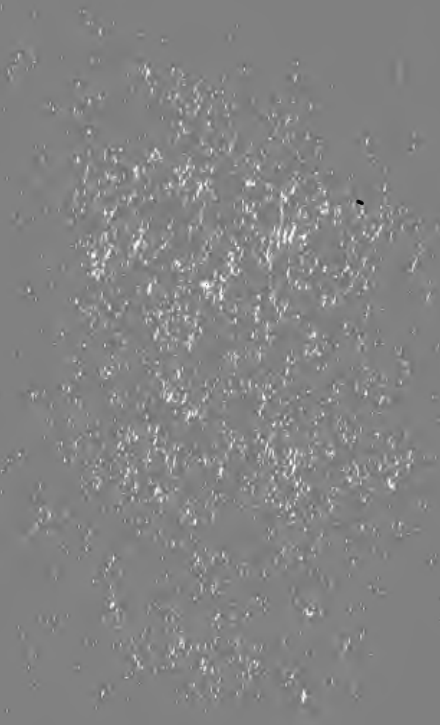

THE FAR WEST:

OR,

A TOUR BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.

EMBRACING

OUTLINES OF WESTERN LIFE AND SCENERY; SKETCHES OF THE PRAIRIES, RIVERS, ANCIENT MOUNDS, EARLY SETTLEMENTS OF THE FRENCH, ETC., ETC.

by

Edmund Flagg, 1815-1890

"If thou be a severe, sour-complexioned man, then I here disallow thee to be a competent judge."—IZAAK WALTON.

"I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry, 'Tis all barren.'"—STERNE.

"Chacun a son stile; le mien, comme vous voyez, n'est pas laconique."—ME. DE SEVIGNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,

NO. 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1838.

TO THE READER.

"He that writes
Or makes a feast, more certainly invites
His judges than his friends; there's not a guest
But will find something wanting or ill dress'd."

In laying before the majesty of the public a couple of volumes like the present, it has become customary for the author to disclaim in his preface all original design of *perpetrating a book*, as if there were even more than the admitted *quantum* of sinfulness in the act. Whether or not such disvowals now-a-day receive all the credence they merit, is not for the writer to say; and whether, were the prefatory asseveration, as in the present case, diametrically opposed to what it often is, the reception would be different, is even more difficult to predict. The articles imbodied in the following volumes were, a portion of them, in their original, hasty production, *designed* for the press; yet the author unites in the disavowal of his predecessors of all intention at that time of perpetrating *a book*.

In the early summer of '36, when about starting upon a ramble over the prairies of the "Far West," in hope of renovating the energies of a shattered constitution, a request was made of the writer, by the distinguished editor of the Louisville Journal, to con-

tribute to the columns of that periodical whatever, in the course of his pilgrimage, might be deemed of sufficient interest. A series of articles soon after made their appearance in that paper under the title, "*Sketches of a Traveller.*" They were, as their name purports, mere sketches from a traveller's *portfeuille*, hastily thrown upon paper whenever time, place, or opportunity rendered convenient; in the steamboat saloon, the inn bar-room, the log-cabin of the wilderness, or upon the venerable mound of the Western prairie. With such favour were these hasty productions received, and so extensively were they circulated, that the writer, on returning from his pilgrimage to "the shrine of health," was induced, by the solicitations of partial friends, to enter at his leisure upon the preparation for the press of a mass of MSS. of a similar character, written at the time, which had never been published; a thorough revision and enlargement of that which had appeared, united with *this*, it was thought, would furnish a passable volume or two upon the "Far West." Two years of residence in the West have since passed away; and the arrangement for the press of the fugitive sheets of a wanderer's sketch-book would not yet, perhaps, have been deemed of sufficient importance to warrant the necessary labour, had he not been daily reminded that his productions, whatever their merit, were already public property so far as could be the case, and at the mercy of every one who thought proper to asume paternity. "Forbearance ceased to be longer a virtue," and the result is now before the

reader. But, while alluding to that aid which his labours may have rendered to others, the author would not fail fully to acknowledge his own indebtedness to those distinguished writers upon the West who have preceded him. To Peck, Hall, Flint, Wetmore, and to others, his acknowledgments are due and are respectfully tendered.

In extenuation of the circumstance that some portions of these volumes have already appeared, though in a crude state, before the public, the author has but to suggest that many works, with which the present will not presume to compare, have made their debut on the unimposing pages of a periodical. Not to dwell upon the writings of Addison and Johnson, and other classics of British literature, several of Bulwer's most polished productions, the elaborate Essays of Elia, Wirt's British Spy, Hazlitt's Philosophical Reviews, Coleridge's Friend, most of the novels of Captain Marryatt and Theodore Hook, and many of the most elegant works of the day, have been prepared for the pages of a magazine.

And now, with no slight misgiving, does the author commit his firstborn bantling to the tender mercies of an impartial public. Criticism he does not deprecate, still less does he brave it; and farther than either is he from soliciting undue favour. Yet to the *reader*, as he grasps him by the hand in parting, would he commit his book, with the quaint injunction of a distinguished but eccentric old English writer upon an occasion somewhat similar:

"I exhort all people, gentle and simple, men,

women, and children, to buy, to read, to extol these labours of mine. Let them not fear to defend every article; for I will bear them harmless. I have arguments good store, and can easily confute, either logically, theologically, or metaphysically, all those who oppose me."

E. F.

New-York, Oct., 1838.

CONTENTS.

VII.

VIII.

IX.

X.

XVI.

XVII.

XVIII.

XIX.

XX.

XXI.

XXII.

ERRATA.

Page 102, one line from the top, for *Bacchanalia*, read Bacchanal.
" 120, two lines from bot., for *Grand*, " Grandes.
" 121, thirteen " " " 1817, " 1814.
" 140, five " " " " *Louis XVIII.* " Louis XVI.
" 158, seventeen " " " *Sumac*, " Sumach.
" 212, foot-note, for *Pasqua de Flores*, read Pasqua Florida.
" 241, five lines from bottom, erase *first.*

THE FAR WEST.

I.

"I do remember me, that, in my youth,
When I was wandering—"

MANFRED.

It was a bright morning in the early days of "leafy June." Many a month had seen me a wanderer from distant New-England; and now I found myself "once more upon the waters," embarked for a pilgrimage over the broad prairie-plains of the sunset West. A drizzly, miserable rain had for some days been hovering, with proverbial pertinacity, over the devoted "City of the Falls," and still, at intervals, came lazily pattering down from the sunlighted clouds, reminding one of a hoiden girl smiling through a shower of April tear-drops, while the quay continued to exhibit all that wild uproar and tumult, "confusion worse confounded," which characterizes the steamboat commerce of the Western Valley. The landing at the time was thronged with steamers, and yet the incessant "boom, boom, boom," of the high-pressure engines, the shrill hiss of scalding steam, and the fitful port-song of the negro firemen rising ever and anon upon the breeze, gave notice of a con-

stant augmentation to the number. Some, too, were getting under way, and their lower *guards* were thronged by emigrants with their household and agricultural utensils. Drays were rattling hither and thither over the rough pavement; Irish porters were cracking their whips and roaring forth alternate staves of blasphemy and song; clerks hurrying to and fro, with fluttering note-books, in all the fancied dignity of "brief authority;" hackney-coaches dashing down to the water's edge, apparently with no motive to the nervous man but noise; while at intervals, as if to fill up the pauses of the Babel, some incontinent steamer would hurl forth from the valves of her overcharged boilers one of those deafening, terrible blasts, echoing and re-echoing along the river-banks, and streets, and among the lofty buildings, till the very welkin rang again.

To one who has never visited the public wharves of the great cities of the West, it is no trivial task to convey an adequate idea of the spectacle they present. The commerce of the Eastern seaports and that of the Western Valley are utterly dissimilar; not more in the staples of intercourse than in the mode in which it is conducted; and, were one desirous of exhibiting to a friend from the Atlantic shore a picture of the prominent features which characterize commercial proceedings upon the Western waters, or, indeed, of Western character in its general outline, at a *coup d'œil*, he could do no better than to place him in the wild uproar of the steamboat quay. Amid the "crowd, the hum,

the shock" of such a scene stands out Western peculiarity in all its stern proportion.

Steamers on the great waters of the West are well known to indulge no violently conscientious scruples upon the subject of punctuality, and a solitary exception at our behest, or in our humble behalf, was, to be sure, not an event to be counted on. "There's dignity in being waited for;" hour after hour, therefore, still found us and left us amid the untold scenes and sounds of the public landing. It is true, and to the unending honour of all concerned be it recorded, very true it is our doughty steamer ever and anon would puff and blow like a porpoise or a narwhal; and then would she swelter from every pore and quiver in every limb with the ponderous labouring of her huge enginery, and the steam would shrilly whistle and shriek like a spirit in its confinement, till at length she united her whirlwind voice to the general roar around; and all this indicated, indubitably, an intention to be off and away; but a knowing one was he who could determine the *when*.

Among the causes of our wearisome detention was one of a nature too melancholy, too painfully interesting lightly to be alluded to. Endeavouring to while away the tedium of delay, I was pacing leisurely back and forth upon the *guard*, surveying the lovely scenery of the opposite shore, and the neat little houses of the village sprinkled upon the plain beyond, when a wild, piercing shriek struck upon my ear. I was hurrying immediately forward to the spot whence it seemed to proceed,

when I was intercepted by some of our boat's crew bearing a mangled body. It was that of our second engineer, a fine, laughing young fellow, who had been terribly injured by becoming entangled with the fly-wheel of the machinery while in motion. He was laid upon the passage floor. I stood at his head; and never, I think, shall I forget those convulsed and agonized features. His countenance was ghastly and livid; beaded globules of cold sweat started out incessantly upon his pale brow; and, in the paroxysms of pain, his dark eye would flash, his nostril dilate, and his lips quiver so as to expose the teeth gnashing in a fearful manner; while a muttered execration, dying away from exhaustion, caused us all to shudder. And then that wild despairing roll of the eyeball in its socket as the miserable man would glance hurriedly around upon the countenances of the bystanders, imploring them, in utter helplessness, to lend him relief. Ah! it is a fearful thing to look upon these strivings of humanity in the iron grasp of a power it may in vain resist! From the quantity of blood thrown off, the oppressive fulness of the chest, and the difficult respiration, some serious pulmonary injury had evidently been sustained; while a splintered clavicle and limbs shockingly shattered racked the poor sufferer with anguish inexpressible. It was evident he believed himself seriously injured, for at times he would fling out his arms, beseeching those around him to "hold him back," as if even then he perceived the icy grasp of the death angel creeping over his frame.

Perhaps I have devoted more words to the detail of this melancholy incident than would otherwise have been the case, on account of the interest which some circumstances in the sufferer's history, subsequently received from the captain of our steamer, inspired.

"Frank, poor fellow," said the captain, "was a native of Ohio, the son of a lone woman, a widow. He was all her hope, and to his exertions she was indebted for a humble support."

Here, then, were circumstances to touch the sympathies of any heart possessed of but a tithe of the nobleness of our nature; and I could not but reflect, as they were recounted, how like the breath of desolation the first intelligence of her son's fearful end must sweep over the spirit of this lonely widow; for, like the wretched Constance, she can "never, never behold him more."

> "Her life, her joy, her food, her all the world!
> Her widow-comfort, and her sorrow's cure!"

While indulging in these sad reflections a gay burst of music arrested my attention; and, looking up, I perceived the packet-boat "Lady Marshall" dropping from her mooring at the quay, her decks swarming with passengers, and under high press of steam, holding her bold course against the current, while the merry dashing of the wheels, mingling with the wild clang of martial music, imparted an air almost of romance to the scene. How strangely did this contrast with that misery from which my eye had just turned!

There are few objects more truly grand—I had

almost said sublime—than a powerful steamer struggling triumphantly with the rapids of the Western waters. The scene has in it a something of that power which we feel upon us in viewing a ship under full sail; and, in some respects, there is more of the sublime in the humbler triumph of man over the elements than in that more vast. Sublimity is a result, not merely of massive, extended, unmeasured greatness, but oftener, and far more impressively, does the sentiment arise from a *combination* of vast and powerful objects. The mighty stream rolling its volumed floods through half a continent, and hurrying onward to mingle its full tide with the "Father of Waters," is truly sublime; its resistless power is sublime; the memory of its by-gone scenes, and the venerable moss-grown forests on its banks, are sublime; and, lastly, the noble fabric of man's workmanship struggling and groaning in convulsed, triumphant effort to overcome the resistance offered, completes a picture which demands not the heaving ocean-waste and the "oak leviathan" to embellish.

It was not until the afternoon was far advanced that we found ourselves fairly embarked. A rapid freshet had within a few hours swollen the tranquil Ohio far beyond its ordinary volume and velocity, and its turbid waters were rolling onward between the green banks, bearing on their bosom all the varied spoils of their mountain-home, and of the rich region through which they had been flowing. The finest site from which to view the city we found to be the channel of the Falls upon the Indiana side of the stream, called the *Indian*

chute, to distinguish it from two others, called the *Middle* chute and the *Kentucky* chute. The prospect from this point is noble, though the uniformity of the structures, the fewness of the spires, the unimposing character of the public edifices, and the depression of the site upon which the city stands, give to it a monotonous, perhaps a lifeless aspect to the stranger.

It was in the year 1778 that a settlement was first commenced upon the spot on which the fair city of Louisville now stands. In the early spring of that year, General George Rodgers Clarke, under authority of the State of Virginia, descended the Ohio with several hundred men, with the design of reducing the military posts of Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Fort Vincent, then held by British troops. Disembarking upon Corn Island at the Falls of the Ohio, opposite the present city, land sufficient for the support of six families, which were left, was cleared and planted with *corn*. From this circumstance the island received a name which it yet retains. General Clarke proceeded upon his expedition, and, in the autumn returning successful, the emigrants were removed to the main land, and a settlement was commenced where Louisville now stands. During the few succeeding years, other families from Virginia settled upon the spot, and in the spring of 1780 seven stations were formed upon Beargrass Creek, which here empties into the Mississippi, and Louisville commenced its march to its present importance.

The view of the city from the Falls, as I have remarked, is not at all imposing; the view of the

Falls from the city, on the contrary, is one of beauty and romance. They are occasioned by a parapet of limestone extending quite across the stream, which is here about one mile in width; and when the water is low the whole chain sparkles with bubbling foam-bells. When the stream is full the descent is hardly perceptible but for the increased rapidity of the current, which varies from ten to fourteen miles an hour.* Owing to the height of the freshet, this was the case at the time when we descended them, and there was a wild air of romance about the dark rushing waters: and the green woodlands upon either shore, overshadowed as they were by the shifting light and shade of the flitting clouds, cast over the scene a bewitching fascination. "*Corn Island*," with its legendary associations, rearing its dense clump of foliage as from the depths of the stream, was not the least beautiful object of the panorama; while the receding city, with its smoky roofs, its bustling quay, and the glitter and animation of an extended line of steamers, was alone necessary to fill up a scene for a limner.† And our steamer swept onward

* It is only at high stages of the river that boats even of a smaller class can pass over the Falls. At other times they go through the "Louisville and Portland Canal," for an interesting description of which, see Appendix.

† A circumstance, too, which adds not a little of interest to the spot, is the old Indian tradition that here was fought the last battle between their race and the former dwellers in Kentucky—the *white mound-builders*—in which the latter were exterminated to a man. True or false, vast quantities of human remains have, at low stages of the Ohio, been found upon the shores of Sandy Island, one mile below, and an extensive graveyard once existed in the vicinity of Shipping-port.

over the rapids, and threaded their maze of beautiful islands, and passed along the little villages at their foot and the splendid steamers along their shore, till twilight had faded, and the dusky mantle of departed day was flung over forest and stream.

Ohio River.

II.

"How beautiful is this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!"

MANFRED.

"The woods—oh! solemn are the boundless woods
Of the great Western World when day declines,
And louder sounds the roll of distant floods."

HEMANS.

LONG before the dawn on the morning succeeding our departure we were roused from our rest by the hissing of steam and the rattling of machinery as our boat moved slowly out from beneath the high banks and lofty sycamores of the river-side, where she had in safety been moored for the night, to resume her course. Withdrawing the curtain from the little rectangular window of my stateroom, the dark shadow of the forest was slumbering in calm magnificence upon the waters; and glancing upward my eye, the stars were beaming out in silvery brightness; while all along the eastern horizon, where

"The gray coursers of the morn
Beat up the light with their bright silver hoofs
And drive it through the sky,"

rested a broad, low zone of clear heaven, proclaiming the coming of a glorious dawn. The hated clang of the bell-boy was soon after heard resounding far and wide in querulous and deafening clamour throughout the cabins, vexing the dull ear of every drowsy man in the terrible language of Macbeth's evil conscience, "sleep no more!" In a very desperation of self-defence I arose. The mists of night had not yet wholly dispersed, and the rack and fog floated quietly upon the placid bosom of the stream, or ascended in ragged masses from the dense foliage upon its banks. All this melted gently away like "the baseless fabric of a vision," and "the beauteous eye of day" burst forth in splendour, lighting up a scene of unrivalled loveliness.

Much, very much has been written of "the beautiful Ohio;" the pens of an hundred tourists have sketched its quiet waters and its venerable groves; but there is in its noble scenery an ever salient freshness, which no description, however varied, can exhaust; new beauties leap forth to the eye of the man of sensibility, and even an humble pen may not fail to array them in the drapery of their own loveliness. There are in this beautiful stream features peculiar to itself, which distinguish it from every other that we have seen or of which we have read; features which render it truly and emphatically *sui generis*. It is not "the blue-rushing of the arrowy Rhone," with castled crags and frowning battlements; it is not the dark-rolling Danube, shadowy with the legend of departed time, upon whose banks armies have met and battled; it is not

the lordly Hudson, roaming in beauty through the ever-varying romance of the Catskill Highlands; nor is it the gentle wave of the soft-flowing Connecticut, seeming almost to sleep as it glides through the calm, "happy valley" of New-England: but it is that noble stream, bounding forth, like a young warrior of the wilderness, in all the joyance of early vigour, from the wild twin-torrents of the hills; rolling onward through a section of country the glory of a new world, and over the wooded heights of whose banks has rushed full many a crimson tide of Indian massacre. Ohio,* "*The River of Blood*," was its fearfully significant name from the aboriginal native; *La Belle Rivière* was its euphonious distinction from the simple Canadian voyageur, whose light pirogue first glided on its blue bosom. "The Beautiful River!"—it is no misnomer—from its earliest commencement to the broad *embouchure* into the turbid floods of the Mississippi, it unites every combination of scenic loveliness which even the poet's sublimated fancy could demand. Now it sweeps along beneath its lofty bluffs in the conscious grandeur of resistless might; and then its clear, transparent waters glide in undulating ripples over the shelly bottoms and among the pebbly heaps of the white-drifted sand-bars, or in the calm magnificence of their eternal wandering.

"To the gentle woods all night
Sing they a sleepy tune."

From either shore streams of singular beauty and euphonious names come pouring in their trib-

* *Kentucke* is said to have a similar meaning.

ute through the deep foliage of the fertile bottoms; while the swelling, volumed outlines of the banks, piled up with ponderous verdure rolling and heaving in the river-breeze like life, recur in such grandeur and softness, and such ever-varying combinations of beauty, as to destroy every approach to monotonous effect. From the source of the Ohio to its outlet its waters imbosom more than an hundred islands, some of such matchless loveliness that it is worthy of remark that such slight allusion has been made to them in the numerous pencillings of Ohio scenery. In the fresh, early summer-time, when the deep green of vegetation is in its luxuriance, they surely constitute the most striking feature of the river. Most of them are densely wooded to the water's edge; and the wild vines and underbrush suspended lightly over the waters are mirrored in their bosom or swept by the current into attitudes most graceful and picturesque. In some of those stretched-out, endless reaches which are constantly recurring, they seem bursting up like beautiful *bouquets* of sprinkled evergreens from the placid stream; rounded and swelling, as if by the teachings of art, on the blue bosom of the waters. A cluster of these "isles of light" I well remember, which opened upon us the eve of the second day of our passage. Two of the group were exceedingly small, mere points of a deeper shade in the reflecting azure; while the third, lying between the former, stretched itself far away in a narrow, well-defined strip of foliage, like a curving gash in the surface, parallel to the

shore; and over the lengthened vista of the waters gliding between, the giant branches bowed themselves, and wove their mingled verdure into an immense Gothic arch, seemingly of interminable extent, but closed at last by a single speck of crimson skylight beyond. Throughout its whole course the Ohio is fringed with wooded bluffs; now towering in sublime majesty hundreds of feet from the bed of the rolling stream, and anon sweeping inland for miles, and rearing up those eminences so singularly beautiful, appropriately termed "Ohio hills," while their broad alluvial plains in the interval betray, by their enormous vegetation, a fertility exhaustless and unrivalled. Here and there along the green bluffs is caught a glimpse of the emigrant's low log cabin peeping out to the eye from the dark foliage, sometimes when miles in the distance; while the rich maize-fields of the bottoms, the girdled forest-trees, and the lowing kine betray the advance of civilized existence. But if the scenes of the Ohio are beautiful beneath the broad glare of morning sunlight, what shall sketch their lineaments when the coarser etchings of the picture are mellowed down by the balmy effulgence of the midnight moon of summer! When her floods of light are streaming far and wide along the magnificent forest-tops! When all is still—still! and sky, and earth, and wood, and stream are hushed as a spirit's breathing! When thought is almost audible, and memory is busy with the past! When the distant bluffs, bathed in molten silver, gleam like beacon-lights, and the far-off vistas of the

meandering waters are flashing with the sheen of their ripples! When you glide through the endless maze, and the bright islets shift, and vary, and pass away in succession like pictures of the kaleidoscope before your eye! When imagination is awake and flinging forth her airy fictions, bodies things unseen, and clothes reality in loveliness not of earth! When a scene like this is developed, what shall adequately depict it? Not the pen.

