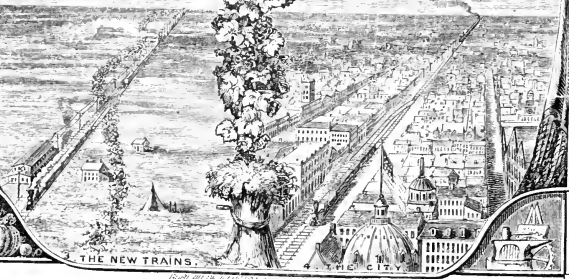
2. THE OLD TRAINS.

LAND

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3. ROADMAKER.

4. SKELETON PATH.



5. THE NEW TRAINS.

6. THE CITY.

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BUFFALO LAND:

AN

AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT

OF THE

*Discoveries, Adventures, and Mishaps of a Scientific
and Sporting Party*

IN THE WILD WEST;

WITH

GRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS OF THE COUNTRY; THE RED MAN, SAVAGE
AND CIVILIZED; HUNTING THE BUFFALO, ANTELOPE,
ELK, AND WILD TURKEY; ETC., ETC.

REplete WITH INFORMATION, WIT, AND HUMOR.

The Appendix Comprising a Complete Guide for Sportsmen and Emigrants.

BY

W. E. WEBB,

OF TOPEKA, KANSAS.

Profusely Illustrated

FROM ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPHS, AND ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY HENRY WORRALL.

CINCINNATI AND CHICAGO:

E. HANNAFORD & COMPANY.

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TO

The Primeval Man,

The Original Westerner, and First Buffalo Hunter,

This Work is Dedicated,

WITH PROFOUND REGARD,

BY THE AUTHOR.

438920



BUFFALO LAND.

BY OUR TAMMANY SACHEM.

THERE'S a wonderful land far out in the West,
Well worthy a visit, my friend ;
There, Puritans thought, as the sun went to rest,
Creation itself had an end.
'T is a wild, weird spot on the continent's face,
A wound which is ghastly and red,
Where the savages write the deeds of their race
In blood that they constantly shed.
The graves of the dead the fair prairies deface,
And stamp it the kingdom of dread.

The emigrant trail is a skeleton path ;
You measure its miles by the bones ;
There savages struck, in their merciless wrath,
And now, after sunset, the moans,
When tempests are out, fill the shuddering air,
And ghosts flit the wagons beside,
And point to the skulls lying grinning and bare
And beg of the teamsters a ride ;
Sometimes 't is a father with snow on his hair,
Again, 'tis a youth and his bride.

What visions of horror each valley could tell,
If Providence gave it a tongue !
How often its Eden was changed to a hell,
In which a whole train had been flung ;

How death cry and battle-shout frightened the birds,
And prayers were as thick as the leaves,
And no one to catch the poor dying one's words
But Death, as he gathered his sheaves:
You see the bones bleaching among the wild herds,
In shrouds that the field spider weaves.

That era is passing—another one comes,
The era of steam and the plow,
With clangor of commerce and factory hums,
Where only the wigwam is now.
Like mist of the morning before the bright sun,
The cloud from the land disappears ;
The Spirit of Murder his circle has run
And fled from the march of the years ;
The click of machine drowns the click of the gun,
And day hides the night time of tears.

PREFACE.

THE purpose of this work is to make the reader better acquainted with that wild land which he has known from childhood, as the home of the Indian and the buffalo. The Rocky Mountain chain, distorted and rugged, has been aptly called the colossal vertebræ of our continent's broad back, and from thence, as a line, the plains, weird and wonderful, stretch eastward through Colorado, and embrace the entire western half of Kansas.

Fortune, not long since, threw in my way an invitation, which I gladly accepted, to join a semi-scientific party, since somewhat known to fame through various articles in the newspaper press, in a sojourn of several months on the great plains. At a meeting held with due solemnity on the eve of starting, the Professor (to whom the reader will be introduced in the proper connection) was chosen leader of the expedition, while to my lot fell the

office of editor of the future record, or rather Grand Scribe of what we were pleased to call our "Log Book." The latter now lies before me, in all its glory of shabby covers and dirty pages. Its soiled face is as honorable as that of the laborer who comes from his task in a well harvested field. Out of the sheaves gathered during our journey, I shall try and take such portions as may best supply the mental cravings of the countless thousands who hunger for the life and the lore of the far West.

I have given the mistakes as well as triumphs of our expedition, and the members of the party will readily recognize their familiar camp names. The disguise will probably be pleasant, as few like to see their failures on public parade, preferring rather to leave these in barracks, and let their successes only appear at review.

The plains have a face, a people, and a brute creation, peculiarly their own, and to these our party devoted earnest study. The expedition presented a rare opportunity of becoming acquainted with the game of the country; and, in writing the present volume, my aim has been to make it so far a text-book for amateur hunters that they may become at once conversant with the habits of the game, and the best manner of killing it. The time is not far distant, when the plains and the Rocky

Mountains will be sought by thousands annually, as a favorite field for sport and recreation.

Another and still larger class, it is hoped, will find much of interest and value in the following pages. From every state in the Union, people are constantly passing westward. We found emigrant wagons on spots from which the Indians had just removed their wigwams. Multitudes more are now on the way, with the earnest purpose of founding homes and, if possible, of finding fortunes. In order to aid this class, as well as the sportsman, I have gathered in an appendix such additional information as may be useful to both.

The scientific details of our trip will probably be published in proper form and time, by the savans interested. In regard to these, my object has been simply to chronicle such matters as made an impression upon my own mind, being content with what cream might be gathered by an amateur's skimming, while the more bulky milk should be saved in capacious scientific buckets.

Professor Cope, the well known naturalist, of the Academy of Sciences, Philadelphia, received for examination and classification the most valuable fossils we obtained, and to him I am indebted for a large amount of most interesting and valuable

scientific matter, which will be found embodied in chapters twenty-third and twenty-fourth.

The illustrations of men and brutes in this work are studies from life. Whenever it was possible, we had photographs taken.

The plains, it must be said, are a tract with which Romance has had much more to do than History. Red men, brave and chivalrous, and unnatural buffalo, with the habits of lions, exist only in imagination. In these pages, my earnest endeavor, when dealing with actualities, has been to "hold the mirror up to Nature," and to describe men, manners, and things as they are in real life upon the frontiers, and beyond, to-day.

W. E. W.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, *May*, 1872.

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BUFFALO LAND.

CHAPTER I.

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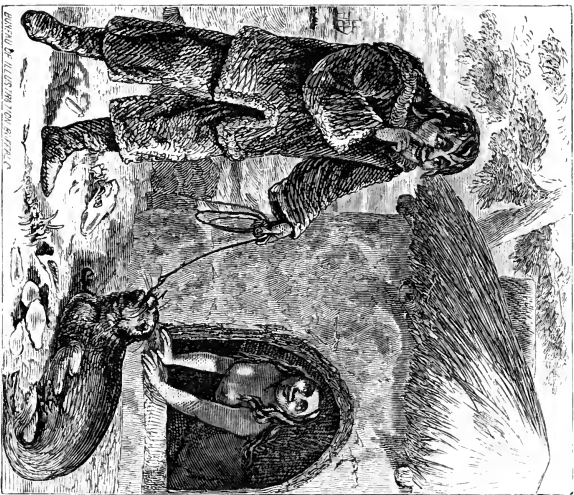
THE great plains—the region of country in which our expedition sojourned for so many months—is wilder, and by far more interesting, than those solitudes over which the Egyptian Sphynx looks out. The latter are barren and desolate, while the former teem with their savage races and scarcely more savage beasts. The very soil which these tread is written all over with a history of the past, even its surface giving to science wonderful and countless fossils of those ages when the world was young and man not yet born.

At first, it was rather unsettled which way the steps of our party would turn; between unexplored territory and that newly acquired, there were several fields open which promised much of interest. Originally, our company numbered a dozen; but Alaska tempted a portion of our savans, and to the fishy and frigid maiden they yielded, drawn by a strange predilection for train-oil and seal meat toward the land of

furs. For the remainder of our party, however, life under the Alaskan's tent-pole had no charms. Our decision may have been influenced somewhat by the seafaring man with whom our friends were to sail. The real name of this son of Neptune was Samuels, but our party called him, as it savored more of salt water, Captain Walrus, of the bark Harpoon. This worthy, according to his own statement, had been born on a whaler, weaned among the Esquimeaux, and, moreover, had frozen off eight toes "trying to winter it at our recent purchase." He evidently disliked to have scientific men aboard, intent on studying eclipses and seals. "A heathenish and strange people are the Alaskans," Walrus was wont to say. "What is not Indian is Russian, and a compound of the latter and aboriginal is a mixture most villainous. One portion of the partnership anatomy takes to brandy, while the other absorbs train-oil, and so a half-breed Alaskan heathen is always prepared for spontaneous combustion, and if rubbed the wrong way, flames up instantly. He is always hot for murder, and if you throw cold water on his designs, his oily nature sheds it."

And many a yarn did the captain spin concerning their strange customs. Sealing a marriage contract consisted in the warrior leaving a fat seal at the hole of the hut, where his intended crawled in to her home privileges of smoke and fish. Their favorite game was "old sledge," played with prisoners to shorten their captivity.

All this, and much more, probably equally true, we had picked up of Alaskan history, and at one time our chests had been packed for a voyage on the Harpoon; but at the final council the west carried it



ALASKAN LOVERS—SEALING THE CONTRACT.



ALASKAN GAME OF OLD SLEDGE.



against the north, and our steps were directed toward the setting sun, instead of the polar star.

The expedition afforded unexcelled facilities for seeing Buffalo Land. It was composed of good material, and pursued its chosen path successfully, though under difficulties which would have turned back a less determined party.

None of our company, I trust, will consider it an unwarrantable license which recounts to others the personal peculiarities and mistakes about which we joked so freely while in camp. It was generally understood, before we parted, that the adventures should be common stock for our children and children's children. Why should not the great public share in it also?

Let the reader place before him a checker-board, and allow it to represent Kansas, whose shape and outline it much resembles; the half nearest him will stand for the eastern or settled portion of the State, of which the other half is embraced in Buffalo Land proper. It is with the latter that we have first to do, as with it we first became acquainted.

Our party entered the State at Kansas City, and took the cars for Topeka, its capital. During our morning ride through the valley of the Kaw, memory went backward to the years when “Bleeding Kansas” was the signal-cry of emancipation. When gray old Time, a decade and a half ago, was writing the history of those bright children of Freedom, the united sisterhood, a virgin arm reached over his shoulder, and a fair young hand, stained with its own life-

blood, wrote on the page toward which all the world was gazing, "I am Kansas, latest-born of America. I would be free, yet they would make me a slave. Save me, my sisters!" The great heart of our nation was sorely distressed. Conscience pointed to one path—Policy, that rank hypocrite, to another.

And so it was that the young queen, with her grand domain in the West, struggled forward to lay her fealty at the feet of our great mother, Liberty. She made a body-guard of her own sons, and their number was quickly swelled by brave hearts from the north, east, and west. The new territory, begging admission as a State, became a battle-ground. Slavery had reached forth its hand to grasp the new State and fresh soil, but the mutilated member was drawn back with wounds which soon reached, corrupted and destroyed the body. In this land of the Far West a nation of young giants had been suddenly developed, and Kansas was forever won for freedom.

But there was yet another enemy and another danger. Westward, toward Colorado, the savage's tomahawk and knife glittered, and struck among the affrighted settlements. *Ad Astra per Aspera*, "to the stars through difficulties," the State exclaims on the seal, and to the stars, through blood, its course has been.

Those old pages of history are too bloody to be brought to light in the bright present, and we purpose turning them only enough to gather what will be now of practical use. Kansas suffered cruelly, and brooded over her wrongs, but she has long since struck hands with her bitterer foe. Most of the "Border

Ruffians" ripened on gallows trees, or fell by the sword, years ago. A few, however, are yet spared, to cheer their old age by riding around in desolate woods at midnight, wrapped in damp nightgowns, and masked in grinning death-heads. Although the mists of shadow-land are chilling their hearts, yet those organs, at the cry of blood, beat quick again, like regimental drums, for action.

The Kaw or the Kansas River, the valley of which we were traversing, is the principal stream of the State—in length to the mouth of the Republican one hundred and fifty miles, and above that, under the name of Smoky Hill, three hundred miles more.

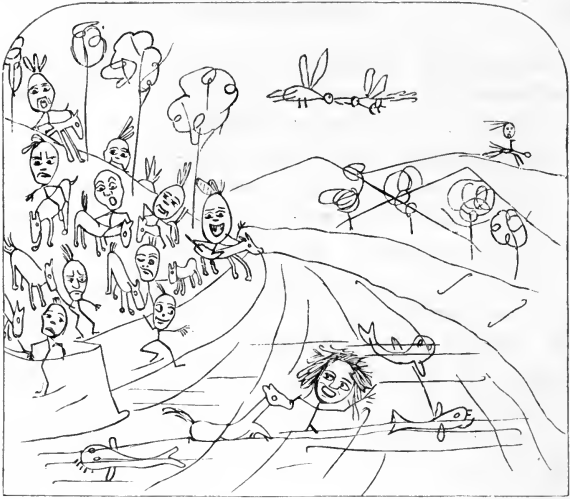
The "Smoky Hill trail" is a familiar name in many an American home. It was the great California path, and many a time the demons of the plain gloated over fair hair, yet fresh from a mother's touch and blessing. And many a faint and thirsty traveler has flung himself with a burst of gratitude on the sandy bed of the desolate river, and thanked the Great Giver of all good for the concealed life found under the sand, and with the strength thus sucked from the bosom of our much-abused mother, he has pushed onward until at length the grand mountains and great parks of Colorado burst upon his delighted vision.

About noon we arrived at Topeka, the capital, well situated on the south bank of the river, having a comfortable, well-to-do air, which suggests the quiet satisfaction of an honest burgher after a morning of toil. The slavery billow of agitation rolled even thus far from beyond the border of the state. Armed men

rode over the beautiful prairies, some east, some west—one band to transplant slavery from the tainted soil of Missouri, another to pluck it up.