Such, such is the beautiful Ohio in the soft days of early summer; and though hackneyed may be the theme of its loveliness, yet, as the dying glories of a Western sunset flung over the landscape the mellow tenderness of its parting smile, "fading, still fading, as the day was declining," till night's dusky mantle had wrapped the "woods on shore" and the quiet stream from the eye, I could not, even at the hazard of triteness, resist an inclination to fling upon the sheet a few hurried lineaments of Nature's beautiful creations.

There is not a stream upon the continent which, for the same distance, rolls onward so calmly, and smoothly, and peacefully as the Ohio. Danger rarely visits its tranquil bosom, except from the storms of heaven or the reckless folly of man, and hardly a river in the world can vie with it in safety, utility, or beauty. Though subject to rapid and great elevations and depressions, its current is generally uniform, never furious. The forest-trees which skirt its banks are the largest in North America, while the variety is endless; several sycamores were pointed out to us upon the shores from thirty to fifty feet in circumference. Its al-

luvial bottoms are broad, deep, and exhaustlessly fertile; its bluffs are often from three to four hundred feet in height; its breadth varies from one mile to three, and its navigation, since the improvements commenced, under the authority of Congress, by the enterprising Shreve, has become safe and easy. The classification of obstructions is the following: *snags*, trees anchored by their roots; fragments of trees of various forms and magnitude; *wreck-heaps*, consisting of several of these stumps, and logs, and branches of trees lodged in one place; *rocks*, which have rolled from the cliffs, and varying from ten to one hundred cubic feet in size; and *sunken boats*, principally flat-boats laden with coal. The last remains one of the most serious obstacles to the navigation of the Ohio. Many steamers have been damaged by striking the wrecks of the *Baltimore*, the *Roanoke*, the *William Hulburt*, and other craft, which were themselves snagged; while keel and flat-boats without number have been lost from the same cause.* Several thousands of the obstacles mentioned have been removed since improvements were commenced, and accidents from this cause are now less frequent. Some of the snags torn up from the bed of the stream, where they have probably for ages been buried, are said to have exceeded a diameter of six feet at the root, and were upward of an hundred feet in length. The removal of these obstructions on the Ohio presents a difficulty and expense not encountered upon the Mississippi. In the latter stream, the root of the snag, when eradicated, is deposited in some deep

* The keel-boat Hindoo, with merchandise to the amount of $50,000, is a late instance.

pool or bayou along the banks, and immediately imbeds itself in alluvial deposite; but on the Ohio, owing to the nature of its banks in most of its course, there is no opportunity for such a disposal, and the boatmen are forced to blast the logs with gunpowder to prevent them from again forming obstructions. The cutting down and clearing away of all leaning and fallen trees from the banks constitutes an essential feature in the scheme of improvement; since the facts are well ascertained that trees seldom plant themselves far from the spot where they fall; and that, when once under the power of the current, they seldom anchor themselves and form snags. The policy of removing the leaning and fallen trees is, therefore, palpable, since, when this is once thoroughly accomplished, no material for subsequent formation can exist. The construction of stone dams, by which to concentrate into a single channel all the waters of the river, where they are divided by islands, or from other causes are spread over a broad extent, is another operation now in execution. The dams at "Brown's Island," the shoalest point on the Ohio, have been so eminently successful as fully to establish the efficiency of the plan. Several other works of a similar character are proposed; a full survey of the stream, hydrographical and topographical, is recommended; and, when all improvements are completed, it is believed that the navigation of the "beautiful Ohio" will answer every purpose of commerce and the traveller, from its source to its mouth, at the lowest stages of the water.

Ohio River.

III.

"The sure traveller,
Though he alight sometimes, still goeth on."

HERBERT.

"A RACE—
Now like autumnal leaves before the blast
Wide scattered."

SPRAGUE.

THUMP, thump, crash! One hour longer, and I was at length completely roused from a troublous slumber by our boat coming to a dead stop. Casting a glance from the window, the bright flashing of moonlight showed the whole surface of the stream covered with drift-wood, and, on inquiry, I learned that the branches of an enormous oak, some sixty feet in length, had become entangled with one of the paddle-wheels of our steamer, and forbade all advance.

We were soon once more in motion; the morning mists were dispersing, the sun rose up behind the forests, and his bright beams danced lightly over the gliding waters. We passed many pleasant little villages along the banks, and it was delightful to remove from the noise, and heat, and confusion below to the lofty *hurricane deck*, and lounge away hour after hour in gazing upon the varied and beautiful scenes which presented themselves in constant succession to the eye. Now we were gliding quietly on through the long island

chutes, where the daylight was dim, and the enormous forest-trees bowed themselves over us, and echoed from their still recesses the roar of our steam-pipe; then we were sweeping rapidly over the broad reaches of the stream, miles in extent; again we were winding through the mazy labyrinth of islets which fleckered the placid surface of the stream, and from time to time we passed the lonely cabin of the emigrant beneath the venerable and aged sycamores. Here and there, as we glided on, we met some relic of those ancient and primitive species of river-craft which once assumed ascendency over the waters of the West, but which are now superseded by steam, and are of too infrequent occurrence not to be objects of peculiar interest. In the early era of the navigation of the Ohio, the species of craft in use were numberless, and many of them of a most whimsical and amusing description. The first was the barge, sometimes of an hundred tons' burden, which required twenty men to force it up against the current a distance of six or seven miles a day; next the keel-boat, of smaller size and lighter structure, yet in use for the purposes of inland commerce; then the Kentucky flat, or broad-horn of the emigrant; the enormous ark, in magnitude and proportion approximating to that of the patriarch; the fairy pirogue of the French voyageur; the birch caïque of the Indian, and log skiffs, gondolas, and dug-outs of the pioneer without name or number. But since the introduction of steam upon the Western waters, most of these unique and primitive contrivances

have disappeared; and with them, too, has gone that singular race of men who were their navigators. Most of the younger of the settlers, at this early period of the country, devoted themselves to this profession. Nor is there any wonder that the mode of life pursued by these boatmen should have presented irresistible seductions to the young people along the banks. Fancy one of these huge boats dropping lazily along with the current past their cabins on a balmy morning in June. Picture to your imagination the gorgeous foliage; the soft, delicious temperature of the atmosphere; the deep azure of the sky; the fertile alluvion, with its stupendous forests and rivers; the romantic bluffs sleeping mistily in blue distance; the clear waters rolling calmly adown, with the woodlands outlined in shadow on the surface; the boat floating leisurely onward, its heterogeneous crew of all ages dancing to the violin upon the deck, flinging out their merry salutations among the settlers, who come down to the water's edge to see the pageant pass, until, at length, it disappears behind a point of wood, and the boatman's bugle strikes up its note, dying in distance over the waters; fancy a scene like this, and the wild bugle-notes echoing and re-echoing along the bluffs and forest shades of the beautiful Ohio, and decide whether it must not have possessed a charm of fascination resistless to the youthful mind in these lonely solitudes. No wonder that the severe toils of agricultural life, in view of such scenes, should have become tasteless and irksome.* The lives of these

* Flint.

boatmen were lawless and dissolute to a proverb. They frequently stopped at the villages along their course, and passed the night in scenes of wild revelry and merriment. Their occupation, more than any other, subjected them to toil, and exposure, and privation; and, more than any other, it indulged them, for days in succession, with leisure, and ease, and indolent gratification. Descending the stream, they floated quietly along without an effort, but in ascending against the powerful current their life was an uninterrupted series of toil. The boat, we are told, was propelled by poles, against which the shoulder was placed and the whole strength applied; their bodies were naked to the waist, for enjoying the river-breeze and for moving with facility; and, after the labour of the day, they swallowed their whiskey and supper, and throwing themselves upon the deck of the boat, with no other canopy than the heavens, slumbered soundly on till the morning. Their slang was peculiar to the race, their humour and power of retort was remarkable, and in their frequent battles with the squatters or with their fellows, their nerve and courage were unflinching.

It was in the year 1811 that the steam-engine commenced its giant labours in the Valley of the West, and the first vessel propelled by its agency glided along the soft-flowing wave of the beautiful river. Many events, we are told, united to render this year a most remarkable era in the annals of Western history.* The spring-freshet of the rivers buried the whole valley from Pittsburgh to New-

* Latrobe.

Orleans in a flood; and when the waters subsided unparalleled sickness and mortality ensued. A mysterious spirit of restlessness possessed the denizens of the Northern forests, and in myriads they migrated towards the South and West. The magnificent comet of the year, seeming, indeed, to verify the terrors of superstition, and to "shake from its horrid hair pestilence and war," all that summer was beheld blazing along the midnight sky, and shedding its lurid twilight over forest and stream; and when the leaves of autumn began to rustle to the ground, the whole vast Valley of the Mississippi rocked and vibrated in earthquake-convulsion! forests bowed their heads; islands disappeared from their sites, and new one's rose; immense lakes and hills were formed; the graveyard gave up its sheeted and ghastly tenants; huge relics of the mastodon and megalonyx, which for ages had slumbered in the bosom of earth, were heaved up to the sunlight; the blue lightning streamed and the thunder muttered along the leaden sky, and, amid all the elemental war, the mighty current of the "Father of Waters" for hours rolled back its heaped-up floods towards its source! All this was the prologue to that mighty drama of *Change* which, from that period to the present, has been sweeping over the Western Valley; it was the fearful welcome-home to that all-powerful agent which has revolutionized the character of half a continent; for at that epoch of wonders, and amid them all, the first steamboat was seen descending the great rivers, and the awe-struck In-

dian on the banks beheld the *Pinelore* flying through the troubled waters.* The rise and progress of the steam-engine is without a parallel in the history of modern improvement. Fifty years ago, and the prophetic declaration of Darwin was pardoned only as the enthusiasm of poetry; it is now little more than the detail of reality:

"Soon shall thy arm, unconquer'd steam, afar
Drag the slow barge or drive the rapid car;
Or on wide-waving wings expanded bear
The flying chariot through the fields of air;
Fair crews triumphant, leaning from above,
Shall wave their fluttering kerchiefs as they move,
Or warrior bands alarm the gaping crowd,
And armies shrink beneath the shadowy cloud."

The steam-engine, second only to the press in power, has in a few years anticipated results throughout the New World which centuries, in the ordinary course of cause and event, would have failed to produce. The dullest forester, even the cold, phlegmatic native of the wilderness, gazes upon its display of beautiful mechanism, its majestic march upon its element, and its sublimity of power, with astonishment and admiration.

Return we to the incidents of our passage. During the morning of our third day upon the Ohio we

* The first steamer upon the waters of the Red River was of a peculiar construction: her steam scape-pipe, instead of ascending perpendicularly from the hurricane deck, projected from the bow, and terminated in the form of a serpent's head. As this monster ascended the wilds of the stream, with her furnaces blazing, pouring forth steam with a roar, the wondering Choctaws upon the banks gave her the poetic and appropriate name of *Pinelore*, "the Fire-Canoe."

passed, among others, the villages of *Rome*, *Troy*, and Rockport. The latter is the most considerable place of the three, notwithstanding *imposing* titles. It is situated upon a green romantic spot, the summit of a precipitous pile of rocks some hundred feet in height, from which sweeps off a level region of country in the rear. Here terminates that series of beautiful bluffs commencing at the confluence of the mountain-streams, and of which so much has been said. A new geological formation commences of a bolder character than any before; and the face of the country gradually assumes those features which are found near the mouth of the river. Passing Green River with its emerald waters, its "Diamond Island," the largest in the Ohio, and said to be *haunted*, and very many thriving villages, among which was Hendersonville, for some time the residence of Audubon, the ornithologist, we found ourselves near midday at the mouth of the smiling Wabash, its high bluffs crowned with groves of the walnut and pecan, the *carya olivæformis* of Nuttal, and its deep-died surface reflecting the yet deeper tints of its verdure-clad banks, as the far-winding stream gradually opened upon the eye, and then retreated in the distance. The confluence of the streams is at a beautiful angle; and, on observing the scene, the traveller will remark that the forests upon one bank are superior in magnitude to those on the other, though of the same species. The appearance is somewhat singular, and the fact is to be accounted for only from the reason that the soil

differs in alluvial character. It has been thought that no stream in the world, for its length and magnitude, drains a more fertile and beautiful country than the Wabash and its tributaries. Emigrants are rapidly settling its banks, and a route has been projected for uniting by canal its waters with those of Lake Erie; surveys by authority of the State of Indiana have been made, and incipient measures taken preparatory to carrying the work into execution.

About one hundred miles from the mouth of the Wabash is situated the village of New-Harmony, far famed for the singular events of which it has been the scene. It is said to be situated on a broad and beautiful plateau overlooking the stream, surrounded by a fertile and heavily-timbered country, and blessed with an atmosphere of health. It was first settled in 1814 by a religious sect of Germans called Harmonites, resembling the Moravians in their tenets, and under the control of George Rapp, in whose name the land was purchased and held. They were about eight hundred in number, and soon erected a number of substantial edifices, among which was a huge House of Assemblage an hundred feet square. They laid out their grounds with beautiful regularity, and established a botanic garden and an extensive greenhouse. For ten years the Harmonites continued to live and labour in love, in the land of their adoption, when the celebrated Robert Dale Owen, of Scotland, came among them, and, at the sum of one hundred and ninety thousand dollars, purchased the establishment entire. His design was of rearing up a community

upon a plan styled by him the "Social System." The peculiar doctrines he inculcated were a perfect equality, moral, social, political, and religious. He held that the promise of never-ending love upon marriage was an absurdity; that children should become no impediment to separation, as they were to be considered members of the community from their second year; that the society should have no professed religion, each individual being indulged in his own faith, and that all temporal possessions should be held in common. On one night of every week the whole community met and danced; and on another they united in a concert of music, while the Sabbath was devoted to philosophical lectures. Many distinguished individuals are said to have written to the society inquiring respecting its principles and prospects, and expressing the wish at a future day to unite with it their destinies. Mr. Owen was sanguine of success. On the 4th of July, 1826, he promulgated his celebrated declaration of mental independence; a document which, for absurdity, has never, perhaps, been paralleled. But all was in vain. Dissension insinuated itself among the members; one after another dropped off from the community, until at length Mr. Owen retired in disgust, and, at a vast sacrifice, disposed of the establishment to a wealthy Scotch gentleman by the name of M'Clure, a former coadjutor. Thus was abandoned the far-famed *social system*, which for a time was an object of interest and topic of remark all over the United States and even in Europe. The Duke of Saxe Weimar passed here a

week in the spring of 1826, and has given a detailed and amusing description of his visit.

About ten miles below the mouth of the Wabash is situated the village of Shawneetown, once a favourite dwelling-spot of the turbulent Shawnee Indian, the tribe of Tecumseh. Quite a village once stood here; but, for some cause unknown, it was forsaken previous to its settlement by the French, and two small mounds are the only vestige of its existence which are now to be seen. A trading-post was established by the early Canadian voyageurs; but, on account of the sickliness of the site, was abandoned, and the spot was soon once more a wilderness. In the early part of 1812 a land-office was here located, and two years subsequent a town was laid off by authority of Congress, and the lots sold as other public lands. Since then it has been gradually becoming the commercial emporium of southern Illinois. The buildings, among which are a very conspicuous bank, courthouse, and a land-office for the southern district of Illinois, are scattered along upon a gently elevated bottom, swelling up from the river to the bluffs in the rear, but sometimes submerged. From this latter cause it has formerly been subject to disease; it is now considered healthy; is the chief commercial port in this section of the state, and is the principal point of debarkation for emigrants for the distant West. Twelve miles in its rear are situated the Gallatin Salines, from which the United States obtains some hundred thousands of bushels of salt annually. It is manufactured by

the evaporation of salt water. This is said to abound over the whole extent of this region, yielding from one eighth to one twelfth of its weight in pure muriate of soda. In many places it bursts forth in perennial springs; but most frequently is obtained by penetrating with the augur a depth of from three to six hundred feet through the solid limestone substratum, when a copper tube is introduced, and the strongly-impregnated fluid gushes violently to the surface. In the vicinity of these salines huge fragments of earthenware, apparently of vessels used in obtaining salt, and bearing the impress of wickerwork, have been thrown up from a considerable depth below the surface. Appearances of the same character exist near Portsmouth, in the State of Ohio, and other places. Their origin is a mystery! the race which formed them is departed!

Ohio River.

IV.

"Who can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creations, hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blooms?"

THOMSON.

"Precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered, and the same for ever."

COLERIDGE.

IT was near noon of the third day of our passage that we found ourselves in the vicinity of that singular series of massive rock formations, stretching along for miles upon the eastern bank of the stream. The whole vast plain, extending from the Northern Lakes to the mouth of the Ohio, and from the Alleghany slope to the boundless prairies of the far West, is said by geologists to be supported by a bed of horizontal limestone rock, whose deep strata have never been completely pierced, though penetrated many hundred feet by the augur. This limestone is hard, stratified, imbedding innumerable shells of the terebratulæ, encrinites, orthocerites, trilobites, productus, and other species. Throughout most of its whole extent it supports a stratum of bituminous coal, various metals, and saline impregnations: its constant decomposition has fertilized the soil, and its absorbent and cavernous nature has prevented swamps from accumulating upon the surface. Such, in general outline, is this vast limerock substratum

of the Western Valley. It generally commences but a few feet below the vegetable deposite; at other places its range is deeper, while at intervals it rises from the surface, and frowns in castellated grandeur over objects beneath. These huge masses of limestone sometimes exhibit the most picturesque and remarkable forms along the banks of the western rivers, and are penetrated in many places by vast caverns. The region we were now approaching was a locality of these singular formations, and for miles before reaching it, as has been remarked, a change in scenery upon the eastern bank is observed. Instead of the rounded wooded summits of the "Ohio hills" sweeping beautifully away in the distance, huge, ponderous rocks, heaped up in ragged masses, "Pelion upon Ossa," are beheld rearing themselves abruptly from the stream, and expanding their Briarean arms in every direction. Some of these cliffs present a uniform, jointed surface, as if of masonry, resembling ancient edifices, and reminding the traveller of the giant ruins of man's creations in another hemisphere, while others appear just on the point of toppling into the river. Among this range of crags is said to hang an *iron coffin*, suspended, like Mohammed's, between heaven and earth. It contains the remains of a man of singular eccentricity, who, previous to his decease, gave orders that they should be deposited thus; and the gloomy object at the close of the year, when the trees are stripped of their foliage, may be perceived, it is said, high up among the rocks from the deck of the passing

steamer. This story probably owes its origin to an event of actual occurrence somewhat similar, at a cliff called by the river-pilots "Hanging Rock." It is situated in the vicinity of "Blennerhasset's Island." The first of these singular cliffs, called "Battery Rock," stretches along the river-bank for half a mile, presenting a uniform and perpendicular façade upward of eighty feet in height. The appearance is striking, standing, as it does, distinct from anything of a kindred character for miles above and for some distance below. Passing several fine farms, which sweep down to the water's edge, a second range of cliffs are discovered, similar to those described in altitude and aspect; but near the base, through the dark cypresses skirting the water, is perceived the ragged entrance to a large cavernous fissure, penetrating the bluff, and designated by the name of "Rock-Inn-Cave." It is said to have received this significant appellation from emigrants, who were accustomed to tarry with their families for weeks at the place when detained by stress of weather, stage of the river, or any other circumstance unfavourable to their progress.

It was near noon of a beautiful day when the necessary orders for landing were issued to the pilot, and our boat rounded up to the low sand-beach just below this celebrated cavern. As we strolled along the shore beneath "the precipitous, black, jagged rocks" overhanging the winding and broken pathway towards the entrance, we could not but consider its situation wild and rugged enough to please the rifest fancy. The entrance,

at first view, is exceedingly imposing; its broad massive forehead beetling over the visiter for some yards before he finds himself within. The mouth of the cavern looks out upon the stream rushing along at the base of the cliff, and is delightfully shaded by a cluster of cypresses, rearing aloft their huge shafts, almost concealed in the luxuriant ivy-leaves clinging to their bark. The entrance is formed into a semi-elliptical arch, springing boldly to the height of forty feet from a heavy bench of rock on either side, and eighty feet in width at the base, throwing over the whole a massive roof of uniform concavity, verging to a point near the centre of the cave. Here may be seen another opening of some size, through which trickles a limpid stream, and forming an entrance to a second chamber, said to be more extensive than that below. The extreme length of this cavern is given by Schoolcraft as one hundred and sixty feet, the floor, the roof, and the walls gradually tapering to a point. The rock is a secondary limestone, abounding with testacea and petrifactions, a fine specimen of which I struck from the ledge while the rest of our party were recording their names among the thousand dates and inscriptions with which the walls are defaced.