A small party of Free State men settled upon this beautiful prairie. South flowed the Waukarusa, south and east the Shunganunga, and west and north the Kaw or Kansas. Here thrived a bulbous root, much loved by the red man, and here lazy Pottawatomies gathered in the fall to dig it. In size and somewhat in shape, it resembled a goose egg, and had a hard, reddish brown shell, and an interior like damaged dough. The Indian gourmands ate it greedily and called it "Topeka." From the two or three families of refugee Free State men the town grew up, and from the Indian root it took its name. Its christening took place in the first cabin erected, and it is reported that a now prominent banker of the town stood sponsor, with his back against the door, refusing any egress until the name of his choice was accepted. It is even affirmed that one opposing city founder was pulled back by his coat-tail from an attempted escape up the wide chimney.

The old Indian love of commemorating events by significant names is well illustrated in Kansas. One example may be given here. Waukarusa once opposed its swollen tide to an exploring band of red men. Now, from time beyond ken, the noble savage has been illustrious for the ingenuity with which he lays all disagreeable duties upon the shoulders of the patient squaw. He may ride to their death, in free wild sport, the bison multitudes; but their skins



“WAUKARUSA.”



“TOASTS HIS MOCCASINED FEET BY THE FIRE.”



must be converted into marketable robes, and the flesh into jerked meat, by the ugly and over-worked partner of his bosom. While she pins the raw hide to earth, and bends patiently over, fleshing it with horn hatchet for weary hours, the stronger vessel, his abdominal recesses wadded with buffalo meat, toasts his moccasined feet by the fire, fills his lungs with smoke from villainous killikinick, and muses soothingly of white scalps and happy hunting grounds.

Ox-like maiden, happy "big injun!" you both belong to an age and a history well nigh past, and let us rejoice that it is so.

But to return to the band long since gathered into aboriginal dust whom we left pausing on the banks of the Waukarusa. "Deep water, bad bottom!" grunted the braves, and, nothing doubting it, one loving warrior pushed his wife and her pony over the bank to test the matter. From the middle of the tide the squaw called back, "Waukarusa" (thigh deep), and soon had gained the opposite bank in safety. Then and there the creek received its name, "Waukarusa."

We procured a remarkable sketch, in the well known Indian style of high art, commemorative of this event. It has always struck us that the savage order of drawing resembles very much that of the ancient Egyptian—except in the matter of drawing at sight, with bow or rifle, on the white man.

CHAPTER II.

A CHAPTER OF INTRODUCTIONS—PROFESSOR PALEOZOIC—TAMMANY SACHEM—DOCTOR
PYTHAGORAS—GENUINE MUGGS—COLON AND SEMI-COLON—SHAMUS DOBEEN—
TENACIOUS GRIPE—BUGS AND PHILOSOPHY—HOW GRIPE BECAME A REPUBLICAN.

WHEN permission was given me to draw upon the journal of our trip for such material as I might desire, it was stipulated that the camp-names should be adhered to. A company on the plains is no respecter of persons, and titles which might have caused offense before starting were received in good part, and worn gracefully thenceforward.

Our leader, Professor Paleozoic, ordinarily existed in a sort of transition state between the primary and tertiary formations. He could tell cheese from chalk under the microscope, and show that one was full of the fossil and the other of the living evidences of animal life. A worthy man, vastly more troubled with rocks on the brain than "rocks" in the pocket.

Learning had once come near making him mad, but from this sad fate he was happily saved by a somewhat Pickwickian blunder. While in Kansas, some years since, he penetrated a remote portion of the wilderness, where, as he was happy in believing, none but the native savage, or, possibly, the primeval man, could ever have tarried long enough to leave any sign behind. Imagine his astonishment and

delight, therefore, when from the tangled grass he drew an upright stone, with lines chiseled on three sides and on the fourth a rude figure resembling more than any thing else one of those odd fictions which geologists call restored specimens. On a ledge near were huge depressions like foot-prints. They were foot-prints of birds, no doubt, and quite as perfect as those found in more favored localities, and from which whole skeletons had been constructed by learned men.

Both specimens were forwarded to, and at the expense of, noted savans of the East. Our professor called the pillar from the tangled grass an altar raised by early races to the winds. The short lines, he suggested, designated the different points of the compass, while the rude figure was intended for Boreas. Our scientists toward the rising sun met the boxes at the depot, paid charges, and careful draymen bore them to the expectant museum.

One hour after, seven wise men might have been seen wending their way sorrowfully homeward, with hands crossed meditatively under their coat-tails, and pocket vacuums where lately were modern coins. Government clearly had a case against our professor. Science decided that he had removed a stone telling in surveyors' signs just what section and township it was on. The figure which he had imagined a heathen idea of Boreas was the fancy of some surveyor's idle moment—a shocking sketch of an impossible buffalo. Whether the bird-tracks had a common origin, or were hewn by the hatchets of the red man, is a point still under discussion.

A worthy man, as before remarked, was the professor, full of knowledge, genial in camp, and, having rubbed his eye-tooth on a section stone, geological authority of the highest order. When the professor said a particular rock belonged to the cretaceous formation, one might safely conclude that no modern influences had been at work either on that rock or in that vicinity. That question was settled.

Next came Tammany Sachem, our heavy weight and our mystery. Before joining our party, he had been a New York alderman, noted for prowess in annual aldermanic clam-bakes at Coney Island. He was wont to exhibit a medal, the prize of such a tournament, on which several immense clams were racing to the griddle, for the honor of being devoured by the city fathers.

A green-ribbed hunting coat traversed his rotundity, which had the generous swell of a puncheon. His face was reddish, and his nose like a beacon-light against a sunset sky. When you thought him awake, he was half asleep; when you thought him asleep, he was wide awake. A look of extreme happiness always beamed on his face when misfortunes impended. Per contra, successes made him suspicious and morose. New York aldermen have always been a puzzle to the nation at large. Perhaps our friend's facial contradictions, put on originally as one of the tricks of the trade, had become chronic from long usage. We have since learned that the sachems of Tammany laugh the loudest and joke the most freely when under affliction.

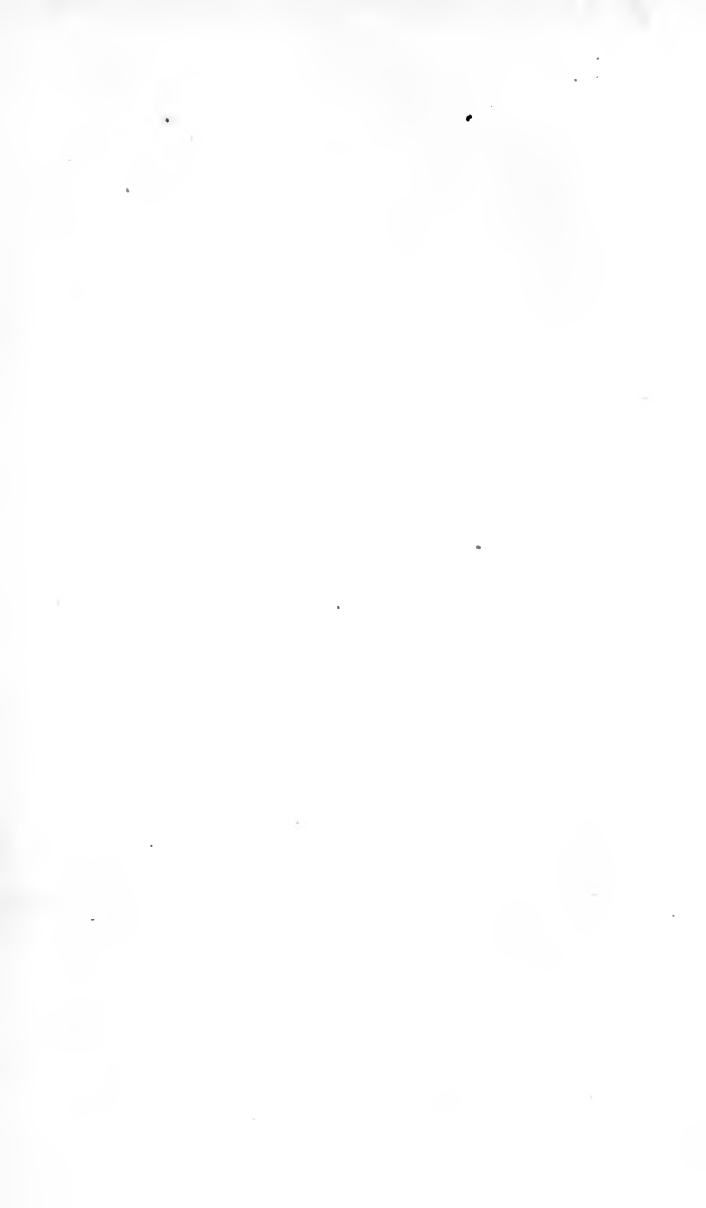
When I was appointed editor, the Sachem volun-



THE PROFESSOR—A REMARKABLE STONE.



TAMMANY SACHM—PROSPECTIVE AND RETROSPECTIVE.



teered as local reporter. Many of the items he gathered are entered in our log-book in rhyme, and to these pages some of them are transferred verbatim. In wooing the muses, our alderman certainly acted out of character. The ideal poet is thin instead of obese, and he is a reckless innovator who lays claim to any measure of the divine afflatus without possessing either a pale face, thin form, or a garret.

As to what drove a New York alderman to the society of buffaloes, we had but one explanation, and that was Sachem's own. We knew that he disliked women in every form, Sorosis and Anti-Sorosis, bitter and sweet alike. According to his statement, made to us in good faith, and which I chronicle in the same, Cupid had once essayed to drive a dart into Sachem's heart, but, in doing so, the barb also struck and wounded his liver. As his love increased, his health failed. His liver became affected in the same ratio as his heart. This was touching our alderman in a tender spot. Imagine a New York city father without digestion; what a subject of scorn he would become to his constituency! Our alderman fled from Cupid, clams, and his beloved Gotham, and sought health and buffalo on the plains of Kansas. As he remarked to us pathetically: "A good liver makes a good husband. Indigestion frightens conubial bliss out of the window. Pills, my boy, pills is the quietus of love. If you wish Cupid to leave, give him a dose of 'em. The liver, instead of the heart, is at the bottom of half the suicides."

Doctor Pythagoras in years was fifty, and in stature

short. His favorite theory was "development," and this he carried to depths which would have astonished Darwin himself. How humble he used to make us feel by digging at the roots of the family tree until its uttermost fiber lay between an oyster and a sponge! (Rumor charged him with waiting so long for diseases to develop, that his patients developed into spirits.) While he indorsed Darwin, however, he also admired Pythagoras. The latter's doctrine of metempsychosis he Darwinized. In their transmigration from one body to another, souls developed, taking a higher order of being with each change, until finally fitted to enter the land of spirits. The soul of a jack-of-all-trades was one which developed slowly, and picked up a new craft with each new body. Like Pythagoras, he remembered several previous bodies which his soul had animated, among others that of the original Rarey, who existed in Egypt some centuries before the modern usurper was born. If souls proved entirely unworthy during the probationary or human period, they were cast back into the brute creation to try it over again. To this class belonged prize-fighters, Congressmen, and the like. With them the past was a blank—an unsuccessful problem washed from the slate. The doctor had a hobby that a vicious horse was only a vicious man entered into a lower order of being. To demonstrate this he had traveled, and still persisted in traveling, on eccentric horses, for the purpose of reasoning with them. But his Egyptian lore had been lost in transmission, and his falls, kicks, and bites became as many as the moons which had passed over his head.

Genuine Muggs was an Englishman. The antipodes of Tammany Sachem, who would not believe any thing, Muggs swallowed every thing. He had already absorbed so much in this way that he knew all about the United States before visiting it. Given half a chance, he would undoubtedly have told the savage more about the latter's habits than the aborigine himself knew. It was positively impossible for him to learn any thing. His round British body was so full of indisputable facts that another one would have burst it. In the Presidential alphabet, from Alpha Washington to Omega Grant, he knew all of our rulers' tricks and trades, and understood better the crooked ways of the White House than our own talented Jenkins.

British phlegm incased his soul, and British leather his feet. From heel to crown he was completely a Briton. His mutton-chop whiskers came just so far, and the h's dropped in and out of his utterings in a perfectly natural way. In the Briton's alphabet, Sachem used to remark, the *I* is so big that it is no wonder the *H* is often crowded out.

Muggs was a fair representative of the average Englishman who has traveled somewhat. The eye-teeth of these persons are generally cut with a slash, and they are forever after sore-mouthed. For a maiden effort they never suck knowledge gently in, but attempt a gulp which strangles. The consequence of this hasty acquiring is a bloated condition. The partly-traveled Briton seems, at first acquaintance, full and swollen with knowledge; but should

the student of learning apply the prick, the result obtained will generally prove to be—gas.

Over our great country, some of the family of Muggs meet one at every turn. Often they scurry along solitarily, but occasionally in groups. In the former case they are unsocial to every body—in the latter to every body except their own party. The bliss which comes from ignorance must be of a thoroughly enjoyable nature, for the Muggses certainly do enjoy themselves. They will pass through a country, remaining completely uncommunicative and self-wrapped, and know less of it after six months' traveling than an American in two. The professor says he has met them in the lonely parks of the Rocky Mountains and in the fishing and hunting solitudes of the Canadas. If they have been an unusually long time without seeing a human being, they may possibly catch at an eye-glass and fling themselves abruptly into a few remarks. But it is in a tone which says, plainer than words, "No use in your going any further, man; I have absorbed all the beauties and knowledge of this locality."

It is a rare treat to see a coach delivered of Muggs at a country inn. "Hi, porter, look hout for my luggage, you know. Tell the publican some chops, rare, and lively now, and a mug of hale, and, if I can 'ave it, a room to myself." If the latter request is granted, and you are inquisitive enough to take a peep, you may see Muggs sturdily surveying himself in the glass, and giving certain satisfied pats to his cravat and waistcoat, as if to satisfy them that they covered a Briton. Could the mirror which reflects

therefore, why the professor for short should call him, as he nearly always did, "Semi."