Like all other curiosities of Nature, this cavern was, by the Indian tribes, deemed the residence of a *Manito** or spirit, evil or propitious, concerning

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that this term is employed to signify the *same* thing by all the tribes from the Arkansas to the sources of the Mississippi; and, according to Mackenzie, throughout the Arctic Regions.

whom many a wild legend yet lives among their simple-hearted posterity. They never passed this dwelling-place of the divinity without discharging their guns (an ordinary mark of respect), or making some other offering propitiatory of his favour. These tributary acknowledgments, however, are never of much value. The view of the stream from the left bench at the cave's mouth is most beautiful. Immediately in front extends a large and densely-wooded island, known by the name of the Cave, while the soft-gliding waters flow between, furnishing a scene of natural beauty worthy an Inman's pencil; and, if I mistake not, an engraving of the spot has been published, a ferocious-looking personage, pistol in hand, crouched at the entrance, eagerly watching an ascending boat. This design originated, doubtless, in the tradition yet extant, that in the latter part of the last century this cavern was the rendezvous of a notorious band of freebooters which then infested the region, headed by the celebrated Mason, plundering the boats ascending from New-Orleans and murdering their crews. From these circumstances this cave has become the scene of a poem of much merit, called the "Outlaw," and has suggested a spirited tale from a popular writer. Many other spots in the vicinity were notorious, in the early part of the present century, for the murder and robbery of travellers, whose fate long remained enveloped in mystery. On the summit of a lofty bluff, not far from the "Battery Rock," was pointed out to us a solitary house, with a single chimney rising from its roof. Its

white walls may be viewed for miles before reaching the place on descending the river. It was here that the family of Sturdevant carried on their extensive operations as counterfeiters for many years unsuspected; and on this spot, in 1821, they expiated their crimes with their lives. A few miles below is a place called "Ford's Ferry," where murder, robbery, forgery, and almost every crime in the calendar were for years committed, while not a suspicion of the truth was awakened. Ford not only escaped unsuspected, but was esteemed a most exemplary man. Associated with him were his son and two other individuals, named Simpson and Shouse. They are all now gone to their account. The old man was mysteriously shot by some person who was never discovered, but was supposed to have been Simpson, between whom and himself a misunderstanding had arisen. If it were so, the murderer was met by fitting retribution, for *he* fell in a similar manner. Shouse and the son of Ford atoned upon the gallows their crimes in 1833. Before reaching this spot the traveller passes a remarkable mass of limestone called "Tower Rock." It is perpendicular, isolated, and somewhat cylindrical in outline. It is many feet in altitude, and upon its summit tradition avers to exist the ruins of an antique tumulus; an altar, mayhap, of the ancient forest-sons, where

> "Garlands, ears of maize, and skins of wolf
> And shaggy bear, the offerings of the tribe
> Were made to the Great Spirit."

In the vicinity of the cliff called "Tower Rock," and not far from Hurricane Island, is said to exist a

remarkable cavern of considerable extent. The cave is entered by an orifice nine feet in width and twelve feet high; a bench of rock is then ascended a few feet, and an aperture of the size of an ordinary door admits the visiter into a spacious hall. In the mouth of the cavern, on the façade of the cliff, at the altitude of twenty-five feet, are engraved figures resembling a variety of animals, as the bear, the buffalo, and even the lion and lioness. All this I saw nothing of, and am, of course, no voucher for its existence; but a writer in the Port Folio, so long since as 1816, states the fact, and, moreover, adds that the engraving upon the rock was executed in "a masterly style."

From this spot the river stretches away in a long delightful reach, studded with beautiful islands, among which "Hurricane Island," a very large one, is chief. Passing the compact little village of Golconda with its neat courthouse, and the mouth of the Cumberland River with its green island, once the rendezvous of Aaron Burr and his chivalrous band, we next reached the town of Paducah, at the outlet of the Tennessee. This is a place of importance,* though deemed unhealthy: it is said to have derived its name from a captive Indian woman, who was here sacrificed by a band of the Pawnees after having been assured of safety. About eight miles below Paducah are situated the ruins of Fort Massac, once a French military post of importance. There is a singular legend respecting this fort still popular among the inhabitants of the neighbouring region, the outlines of which

* It has since been nearly destroyed by fire.

are the following: The fortress was erected by the French while securing possession of the Western Valley, and, soon after, hostilities arising between them and the natives, the latter contrived a stratagem, in every respect worthy the craft and subtlety of the race, to obtain command of this stronghold. Early one morning a body of Indians, enveloped each in a bearskin, appeared upon the opposite bank of the Ohio. Supposing them the animal so faithfully represented, the whole French garrison in a mass sallied incontinently forth, anticipating rare sport, while the remnant left behind as a guard gathered themselves upon the glacis as spectators of the scene. Meanwhile, a large body of Indians, concealed in rear of the fort, slipped silently from their ambush, and few were there of the French who escaped to tell the tale of the scene that ensued. They were *massacred* almost to a man, and hence the name of *Massac* to the post. During the war of the revolution a garrison was stationed upon the spot for some years, but the structures are now in ruins. A few miles below is a small place consisting of a few farmhouses, called Wilkinsonville, on the site where Fort Wilkinson once stood; just opposite, along the shore, commences the "Grand Chain" of rocks so famous to the Ohio pilot, extending four miles. The little village of Caledonia is here laid off among the bluffs. It has a good landing, and is the proposed site of a marine hospital.

It was sunset when we arrived at the confluence of the rivers. In course of the afternoon we had been visited by a violent thunder-gust, accompanied

by hail. But sunset came, and the glorious "bow of the covenant" was hung out upon the dark bosom of the clouds, spanning woodland and waters with its beautiful hues. And yet, though the hour was a delightful one, the scene did not present that aspect of vastness and sublimity which was anticipated from the celebrity of the streams. For some miles before uniting its waters with the Mississippi, the Ohio presents a dull and uninteresting appearance. It is no longer the clear, sparkling stream, with bluffs and woodland painted on its surface; the volume of its channel is greatly increased by its union with two of its principal tributaries, and its waters are turbid; its banks are low, inundated, and clothed with dark groves of deciduous forest-trees, and the only sounds which issue from their depths to greet the traveller's ear are the hoarse croakings of frogs, or the dull monotony of countless choirs of moschetoes. Thus rolls on the river through the dullest, dreariest, most uninviting region imaginable, until it sweeps away in a direction nearly southeast, and meets the venerable Father of the West advancing to its embrace. The volume of water in each seems nearly the same; the Ohio exceeds a little in breadth, their currents oppose to each other an equal resistance, and the resultant of the forces is a vast lake more than two miles in breadth, where the united waters slumber quietly and magnificently onward for leagues in a common bed. On the right come rolling in the turbid floods of the Mississippi; and on looking upon it for the first time with preconceived ideas of the magnitude of the mightiest

river on the globe, the spectator is always disappointed. He considers only its breadth when compared with the Ohio, without adverting to its vast depth. The Ohio sweeps in majestically from the north, and its clear waters flow on for miles without an intimate union with its turbid conqueror. The characteristics of the two streams are distinctly marked at their junction and long after. The banks of both are low and swampy, totally unfit for culture or habitation. "Willow Point," which projects itself into the confluence, presents an elevation of twenty feet; yet, in unusual inundations, it is completely buried six feet below the surface, and the agitated waters, rolling together their masses, form an enormous lake. How strange it seemed, while gazing upon the view I have attempted to delineate, now fading away beneath the summer twilight—how very strange was the reflection that these two noble streams, deriving their sources in the pellucid lakes and the clear icy fountains of their highland-homes, meandering majestically through scenes of nature and of art unsurpassed in beauty, and draining, and irrigating, and fertilizing the loveliest valley on the globe—how strange, that the confluence of the waters of such streams, in their onward rolling to the deep, should take place at almost the only stage in their course devoid entirely of interest to the eye or the fancy; in the heart of a dreary and extended swamp, waving with the gloomy boughs of the cypress, and enlivened by not a sound but the croaking of bullfrogs, and the deep, surly misery note of

moschetoes! Willow Point is the property of a company of individuals, who announce it their intention to elevate the delta above the power of inundations, and here to locate a city. There are as yet, however, but a few storehouses on the spot; and when we consider the incalculable expense the only plan for rendering it habitable involves, we can only deem the idea of a city here as the chimera of a Utopian fancy. For more than twelve miles above the confluence, the whole alluvion is annually inundated, and forbids all improvement; but were this site an elevated one, a city might here be founded which should command the immense commerce of these great rivers, and become the grand central emporium of the Western Valley.

Upon the first elevated land above the confluence stands the little town called America. This is the proposed *terminus* to the grand central railroad of the Internal Improvement scheme of Illinois, projected to pass directly through the state, uniting its northern extremity with the southern. The town is said to have been much retarded in its advancement by the circumstance of a sand-bar obstructing the landing. It has been contemplated to cut a basin, extending from the Ohio to a stream called "Humphrey's Creek," which passes through the place, and thus secure a harbour. Could this plan be carried into execution, America would soon become a town of importance.

Ohio River.

V.

"The groves were God's first temples."

BRYANT.

"Oh! it's hame, and it's hame, it's hame wad I be,
Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie."

CUNNINGHAM.

"Those Sabbath bells, those Sabbath bells,
I hear them wake the hour of prime."

LAMB.

"She walks the waters like a thing of life."

BYRON.

IT was late before we had passed the confluence of the Ohio with the dark-rolling tide of the "endless river," and the mellow gorgeousness of summer sunset had gently yielded to the duskiness of twilight, and that to the inky pall of night. The moon had not risen, and the darkness became gradually so dense that doubts were entertained as to the prudence of attempting to stem the mighty current of the Mississippi on such a night. These, however, were overruled; and, sweeping around the low peninsula of Cairo, our steamer met the torrent and quivered in every limb. A convulsed, motionless struggle ensued, in which the heavy labouring of the engine, the shrill whistle of the safety-valve, the quick, querulous crackling of the furnaces, the tumultuous rushing of the wheels, and the stern roar of the scape-pipe, gave evidence of the fearful power summoned up to overcome the flood. At length we began very slowly to ascend the stream.

Our speed was about five miles an hour, and the force of the current nearly the same, which so impedes advancement that it requires as long to ascend from the confluence to St. Louis as to descend to the same point from the Falls, though the distance is less than half. All night our steamer urged herself slowly onward against the current, and the morning found us threading a narrow channel amid a cluster of islands, from whose dense foliage the night-mists were rising and settling in dim confusion. Near the middle of the stream, above this collection, lays a very large island, comprising eight or ten thousand acres. It is called English Island; is heavily timbered; huge vines of the wild grape are leaping like living things from branch to branch, and the wild pea flourishes all over the surface of the soil in most luxuriant profusion. The stream here expands itself to the breadth of four miles, and abounds with islands.

As the morning advanced the sun burst gloriously forth from the mists; and as I gazed with tranquillized delight upon the beautiful scenery it unrolled, I remembered that it was the morning of the Sabbath—the peaceful Sabbath. It is a sweet thing to pass the hours of holy time amid the eloquent teachings of inanimate nature. It is pleasant to yield up for a season the sober workings of reason to the warm gushings of the heart, and to suffer the homage of the soul to go up before the Author of its being unfettered by the chill formalities, the bustling parade, the soulless dissembling of the unbending courtesies of ordinary life. Amid the

crowded assemblage, there is but little of that humbleness of spirit and that simple-hearted fervour of worship which it is in man to feel when communing within the shadowy solitudes of Nature with his God. There are moments, too, when the soul of man is called back from the heartlessness of life, and pours forth its emotions, gush upon gush, in all the hallowed luxuriance of its nature; when, from the fevered turmoil of daily existence, it retires to well up its sympathies alone beneath the covert of a lulled and peaceful bosom; and surely such a season is the calm, waveless hour of Sabbath sacredness. And it is a blessed appointment that, in a world whose quietude too often is disturbed by the untamed heavings of unholy feeling, there should yet be moments when the agitated events of the past are forgotten, when the apprehensions of the future are unthought of, and the generous emotions of the heart are no more repressed. Such moments are the crystal fount of the *oasis*, girt, indeed, by the sands and barrenness of the desert; yet laughing forth in tinkling melody amid its sprinkled evergreens, in all the sparkling freshness of mimic life, to bathe the languid lip of the weary one. Such moments are the mellow radiance of the departing sun when the trials of the day are over; and tenderly and softly do their influences descend upon the heart. Like the pure splendour of the star of even, how calmly does the sacred Sabbath-time beam out from the dark, unquiet firmament of life! 'Tis the blessed rainbow of promise and of consolation amid the rough storms of our pilgrim-

age, and its holy influences elicit all the untold richness of the heart. It is a season soft as the memorial of buried affection, mild as the melody of departed years, pure as the prayer of feebleness from the lip of childhood, beautiful as yon floating islet sleeping in sunset radiance on the blue evening wave. "Gone, gone for ever!" Another Sabbath is over, and from its gathering shades it is good to cast back a glance of reflection.

A company of emigrants, in course of the morning, were landed from our boat at a desolate-looking spot upon the Missouri shore; men, women, and little ones, with slaves, household stuff, pots, kettles, dogs, implements of husbandry, and all the paraphernalia of the backwood's farm heaped up promiscuously in a heterogeneous mass among the undergrowth beneath the lofty trees. A similar party from the State of Vermont were, during our passage, landed near the mouth of the Wabash, one of whom was a pretty, delicate female, with an infant boy in her arms. They had been *deck-passengers*, and we had seen none of them before; yet their situation could not but excite interest in their welfare. Poor woman! thought I, as our boat left them gazing anxiously after us from the inhospitable bank, little do you dream of the trials and the privations to which your destiny conducts, and the hours of bitter retrospection which are to come over your spirit like a blight, as, from these cheerless solitudes, you cast back many a lingering thought to your dear, distant home in New-England; whose very mountain-crags and fierce storms

of winter, harsh and unwelcome though they might seem to the stranger, were yet pleasant to you:

"My native land! my native land!
Though bare and bleak thou be,
And scant and cold thy summer smile,
Thou'rt all the world to me."

A few years, and all this will have passed away. A new home and new ties will have sprung up in the wilderness to sooth the remembrance of the old. This broad valley will swarm with population; the warm breath of man will be felt upon the cheek, and his tread will be heard at the side; the glare of civilization and the confused hum of business will have violated these solitudes and broken in upon their gloom, and here empire shall have planted her throne; and then, perchance, that playful boy upon the bosom may rise to wield the destinies of his fellows. But many a year of toil and privation must first have passed away; and who shall record their annals? A thousand circumstances, all unlooked for, will seize upon the feelings of the emigrant; the harshness of strangers, the cold regard of recent acquaintance, the absence of relatives and of friends long cherished, the distance which separates him from his native home, and the dreary time which must elapse between all communications of the pen. And then the sweet chime of the Sabbath-bell of New-England, pealing out in "angels' music"* on the clear mountain-air, to usher in the hours of holy time, and to summon the soul of man to communion with its Maker; will this be heard amid the forest solitude? and all that quiet

* Herbert.

intermingling of heart with heart which divests grief of half its bitterness by taking from it all its loneliness? And the hour of sickness, and of death, and of gushing tears, as they come to all, may not be absent here; and where are the soothing consolations of religious solemnity, and the sympathies of kindred souls, and the unobtrusive condolence of those who alone may enter the inner temple of the breast, where the stranger intermeddleth not? Yes, it must be—notwithstanding the golden anticipations indulged by every humble emigrant to this El Dorado of promise—it must be that there will arise in his bosom, when he finds himself for the first time amid these vast forest solitudes, attended only by his wife and children, a feeling of unutterable loneliness and desertion. Until this moment he has been sustained by the buoyancy of anticipated success, the excitement of change, the enlivening influences of new and beautiful scenes; and the effect of strange faces and strange customs has been to divert the attention, while the farewell pressure of affection yet has warmly lingered. All this is over now, and his spirit, left to its own resources, sinks within him. The sacred spot of his nativity is far, far away towards the morning sun; and there is the village church and the village graveyard, hallowed by many a holy remembrance; there, too, are the playmates and the scenes of his boyhood-days; the trysting-place of youthful love and of youthful friendship, spots around which are twined full many a tendril of his heart; and he has turned from them all *for ever*. Henceforth he is a wanderer, and a distant soil must

claim his ashes. He who, with such reflections, yearns not for the home of his fathers, is an alien, and no true son of New-England.

It was yet early in the morning of our first day upon the Mississippi that we found ourselves beneath the stately bluff upon which stands the old village of Cape Girardeau. Its site is a bold bank of the stream, gently sloping to the water's edge, upon a substratum of limerock. A settlement was commenced on this spot in the latter part of the last century. Its founders were of French and German extraction, though its structures do not betray their origin. The great earthquakes of 1811, which vibrated through the whole length of the Western Valley, agitated the site of this village severely; many brick houses were shattered, chimneys thrown down, and other damage effected, traces of the repairs of which are yet to be viewed. The place received a shock far more severe, however, in the removal of the seat of justice to another town in the county: but the landing is an excellent one; iron ore and other minerals are its staples of trade, and it is again beginning to assume a commercial character. The most remarkable objects which struck our attention in passing this place were several of those peculiarly novel mills put in motion by a spiral water-wheel, acted on by the current of the river. These screw-wheels float upon the surface parallel to the shore, rising or falling with the water, and are connected with the gearing in the millhouse upon the bank by a long shaft. The action of the current upon

the spiral thread of the wheel within its external casing keeps it in constant motion, which is communicated by the shaft to the machinery of the mills. The contrivance betrays much ingenuity, and for purposes where a *motive* of inconsiderable power is required, may be useful; but for driving heavy millstones or a saw, the utility is more than problematical.

In the vicinity of Cape Girardeau commences what is termed the "Tyowapity Bottom," a celebrated section of country extending along the Missouri side of the stream some thirty miles, and abounding with a peculiar species of potter's clay, unctuous in its nature, exceedingly pure and white, and plastic under the wheel. This stratum of clay is said to vary from one foot to ten in depth, resting upon sandstone, and covered by limestone abounding in petrifactions. A manufactory is in operation at Cape Girardeau, in which this substance is the material employed. Near the northern extremity of this bottom the waters of the Muddy River enter the Mississippi from Illinois. This stream was discovered by the early French voyageurs, and from them received the name of *Rivière au Vase*, or *Vaseux*. It is distinguished for the salines upon its banks, for its exhaustless beds of bituminous coal, for the fertility of the soil, and for a singularly-formed eminence among the bluffs of the Mississippi, a few miles from its mouth. Its name is "*Fountain Bluff*," derived from the circumstance that from its base gush out a number of limpid springs. It is said to measure eight miles

in circumference, and to have an altitude of several hundred feet. Its western declivity looks down upon the river, and its northern side is a precipitous crag, while that upon the south slopes away to a fertile plain, sprinkled with farms.

A few miles above the Big Muddy stands out from the Missouri shore a huge perpendicular column of limestone, of cylindrical formation, about one hundred feet in circumference at the base, and in height one hundred and fifty feet, called the "Grand Tower." Upon its summit rests a thin stratum of vegetable mould, supporting a shaggy crown of rifted cedars, rocking in every blast that sweeps the stream, whose turbid current boils, and chafes, and rages at the obstruction below. This is the first of that celebrated range of heights upon the Mississippi usually pointed out to the tourist, springing in isolated masses from the river's brink upon either side, and presenting to the eye a succession of objects singularly grotesque. There are said to exist, at this point upon the Mississippi, indications of a huge parapet of limestone having once extended across the stream, which must have formed a tremendous cataract, and effectually inundated all the alluvion above. At low stages of the water ragged shelves, which render the navigation dangerous, are still to be seen. Among the other cliffs along this precipitous range which have received names from the boatmen are the "Devil's Oven," "Teatable," "Backbone," &c., which, with the "Devil's Anvil," "Devil's Island," &c., indicate pretty plainly the divinity most religiously pro-

pitiated in these dangerous passes. The "Oven" consists of an enormous promontory of rock, about one hundred feet from the surface of the river, with a hemispherical orifice scooped out of its face, probably by the action, in ages past, of the whirling waters now hurrying on below. It is situated upon the left bank of the stream, about one mile above the "Tower," and is visible from the river. In front rests a huge fragment of the same rock, and in the interval stands a dwelling and a garden spot. The "Teatable" is situated at some distance below, and the other spots named are yet lower upon the stream. This whole region bears palpable evidence of having been subjected, ages since, to powerful volcanic and diluvial action; and neither the Neptunian or Vulcanian theory can advance a superior claim.

For a long time after entering the dangerous defile in the vicinity of the *Grand Tower*, through which the current rushes like a racehorse, our steamer writhed and groaned against the torrent, hardly advancing a foot. At length, as if by a single tremendous effort, which caused her to quiver and vibrate to her centre, an onward impetus was gained, the boat shot forward, the rapids were overcome, and then, by chance, commenced one of those perilous feats of rivalry, formerly, more than at present, frequent upon the Western waters, A RACE. Directly before us, a steamer of a large class, deeply laden, was roaring and struggling against the torrent under her highest pressure. During our passage we had several times passed and repassed each other, as either boat was delayed

at the various woodyards along the route; but now, as the evening came on, and we found ourselves gaining upon our antagonist, the excitement of emulation flushed every cheek. The passengers and crew hung clustering, in breathless interest, upon the galleries and the boiler deck, wherever a post for advantageous view presented; while the hissing valves, the quick, heavy stroke of the piston, the sharp clatter of the *eccentric*, and the cool determination of the pale engineer, as he glided like a spectre among the fearful elements of destruction, gave evidence that the challenge was accepted. But there was one humble individual, above all others, whose whole soul seemed concentrated in the contest, as from time to time, in the intervals of toil, his begrimed and working features were caught, glaring through the lurid light of the furnaces he was feeding. This was no less a personage than the doughty fireman of our steamer; a long, lanky individual, with a cute cast of the eye, a knowing tweak of the nose, and an interminable longitude of phiz. His checkered shirt was drenched with perspiration; a huge pair of breeches, begirdling his loins by means of a leathern belt, covered his nether extremities, and two sinewy arms of "whipcord and bone" held in suspension a spade-like brace of hands. During our passage, more than once did I avail myself of an opportunity of studying the grotesque, good-humoured visage of this *unique* individual; and it required no effort of fancy to imagine I viewed before me some lingering remnant of that "horse and alligator race," now, like

the poor Indian, fast fading from the West before the march of steamboats and civilization, *videlicet*, "the Mississippi boatman." And, on the occasion of which I speak, methought I could catch no slight resemblance in my interesting fireman, as he flourished his ponderous limbs, to that faithful portraiture of his majesty of the Styx in Tooke's Pantheon! though, as touching this latter, I must confess me of much dubiety in boyhood days, with the worthy "gravedigger" Young, having entertained shrewd suspicions whether the "tyrant ever sat."

But in my zeal for the honest Charon I am forgetting the exciting subject of the race. During my digression, the ambitious steamers have been puffing, and sweating, and glowing in laudable effort, to say nothing of stifled sobs said to have issued from their labouring bosoms, until at length a grim smile of satisfaction lighting up the rugged features of the worthy Charon, gave evidence that not in vain he had wielded his mace or heaved his wood. A dense mist soon after came on, and the exhausted steamers were hauled up at midnight beneath the venerable trees upon the banks of the stream. On the first breakings of dawn all was again in motion. But, alas! alas! in spite of all the strivings of our valorous steamer, it soon became but too evident that her mighty rival must prevail, as with distended jaws, like to some huge fish, she came rushing up in our wake, as if our annihilation were sure. But our apprehensions proved groundless; like a civil, well-behaved rival, she speeded on, hurling forth a triple bob-major of

curses at us as she passed, doubtless by way of salvo, and disappeared behind a point. When to this circumstance is added that a long-winded racer of a mail-boat soon after swept past us in her onward course, and left us far in the rear, I shall be believed when it is stated that the steamer on which we were embarked was distinguished for anything but speed; a circumstance by none regretted *less* than by myself.

Mississippi River.

VI.

"I linger yet with Nature."

MANFRED.

"Onward still I press,
Follow thy windings still, yet sigh for more."

GOETHE.

"God's my life, did you ever hear the like!
What a strange man is this!"

BEN JONSON.

BUT a very few years have passed away since the navigation of the Mississippi was that of one of the most dangerous streams on the globe; but, thanks to the enterprising genius of the scientific Shreve, this may no longer with truth be said. In 1824 the first appropriation* was voted by Congress for improving the navigation of the Western rivers; and since that period thousands of snags, sawyers,

* $105,000.

planters, sand-bars, sunken rocks, and fallen trees have been removed, until all that now remains is to prevent new obstacles from accumulating where the old have been eradicated. For much of its course in its lower sections, the Mississippi is now quite safe; and as the progress of settlements advances upon its banks, the navigation of this noble stream will doubtless become unobstructed in its whole magnificent journey from the falls of the "Laughing Water" to the Mexican Gulf. The indefatigable industry, the tireless perseverance, the indomitable enterprise, and the enlarged and scientific policy of Captain Shreve, the projector and accomplisher of the grand national operations upon the Western rivers, can never be estimated beyond their merit. The execution of that gigantic undertaking, the removal of the Red River Raft, has identified his history with that of the empire West; his fame will endure so long as those magnificent streams, with which his name is associated, shall continue to roll on their volumed waters to the deep.

These remarks have been suggested by scenes of constant recurrence to the traveller on the Mississippi. The banks, the forests, the islands all differ as much as the stream itself from those of the soft-gliding Ohio. Instead of those dense emerald masses of billowy foliage swelling gracefully up from the banks of "the beautiful river," those of the Mississippi throw back a rough, ragged outline; their sands piled with logs and uprooted trees, while heaps of wreck and drift-wood betray the wild ravages of the stream. In the midst of

the mass a single enormous sycamore often rears its ghastly limbs, while at its foot springs gracefully up a light fringe of the pensile willow. Sometimes, too, a huge sawyer, clinging upon the verge of the channel, heaves up its black mass above the surface, then falls, and again rises with the rush of the current. Against one of these sawyers is sometimes lodged a mass of drift-wood, pressing it firmly upon the bottom, till, by a constant accumulation, a foundation is gradually laid and a new island is formed: this again, by throwing the water from its course, causes a new channel, which, infringing with violence upon the opposite bank, undermines it with its colonnade of enormous trees, and thus new material in endless succession is afforded for obstructions to the navigation. The deposites of alluvion along the banks betray a similar origin of gradual accumulation by the annual floods. In some sections of the American Bottom, commencing at its southern extremity with the Kaskaskia River, the mould, upward of thirty feet in depth, is made up of numerous strata of earth, which may be readily distinguished and counted by the colours.

About twenty miles above the mouth of the Kaskaskia is situated Ste. Genevieve, grand deposite of the lead of the celebrated ancient mines *La Motte*, and *A'Burton*, and others, some thirty miles in the interior, and the market which supplies all the mining district of the vicinity. It was first commenced about the year 1774 by the original settlers of Upper Louisiana; and the Canadian

French, with their descendants, constitute a large portion of its present inhabitants. The population does not now exceed eight hundred, though it is once said to have numbered two thousand inhabitants. Some of the villagers are advanced in years, and among them is M. Valle, one of the chief proprietors of *Mine la Motte*, who, though now some ninety years of age, is almost as active as when fifty. Ste. Genevieve is situated about one mile from the Mississippi, upon a broad alluvial plain lying between the branches of a small stream called *Gabourie*. Beyond the first bottom rises a second steppe, and behind this yet a third, attaining an elevation of more than a hundred feet from the water's edge. Upon this elevated site was erected, some twenty years since, a handsome structure of stone, commanding a noble prospect of the river, the broad American Bottom on the opposite side, and the bluffs beyond the Kaskaskia. It was intended for a literary institution; but, owing to unfavourable reports with regard to the health of its situation, the design was abandoned, and the edifice was never completed. It is now in a state of "ruinous perfection," and enjoys the reputation, moreover, of being *haunted*. In very sooth, its aspect, viewed from the river at twilight, with its broken windows outlined against the western sky, is wild enough to warrant such an idea or any other. A courthouse and Catholic chapel constitute the public buildings. To the south of the village, and lying upon the river, is situated the common field, originally comprising

two thousand *arpens;* but it is now much less in extent, and is yearly diminishing from the action of the current upon the alluvial banks. These common fields were granted by the Spanish government, as well as by the French, to every village settled under their domination. A single enclosure at the expense of the villagers was erected and kept in repair, and the lot of every individual was separated from his neighbour's by a double furrow. Near this field the village was formerly located; but in the inundation of 1785, called by the old *habitans* "*L'annee des grandes eaux*," so much of the bank was washed away that the settlers were forced to select a more elevated site. The Mississippi was at this time swelled to thirty feet above the highest water-mark before known; and the town of Kaskaskia and the whole American Bottom were inundated.

Almost every description of minerals are to be found in the county, of which Ste. Genevieve is the seat of justice. But of all other species, iron ore is the most abundant. The celebrated *Iron Mountain* and the *Pilot Knob* are but forty miles distant. Abundance of coal is found in the opposite bluffs in Illinois. About twelve miles from the village has been opened a quarry of beautiful white marble, in some respects thought not inferior to that of Carrara. There are also said to be immense caves of pure white sand, of dazzling lustre, quantities of which are transported to Pittsburg for the manufacture of flint glass. There are a number of beautiful fountains in the neighbourhood, one of which is said to be of surpassing loveliness. It is several

yards square, and rushes up from a depth of fifteen or twenty feet, enclosed upon three sides by masses of living rock, over which, in pensile gracefulness, repose the long glossy branches of the forest-trees.

The early French settlers manufactured salt a few miles from the village, at a saline formerly occupied by the aborigines, the remains of whose earthen kettles are yet found on the spot. About thirty years since a village of the Peoria Indians was situated where the French common field now stands; and from the ancient mounds found in the vicinity, and the vast quantities of animal and human remains, and utensils of pottery exhumed from the soil, the spot seems to have been a favourite location of a race whose destiny, and origin, and history are alike veiled in oblivion. The view of Ste. Genevieve from the water is picturesque and beautiful, and its landing is said to be superior to any between the mouth of the Ohio and the city of St. Louis. The village has that decayed and venerable aspect characteristic of all these early French settlements.

As we were passing Ste. Genevieve an accident occurred which had nearly proved fatal to our boat, if not to the lives of all on board of her. A race which took place between another steamer and our own has been noticed. In some unaccountable manner, this boat, which then passed us, fell again in the rear, and now, for the last hour, had been coming up in our wake under high steam. On overtaking us, she attempted, contrary to all rules and reg-

ulations for the navigation of the river provided, to pass between our boat and the bank beneath which we were moving; an outrage which, had it been persisted in a moment longer than was fortunately the case, would have sent us to the bottom. For a single instant, as she came rushing on, contact seemed inevitable; and, as her force was far superior to our own, and the recklessness of many who have the guidance of Western steamers was well known to us all, the passengers stood clustering around upon the decks, some pale with apprehension, and others with firearms in their hands, flushed with excitement, and prepared to render back prompt retribution on the first aggression. The pilot of the hostile boat, from his exposed situation and the virulent feelings against him, would have met with certain death; and he, consequently, contrary to the express injunctions of the master, reversed the motion of the wheels just at the instant to avoid the fatal rencounter. The sole cause for this outrage, we subsequently learned, was a private pique existing between the pilots of the respective steamers. One cannot restrain an expression of indignant feeling at such an exhibition of foolhardy recklessness. It is strange, after all the fearful accidents of this description upon the Western waters, and that terrible prodigality of human life which for years past has been constantly exhibited, there should yet be found individuals so utterly regardless of the safety of their fellow-men, and so destitute of every emotion of generous feeling, as to force their way heedlessly onward into

danger, careless of any issue save the paltry gratification of private vengeance. It is a question daily becoming of more startling import, How may these fatal occurrences be successfully opposed? Where lies the fault? Is it in public sentiment? Is it in legal enactment? Is it in individual villany? However this may be, our passage seemed fraught with adventure, of which this is but an incident. After the event mentioned, having composed the agitation consequent, we had retired to our berths, and were just buried in profound sleep, when crash—our boat's bow struck heavily against a snag, which, glancing along the bottom, threw her at once upon her beams, and all the passengers on the elevated side from their berths. No serious injury was sustained, though alarm and confusion enough were excited by such an unceremonious turn-out. The dismay and tribulation of some of our worthy company were entirely too ludicrous for the risibles of the others, and a hearty roar of cachinnation was heard even above the ejaculations of distress; a very improper thing, no doubt, and not at all to be recommended on such occasions, as one would hardly wish to make a grave "unknell'd and uncoffin'd" in the Mississippi, with a broad grin upon his phiz.

In alluding to the race which took place during our passage, honourable mention was made of a certain worthy individual whose vocation was to feed the furnaces; and one bright morning, when all the others of our company had bestowed themselves in their berths because of the intolerable

heat, I took occasion to visit the sooty Charon in the purgatorial realms over which he wielded the sceptre. "Grievous work this building fires under a sun like that," was the salutation, as my friend the fireman had just completed the toilsome operation once more of stuffing the furnace, while floods of perspiration were coursing down a chest hairy as Esau's in the Scripture, and as brawny. Hereupon honest Charon lifted up his face, and drawing a dingy shirt sleeve with emphasis athwart his eyes, bleared with smut, responded, "Ay, ay, sir; it's a sin to Moses, such a trade;" and seizing incontinently upon a fragment of tin, fashioned by dint of thumping into a polygonal dipper of unearthly dimensions, he scooped up a quantity of the turbid fluid through which we were moving, and deep, deep was the potation which, like a succession of rapids, went gurgling down his throat. Marvellously refreshed, the worthy genius dilated, much to my edification, upon the glories of a fireman's life. "Upon this hint I spake" touching the topic of our recent race; and then were the strings of the old worthy's tongue let loose; and vehemently amplified he upon "our smart chance of a gallop" and "the slight sprinkling of steam he had managed to push up." "Ah, stranger, I'll allow, and couldn't I have teetotally obfusticated her, and right mightily used her up, hadn't it been I was sort of bashful as to keeping path with such a cursed old mud-turtle! But it's all done gone;" and the droughty Charon seized another swig from the unearthly dipper; and closing hermetically his lantern jaws, and resuming his *in-*

fernal labours, to which those of Alcmena's son or of Tartarean Sysiphus were trifles, I had the discretion to betake myself to the upper world.

During the night, after passing Ste. Genevieve, our steamer landed at a woodyard in the vicinity of that celebrated old fortress, Fort Chartres, erected by the French while in possession of Illinois; once the most powerful fortification in North America, but now a pile of ruins. It is situated about three miles from *Prairie de Rocher*, a little antiquated French hamlet, the scene of one of Hall's Western Legends. We could see nothing of the old fort from our situation on the boat; but its vast ruins, though now a shattered heap, and shrouded with forest-trees of more than half a century's growth, are said still to proclaim in their finished and ponderous masonry its ancient grandeur and strength. In front stretches a large island in the stream, which has received from the old ruin a name. It is not a little surprising that there exists no description of this venerable pile worthy its origin and eventful history.

Mississippi River.

VII.

"The hills! our mountain-wall, the hills!"

Alpine Omen.

"But thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever,
Could man but leave thy bright creation so—"

Childe Harold.

THERE are few objects upon the Mississippi in which the geologist and natural philosopher may claim a deeper interest than that singular series of limestone cliffs already alluded to, which, above its junction with the Ohio, present themselves to the traveller all along the Missouri shore. The principal ridge commences a few miles above Ste. Genevieve; and at sunrise one morning we found ourselves beneath a huge battlement of crags, rising precipitously from the river to the height of several hundred feet. Seldom have I gazed upon a scene more eminently imposing than that of these hoary old cliffs, when the midsummer-sun, rushing upward from the eastern horizon, bathed their splintered pinnacles and spires and the rifted tree-tops in a flood of golden effulgence. The scene was not unworthy Walter Scott's graphic description of the view from the Trosachs of Loch Katrine, in the "Lady of the Lake:"

"The *eastern* waves of *rising* day
Roll'd o'er the *stream* their level way;

Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
* * * * *
Their rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked
Or mosque of eastern architect."

All of these precipices, not less than those on the Ohio, betray palpable indication of having once been swept by the stream ; and the fantastic excavations and cavernous fissures which their bold escarpments expose would indicate a current far more furious and headstrong than that, resistless though it be, which now rolls at their base. The idea receives confirmation from the circumstance that opposite extends the broad American Bottom, whose alluvial character is undisputed. This tract once constituted our western border, whence the name.

The bluffs of Selma and Herculaneum are distinguished for their beauty and grandeur, not less than for the practical utility to which they have been made subservient. Both places are great depositories of lead from the mines of the interior, and all along their cliffs, for miles, upon every eligible point, are erected tall towers for the manufacture of shot. Their appearance in distant view is singularly picturesque, perched lightly upon the pinnacles of towering cliffs, beetling over the flood, which rushes along two hundred feet below. Some of these shot manufactories have been in operation

for nearly thirty years. Herculaneum has long been celebrated for those in her vicinity. The situation of the town is the mouth of Joachim Creek; and the singular gap at this point has been aptly compared to an enormous door, thrown open in the cliffs for the passage of its waters. A few miles west of this village is said to exist a great natural curiosity, in shape of a huge rock of limestone, some hundred feet in length, and about fifty feet high. This rock is completely honeycombed with perforations, and has the appearance of having been pierced by the mytilus or some other marine insect.

A few miles above Herculaneum comes in the Platine Creek; and here commence the "Cornice Rocks," a magnificent escarpment of castellated cliffs some two or three hundred feet in perpendicular altitude from the bed of the stream, and extending along the western bank a distance of eight or ten miles. Through the façade of these bluffs pours in the tribute of the Merrimac, a bright, sparkling, beautiful stream. This river is so clear and limpid that it was long supposed to glide over sands of silver; but the idea has been abandoned, and given place to the certainty of an abundant store of lead, and iron, and salt upon its banks, while its source is shaded by extensive forests of the white pine, a material in this section of country almost, if not quite, as valuable. Ancient works of various forms are also found upon the banks of the Merrimac. There is an immense cemetery near the village of Fenton, containing

thousands of graves of a pigmy size, the largest not exceeding four feet in length. This cemetery is now enclosed and cultivated, so that the graves are no longer visible; but, previous to this, it is said that headstones were to be seen bearing unintelligible hieroglyphical inscriptions. Human remains, ancient pottery, arrow-heads, and stone axes are daily thrown up by the ploughshare, while the numerous mounds in the vicinity are literally composed of the same materials. Mammoth bones, such as those discovered on the Ohio and in the state of New-York, are said also to have been found at a salt-lick near this stream.

It was a bright morning, on the fifth day of an exceedingly long passage, that we found ourselves approaching St. Louis. At about noon we were gliding beneath the broad ensign floating from the flagstaff of Jefferson Barracks. The sun was gloriously bright; the soft summer wind was rippling the waters, and the clear cerulean of the heavens was imaged in their depths. The site of the quadrangle of the barracks enclosing the parade is the broad summit of a noble bluff, swelling up from the water, while the outbuildings are scattered picturesquely along the interval beneath; the view from the steamer cannot but strike the traveller as one of much scenic beauty. Passing the venerable village of Carondelet, with its whitewashed cottages crumbling with years, and old Cahokia buried in the forests on the opposite bank, the gray walls of the Arsenal next stood out before us in the rear of its beautiful esplanade. A fine quay is erected upon the river in front, and the extensive grounds

are enclosed by a wall of stone. Sweeping onward, the lofty spire and dusky walls of St. Louis Cathedral, on rounding a river bend, opened upon the eye, the gilded crucifix gleaming in the sunlight from its lofty summit; and then the glittering cupolas and church domes, and the fresh aspect of private residences, mingling with the bright foliage of forest-trees interspersed, all swelling gently from the water's edge, recalled vividly the beautiful "Mistress of the North," as my eye has often lingered upon her from her magnificent bay. A few more spires, and the illusion would be perfect. For beauty of outline in distant view, St. Louis is deservedly famed. The extended range of limestone warehouses circling the shore give to the city a grandeur of aspect, as approached from the water, not often beheld; while the dense-rolling forest-tops stretching away in the rear, the sharp outline of the towers and roofs against the western sky, and the funereal grove of steamboat-pipes lining the quay, altogether make up a combination of features novel and picturesque. As we approached the landing all the uproar and confusion of a steamboat port was before us, and our own arrival added to the bustle.

And now, perchance, having escaped the manifold perils of sawyer and snag, planter, wreck-heap, and sand-bar, it may not be unbecoming in me, like an hundred other tourists, to gather up a votive offering, and—if classic allusion be permissible on the waters of the wilderness West—hang it up before the shrine of the "Father of Floods."