Shamus Dobeen, our cook and body-servant, according to his own account, was the child of an impoverished but noble Irish family. Indeed, we doubt if any Irishman was ever promoted from shovel laborer to body-servant without suddenly remembering that he was "descended" from a line of kings. At the time Shamus was added to the population of Ireland, the patrimonial estate had dwindled down to a peat bog. As this soon "petered out," Shamus went from the exhausted moor into the cold world. He had been by turns expelled patriot, dirt disturber on new railroads, gunner on a Confederate cruiser, and high private in a Union regiment. The position of gunner he lost by touching off a piece before the muzzle had been run out, in consequence of which part of the vessel's side went off suddenly with the gun. Captured, he readily became a Union soldier, and could, without doubt, have transformed himself into a Cheyenne, or a Patagonian, had occasion for either ever required.

While in Topeka, our party made the acquaintance of Tenacious Gripe, a well-known Kansas politician, and who attached himself to us for the trip. Every person in the State knew him, had known him in territorial times, and would know him until either the State or he ceased to be.

Flung headlong from somewhere into Kansas during the "border ruffian" period, he would probably have passed as rapidly out of it had he been allowed to do so peaceably. But as the slavery party en-

deavored to push him, he concluded to stick. At that particular time, he was a moderate Democrat or conservative Republican, and consequently had no particular principles. But the slavery party supposed he had, and to them accordingly he became an object of suspicion. They assumed the aggressive, and he at once resolved into a staunch Republican. Had the latter first struck him, he would have been as staunch a Democrat. And Gripe has never known how near he came to being the latter. The Republicans had just decided to order him out of the state as a border ruffian spy, when the Democrats took action and did so for his not being one. Those were troublous times. He went to the front at once in the antislavery ranks, and has stayed there ever since. Sore-headed men are apt to become famous. There were those in our late war who were kicked by adversity into the very arms of Fame.

Our friend had been in both the upper and lower houses of the State Legislature, and had rolled Congressional logs, moreover, until he was hardly happy without having his hands on one.

own legs as well. His tail having been cut short in youth, and retrimmed in old age, the outfit made but a sorry figure going up the street. The Professor said it suggested the idea of some fossil vertebra, with a paint brush attached to its end, running away with a geological student.

After the return and cries for more bids, Muggs must have winked at the auctioneer—possibly, to slyly telegraph him the fact that in “Hengland” they were up to such games. At least the auctioneer so declared, and advancing the price one dollar in accordance therewith, finally knocked the brute down to him. Then the British wrath bubbled and boiled. The auctioneer was inexorable. Muggs *had* winked, and that was an advanced bid, according to commercial custom the land over. Articles were often sold simply by the vibration of an eyelash, and not a word uttered.

The Professor remarked that in law winks would doubtless be accepted as evidence. It was a recognized principle of the statutes that he who winked at a matter acquiesced in it, and indeed such signals were often more expressive than words. Sachem sustained this point, and added further that he had known many a man’s head broken on account of an injudicious wink.

The crowd, with almost unanimous voice, pronounced the auctioneer right and Muggs wrong.

“Me take the brute!” exclaimed the indignant Briton; “why he can ’ardly stand up long enough to be knocked down. Except in France, he could be put to no earthly use whatever. ’Is knees knock to-

gether in an ague quartette, and 'is tail—look at it! It's hincapable of knocking a fly off; looks more like flying off hitself!" Muggs further declared the sale was an attempt on the owner's part to evade the health officer, who would have been around, in a couple of days, to have the carcass removed.

The auctioneer waxed belligerent, the crowd noisy, and Muggs, like a true Englishman, secured peace at the price of British gold. The horse was on his hands, having barely escaped being on the town, and an enthusiastic crowd of urchins escorted the purchase to a livery stable. Muggs christened the animal *Cynocephalus*, and soon afterward sold him to Mr. Colon, who was of an economical turn, for the use of his son Semi.

"I have heard," said the thoughtful father, "that the buffalo grass of the plains is very nourishing. All that the poor steed needs is care and fat pastures. Semi can give him the former, and over the latter our future journey lies. I have also learned that what is especially needed in a hunting horse is steadiness, and this quality the animal certainly possesses."

From some months' acquaintance with the purchase, we can say that *Cynocephalus* was steady to a remarkable degree. We are firmly persuaded that a heavy battery might have fired a salute over his back without moving him, unless, possibly, the concussion knocked him down.

Our first hunting morning, the second day preceding our hegira westward, came to us with a clear sky, the sun shedding a mellow warmth, and the air

full of those exhilarating qualities which our lungs afterward drank in so freely on the plains. Indian summer, delightful anywhere, is especially so in Kansas.

From the advance guard of the winter king not a single chilling zephyr steals forward among the tarrying ones of summer. Soothing and gentle as when laden with spicy fragrance south, they here shower the whole land with sunbeams. Earth no longer seems a heavy, inert mass, but floats in that smoky, fleecy atmosphere with which artists delight so much to wrap their angels. It is as if the warmer, lighter clouds of sunny weather were nestling close to earth, frightened from the skies, like a flock of white swans, at the October howls of winter. But I never could agree with those writers who call this season dreamy. If such it be, it is surely a dream of motion. All nature appears quickened. The inhabitants of the air have commenced their southern pilgrimage, and the oldest and leading ganders may be heard croaking, day-time and night-time, to their wedge-shaped flocks their narrative of summer experiences at the Arctic circle, and their commands for the present journey.

Sachem, I find, has recorded as a discovery in natural history that geese form their flocks in wedge shape that they may easier "make a split" for the south when Nature, with her north pole, stirs up their feeding and breeding-grounds in November gales, and changes their fields of operation into fields of ice. Sachem was sadly addicted to slang phrases.

All game, I may remark, is wilder at this season of the year than earlier. If the earth is dreaming,

its wild inhabitants certainly are not. Men, too, have thrown off the summer lethargy, and shave their neighbors as closely as ever. If any one thinks it a dreamy season of the year, let him test the matter practically by being a day or two behindhand with a payment.

In reply to a question, the professor told us that the smoky condition of the atmosphere was probably caused by the exhalation of phosphorus from decaying vegetation. Sachem remarked that out of twenty different objects which he had submitted for examination, and as many questions that he had asked, nine-tenths of the results contained phosphorus in some shape. It was becoming monotonous and dangerous.

While the party thus mused and speculated, we had come out into the open country, south-west of town, and were now approaching Webster's Mound, a cone-shaped hill from which we afterward obtained some excellent views. For the trip we had been supplied with two dogs, one a setter, belonging to the private secretary of the Governor, and the other a pointer, the property of a real estate dealer. The former was an ancient and venerable animal. The rheumatism was seized of his backbone and held high revel upon the juices which should have lubricated the joints. Even his tail wagged with a jerk, inclining the body to whichever side it had last swung. He was so full of rheumatism that whenever he scented a chicken the pain evoked by the excitement caused him to howl with anguish. The pointer, per contra, was hale and swift, but had lost one eye; and a shot from

the same charge which destroyed that organ, rattled also on his left ear-drum, and that membrane no longer responded to the shouts of the hunter. On one side he could see, and not hear—on the other, hear, but not see. Nevertheless, with gestures for the left view, and shouts on the right, fair work might still be obtained. Both dogs rejoiced in the uncommon name of Rover, and both possessed that most excellent of all points in such animals, a steady point.