It is surely no misnomer that this giant stream has been styled the "eternal river," the "terrible Mississippi;"* for we may find none other imbodying so many elements of the fearful and the sublime. In the wild rice-lakes of the far frozen north, amid a solitude broken only by the shrill clang of the myriad water-fowls, is its home. Gushing out from its fountains clear as the air-bell, it sparkles over the white pebbly sand-beds, and, breaking over the beautiful falls of the "Laughing Water,"† it takes up its majestic march to the distant deep. Rolling onward through the shades of magnificent forests, and hoary, castellated cliffs, and beautiful meadows, its volume is swollen as it advances, until it receives to its bosom a tributary, a rival, a conqueror, which has roamed three thousand miles for the meeting, and its original features are lost for ever. Its beauty is merged in sublimity! Pouring along in its deep bed the heaped-up waters of streams which drain the broadest valley on the globe; sweeping onward in a boiling mass, furious, turbid, always dangerous; tearing away, from time to time, its deep banks, with their giant colonnades of living verdure, and then, with the stern despotism of a conqueror, flinging them aside again; governed by no principle but its own lawless will, the dark majesty of its features summons up an emotion of the sublime which defies contrast or parallel. And then, when we think of its far, lonely course, journeying onward in proud, dread, solitary grandeur,

* A name of Algonquin origin—*Missi* signifying great, and *sepe* a river.

† Indian name for the "Falls of St. Anthony."

through forests dusk with the lapse of centuries, pouring out the ice and snows of arctic lands through every temperature of clime, till at last it heaves free its mighty bosom beneath the Line, we are forced to yield up ourselves in uncontrolled admiration of its gloomy magnificence. And its dark, mysterious history, too; those fearful scenes of which it has alone been the witness; the venerable tombs of a race departed which shadow its waters; the savage tribes that yet roam its forests; the germes of civilization expanding upon its borders; and the deep solitudes, untrodden by man, through which it rolls, all conspire to throng the fancy. Ages on ages and cycles upon cycles have rolled away; wave after wave has swept the broad fields of the Old World; an hundred generations have arisen from the cradle and flourished in their freshness, and, like autumn leaflets, have withered in the tomb; and the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, the Cæsars and the Caliphs, have thundered over the nations and passed away; and here, amid these terrible solitudes, in the stern majesty of loneliness, and power, and pride, have rolled onward these deep waters to their destiny!

"Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy?"
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer!"

There is, perhaps, no stream which presents a greater variety of feature than the Mississippi, or phenomena of deeper interest, whether we regard the soil, productions, and climate of its valley, its individual character and that of its tributaries, or

the outline of its scenery and course. The confluents of this vast stream are numerous, and each one brings a tribute of the soil through which it has roamed. The Missouri pours out its waters heavily charged with the marl of the Rocky Mountains, the saffron sands of the Yellow Stone, and the chalk of the White River; the Ohio holds in its floods the vegetable mould of the Alleghanies, and the Arkansas and Red Rivers bring in the deep-died alluvion of their banks. Each tributary mingles the spoils of its native hills with the general flood. And yet, after the contributions of so many streams, the remarkable fact is observed that its breadth and volume seem rather diminished than increased. Above the embouchure of the Missouri, fifteen hundred miles from the Mexican gulf, it is broader than at New-Orleans, with scarce one tenth of its water; and at the foot of St. Anthony's Falls its breadth is but one third less. This forms a striking characteristic of the Western rivers, and owes, perhaps, its origin partially to the turbid character of their waters: as they approach their outlet they augment in volume, and depth, and impetuosity of current, but contract their expanse. None, however, exhibit these features so strikingly as the grand central stream; and while, for its body of water, it is the narrowest stream known, it is charged with heavier solutions and has broader alluvions than any other. The depth of the stream is constantly varying. At New-Orleans it exceeds one hundred feet. Its width is from half of one mile to two miles; the breadth of its valley

from six miles to sixty; the rapidity of its current from two miles to four; its mean descent six inches in a mile, and its annual floods vary from twelve feet to sixty, commencing in March and ending in May. Thus much for Statistics.

Below its confluence with its turbid tributary, the Mississippi, as has been observed, is no longer the clear, pure, limpid stream, gushing forth from the wreathy snows of the Northwest; but it whirls along against its ragged banks a resistless volume of heavy, sweeping floods, and its aspect of placid magnificence is beheld no more. The turbid torrent heaves onward, wavering from side to side like a living creature, as if to overleap its bounds; rolling along in a deep-cut race-path, through a vast expanse of lowland meadow, from whose exhaustless mould are reared aloft those enormous shafts shrouded in the fresh emerald of their tasselled parasites, for which its alluvial bottoms are so famous. And yet the valley of the "endless river" cannot be deemed heavily timbered when contrasted with the forested hills of the Ohio. The sycamore, the elm, the linden, the cotton-wood, the cypress, and other trees of deciduous foliage, may attain a greater diameter, but the huge trunks are more sparse and more isolated in recurrence.

But one of the most striking phenomena of the Mississippi, in common with all the Western rivers, and one which distinguishes them from those which disembogue their waters into the Atlantic, is the uniformity of its meanderings. The river, in its onward course, makes a semicircular sweep al-

most with the precision of a compass, and then is precipitated diagonally athwart its channel to a curve of equal regularity upon the opposite shore. The deepest channel and most rapid current is said to exist in the bend; and thus the stream generally infringes upon the *bend-side*, and throws up a sandbar on the shore opposite. So constantly do these sinuosities recur, that there are said to be but three *reaches* of any extent between the confluence of the Ohio and the Gulf, and so uniform that the boatmen and Indians have been accustomed to estimate their progress by the number of bends rather than by the number of miles. One of the sweeps of the Missouri is said to include a distance of forty miles in its curve, and a circuit of half that distance is not uncommon. Sometimes a "*cut-off*," in the parlance of the watermen, is produced at these bends, where the stream, in its headlong course, has burst through the narrow neck of the peninsula, around which it once circled. At a point called the "Grand Cut-off," steamers now pass through an isthmus of less than one mile, where formerly was required a circuit of twenty. The current, in its more furious stages, often tears up islands from the bed of the river, removes sandbars and points, and sweeps off whole acres of alluvion with their superincumbent forests. In the season of flood the settlers, in their log-cabins along the banks, are often startled from their sleep by the deep, sullen crash of a "land-slip," as such removals are called.

The scenery of the Mississippi, below its con-

fluence with the Missouri, is, as has been remarked, too sublime for beauty; and yet there is not a little of the picturesque in the views which meet the eye along the banks. Towns and settlements of greater or less extent appear at frequent intervals; and then the lowly log-hut of the pioneer is not to be passed without notice, standing beneath the tall, branchless columns of the girdled forest-trees, with its luxuriant maize-fields sweeping away in the rear. One of these humble habitations of the wilderness we reached, I remember, one evening near twilight; and while our boat was delayed at the woodyard, I strolled up from the shore to the gateway, and entered easily into confabulation with a pretty, slatternly-looking female, with a brood of mushroom, flaxen-haired urchins at her apron-string, and an infant at the breast very quietly receiving his supper. On inquiry I learned that eighteen years had seen the good woman a denizen of the wilderness; that all the responsibilities appertained unto herself, and that her "man" was proprietor of some thousand acres of *bottom* in the vicinity. Subsequently I was informed that the worthy woodcutter could be valued at not less than one hundred thousand! yet, *en verite*, reader mine, I do asseverate that my latent sympathies were not slightly roused at the first introduction, because of the seeming poverty of the dirty cabin and its dirtier mistress!

St. Louis.

VIII.

"Once more upon the waters, yet once more!"
Childe Harold.

"I believe this is the finest confluence in the world."
CHARLEVOIX.

"'Tis twilight now;
The sovereign sun behind his western hills
In glory hath declined."
BLACKWOOD'S *Magazine.*

A BRIGHT, sunny summer morning as ever smiled from the blue heavens, and again I found myself upon the waters. Fast fading in the distance lay the venerable little city of the French, with its ancient edifices and its narrow streets, while in anticipation was a journeying of some hundred miles up the Illinois. Sweeping along past the city and the extended line of steamers at the landing, my attention was arrested by that series of substantial stone mills situated upon the shore immediately above, and a group of swarthy little Tritons disporting themselves in the turbid waters almost beneath our paddle-wheels. Among other singular objects were divers of those nondescript inventions of Captain Shreve, yclept by the boatmen "Uncle Sam's Tooth-pullers;" and, judging from their ferocious physiognomy, and the miracles they have effected in the navigation of the great waters of the West, well do they correspond to the *soubriquet.*

The craft consists of two perfect hulls, constructed with a view to great strength; united by heavy beams, and, in those parts most exposed, protected by an armature of iron. The apparatus for eradicating the snags is comprised in a simple wheel and axle, auxiliary to a pair of powerful steam-engines, with the requisite machinery for locomotion, and a massive beam uniting the bows of the hulls, sheathed with iron. The *modus operandi* in tearing up a snag, or sawyer, or any like obstruction from the bed of the stream, appears to be this: Commencing at some distance below, in order to gain an impetus as powerful as possible, the boat is forced, under a full pressure of steam, against the snag, the head of which, rearing itself above the water, meets the strong transverse beam of which I have spoken, and is immediately elevated a number of feet above the surface. A portion of the log is then severed, and the roots are torn out by the windlass, or application of the main strength of the engines; or, if practicable, the first operation is repeated until the obstacle is completely eradicated. The efficiency of this instrument has been tested by the removal of some thousand obstructions, at an average expense of about twelve or fifteen dollars each.

Along the river-banks in the northern suburbs of the city lie the scattered ruins of an ancient fortification of the Spanish government, when it held domination over the territory; and one circular structure of stone, called "Roy's Tower," now occupied as a dwelling, yet remains entire. There is also an

old castle of stone in tolerable preservation, surrounded by a wall of the same material. Some of these venerable relics of former time—alas! for the irreverence of the age—have been converted into limekilns, and into lime itself, for aught that is known to the contrary! The waterworks, General Ashley's beautiful residence, and that series of ancient mounds for which St. Louis is famous, were next passed in succession, while upon the right stretched out the long low outline of "Blood Island" in the middle of the stream. For several miles above the city, as we proceeded up the river, pleasant villas, with their white walls and cultivated grounds, were caught from time to time by the eye, glancing through the green foliage far in the interior. It was a glorious day. Silvery cloudlets were floating along the upper sky like spiritual creations, and a fresh breeze was rippling the waters: along the banks stood out the huge spectral Titans of the forest, heaving aloft their naked limbs like monuments of "time departed," while beneath reposed the humble hut and clearing of the settler.

It was nearly midday, after leaving St. Louis, that we reached the embouchure of the Missouri. Twenty miles before attaining that point, the confluent streams flow along in two distinct currents upon either shore, the one white, clayey, and troubled, the other a deep blue. The river sweeps along, indeed, in two distinct streams past the city of St. Louis, upon either side of Blood Island, nor does it unite its heterogeneous floods for many miles below. At intervals, as the huge mass rolls itself

along, vast whirls and swells of turbid water burst out upon the surface, producing an aspect not unlike the sea in a gusty day, mottled by the shadows of scudding clouds. Charlevoix, the chronicler of the early French explorations in North America, with reference to this giant confluence, more than a century since thus writes: "I believe this is the finest confluence in the world. The two rivers are much of the same breadth, each about half a league, but the Missouri is by far the most rapid, and seems to enter the Mississippi like a conqueror, through which it carries its white waves to the opposite shore without mixing them. Afterward it gives its colour to the Mississippi, which it never loses again, but carries quite down to the sea." This account, with all due consideration for the venerable historian, accords not precisely with the scene of the confluence at the present day, at least not as it has appeared to myself. The Missouri, indeed, rolls in its heavy volume with the impetuosity and bearing of a "conqueror" upon the tranquil surface of its rival; but entering, as it does, at right angles, its waters are met in their headlong course, and almost rolled back upon themselves for an instant by the mighty momentum of the flood they strike. This is manifested by, and accounts for, that well-defined line of light mud-colour extending from bank to bank across its mouth, bounded by the dark blue of the Upper Mississippi, and flowing sluggishly along in a lengthened and dingy stain, like a fringe upon the western shore. The breadth of the embouchure is about one mile, and its

channel lies nearly in the centre, bounded by vast sand-bars—sediment of the waters—upon either side. The alluvial deposites, with which it is heavily charged, accumulate also in several islands near the confluence, while the rivers united spread themselves out into an immense lake. As the steamer glides along among these islands opposite the Missouri, the scene with its associations is grand beyond description. Far up the extended vista of the stream, upon a lofty bluff, stands out a structure which marks the site of the ancient military post of "Belle Fontaine;" while on the opposite bank, stretching inland from the point heavily wooded, lies the broad and beautiful prairie of the "Mamelles." Directly fronting the confluence stand a range of heights upon the Illinois shore, from the summit of which is spread out, like a painting, one of the most extraordinary views in the world.

The Mississippi, above its junction with its turbid tributary, is, as has been remarked, a clear, sparkling, beautiful stream; now flashing in silvery brilliance over its white sand-bars, then retreating far into the deep indentations of its shady banks, and again spreading out its waters into a tranquil, lakelike basin miles in extent, studded with islets.

The far-famed village of Alton, situated upon the Illinois shore a few miles above the confluence, soon rose before us in the distance. When its multiform declivities shall have been smoothed away by the hand of enterprise and covered with handsome edifices, it will doubtless present a fine appearance

from the water; as it now remains, its aspect is rugged enough. The Penitentiary, a huge structure of stone, is rather too prominent a feature in the scene. Indeed, it is the first object which strikes the attention, and reminds one of a gray old baronial castle of feudal days more than of anything else. The churches, of which there are several, and the extensive warehouses along the shore, have an imposing aspect, and offer more agreeable associations. As we drew nigh to Alton, the fireman of our steamer deemed proper, in testimonial of the dignity of our arrival, to let off a certain rusty old swivel which chanced to be on board; and to have witnessed the marvellous fashion in which this important manœuvre was executed by our worthies, would have pardoned a smile on the visage of Heraclitus himself. One lanky-limbed genius held a huge dipper of gunpowder; another, seizing upon the extremity of a hawser, and severing a generous fragment, made use thereof for wadding; a third rammed home the charge with that fearful weapon wherewith he poked the furnaces; while a fourth, honest wight—all preparation being complete—advanced with a shovel of glowing coals, which, poured upon the touchhole, the old piece was briefly delivered of its charge, and the woods, and shores, and welkin rang again to the roar. If we made not our entrance into Alton with "pomp and circumstance," it was surely the fault of any one but our worthy fireman.

The site of Alton, at the confluence of three large and navigable streams; its extensive back country

of great fertility; the vast bodies of heavy timber on every side; its noble quarries of stone; its inexhaustible beds of bituminous coal only one mile distant, and its commodious landing, all seem to indicate the design of Nature that here should arise a populous and wealthy town. The place has been laid off by its proprietors in liberal style; five squares have been reserved for public purposes, with a promenade and landing, and the corporate bounds extend two miles along the river, and half a mile into the interior. Yet Alton, with all its local and artificial advantages, is obnoxious to objections. Its situation, in one section abrupt and precipitous, while in another depressed and confined, and the extensive alluvion lying between the two great rivers opposite, it is believed, will always render it more or less unhealthy; and its unenviable proximity to St. Louis will never cease to retard its commercial advancement.

The *city* of Alton, as it is now styled by its charter, was founded in the year 1818 by a gentleman who gave the place his name; but, until within the six years past, it could boast but few houses and little business. Its population now amounts to several thousands, and its edifices for business, private residence, or public convenience are large and elegant structures. Its stone churches present an imposing aspect to the visiter. The streets are from forty to eighty feet in width, and extensive operations are in progress to render the place as uniform as its site will admit. A contract has been recently entered upon to construct a culvert over the Little Piasa Creek,

which passes through the centre of the town, upon which are to be extended streets. The expense is estimated at sixty thousand dollars. The creek issues from a celebrated fountain among the bluffs called "Cave Spring." Alton is not a little celebrated for its liberal contribution to the moral improvements of the day. To mention but a solitary instance, a gentleman of the place recently made a donation of ten thousand dollars for the endowment of a female seminary at Monticello, a village five miles to the north; and measures are in progress to carry the design into immediate execution. Two railroads are shortly to be constructed from Alton; one to Springfield, seventy miles distant, and the other to Mount Carmel on the Wabash. The stock of each has been mostly subscribed, and they cannot fail, when completed, to add much to the importance of the places. Alton is also a *proposed* terminus of two of the state railroads, and of the Cumberland Road.

At Alton terminates the "American Bottom," and here commences that singular series of green, grassy mounds, rounding off the steep summits of the cliffs as they rise from the water, which every traveller cannot but have noticed and admired. It was a calm, beautiful evening when we left the village; and, gliding beneath the magnificent bluffs, held our way up the stream, breaking in upon its tranquil surface, and rolling its waters upon either side in tumultuous waves to the shore. The rich purple of departing day was dying the western heavens; the light gauzy haze of twilight was unfolding itself like a veil over the forest-tops; "Maro's shep-

herd star" was stealing timidly forth upon the brow of night; the flashing fireflies along the underbrush were beginning their splendid illuminations, and the mild melody of a flute and a few fine voices floating over the shadowy waters, lent the last touching to a scene of beauty. A little French village, with its broad galleries, and steep roofs, and venerable church, in a few miles appeared among the underbrush on the left. Upon the opposite shore the bluffs began to assume a singular aspect, as if the solid mass of limestone high up had been subjected to the excavation of rushing waters. The cliffs elevated themselves from the river's edge like a regular succession of enormous pillars, rendered more striking by their ashy hue. This giant colonnade—in some places exceeding an altitude of an hundred feet, and exhibiting in its façade the openings of several caves—extended along the stream until we reached Grafton, at the mouth of the Illinois; the calm, beautiful, ever-placid Illinois; beautiful now as on the day the enthusiast voyageur first deemed it the pathway to a "paradise upon earth." The moon was up, and her beams were resting mellowly upon the landscape. Far away, even to the blue horizon, the mirror-surface of the stream unfolded its vistas to the eye; upon its bosom slumbered the bright islets, like spirits of the waters, from whose clear depths stood out the reflection of their forests, while to the left opened upon the view a glimpse of the "Mamelle Prairie," rolling its bright waves of verdure beneath the moonlight like a field of fairy land. For an hour we gazed upon this magnificent scene, and the bright

waves dashed in sparkles from our bow, retreating in lengthened wake behind us, until our steamer turned from the Mississippi, and we were gliding along beneath the deep shadows of the forested Illinois.

Illinois River.

IX.

"A tale of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years!" OSSIAN.

"Thou beautiful river! Thy bosom is calm,
And o'er thee soft breezes are shedding their balm;
And Nature beholds her fair features portray'd,
In the glass of thy bosom serenely display'd."

BENGAL ANNUAL.

"Tam saw an unco sight."

BURNS.

IT is an idea which has more than once occurred to me, while throwing together these hasty delineations of the beautiful scenes through which, for the past few weeks, I have been moving, that, by some, a disposition might be suspected to tinge every outline indiscriminately with the "*coleur de rose.*" But as well might one talk of an exaggerated emotion of the sublime on the table-rock of Niagara, or amid the "snowy scalps" of Alpine scenery, or of a mawkish sensibility to loveliness amid the purple glories of the "*Campagna di Roma,*" as of either, or of both combined, in the noble "valley beyond the mountains." Nor is the interest experi-

enced by the traveller for many of the spots he passes confined to their scenic beauty. The associations of by-gone times are rife in the mind, and the traditionary legend of the events these scenes have witnessed yet lingers among the simple forest-sons. I have mentioned that remarkable range of cliffs commencing at Alton, and extending, with but little interruption, along the left shore of the Mississippi to the mouth of the Illinois. Through a deep, narrow ravine in these bluffs flows a small stream called the Piasa. The name is of aboriginal derivation, and, in the idiom of the Illini, denotes "*The bird that devours men.*" Near the mouth of this little stream rises a bold, precipitous bluff, and upon its smooth face, at an elevation seemingly unattainable by human art, is graven the figure of an enormous bird with extended pinions. This bird was by the Indians called the "*Piasa;*" hence the name of the stream. The tradition of the Piasa is said to be still extant among the tribes of the Upper Mississippi, and is thus related:

"Many thousand moons before the arrival of the pale faces, when the great megalonyx and mastodon, whose bones are now thrown up, were still living in the land of the green prairies, there existed a bird of such dimensions that he could easily carry off in his talons a full-grown deer. Having obtained a taste of human flesh, from that time he would prey upon nothing else. He was as artful as he was powerful; would dart suddenly and unexpectedly upon an Indian, bear him off to one of the caves in the bluff, and devour him. Hundreds of warriors attempted for years to destroy him, but without success.

Whole villages were depopulated, and consternation spread throughout all the tribes of the Illini. At length *Owatoga*, a chief whose fame as a warrior extended even beyond the great lakes, separating himself from the rest of his tribe, fasted in solitude for the space of a whole moon, and prayed to the Great Spirit, the Master of Life, that he would protect his children from the *Piasa*. On the last night of his fast the Great Spirit appeared to him in a dream, and directed him to select twenty of his warriors, each armed with a bow and pointed arrows, and conceal them in a designated spot. Near the place of their concealment another warrior was to stand in open view as a victim for the *Piasa*, which they must shoot the instant he pounced upon his prey. When the chief awoke in the morning he thanked the Great Spirit, returned to his tribe, and told them his dream. The warriors were quickly selected and placed in ambush. *Owatoga* offered himself as the victim, willing to die for his tribe; and, placing himself in open view of the bluff, he soon saw the *Piasa* perched on the cliff, eying his prey. *Owatoga* drew up his manly form to its utmost height; and, placing his feet firmly upon the earth, began to chant the death-song of a warrior: a moment after, the *Piasa* rose in the air, and, swift as the thunderbolt, darted down upon the chief. Scarcely had he reached his victim when every bow was sprung and every arrow was sped to the feather into his body. The *Piasa* uttered a wild, fearful scream, that resounded far over the opposite side of the river, and expired. *Owatoga* was safe.

Not an arrow, not even the talons of the bird had touched him; for the Master of Life, in admiration of his noble deed, had held over him an invisible shield. In memory of this event, this image of the Piasa was engraved in the face of the bluff."

Such is the Indian tradition. True or false, the figure of the bird, with expanded wings, graven upon the surface of solid rock, is still to be seen at a height perfectly inaccessible; and to this day no Indian glides beneath the spot in his canoe without discharging at this figure his gun. Connected with this tradition, as the spot to which the Piasa conveyed his human victims, is one of those caves to which I have alluded. Another, near the mouth of the Illinois, situated about fifty feet from the water, and exceedingly difficult of access, is said to be crowded with human remains to the depth of many feet in the earth of the floor. The roof of the cavern is vaulted. It is about twenty-five feet in height, thirty in length, and in form is very irregular. There are several other cavernous fissures among these cliffs not unworthy description.

The morning's dawn found our steamer gliding quietly along upon the bright waters of the Illinois. The surface of the stream was tranquil; not a ripple disturbed its slumbers; it was currentless; the mighty mass of the Mississippi was swollen, and, acting as a dam across the mouth of its tributary, caused a *back-water* of an hundred miles. The waters of the Illinois were consequently stagnant, tepid, and by no means agreeable to the taste. There was present, also, a peculiarly bitter twang,

thought to be imparted by the roots of the trees and plants along its banks, which, when motionless, its waters steep; under these circumstances, water is always provided from the Mississippi before entering the mouth of the Illinois. But, whatever its qualities, this stream, to the eye, is one of the most beautiful that meanders the earth. As we glided onward upon its calm bosom, a graceful little fawn, standing upon the margin in the morning sunlight, was bending her large, lustrous eyes upon the delicate reflection of her form, mirrored in the stream; and, like the fabled Narcissus, so enamoured did she appear with the charm of her own loveliness, that our noisy approach seemed scarce to startle her; or perchance she was the pet of some neighbouring log-cabin. The Illinois is by many considered the "*belle rivière*" of the Western waters, and, in a commercial and agricultural view, is destined, doubtless, to occupy an important rank. Tonti, the old French chronicler, speaks thus of it: "The banks of that river are as charming to the eye as useful to life; the meadows, fruit-trees, and forests affording everything that is necessary for men and beasts." It traverses the entire length of one of the most fertile regions in the Union, and irrigates, by its tributary streams, half the breadth. Its channel is sufficiently deep for steamers of the larger class; its current is uniform, and the obstacles to its navigation are few, and may be easily removed. The chief of these is a narrow bar just below the town of Beardstown, stretching like a wing-dam quite across to the western bank; and any boat which may pass this bar

can at all times reach the port of the Rapids. Its length is about three hundred miles, and its narrowest part, opposite Peru, is about eighty yards in width. By means of a canal, uniting its waters with those of Lake Michigan, the internal navigation of the whole country from New-York to New-Orleans is designed to be completed.

The banks of the Illinois are depressed and monotonous, liable at all seasons to inundation, and stretch away for miles to the bluffs in broad prairies, glimpses of whose lively emerald and silvery lakes, caught at intervals through the dark fringe of cypress skirting the stream, are very refreshing. The bottom lands upon either side, from one mile to five, are seldom elevated much above the ordinary surface of the stream, and are at every higher stage of water submerged to the depth of many feet, presenting the appearance of a stream rolling its tide through an ancient and gloomy forest, luxuriant in foliage and vast in extent. It is not surprising that all these regions should be subject to the visitations of disease, when we look upon the miserable cabin of the woodcutter, reared upon the very verge of the water, surrounded on every side by swamps, and enveloped in their damp dews and the poisonous exhalations rising from the seething decomposition of the monstrous vegetation around. The traveller wonders not at the sallow complexion, the withered features, and the fleshless, ague-racked limbs, which, as he passes, peep forth upon him from the luxuriant foliage of this region of sepulchres; his only astonishment is, that in such an atmosphere the human con-

stitution can maintain vitality at all. And yet, never did the poet's dream image scenery more enchanting than is sometimes unfolded upon this beautiful stream. I loved, on a bright sunny morning, to linger hours away upon the lofty deck, as our steamer thridded the green islets of the winding waters, and gaze upon the reflection of the blue sky flecked with cloudlets in the bluer wave beneath, and watch the startling splash of the glittering fish, as, in exhilarated joyousness, he flung himself from its tranquil bosom, and then fell back again into its cool depths. Along the shore strode the blue-backed wader; the wild buck bounded to his thicket; the graceful buzzard—vulture of the West—soared majestically over the tree-tops, while the fitful chant of the fireman at his toil echoed and re-echoed through the recesses of the forests.

Upon the left, in ascending the Illinois, lie the lands called the "*Military Bounty Tract*," reserved by Congress for distribution among the soldiers of the late war with Great Britain. It is comprehended within the peninsula of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, about an hundred and seventy miles in length and sixty broad, embracing twelve of the northwest counties of the state. This tract of country is said to be exceedingly fertile, abounding in beautiful prairies and lakes; but the delta or alluvial regions cannot but prove unhealthy. Its disposition for the purpose of military bounties has retarded its settlement behind that of any other quarter of the state; a very inconsiderable portion has been appropriated by the soldiers; most of the titles have

long since departed, and the land has been disposed of past redemption for taxes. Much is also held by non-residents, who estimate it at an exorbitant value; but large tracts can be obtained for a trifling consideration, the purchaser risking the title, and many flourishing settlements are now springing up, especially along the Mississippi.

Near the southern extremity of the Military Tract, at a point where the river sweeps out a deep bend from its western bank, about fifty years since was situated the little French village of *Cape au Gris*, or Grindstone Point, so named from the neighbouring rocks. The French seem to have vied with the natives in rendering the "signification" conformable to the "thing signified," in bestowing names upon their explorations in the West. The village of *Cape au Gris* was situated upon the bank of the river, and, so late as 1811, consisted of twenty or thirty families, who cultivated a "common field" of five hundred acres on the adjacent prairie, stretching across the peninsula towards the Mississippi. At the commencement of the late war they were driven away by the savages, and a small garrison from the cantonment of Belle Fontaine, at the confluence, was subsequently stationed near the spot by General Wilkinson. A few years after the close of the war American emigration commenced. This is supposed to have been the site, also, of one of the forts erected by La Salle on his second visit to the West.

As we ascended the Illinois, flourishing villages were constantly meeting the eye upon either bank of the stream. Among these were the euphonious

names of Monroe, Montezuma, Naples, and Havana! At Beardstown the rolling prairie is looked upon for the first time; it afterward frequently recurs. As our steamer drew nigh to the renowned little city of Pekin, we beheld the bluffs lined with people of all sexes and sizes, watching our approach as we rounded up to the landing. Some of our passengers, surprised at such a gathering together in such a decent, well-behaved little settlement as Pekin, sagely surmised the loss of a day from the calendar, and began to believe it the first instead of the last of the week, until reflection and observation induced the belief that other rites than those of religion had called the multitude together. Landing, streets, tavern, and groceries—which latter, be it spoken of the renowned Pekin, were like anything but "angel's visits" in recurrence—all were swarmed by a motley assemblage, seemingly intent upon *doing nothing*, and that, too, in the noisiest way. Here a congregation of keen-visaged worthies were gathered around a loquacious land-speculator, beneath the shadow of a sign-post, listening to an eloquent holding-forth upon the merits, relative and distinctive, of prairie land and bluff; there a cute-looking personage, with a twinkle of the eye and sanctimoniousness of phiz, was vending his wares by the token of a flaunting strip of red baize; while lusty viragoes, with infants at the breast, were battering their passage through the throng, crowing over a "bargain" on which the "cute" pedler had cleared not *more* than cent. per cent. And then there were sober men and men not sober; individuals half seas over and whole seas

over, all in as merry trim as well might be; while, as a sort of presiding genius over the bacchanalia, a worthy wag, tipsy as a satyr, in a long calico gown, was prancing through the multitude, with infinite importance, on the skeleton of an unhappy horse, which, between *nicking* and *docking*, a spavined limb and a spectral eye, looked the veritable genius of misery. The cause of all this commotion appeared to be neither more nor less than a redoubted "monkey show," which had wound its way over the mountains into the regions of the distant West, and reared its dingy canvass upon the smooth sward of the prairie. It was a spectacle by no means to be slighted, and "divers came from afar" to behold its wonders.

For nothing, perhaps, have foreign tourists in our country ridiculed us more justly than for that pomposity of nomenclature which we have delighted to apply to the thousand and one towns and villages sprinkled over our maps and our land; instance whereof this same renowned representative of the Celestial Empire concerning which I have been writing. Its brevity is its sole commendation; for as to the taste or appropriateness of such a name for such a place, to say naught of the euphony, there's none. And then, besides Pekin, there are Romes, and Troys, and Palmyras, and Belgrades, Londons and Liverpools, Babels and Babylons *without account*, all rampant in the glories of log huts, with sturdy porkers forth issuing from their sties, by way, doubtless, of the sturdy knight-errants of yore caracoling from the sallyports of their illus-

trious namesakes. But why, in the name of all propriety, this everlasting plagiarizing of the Greek, Gothic, Gallic patronymics of the Old World, so utterly incongruous as applied to the backwoods settlements of the New! If in very poverty of invention, or in the meagerness of our "land's language," we, as a people, feel ourselves unequal to the task—one, indeed, of no ordinary magnitude—of christening all the newborn villages of our land with melodious and appropriate appellations, may it not be advisable either to nominate certain worthy dictionary-makers for the undertaking, or else to retain the ancient Indian names? Why discard the smooth-flowing, expressive appellations bestowed by the injured aborigines upon the gliding streams and flowery plains of this land of their fathers, only to supersede them by affixes most foreign and absurd? "Is this proceeding just and honourable" towards that unfortunate race? Have we visited them with so *many* returns of kindness that this would overflow the cup of recompense? Why tear away the last and only relic of the past yet lingering in our midst? Have we too many memorials of the olden time? Why disrobe the venerable antique of that classic drapery which alone can befit the severe nobility of its mien, only to deck it out in the starched and tawdry preciseness of a degenerate taste?

Illinois River.

X.

"It is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!"
Childe Harold.

"GOOD-EVENING, sir; a good-evening to ye, sir; pleased with our village, sir!" This was the frank and free salutation a genteel, farmer-looking personage, with a broad face, a broad-brimmed hat, and a broad-skirted coat, addressed to me as I stood before the inn door at Peoria, looking out upon her beautiful lake. On learning, in reply to his inquiry, "Whence do ye come, stranger?" that my birth-spot was north of the Potomac, he hailed me with hearty greeting and warm grasp as a brother. "I am a Yankee, sir; yes, sir, I am a genuine export of the old 'Bay State.' Many years have gone since I left her soil; but I remember well the 'Mistress of the North,' with her green islands and blue waters. In my young days, sir, I wandered all over the six states, and I have not forgotten the valley of the Connecticut. I have seen the 'Emporium' with her Neapolitan bay, and I have looked on the 'city of the monuments and fountains;' but in all my journeyings, stranger, I have not found a spot so pleasant as this little quiet Peoria of the Western wilderness!" Whether to smile in admi-

ration or to smile at the oddity of this singular compound of truth and exaggeration, propounded, withal, in such grandiloquent style and language, I was at a loss; and so, just as every prudent man would have acted under the circumstances, *neither* was done; and the quiet remark, "You are an enthusiast, sir," was all that betrayed to the worthy man the emotions of the sublime and ridiculous of which he had been the unwitting cause.

But, truly, the little town with this soft Indian name is a beautiful place, as no one who has ever visited it has failed to remark. The incidents of its early history are fraught with the wild and romantic. The old village of Peoria was one of the earliest settlements of the French in the Mississippi Valley; and, many years before the memory of the present generation, it had been abandoned by its founders, a new village having been erected upon the present site, deemed less unhealthy than the former. The first house is said to have been built in new Peoria, or *La ville de Maillet*, as was its *nom de nique*, about the year 1778; and the situation was directly at the outlet of the lake, one mile and a half below the old settlement. Its inhabitants consisted chiefly of that wild, semi-savage race of Indian traders, hunters, trappers, voyageurs, *couriers du bois*, and half-breeds, which long formed the sole link of union between the northern lakes and the southwest. After residing nearly half a century on this pleasant spot, in that happy harmony with their ferocious neighbours for which the early French were so remarkable, they were at length, in the

autumn of 1812, exiled from their ancient home by the militia of Illinois, on charge of conniving at Indian atrocities upon our people, a party having been fired on at night while anchored before the village in their boats. The villagers fled for refuge to their friends upon the Mississippi. In the autumn of the succeeding year, General Howard, with 1400 men, ascended the Illinois; a fortress was constructed at Peoria in twelve days from timber cut on the opposite side of the lake. It was named Fort Clarke, and was occupied by a detachment of United States' troops. In course of a few weeks the whole frontier was swept of hostile Indians. On the termination of hostilities with Great Britain the fort was abandoned, and soon after was burned by the Indians, though the ruins are yet to be seen. The present settlement was commenced by emigrants but a few years since, and has advanced with a rapidity scarcely paralleled even in the West. Geographically, it is the centre of the state, and may at some future day become its seat of government. It is the shire town of a county of the same name; has a handsome courthouse of freestone; the neighbouring regions are fertile, and beds of bituminous coal are found in the vicinity. These circumstances render this spot, than which few can boast a more eventful history, one of the most eligible *locales* in the state for the emigrant. Its situation is indescribably beautiful, extending along the lake of the same name, the Indian name of which was *Pinatahwee*, for several miles from its outlet. This water-sheet, which is little more than an expansion of the stream of from one to three miles, stretches away for about

twenty, and is divided near its middle by a contraction called the *Narrows*. Its waters are exceedingly limpid, gliding gently over a pebbly bottom, and abounding in fish of fifty different species, from which an attempt for obtaining oil upon a large scale was commenced a few years since, but was abandoned without success. Some of the varieties of these fish are said to be rare and curious. Several specimens of a species called the "Alligator Garr" have been taken. The largest was about seven feet in length, a yard in circumference, and encased in armour of hornlike scales of quadrilateral form, impenetrable to a rifle-ball. The weight was several hundred pounds; the form and the teeth—of which there were several rows—similar to those of the shark, and, upon the whole, the creature seemed not a whit less formidable. Another singular variety found is the "spoonfish," about four feet in length, with a black skin, and an extension of the superior mandible for two feet, of a thin, flat, shovel-like form, used probably for digging its food. The more ordinary species, pike, perch, salmon, trout, buffalo, mullet, and catfish, abound in the lake, while the surface is covered with geese, ducks, gulls, a species of water turkey, and, not unfrequently, swans and pelicans. Its bottom contains curious petrifactions and carnelions of a rare quality.

From the pebbly shore of the lake, gushing out with fountains of sparkling water along its whole extent, rises a rolling bank, upon which now stands most of the village. A short distance and you ascend a second eminence, and beyond this you reach

the bluffs, some of them an hundred feet in height, gracefully rounded, and corresponding with the meandering of the stream below. From the summit of these bluffs the prospect is uncommonly fine. At their base is spread out a beautiful prairie, its tall grass-tops and bright-died flowerets nodding to the soft summer wind. Along its eastern border is extended a range of neat edifices, while lower down sleep the calm, clear waters of the lake, unruffled by a ripple, and reflecting from its placid bosom the stupendous vegetation of the wooded alluvion beyond.

It was near the close of a day of withering sultriness that we reached Peoria. Passing the Kickapoo, or Red Bud Creek, a sweep in the stream opened before the eye a panorama of that magnificent water-sheet of which I have spoken, so calm and motionless that its mirror surface seemed suspended in the golden mistiness of the summer atmosphere which floated over it. As we were approaching the village a few sweet notes of a bugle struck the ear; and in a few moments a lengthened troop of cavalry, with baggage-cars and military paraphernalia, was beheld winding over a distant roll of the prairie, their arms glittering gayly in the horizontal beams of the sinking sun as the ranks appeared, were lost, reappeared, and then, by an inequality in the route, were concealed from the view. The steamer "Helen Mar" was lying at the landing as we rounded up, most terribly shattered by the collapsing of the flue of one of her boilers a few days before in the vicinity. She had been swept by the death-blast from one extremity

to the other, and everything was remaining just as when the accident occurred, even to the pallets upon which had been stretched the mangled bodies, and the remedies applied for their relief. The disasters of steam have become, till of late, of such ordinary occurrence upon the waters of the West, that they have been thought of comparatively but little; yet in no aspect does the angel of death perform his bidding more fearfully. Misery's own pencil can delineate no scene of horror more revolting; humanity knows no visitation more terrible! The atmosphere of hell envelops the victim and sweeps him from the earth!

Happening casually to fall in with several gentlemen at the inn who chanced to have some acquaintance with the detachment of dragoons I have mentioned, I accepted with pleasure an invitation to accompany them on a visit to the encampment a few miles from the town. The moon was up, and was flinging her silvery veil over the landscape when we reached the bivouac. It was a picturesque spot, a low prairie-bottom on the margin of the lake, beneath a range of wooded bluffs in the rear; and the little white tents sprinkled about upon the green shrubbery beneath the trees; the stacks of arms and military accoutrements piled up beneath or suspended from their branches; the dragoons around their tents, engaged in the culinary operations of the camp, or listlessly lolling upon the grass as the laugh and jest went free; the horses grazing among the thickets, while over the whole was resting the misty splendour of the moonlight,

made up a *tout ensemble* not unworthy the crayon of a Weir. The detachment was a small one, consisting of only one hundred men, under command of Captain S——, on an excursion from Camp des Moines, at the lower rapids of the Mississippi, to Fort Howard, on Green Bay, partially occasioned by a rumour of Indian hostilities threatened in that vicinity. They were a portion of several companies of the first regiment of dragoons, levied by Congress a few years since for the protection of the Western frontier, in place of the "Rangers," so styled, in whom that trust had previously reposed. They were all Americans, resolute-looking fellows enough, and originally rendezvoused at Jefferson Barracks. The design of such a corps is doubtless an excellent one; but military men tell us that some unpardonable omissions were made in the provisions of the bill reported by Congress in which the corps had its origin; for, according to the present regulations, all approximation to discipline is precluded. Captain S—— received us leisurely reclining upon a buffalo-robe in his tent; and, in a brief interview, we found him possessed of all that gentlemanly *naïveté* which foreign travellers would have us believe is, in our country, confined to the profession of arms. The night-dews of the lowlands had for some hours been falling when we reached the village drenched with their damps.

Much to our regret, the stage of water in the Illinois would not permit our boat to ascend the stream, as had been the intention, to Hennepin, some twenty miles above, and Ottawa, at the foot of the rapids. Nearly equidistant between these

flourishing towns, upon the eastern bank of the Illinois, is situated that remarkable crag, termed by the early French "*Le Rocher*," by the Indian traditions "*Starved Rock*," and by the present dwellers in its vicinity, as well as by Schoolcraft and the maps, "*Rockfort*." It is a tall cliff, composed of alternate strata of lime and sandstone, about two hundred and fifty feet in height by report, and one hundred and thirty-four by actual measurement. Its base is swept by the current, and it is perfectly precipitous upon three sides. The fourth side, by which alone it is accessible, is connected with the neighbouring range of bluffs by a natural causeway, which can be ascended only by a difficult and tortuous path. The summit of the crag is clothed with soil to the depth of several feet, sufficient to sustain a growth of stunted cedars. It is about one hundred feet in diameter, and comprises nearly an acre of level land. The name of "Starved Rock" was obtained by this inaccessible battlement from a legend of Indian tradition, an outline of which may be found in Flint's work upon the Western Valley, and an interesting story wrought from its incidents in Hall's "Border Tales." A band of the Illini having assassinated Pontiac, the Ottoway chieftain, in 1767, the tribe of the Pottawattamies made war upon them. The Illini, being defeated, fled for refuge to this rock, which a little labour soon rendered inaccessible to all the assaults of their enemy. At this crisis, after repeated repulse, the besiegers determined to reduce the hold by *starvation*, as the only method remaining. The tradition of this siege affords, perhaps,

as striking an illustration of Indian character as is furnished by our annals of the unfortunate race. Food in some considerable quantity had been provided by the besieged; but when, parched by thirst, they attempted during the night to procure water from the cool stream rushing below them by means of ropes of bark, the enemy detected the design, and their vessels were cut off by a guard in canoes. The last resource was defeated; every stratagem discovered; hope was extinguished; the unutterable tortures of thirst were upon them; a terrific death in anticipation; yet they yielded not; the speedier torments of the stake and a triumph to their foes was the alternative. And so they perished—all, with a solitary exception—a woman, who was adopted by the hostile tribe, and was living not half a century since. For years the summit of this old cliff was whitened by the bones of the victims; and quantities of remains, as well as arrow-heads and domestic utensils, are at the present day exhumed. Shells are also found, but their *whence* and *wherefore* are not easily determined. At the only accessible point there is said to be an appearance of an intrenchment and rampart. A glorious view of the Illinois, which, forming a curve, laves more than half of the column's base, is obtained from the summit. An ancient post of the French is believed to have once stood here.