If any of my readers are fond of field-sports, and have not yet shot prairie-chickens over a dog, let them take their guns and hie to the West, and taste for themselves of this rare sport. With the wide prairie around him, keeping the bird in full view during its passage through the air, one can choose his distance for firing and witness the full effect of his shot. I think the brief instant when the flight of the bird is checked and it drops head-foremost to earth, is the sweetest moment of all to the hunter.

CHAPTER IV.

CHICKEN-SHOOTING CONTINUED—A SCIENTIFIC PARTY TAKE THE BIRDS ON THE WING—EVILS OF FAST FIRING—AN OLD-FASHIONED "SLOW SHOT"—THE HABITS OF THE PRAIRIE-CHICKEN—ITS PROSPECTIVE EXTINCTION—MODE OF HUNTING IT—THE GOPHER SCALP LAW.

WE had left the road and were now driving over the fine prairie skirting Webster's Mound, the grass being about a foot high and affording excellent cover. Taking advantage of its being matted so closely from the early frosts, the old cocks hid under the thick tufts and called for close work on the part of our dogs.

Back and forth across our path these intelligent animals ranged, the one fifty yards or so to our right, the other as many to our left, crossing and re-crossing, with open mouths drinking in eagerly the tainted breeze. This latter was in our favor, and both dogs suddenly joined company and worked up into it, with outstretched noses pointing to game that was evidently close ahead.

The pointer crawled cautiously, like a tiger, his spotted belly sweeping the earth, and his tail, which had been lashing rapidly an instant before, gradually stiffening. He would open his mouth suddenly, drink in a quick, deep draught of air, and, closing the jaws again, hold it until obliged to take another

respiration. He seemed as loath to let the scent of the chicken pass from his nostrils as a hungry news-boy is to quit the savory precincts of Delmonico's kitchen window. The setter's old bones appeared to renew their youth under the excitement, and he was as active as a retired war-horse suddenly plunged into battle.

Both dogs came simultaneously to a point—tails curved up and rigid, each body motionless as if cut in marble and one forepaw lifted. No wonder so many men are wild with a passion for hunting. Kind Providence smiles upon the legitimate sport from conception to close, and gives us a *posé* to start with fascinating to any lover of the beautiful, whether hunter or not. But one must not pause to moralize while dogs are on the point, or he will have more philosophy than chickens.

All the party had got safely to ground and were behind the dogs, with guns ready and eyes eagerly fastened on the thick grass which concealed its treasure as completely as if it had been a thousand miles below its roots, or on the opposite side of this mundane sphere in China. Not a thing was visible within fifty yards of our noses save two dogs standing motionless, with stiffened tails and eyes fixed on, and nozzles pointed toward, a spot in the sea of brown, withered grass, not ten feet away.

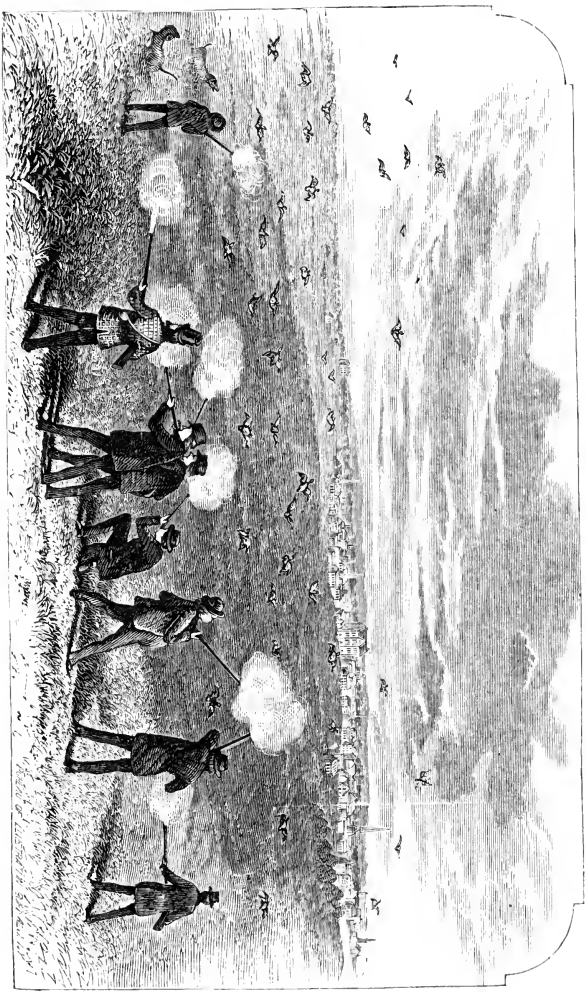
The Professor took out his lens, Mr. Colon let down the hammers of his gun and cocked them again, to be sure all was right, while Sachem wore a puzzled expression as if undecided whether the attitude of the dogs indicated any thing particular or not. The

grass nodded and rustled in the light wind, but not a blade moved to indicate the presence of any living thing beneath it, while the dogs remained as if petrified.

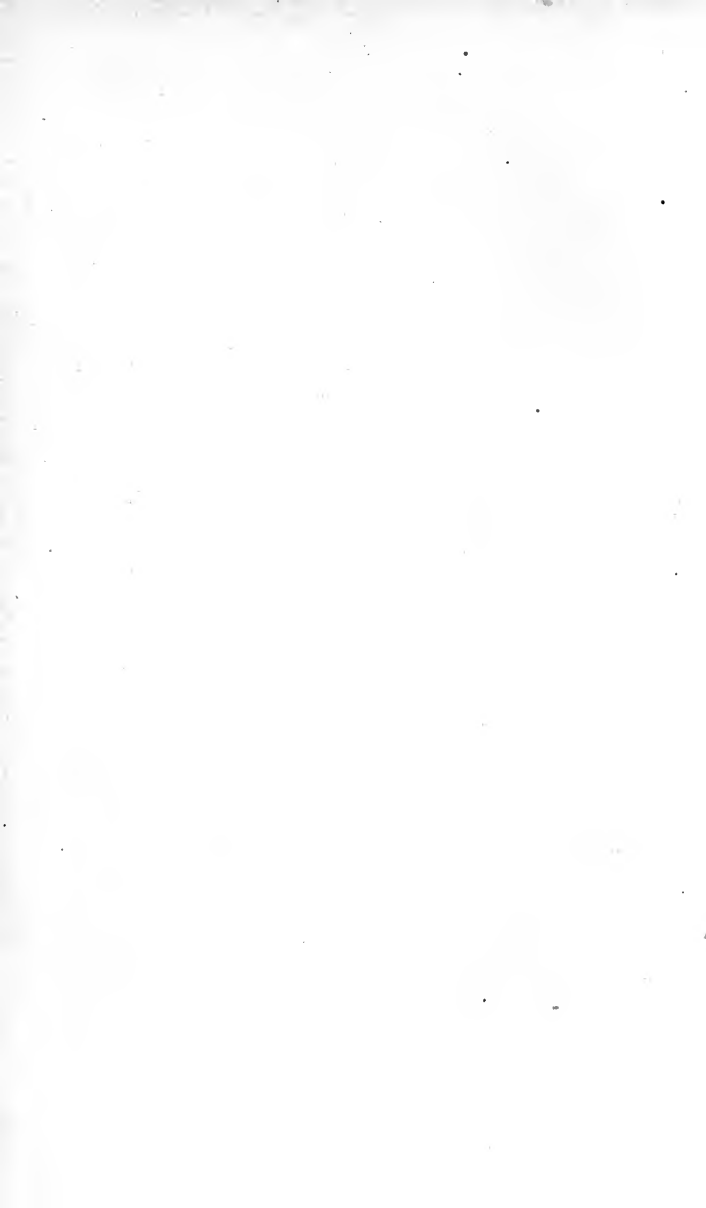
The Professor said it was very remarkable, and wondered what had better be done next. Mr. Colon thought that the dogs were tired, and we might as well get into the wagon. Another suggested at random that we should set the dogs on, and Muggs, who had probably heard the expression somewhere, cried, "Hi, boys, on bloods!" At the words the dogs made a few quick steps forward, and on the instant the grass seemed alive with feathered forms, popping into air like bobs in shuttlecock. Such a fluttering and flying I have never seen since, when a boy, I ventured into a dove cote, and was knocked over by the rush of the alarmed inmates. From under our very feet, almost brushing our faces, the beautiful pinnated grouse of the prairies left their cover, and us also.

Every gun had gone off on the instant, and we doubt if one was raised an inch higher than it happened to be when the covey started. The Professor afterward extracted some stray shot from the legs of his boots, and the setter, which was next to Muggs, gave a cry of pain for which there was evidently other cause than rheumatism, as was demonstrated by his retirement to the rear, from which he refused to budge until we all got into the wagon, and to which he invariably retreated whenever we got out.

From the midst of the birds which were soaring away, one was seen to rise suddenly a few feet above



OUR FIRST BIRD-SHOOTING.



his comrades, and then fall straight as a plummet, and head first, to earth. It had caught some stray shot from the bombardment—Muggs claimed from his gun, but this statement the setter, could he have spoken, would certainly have disputed.

Semi-Colon brought in the game, which proved to be a fine male, with whiskers and full plumage, which must have made sad havoc among the hearts of the hens, when the old fellow was on annual dress parade in the spring. At that season of the year the cocks seek some knoll of the prairie, where the grass has been burnt or cut off, and strut up and down with ruffled feathers, uttering meanwhile a booming sound, which can be heard in a clear morning for miles. The flabby pink skin that at other seasons hangs in loose folds on his neck is then distended like a bag-pipe, and he is a very different bird from the same individual in his Quaker gray and respectable summer and fall habits.

Ensnconced again in the wagon, our party moved forward, the dogs, as before, examining the prairie. The professor was comparing the birds of the present and the past ages, when Muggs suddenly blasted his eyes and declared the beasts were at it again. And so they were, the setter making a good stand at some game in the grass, and the other dog, a short distance off, pointing his companion. During the remainder of the day we found many large flocks of birds, and fired away until two or three swelled noses testified how dirty our guns were.

“Fast shooting,” said the professor, as we were on our way home, “is as bad as that too slow. Al-

though I am no sportsman from practice, I love and have studied the principles of it. In my father's day the rule was, when a bird rose, for a hunter to take out his snuff-box, take snuff, replace the box, aim, and fire: You may find the advice yet in some works. The shot then has distance in which to spread. With close shooting they are all together, and you might as well fire a bullet. When you have given the bird time, act quickly. The first sight is the best. Again, the first moment of flight, with most birds, is very irregular, as it is upward, instead of from you."

Dobeen begged leave to inform our "honors" that in Ireland, after a bird rose, the rule was, instead of taking snuff, to take off the boots before firing. The professor thought that such a habit related to outrunning the gamekeeper, and was intended to procure distance for the poacher rather than the bird.

Sachem stated that he had known a slow hunter once. He was a revolutionary veteran, used a revolutionary musket, and believed in revolutionary powder. He refused to do any thing different from what his fathers did, and abhorred double-barreled shot-guns and percussion-caps as inventions of the devil. It was constantly, "General Washington did this," and "Our army did that," and his old head shook sadly at the innovations Young America was making. His ghost, with the revolutionary musket on its shoulder, had since been known to chase hunters, with breech-loaders, who were caught on his favorite ground after dark. "Old 1776" was great on wing-shooting, and could be seen at almost any time hobbling over the moor, firing away at snipe and water-

fowl. He was one of those slow, deliberate cases, always taking snuff after the bird rose. There would be a glitter of fluttering wings as the game shot into air. Down would come the long musket, out would come the snuff-box, and the old soldier would go through the present, make ready, take snuff, take aim, and fire, all as coolly as if on parade. The old musket often hung fire from five to ten seconds, and the premonitory flash could be seen as the shaky flint clattered down on the pan. The veteran always patiently covered the bird until the charge got out. The recoil was tremendous, and the old man often went down before the bird; but such positions, he asserted, were taken voluntarily, as ones of rest. Some said that the gun had been known to kick him again after he was down."

Sachem's narration was here cut short by the dogs again pointing. This was followed by the usual bombardment, which over, the bag showed the magnificent aggregate of two chickens for the entire day's sport.

The prairie-chicken is now extinct in many of the Western States where it was once well known. Usually, during the first few years of settlement, it increases rapidly, and is often a nuisance to pioneer farmers. Perhaps, when the latter first settle in a country, a few covies may be seen; under the favorable influences of wheat and corn-fields, the dozens increase to thousands and cover the land. But with denser settlement come more guns, and, what is a far more destructive agent, trained dogs also. Under the first order of things, the farmer, with his musket,

might kill enough for the home table. With double-barreled gun and keen-scented pointer, the sportsman and pot-hunter think nothing of fifty or sixty birds for a day's work. It seems almost impossible, under such a combination, for a covey to escape total annihilation.

We may suppose a couple of fair shots hunting over a dog in August, when the chickens lie close, and the year's broods are in their most delicate condition for the table. The pointer makes a stand before a fine covey hidden in the thick grass before him. The ready guns ask no delay, and, at the word, he flushes the chickens immediately under his nose. Each hunter takes those which rise before him, or on his side, and if four or less left cover at the first alarm, that number of gray-speckled forms the next moment are down in the grass, not to leave it again. If more rose, they are "marked," which means that their place of alighting is carefully noted, and, as the chicken has but a short flight, this task is easy. Meanwhile, the guns have been reloaded, the dog flushes others of the hiding birds, and so the sport goes on. The birds that get away are "marked down," and again found and flushed by the dog. Without this useful animal the chickens would multiply, despite any number of hunters. I have often seen covies go down in the grass but a few hundred yards away, yet have tramped through the spot dozens of times without raising a single bird. In twenty years this delicious game will probably be as much a thing of the past as is the Dodo of the Isle de France. At the period of our visit they were

already gathering into their fall flocks, which sometimes number a hundred or more. In these they remain until St. Valentine recommends a separation. During the colder weather of winter they seek the protection of the timber, and may be seen of mornings on the trees and fences. They never roost there, however, but pass the night hidden in the adjacent grass.