Brightly were the moonbeams streaming over the blue lake Pinatahwee as our steamer glided from its waters. Near midnight, as we swept past Pekin, we were roused from our slumbers by the plaintive

notes of the "German Hymn," which mellowly came stealing from distance over the waters; and we almost pardoned the "Menagerie" its multifold transgressions because of that touching air. There is a chord in almost every bosom, however rough and unharmonious its ordinary emotions, which fails not to vibrate beneath the gentle influences of "sweet sounds." From this, as from the strings of the wind-harp, a zephyr may elicit a melody of feeling which the storm could never have awakened. There are seasons, too, when the nerves and fibres of the system, reposing in quietness, are most exquisitely attempered to the mysterious influences and the delicate breathings of harmony; and such a season is that calm, holy hour, when deep sleep hath descended upon man, and his unquiet pulsings have for an interval ceased their fevered beat. To be awakened then by music's cadence has upon us an effect unearthly! It calls forth from their depths the richest emotions of the heart. The moonlight serenade! Ah, its wild witchery has told upon the romance of many a young bosom! If you have a mistress, and you would woo her *not vainly*, woo her thus! I remember me, when once a resident of the courtly city of L——, to have been awakened one morning long before the dawn by a strain of distant music, which, swelling and rising upon the still night-air, came floating like a spirit through the open windows and long galleries of the building. I arose; all was calm, and silent, and deserted through the dim, lengthened streets of the city. Not a light gleamed from a casement; not a

footfall echoed from the pavement; not a breath broke the stillness save the crowing of the far-off cock proclaiming the morn, and the low rumble of the marketman's wagon; and then, swelling upon the night-wind, fitfully came up that beautiful gush of melody, wave upon wave, surge after surge, billow upon billow, winding itself into the innermost cells of the soul!

"Oh, it came o'er my ear like the sweet South,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour."

Illinois River.

XI.

"You will excuse me if I do not strictly confine myself to narration, but now and then interpose such *reflections* as may offer while I am writing."—NEWTON.

"Each was a giant heap of mouldering clay;
There slept the warriors, women, friends, and foes;
There, side by side, the rival chieftains lay,
And mighty tribes swept from the face of day."

FLINT.

MORE than three weeks ago I found myself, one bright morning at sunrise, before the city of St. Louis on descending the Illinois; and in that venerable little city have I ever since been a dweller. A series of those vexatious delays, ever occurring to balk the designs of the tourist, have detained me longer than could have been anticipated. Not the

most inconsiderable of these preventives to locomotion in this bustling, swapping, chaffering little city, strange as it may seem, has been the difficulty of procuring, at a conscionable outlay of dollars and cents, a suitable steed for a protracted jaunt. But, thanks to the civility or *selfism* of a friend, this difficulty is at an end, and I have at length succeeded in securing the reversion of a tough, spirited little bay, which, by considerate usage and bountiful foddering, may serve to bear me, with the requisite quantum of speed and safety, over the prairies. A few days, therefore, when the last touch of *acclimation* shall have taken its leave, and "I'm over the border and awa'."

The city of San' Louis, now hoary with a century's years, was one of those early settlements planted by the Canadian French up and down the great valley, from the Northern Lakes to the Gulf, while the English colonists of Plymouth and Jamestown were wringing out a wretched subsistence along the steril shores of the Atlantic, wearied out by constant warfare with the thirty Indian tribes within their borders. Attracted by the beauty of the country, the fertility of its soil, the boundless variety of its products, the exhaustless mineral treasures beneath its surface, and the facility of the trade in the furs of the Northwest, a flood of Canadian emigration opened southward after the discoveries of La Salle, and the little villages of Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Prairie du Po, Prairie du Rocher, St. Phillipe, St. Ferdinand, Peoria, Fort Chartres, Vuide Poche, Petites Cotes, now St. Charles, Pain Court, now St. Louis, and others, successively sprang up in

the howling waste. Over nearly all this territory have the Gaul, the Spaniard, the Briton, and the Anglo-American held rule, and a dash of the national idiosyncrasy of each may be detected. Especially true is this of St. Louis. There is an antiquated, venerable air about its narrow streets and the ungainly edifices of one portion of it; the steep-roofed stone cottage of the Frenchman, and the tall stuccoed-dwelling of the Don, not often beheld. A mellowing touch of time, which few American cities can boast, has passed over it, rendering it a spot of peculiar interest to one with the slightest spirit of the antiquary, in a country where all else is new. The modern section of the city, with its regular streets and lofty edifices, which, within the past fifteen years, has arisen under the active hand of the northern emigrant, presents a striking contrast to the old.

The site of St. Louis is elevated and salubrious, lying for some miles along the Mississippi upon two broad plateaux or steppes swelling up gently from the water's edge. Along the first of these, based upon an exhaustless bed of limestone, which furnishes material for building, are situated the lower and central portions of the city, while that above sweeps away in an extensive prairie of stunted black-jack oaks to the west. The latter section is already laid out into streets and building-lots; elegant structures are rapidly going up, and, at no distant day, this is destined to become the most courtly and beautiful portion of the city. It is at a pleasant remove from the dust and bustle of the landing,

while its elevation affords a fine view of the harbour and opposite shore. Yet, with all its improvements of the past few years, St. Louis remains emphatically "a little *French* city." There is about it a cheerful village air, a certain *rus in urbe*, to which the grenadier preciseness of most of our cities is the antipodes. There are but few of those endless, rectilinear avenues, cutting each other into broad squares of lofty granite blocks, so characteristic of the older cities of the North and East, or of those cities of tramontane origin so rapidly rising within the boundaries of the valley. There yet remains much in St. Louis to remind one of its village days; and a stern *eschewal* of mathematical, angular exactitude is everywhere beheld. Until within a few years there was no such thing as a row of houses; all were disjoined and at a considerable distance from each other; and every edifice, however central, could boast its humble *stoop*, its front-door plat, bedecked with shrubbery and flowers, and protected from the inroads of intruding man or beast by its own tall stoccade. All this is now confined to the southern or French section of the city; a right Rip Van Winkle-looking region, where each little steep-roofed cottage yet presents its broad piazza, and the cosey settee before the door beneath the tree shade, with the fleshy old burghers soberly luxuriating on an evening pipe, their dark-eyed, brunette daughters at their side. There is a delightful air of "old-fashioned comfortableness" in all this, that reminds us of nothing we have seen in our own country, but much of the antiquated villages of which we have

been told in the land beyond the waters. Among those remnants of a former generation which are yet to be seen in St. Louis are the venerable mansions of Auguste and Pierre Chouteau, who were among the founders of the city. These extensive mansions stand upon the principal street, and originally occupied, with their grounds, each of them an entire square, enclosed by lofty walls of heavy masonry, with loopholes and watch-towers for defence. The march of improvement has encroached upon the premises of these ancient edifices somewhat; yet they are still inhabited by the posterity of their builders, and remain, with their massive walls of stone, monuments of an earlier era.

The site upon which stands St. Louis was selected in 1763 by M. Laclede, a partner of a mercantile association at New-Orleans, to whom D'Abbadie, Director-general of the province of Louisiana, had granted the exclusive privilege of the commerce in furs and peltries with the Indian tribes of the Upper Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. By the treaty of that year France had ceded all her possessions east of the Mississippi to Great Britain, and there was on the western shore only the small village of Ste. Genevieve. This was subsequently deemed too distant from the mouth of the Mississippi to be a suitable depôt and post for the fur-trade; and Laclede, having surveyed all the neighbouring region, fixed upon the spot where St. Louis now stands as a more eligible site. Whether this site was selected by the flight of birds, by consultation of the entrails of beasts, or the voice of an oracle; whether by ac-

cident or design, tradition averreth not. Yet sure is it, that under the concurrence of all these omens, a more favourable selection could not have been made than this has proved. It *is related*, however, that when the founder of the city first planted foot upon the shore, the imprint of a human foot, naked and of gigantic dimensions, was found enstamped upon the solid limestone rock, and continued in regular succession as if of a man advancing from the water's edge to the plateau above.* By a more superstitious age this circumstance would have been deemed an omen, and, as such, commemorated in the chronicles of the city. On the 15th of February, 1764, Colonel Auguste Chouteau, with a number of persons from Ste. Genevieve, Cahokia, and Fort Chartres, arrived at the spot, and commenced a settlement by felling a splendid grove of forest-trees which then reared itself upon the bank, and erecting a building where the market-house now stands. The town was then laid off, and named in honour of Louis XV., the reigning monarch of France, though the settlers were desirous of giving it the name of its founder: to this Laclede would not consent. He died at the post of Arkansas in 1778; Colonel Chouteau followed him in the month of February of 1829, just sixty-four years from the founding of the city. He had been a constant resident, had seen the spot merge from the wilderness, and had become one of its most opulent citizens.

For many years St. Louis was called "*Pain*

* The imprint of a human foot is yet to be seen in the limestone of the shore not far from the landing at St. Louis.

Court," from the scarcity of provisions, which circumstance at one period almost induced the settlers to abandon their design. In 1765 Fort Chartres was delivered to Great Britain, and the commandant, St. Ange, with his troops, only twenty-two in number, proceeded to St. Louis; and assuming the government, the place was ever after considered the capital of the province. Under the administration of St. Ange, which is said to have been mild and patriarchal, the *common field* was laid open, and each settler became a cultivator of the soil. This field comprised several thousand acres, lying upon the second steppe mentioned, and has recently been divided into lots and sold to the highest bidder. Three years after the arrival of St. Ange, Spanish troops under command of Don Rious took possession of the province agreeable to treaty; but, owing to the dissatisfaction of the inhabitants, no official authority was exercised until 1770. Thirty years afterward the province was retroceded to France, and from that nation to the United States. In the spring of 1778 an attack was made upon the village by a large body of the northern Indians, at the instigation of the English. They were repulsed with a loss of about twenty of the settlers, and the year was commemorated as "*L'annee du grand coup*." In the spring of 1785, the Mississippi rose thirty feet above the highest water-mark previously known, and the American Bottom was inundated. This year was remembered as "*L'annee des grand eaux*."

At that period commerce with New-Orleans, for

the purpose of obtaining merchandise for the fur trade, was carried on exclusively by keel-boats and barges, which in the spring started upon their voyage of more than a thousand miles, and in the fall of the year slowly returned against the current. This mode of transportation was expensive, tedious, and unsafe; and it was rendered yet more hazardous from the murders and robberies of a large band of freebooters, under two chiefs, Culburt and Magilbray, who stationed themselves at a place called Cotton Wood Creek, on the Mississippi, and captured the ascending boats. This band was dispersed by a little fleet of ten barges, which, armed with swivels, ascended the river in company. This year was remembered as "*L'annee des bateaux.*" All the inconvenience of this method of transportation continued to be experienced until the introduction of steam upon the Western waters; and the first boat of this kind which made its appearance at the port of St. Louis was the "General Pike," in 1817. This boat was commanded by Captain Jacob Reed, and, at the time of its arrival, a large body of a neighbouring Indian tribe chanced to have an encampment in the suburbs of the city. Their astonishment, and even *terror*, at first sight of the evolutions of the steamer, are said to have been indescribable. They viewed it as nothing less than a living thing; a monster of tremendous power, commissioned by the "Great Spirit" for their extermination, and their humiliation was proportional to their terror. Great opposition was raised against steamers by the boatmen, some thousands of whom, by their introduction, would

be thrown out of employment; but this feeling gradually passed away, and now vessels propelled by steam perform in a few days a voyage which formerly required as many months. A trip to the city, as New-Orleans, *par excellence*, was styled, then demanded weeks of prior preparation, and a man put his house and household in order before setting out: now it is an ordinary jaunt of pleasure. The same dislike manifested by the old French *habitans* to the introduction of the steamer or *smoke-boat*, "bateau à vapeur," as they termed it, has betrayed itself at every advance of modern improvement. Erected, as St. Louis was, with no design of a city, its houses were originally huddled together with a view to nothing but convenience; and its streets were laid out too narrow and too irregular for the bustle and throng of mercantile operations. In endeavouring to correct this early error, by removing a few of the old houses and projecting balconies, great opposition has been encountered. Some degree of uniformity in the three principal streets parallel to the river has, however, by this method been attained. Water-street is well built up with a series of lofty limestone warehouses; but an irretrievable error has been committed in arranging them at so short a distance from the water. On some accounts this proximity to the river may be convenient; but for the sake of a broad arena for commerce; for the sake of a fresh and salubrious circulation of air from the water; for the sake of scenic beauty, or a noble promenade for pleasure, there should have been no encroachment upon the pre-

cincts of the "eternal river." In view of the miserable *plan* of St. Louis, if it may claim anything of the kind, and the irregular manner and singular taste with which it has been built, the regret has more than once been expressed, that, like Detroit,* a conflagration had not swept it in its earlier days, and given place to an arrangement at once more consistent with elegance and convenience.

From the river bank to the elevated ground sweeping off in the rear of the city to the west is a distance of several hundred yards, and the height above the level of the water cannot be far from an hundred feet. The ascent is easy, however, and a noble view is obtained, from the cupola of the court-house on its summit, of the Mississippi and the city below, of the broad American Bottom, with its bluffs in the distance, and a beautiful extent of natural scenery in the rear. Along the brow of this eminence once stood a line of military works, erected for the defence of the old town in 1780 by Don Francois de Cruzat, lieutenant governor "*de la partie occidentale des Illinois*," as the ancient chronicles style the region west of the Mississippi. These fortifications consisted of several circular towers of stone, forty feet in diameter and half as many in altitude, planted at intervals in a line of stoccade, besides a small fort, embracing four demilunes and a parapet of mason-work. For many years these old works were in a dismantled and deserted state, excepting the fort, in one building of which was held

* In 1805.

the court, and another superseded the necessity of a prison. Almost every vestige is now swept away. The great earthquakes of 1811 essentially assisted in toppling the old ruins to the ground. The whole city was powerfully shaken, and has since been subject to occasional shocks.*

It is in the northern suburbs of the city that are to be seen those singular ancient mounds for which St. Louis is so celebrated; and which, with others in the vicinity, form, as it were, a connecting link between those of the north, commencing in the lake counties of Western New-York, and those of the south, extending deep within the boundaries of Mexico, forming an unbroken line from one extremity of the great valley to the other. Their position at St. Louis is, as usual, a commanding one, upon the second bank, of which I have spoken, and looking proudly down upon the Mississippi, along which the line is parallel. They stand isolated, or distinct from each other, in groups; and the outline is generally that of a rectangular pyramid, truncated nearly one half. The first collection originally consisted of ten tumuli, arranged as three sides of a square area of about four acres, and the open flank to the west was guarded by five other small circular earth-heaps, isolated, and forming the segment of a circle around

* One, which occurred during the summer of the present year, was extensively felt. In the vicinity of this fortification, to the south, was an extensive burial-ground; and many of its slumbering tenants, in the grading of streets and excavating of cellars, have been thrown up to the light after a century's sleep.

the opening. This group is now almost completely destroyed by the grading of streets and the erection of edifices, and the eastern border may alone be traced. North of the first collection of tumuli is a second, four or five in number, and forming two sides of a square. Among these is one of a very beautiful form, consisting of three stages, and called the "Falling Garden." Its elevation above the level of the second plateau is about four feet, and the area is ample for a dwelling and yard; from the second it descends to the first plateau along the river by three regular gradations, the first with a descent of two feet, the second of ten, and the lower one of five, each stage presenting a beautiful site for a house. For this purpose, however, they can never be appropriated, as one of the principal streets of the city is destined to pass directly through the spot, the grading for which is already commenced. The third group of mounds is situated a few hundred yards above the second, and consists of about a dozen eminences. A series extends along the west side of the street, through grounds attached to a classic edifice of brick, which occupies the principal one; while opposite rise several of a larger size, upon one of which is situated the residence of General Ashley, and upon another the reservoir which supplies the city with water, raised from the Mississippi by a steam force-pump upon its banks. Both are beautiful spots, imbowered in forest-trees; and the former, from its size and structure, is supposed to have been a citadel or place of defence.

In excavating the earth of this mound, large quantities of human remains, pottery, half-burned wood, &c., &c., were thrown up; furnishing conclusive evidence, were any requisite farther than regularity of outline and relative position, of the artificial origin of these earth-heaps. About six hundred yards above this group, and linked with it by several inconsiderable mounds, is situated one completely isolated, and larger than any yet described. It is upward of thirty feet in height, about one hundred and fifty feet long, and upon the summit five feet wide. The form is oblong, resembling an immense grave; and a broad terrace or apron, after a descent of a few feet, spreads out itself on the side looking down upon the river. From the extensive view of the surrounding region and of the Mississippi commanded by the site of this mound, as well as its altitude, it is supposed to have been intended as a vidette or watch-tower by its builders. Upon its summit, not many years ago, was buried an Indian chief. He was a member of a deputation from a distant tribe to the agency in St. Louis; but, dying while there, his remains, agreeable to the custom of his tribe, were deposited on the most commanding spot that could be found. This custom accounts for the circumstance urged against the antiquity and artificial origin of these works, that the relics exhumed are found near the surface, and were deposited by the present race. But the distinction between the remains found near the surface and those in the depths of the soil is too palpable and too

notorious to require argument. From the *Big Mound*, as it is called, a *cordon* of tumuli stretch away to the northwest for several miles along the bluffs parallel with the river, a noble view of which they command. They are most of them ten or twelve feet high; many clothed with forest-trees, and all of them supposed to be tombs. In removing two of them upon the grounds of Col. O'Fallon, immense quantities of bones were exhumed. Similar mounds are to be found in almost every county in the state, and those in the vicinity of St. Louis are remarkable only for their magnitude and the regularity of their relative positions. It is evident, from these monuments of a former generation, that the natural advantages of the site upon which St. Louis now stands were not unappreciated long before it was pressed by the first European footstep.

It is a circumstance which has often elicited remark from those who, as tourists, have visited St. Louis, that so little interest should be manifested by its citizens for those mysterious and venerable monuments of another race by which on every side it is environed. When we consider the complete absence of everything in the character of a public square or promenade in the city, one would suppose that individual taste and municipal authority would not have failed to avail themselves of the moral interest attached to these mounds and the beauty of their site, to have formed in their vicinity one of the most attractive spots in the West. These ancient tumuli could, at no considerable expense, have been

enclosed and ornamented with shrubbery, and walks, and flowers, and thus preserved for coming generations. As it is, they are passing rapidly away; man and beast, as well as the elements, are busy with them, and in a few years they will quite have disappeared. The practical utility of which they are available appears the only circumstance which has attracted attention to them. One has already become a public reservoir, and measures are in progress for applying the larger mound to a similar use, the first being insufficient for the growth of the city. It need not be said that such indifference of feeling to the only relics of a by-gone race which our land can boast, is not well in the citizens of St. Louis, and should exist no longer; nor need allusion be made to that eagerness of interest which the distant traveller, the man of literary taste and poetic fancy, or the devotee of abstruse science, never fails to betray for these mysterious monuments of the past, when, in his tour of the Far West, he visits St. Louis; many a one, too, who has looked upon the century-mossed ruins of Europe, and to whose eye the castled crags of the Rhine are not unfamiliar. And surely, to the imaginative mind, there *is* an interest which attaches to these venerable beacons of departed time, enveloped as they are in mystery inscrutable; and from their origin, pointing, as they do, down the dim shadowy vista of ages of which the ken of man telleth not, there is an interest which hallows them even as the hoary piles of old Egypt are hallowed, and which feudal Europe, with all her

time-stained battlements, can never boast. It is the mystery, the impenetrable mystery veiling these aged sepulchres, which gives them an interest for the traveller's eye. They are landmarks in the lapse of ages, beneath whose shadows generations have mouldered, and around whose summits a gone *eternity* plays! The ruined tower, the moss-grown abbey, the damp-stained dungeon, the sunken arch, the fairy and delicate fragments of the shattered peristyle of a classic land, or the beautiful frescoes of Herculaneum and Pompeii—around *them* time has indeed flung the silvery mantle of eld while he has swept them with decay; but *their* years may be *enumerated*, and the circumstances, the authors, and the purposes of their origin, together with the incidents of their ruin, are chronicled on History's page for coming generations. But who shall tell the era of the origin of these venerable earth-heaps, the race of their builders, the purpose of their erection, the thousand circumstances attending their rise, history, desertion? Why now so lone and desolate? Where are the multitudes that once swarmed the prairie at their base, and vainly busied themselves in rearing piles which should exist the wonder of the men of other lands, and the sole monument of their own memory long after they themselves were dust? Has war, or famine, or pestilence brooded over these beautiful plains? or has the fiat of Omnipotence gone forth, that as a race their inhabitants should exist no longer, and the death-angel been commissioned to sweep them from off the face of

the earth as if with destruction's besom? We ask: the inquiry is vain; we are answered not! Their mighty creations and the tombs of myriads heave up themselves in solemn grandeur before us; but from the depths of the dusky earth-heap comes forth no voice to tell us its origin, or object, or story!