The prairie-chicken's admirers are numerous, other animals beside man being willing to dine on its plump breast. We had an illustration of this in our first day's shooting. Sometimes when we fired, the report would attract to our vicinity wandering hawks, and we found that either instinct or previous experience teaches these fierce hunters of the air that in the vicinity of their fellow-hunter, man, wounded birds may be found. One wounded chicken, which fell near us, was seized by a hawk immediately.

As we passed one or two fields, indications of gophers appeared, their small mounds of earth covering the ground. In some counties these animals formerly destroyed crops to such an extent that the celebrated "Gopher Act" was passed. This gave a bounty of two dollars for each scalp, and under it many farms yielded more to the acre than ever before or since. One of these animals which we secured resembled in size and shape the Norway rat, and, in the softness and color of its coat, was not unlike a mole. The oddest thing was its earth-pouches—two open sacks, one on either side of its head, and capable of containing each a tablespoonful or more. These the gopher employs, in his subterranean researches, for

the same purpose that his enemy, man, does a wheelbarrow. Packing them with dirt, the little fellow trudges gayly to the surface, and there cleverly dumps his load.

We reached town again, well pleased with our day's ride, and over our evening pipes discussed the results. Muggs thought our shot were too small. Sachem thought the birds were.

Colon' was delighted with the new State, but believed that wing-shooting was not his *forte*. He would be more apt to hit a bird on the wing if he could only catch it roosting somewhere.

Gripe, at the other end of the room, was piling Republican doctrines upon a bearded Democratic heathen from the Western border.

CHAPTER V.

A TRIAL BY JUDGE LYNCH—HUNG FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT—QUAIL SHOOTING—
HABITS OF THE BIRDS, AND MODE OF KILLING THEM—A RING OF QUAILS—THE
EFFECTS OF A SEVERE WINTER—THE SNOW GOOSE.

A SHORT time after supper, Tenacious Gripe appeared with the mayor of the city, who wished to make the acquaintance of the Professor. The two august personages bowed to each other. It was the happiest moment in their respective lives, they declared. An invitation was extended us to delay our departure another day and try quail shooting. The citizens said the birds were unusually abundant, the previous winter having been mild and the summer long enough for two separate broods to be hatched, and the brush and river banks were swarming with them. As we were about to abandon the birds of the West and seek an acquaintance with its beasts, we decided, after a brief consultation, to accept the invitation and remain another day.

Among the persons present in the crowded office of the hotel, was a man from the southwestern part of the state who had lately been interested in a trial before the celebrated Judge Lynch. Sachem interviewed him, and reports his statement of the occurrence in the log book, as follows :

A stranger played me fur a fool,
An' threw the high, low, jack,
An' sold me the wuss piece of mule
That ever humped a back.

But that wer fair; I don't complain,
That I got beat in trade;
I don't sour on a fellow's gain,
When sich is honest made.

But wust wer this, he stole the mule,
An' I were bilked complete;
Such thieves, we hossmen makes a rule
To lift 'em from their feet.

We started arter that 'ere pup,
An' took the judge along,
For fear, with all our dander up,
We might do somethin' wrong.

We caught him under twenty miles,
An' tried him under trees;
The judge he passed around the "smiles,"
As sort o' jury fees.

"Pris'ner," says judge, "now say your say,
An' make it short an' sweet,
An', while yer at it, kneel and pray,
For Death yer can not cheat.

No man shall hang, by this 'ere court,
Exceptin' on the square;
There's time fur speech, if so it's short,
But none to chew or swear."

An' then the thievin' rascal cursed,
An' threw his life away,
He said, "Just pony out your worst,
Your best would be foul play."

Then judge he frowned an awful frown,
An' snapped this sentence short,
"Jones, twitch the rope, an' write this down,
Hung for contempt of court!"

Sharp 8 next morning saw us on the road leading east of town, the two dogs with us, and a young one additional, the property of a resident sportsman. Our last acquisition joined us on the run, and kept on it all day, going over the ground with the speed of a greyhound, his fine nose, however, giving him better success than his reckless pace would have indicated.

Three miles from town, or half way between it and Tecumseh, our party left the wagon, with direction for it to follow the road, while we scouted along on a parallel, following the river bank.

The Kaw stretched eastward, broad and shallow, with numerous sand bars, and along its edges grew the scarlet sumach and some stunted bushes, and between these and the corn a high, coarse bottom grass, with intervals at every hundred yards or so apart of a shorter variety, like that on a poor prairie. Among the bushes, there was no grass whatever, and yet the birds seemed indifferently to frequent one spot equally with another.

In less than ten minutes after leaving the wagon, all the dogs were pointing on a barren looking spot,

thinly sprinkled with scrubby bushes not larger than jimson-weeds. They were several yards apart, so that each animal was clearly acting on his own responsibility.

If it puzzled us the day before to discover any signs of game under their noses, it certainly did so now. There was apparently no place of concealment for any object larger than a field-mouse. The bushes were wide apart, and the soil between was a loose sand. Around the roots of the scrubs, it is true, a few thin, wiry spears of grass struggled into existence, but these covered a space not larger than a man's hand, and it seemed preposterous to imagine that they could be capable of affording cover. That three dogs were pointing straight at three bushes was apparent, but we could see nothing in or about the latter calling for such attention.

Shamus, who had accompanied us, wished to know if the twigs were witch hazels, because, if so, three invisible old beldames might be taking a nap under them, after a midnight ride. "But, then," said Do-been, "the dog's hairs don't stand on end as they always do in Ireland when they see ghosts and witches." We believe that our worthy cook was really disappointed in not discovering any stray broomsticks lying around. These, he afterward informed us, could not be made invisible, though their owners should take on airy shapes unrecognizable by mortal eyes.

Muggs had suggested urging the dogs in, but the party, wiser from yesterday's experience, desired a ground shot, if it could be secured. The Professor

adjusted his lens, and decided to make a personal inspection around the roots of the bush immediately in front of him.

Carefully the sage bent over the suspicious spot, and almost fell backward as, with a whiz and a dart, half a dozen quails flew out, brushing his very nose. Instantly every bush sent forth its fugitives. A flash of feathered balls, and they were all gone. Such whizzing and whirring! it was as if those scraggy bushes were *mitrailleuses*, in quick succession discharging their loads.

Only one gun had gone off, but that so loudly that our ears rung for several seconds. Mr. Colon had accidentally rammed at least two, perhaps half a dozen, loads into one barrel, and the gun discharged with an aim of its own, the butt very low down. Two birds fell dead. But alas for our Nimrod! Colon stood with one hand on his stomach undecided whether that organ remained or not. On this point, however, he was fully re-assured at the supper-table that night, and in all our after experience, we never knew that gun to have the least opportunity for going off, except when at its owner's shoulder, and he perfectly ready for it.

The two birds were now submitted to the party for inspection. They were fine specimens of the American quail, more properly called by those versed in quailology, the Bob White. This bird is very plentiful throughout Kansas, and just before the shooting season commences, in September, will even frequent the gardens and alight on the houses of Topeka. They "lay close" before a dog, take flight