"Ye mouldering relics of a race departed,
Your names have perished; not a trace remains,
Save where the grassgrown mound its summit rears
From the green bosom of your native plains."

Ages since—long ere the first son of the Old World had pressed the fresh soil of the New; long before the bright region beyond the blue wave had been the object of the philosopher's revery by day and the enthusiast's vision by night—in the deep stillness and solitude of an unpeopled land, these vast mausoleums rose as now they rise, in lonely grandeur from the plain, and looked down, even as now they look, upon the giant flood rolling its dark waters at their base, hurrying past them to the deep. So has it been with the massive tombs of Egypt, amid the sands and barrenness of the desert. For ages untold have the gloomy pyramids been reflected by the inundations of the Nile; an hundred generations, they tell us, have arisen from the cradle and reposed beneath their shadows, and, like autumn leaves, have dropped into the grave; but from the deep midnight of by-gone centuries comes forth no daring spirit to claim these kingly sepulchres as his own! And shall the dusky piles on the plains of distant Egypt affect so deeply our reverence for the

departed, and these mighty monuments, reposing in dark sublimity upon our own magnificent prairies, veiled in mystery more inscrutable than they, call forth no solitary throb? Is there no hallowing interest associated with these aged relics, these tombs, and temples, and towers of another race, to elicit emotion? Are they *indeed* to us no more than the dull clods we tread upon? Why, then, does the wanderer from the far land gaze upon them with wonder and veneration? Why linger fondly around them, and meditate upon the power which reared them and is departed? Why does the poet, the man of genius and fancy, or the philosopher of mind and nature, seat himself at their base, and, with strange and undefined emotions, pause and ponder amid the loneliness which slumbers around? And surely, if the far traveller, as he wanders through this Western Valley, may linger around these aged piles and meditate upon a power departed, a race obliterated, an influence swept from the earth for ever, and dwell with melancholy emotions upon the destiny of man, is it not meet that those into whose keeping they seem by Providence consigned should regard them with interest and emotion? that they should gather up and preserve every incident relevant to their origin, design, or history which may be attained, and avail themselves of every measure which may give to them perpetuity, and hand them down, undisturbed in form or character, to other generations?

The most plausible, and, indeed, the only plausible argument urged by those who deny the artificial

origin of the ancient mounds, is *their immense size.* There are, say they, "many mounds in the West that exactly correspond in *shape* with these supposed antiquities, and yet, from their *size*, most evidently were not made by man;" and they add that "it would be well to calculate upon the ordinary labour of excavating canals, how many hands, with spades, wheelbarrows, and other necessary implements, it would take to throw up mounds like the largest of these within any given time."* We are told that in the territory of Wisconsin and in northern Illinois exist mounds to which these are molehills. Of those, Mount Joliet, Mount Charles, Sinsinewa, and the Blue Mounds vary from one to four hundred feet in height; while west of the Arkansas exists a range of earth-heaps ten or twelve miles in extent, and two hundred feet high: there also, it might be added, are the Mamelle Mountains, estimated at one thousand feet. The adjacent country is prairie; farms exist on the summits of the mounds, which from their declivity are almost inaccessible, and *springs gush out from their sides.* With but one exception, I profess to know nothing of these mounds from personal observation; and, consequently, can hazard no opinion of their character. The fact of the "gushing springs," it is true,

* This quotation is from the pen of an exceedingly accurate writer upon the West, and a worthy man; so far its sentiment is deserving of regard. I have canvassed the topic personally with this gentleman, and upon other subjects have frequently availed myself of a superior information, which more than twenty years of residence in the Far West has enabled him to obtain. I refer to the Rev. J. M. Peck, author of "Guide for Emigrants," &c.

savours not much of artificialness; and in this respect, at least, do these mounds differ from those claimed as of artificial origin. The earth-heaps of which I have been speaking can boast no "springs of water gushing from their sides;" if they could, the fact would be far from corroborating the theory maintained. The analogy between these mounds is admitted to be strong, though there exist diversities; and were there *none*, even Bishop Butler says that we are not to infer a thing true upon slight presumption, since "there may be probabilities on both sides of a question." From what has been advanced relative to the character of the mounds spoken of, it is believed that the probabilities strongly preponderate in favour of their artificial origin, even admitting their *perfect* analogy to those "from whose sides gush the springs." But more anon.

St. Louis.

XII.

"There, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise."

GRAY.

"Some men have been
Who loved the church so well, and gave so largely to't,
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday."

THERE are few more delightful views in the vicinity of St. Louis of a fine evening than that commanded by the summit of the "Big Mound," of which I have spoken, in the northern suburbs of the city. Far away from the north comes the Mississippi, sweeping on in a broad, smooth sheet, skirted by woodlands; and the rushing of its waters along the ragged rocks of the shores below is fancied faintly to reach the ear. Nearly in the middle of the stream are stretched out the long, low, sandy shores of "Blood Island," a spot notorious in the annals of duelling. Upon the Illinois shore beyond it is contemplated erecting a pier, for the purpose of throwing the full volume of the current upon the western shore, and thus preserving a channel of deep water along the landing of the city. Within a few years past an extensive sand-bar has accumulated opposite the southern section of the city, which threatens, unless removed, greatly to obstruct, if not to destroy, the harbour. To remedy this, an appro-

priation has been made by Congress, surveys have been taken, measures devised and their execution commenced. Upon the river-bank opposite the island stands the "Floating Dry Dock," an ingenious contrivance, the invention of a gentleman of St. Louis, and owned by a company of patentees. It consists of an indefinite number of floats, which may be increased or diminished at pleasure, each of them fourteen feet in breadth, and about four times that length, connected laterally together. After being sunk and suspended at the necessary depth in the water, the boat to be repaired is placed upon them, and they rise till her hull is completely exposed.

As the spectator, standing upon the Mound, turns his eye to the south, a green grove lies before him and the smaller earth-heaps, over which are beheld the towers and roofs of the city rising in the distance; far beyond is spread out a smooth, rolling carpet of tree-tops, in the midst of which the gray limestone of the arsenal is dimly perceived. The extent between the northern suburbs of St. Louis and its southern extremity along the river curve is about six miles, and the city can be profitably extended about the same distance into the interior. The prospect in this direction is boundless for miles around, till the tree-tops blend with the western horizon. The face of the country is neither uniform nor broken, but undulates almost imperceptibly away, clothed in a dense forest of black-jack oak, interspersed with thickets of the wild-plum, the crab-apple, and the hazel. Thirty years ago, and this broad plain was a treeless, shrubless waste,

without a solitary farmhouse to break the monotony. But the annual fires were stopped; a young forest sprang into existence; and delightful villas and country seats are now gleaming from the dark foliage in all directions. To some of them are attached extensive grounds, adorned with groves, orchards, fishponds, and all the elegances of opulence and cultivated taste; while in the distance are beheld the glittering spires of the city rising above the trees. At one of these, a retired, beautiful spot, residence of Dr. F——, I have passed many a pleasant hour. The sportsman may here be indulged to his heart's desire. The woods abound with game of every species: the rabbit, quail, prairie-hen, wild-turkey, and the deer; while the lakes, which flash from every dell and dingle, are swarmed with fish. Most of these sheets of water are formed by immense springs issuing from *sink-holes;* and are supposed, like those in Florida, which suggested the wild idea of the *fountain of rejuvenescence,* to owe their origin to the subsidence of the bed of porous limestone upon which the Western Valley is based. Many of these springs intersect the region with rills and rivulets, and assist in forming a beautiful sheet of water in the southern suburbs of the city, which eventually pours out its waters into the Mississippi. Many years ago a dam and massive mill of stone was erected here by one of the founders of the city; it is yet standing, surrounded by aged sycamores, and is more valuable and venerable than ever. The neighbouring region is abrupt and broken, varied by a delightful vicissitude of hill and dale. The bor-

ders of the lake are fringed with groves, while the steep bluffs, which rise along the water and are reflected in its placid bosom, recall the picture of Ben Venue and Loch Katrine:

> "The mountain shadows on her breast
> Were neither broken nor at rest;
> In bright uncertainty they lie,
> Like future joys to Fancy's eye."

This beautiful lake and its vicinity is, indeed, unsurpassed for scenic loveliness by any spot in the suburbs of St. Louis. At the calm, holy hour of Sabbath sunset, its quiet borders invite to meditation and retirement. The spot should be consecrated as the trysting-place of love and friendship. Some fine structures are rising upon the margin of the waters, and in a few years it will be rivalled in beauty by no other section of the city.

St. Louis, like most Western cities, can boast but few public edifices of any note. Among those which are to be seen, however, are the large and commodious places of worship of the different religious denominations; an elegant courthouse, occupying with its enclosed grounds one of the finest squares in the city; two market-houses, one of which, standing upon the river-bank, contains on its second floor the City Hall; a large and splendid theatre, in most particulars inferior to no other edifice of the kind in the United States; and an extensive hotel, which is now going up, to be called the "St. Louis House," contracted for one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The Cathedral of St. Luke, the University, Hospital, Orphan Asylum, and the

"Convent of the Sacred Heart," are Catholic Institutions, and well worthy of remark. For many years after its settlement, the Roman Catholic faith prevailed exclusively in St. Louis. The founders of the city and its earliest inhabitants were of this religious persuasion; and their descendants, many of whom are now among its most opulent and influential citizens, together with foreign immigrants of a recent date, form a numerous and respectable body. The names of Chouteau, Pratte, Sarpy, Cabanné, Menard, Soulard, &c., &c., are those of early settlers of the city which yet are often heard.

The "Cathedral of St. Luke" is a noble structure of stone. It was consecrated with great pomp in the autumn of '34, having occupied three years in its erection. The site is unfavourable, but it possessed an interest for many of the old citizens which no other spot could claim. Here had stood their ancient sanctuary, with which was associated the holy feelings of their earliest days; here had been the baptismal font and the marriage altar; while beneath reposed the sacred remains of many a being, loved and honoured, but passed away. The former church was a rude structure of logs. The dimensions of the present building are a length of about one hundred and forty feet, to a breadth of eighty and an altitude of forty, with a tower of upward of an hundred feet, surmounted by a lofty cross. The steeple contains a peal of six bells, the three larger of which were cast in Normandy, and chime very pleasantly; upon the four sides of the tower are the dial-plates of a clock, which strikes the hours upon

the bells. The porch of the edifice consists of four large columns of polished freestone, of the Doric order, with corresponding entablature, cornice, pediment, and frieze, the whole surface of the latter being occupied with the inscription "*In honorem S. Ludovici. Deo Uni et Trino, Dicatum, A.D. MDCCCXXXIV*," the letters elevated in *basso-relievo*. Over the entrances, which are three in number, are inscribed, in French and in English, passages from Scripture, upon tablets of Italian marble. The porch is protected from the street by battlements, surmounted by an iron railing, and adorned by lofty candelabra of stone. The body of the building is divided by two colonnades, of five pillars each, into three aisles. The columns, composed of brick, stuccoed to imitate marble, are of the Doric order, supporting a cornice and entablature, decorated with arabesques and medallions ; and upon them reposes the arch of the elliptic-formed and panelled ceiling. Between the columns are suspended eight splendid chandeliers, which, when lighted at night, produce a magnificent effect. The walls are enriched by frescoes and arabesques, and the windows are embellished with transparencies, presenting the principal transactions of the Saviour's mission. This is said to be one of the first attempts at a substitute for the painted glass of the Middle Ages, and was executed, together with the other pictorial decorations of the edifice, by an artist named *Leon*, sent over for the purpose from France. The effect is grand. Even the gairish sunbeams are mellowed down as they struggle dimly through the richly-col-

oured hangings, and the light throughout the sacred pile seems tinged with rainbow hues. In the chancel of the church, at the bottom of the centre aisle, elevated by a flight of steps, and enclosed by a balustrade of the Corinthian order, is situated the sanctuary. Upon either side stand pilasters to represent marble, decorated with festoons of wheat-ears and vines, symbolical of the eucharist, and surmounted with caps of the Doric order. On the right, between the pilasters, is a gallery for the choir, with the organ in the rear, and on the left side is a veiled gallery for the "Sisters of Charity" connected with the convent and the other institutions of the church. The altar-piece at the bottom of the sanctuary represents the Saviour upon the cross, with his mother and two of his disciples at his feet; on either side rise two fluted Corinthian columns, with a broken pediment and gilded caps, supporting a gorgeous entablature. Above the whole is an elliptical window, hung with the transparency of a dove, emblematic of the Holy Ghost, shedding abroad rays of light. The high altar and the tabernacle stand below, and the decorations on festal occasions, as well as the vestments of the officiating priests, are splendid and imposing. Over the bishop's seat, in a side arch of the sanctuary, hangs a beautiful painting of St. Louis, titular of the cathedral, presented by the amiable Louis XVIII. of France previous to his exile. At the bottom of each of the side aisles of the church stand two chapels, at the same elevation with the sanctuary. Between two fluted columns of the Ionic order is suspended, in each chapel, an

altar-piece, with a valuable painting above. The piece on the left represents St. Vincent of Gaul engaged in charity on a winter's day, and the picture above is the marriage of the blessed Virgin. The altar-piece of the right represents St. Patrick of Ireland in his pontifical robes, and above is a painting of our Saviour and the centurion, said to be by Paul Veronese. At the opposite extremity of the building, near the side entrances, are two valuable pieces; one said to be by Rubens, of the Virgin and Child, the other the martyrdom of St. Bartholemew. Above rise extensive galleries in three rows; to the right is the baptismal font, and a landscape of the Saviour's immersion in Jordan. Beneath the sanctuary of the church is the lower chapel, divided into three aisles by as many arches, supported by pilasters, which, as well as the walls, are painted to imitate marble. There is here an altar and a marble tabernacle, where mass is performed during the week, and the chapel is decorated by fourteen paintings, representing different stages of the Saviour's passion.*

In the western suburbs of the city, upon an eminence, stand the buildings of the St. Louis University, handsome structures of brick. The institution is conducted by Jesuits, and most of the higher branches of learning are taught. The present site has been offered for sale, and the seminary is to be removed some miles into the interior. Connected

* In this outline of the Cathedral the author is indebted largely to a minute description by the Rev. Mr. Lutz, the officiating priest, published in the Missouri Gazetteer.

with the college is a medical school of recent date. The chapel of the institution is a large, airy room, hung with antique and valuable paintings. Two of these, suspended on each side of the altar, said to be by Rubens, are master-pieces of the art. One of them represents Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jesuits; the other is the full-length picture of the celebrated Francis Xavier, apostle to the Indies, who died at Goa while engaged in his benevolent labours. In an oratory above hangs a large painting by the same master; a powerful, though unfinished production. All the galleries of the buildings are decorated with paintings, some of which have but little to commend them to notice but their antiquity. The library embraces about twelve hundred volumes, mostly in the French language. The *Universal Geography* of Braviara, a valuable work of eleven folios, brilliantly illuminated, and the *Actæ Sanctorum*, an enormous work of *forty-two* folio volumes, chiefly attract the visiter's attention. The philosophical apparatus attached to the institution is very insufficient. Most of the pupils of the institution are French, and they are gathered from all quarters of the South and West; a great number of them are from Louisiana, sons of the planters.

St. Louis.

XIII.

"Away! away! and on we dash!
Torrents less rapid and less rash."

Mazeppa.

"Mark yon old mansion frowning through the trees,
Whose hollow turret woos the whistling breeze."

ROGERS.

IT was a pleasant afternoon when, in company with a number of friends, I left the city for an excursion into its southern suburbs, and a visit to the military works, a few miles distant. The atmosphere had that mild, mellowy mistiness which subdues the fierce glare of the sunbeams, and flings over every object a softened shade. A gentle breeze from the south was astir balmily and blandly among the leaves; in fine, it was one of those grateful, genial seasons, when the senses sympathize with the quietude of external creation, and there is no reason, earthly or unearthly, why the inward man should not sympathize with the man without; a season when you are at peace with yourself, and at peace with every object, animate, inanimate, or vegetable, about you. Our party consisted of eight precious souls, and "all agog to dash through thick and thin," if essential to a jovial jaunt. And now fain would I enumerate those worthy individuals, together with their several peculiarities and dispositions, good and bad, did not a certain delicacy for-

bid. Suffice it to say, the excursion was devised in honour, and for the especial benefit, of a young and recently-married couple from "the city of monuments and fountains," who were enjoying their honey-moon in a trip to the Far West. Passing through the narrow streets and among the ancient edifices of the *old* city, we came to that section called South St. Louis. This is destined to become the district of manufactures; large quantities of bituminous coal, little inferior to that of the Alleghanies, is here found; and railroads to the celebrated Iron Mountain, sixty miles distant, and to the coal-banks of the Illinois bluffs, as well as to the northern section of the city, are projected. The landing is good, the shore being composed of limestone and marble, of two different species, both of which admit a high degree of polish. There is also quarried in this vicinity a kind of freestone, which, when fresh from the bed, is soft, but, on exposure to the atmosphere, becomes dense and hard. We passed a number of commodious farmhouses as we ambled along; and now and then, at intervals through the trees, was caught a glimpse of the flashing sheen of the river gliding along upon our left. At a short distance from the road were to be seen the ruins of the "Eagle Powder-works," destroyed by fire in the spring of '36. They had been in operation only three years previous to their explosion, and their daily manufacture was three hundred pounds of superior powder. The report and concussion of the explosion was perceived miles around the country, and the loss sustained by the proprietors was esti-

mated at forty thousand dollars. The site of these works was a broad plain, over which, as our horses were briskly galloping, a circumstance occurred which could boast quite as much of reality as romance.

To my own especial gallantry—gallant man—had been intrusted the precious person of the fair bride, and lightly and gracefully pressed her fairy form upon the back of a bright-eyed, lithe little animal, with a spirit buoyant as her own. The steed upon which I was myself mounted was a powerful creature, with a mouth as unyielding as the steel bit he was constantly champing. The lady prided herself, not without reason, upon her boldness and grace in horsemanship and her skill in the *manège;* and, as we rode somewhat in advance of our cavalcade, the proposal thoughtlessly dropped from her that we should elope and leave our companions in the lurch. Hardly had the syllables left her lip, than the reins were flung loose upon the horses' manes; they bounded on, and away, away, away the next moment were we skirring over the plain, like the steed of the Muses on a steeple-chase. A single shout of warning to my fair companion was returned by an ejaculation of terror, for her horse had become his own master. The race of John Gilpin or of Alderman Purdy were, either or both of them, mere circumstances to ours. For more than a mile our excited steeds swept onward in their furious course to the admiration of beholders; and how long the race might have been protracted is impossible to say, had not certain sons of Erin—worthy souls

—in the innocence of their hearts and the ignorance of their heads, and by way of perpetrating a notable exploit, thought proper to throw themselves from the roadside directly before us. The suddenness of the movement brought both our animals nearly upon their haunches, and the next minute saw the fair bride quietly seated in the dust beneath their feet. The shock had flung her from her seat, but she arose uninjured. To leap from my saddle and place the lady again in hers was the work of a moment; and when the cortége made its appearance, our runaway steeds were ambling along in a fashion the most discreet and exemplary imaginable.

The situation of the Arsenal, upon a swelling bank of the river, is delightful. It is surrounded by a strong wall of stone, embracing extensive grounds, through which a green, shady avenue leads from the highway. The structures are composed chiefly of unhewn limestone, enclosing a rectangular area, and comprise about a dozen large buildings, while a number of lesser ones are perceived here and there among the groves. The principal structure is one of four stories, looking down upon the Mississippi, with a beautiful esplanade, forming a kind of natural glacis to the whole armory, sweeping away to the water. Upon the right and left, in the same line with the rectangle, are situated the dwellings of the officers; noble edifices of hewn stone, with cultivated garden-plats and fruit-trees. The view of the stream is here delightful, and the breeze came up from its surface fresh and free. A pair of pet deer were frolicking along the shore. Most of the remaining structures are offices and

workshops devoted to the manufacture of arms. Of these there were but few in the Arsenal, large quantities having been despatched to the South for the Florida war. It is designed, I am informed, to mount ordnance at these works—to no great extent, probably; there were several pieces of artillery already prepared. The slits and loopholes in the deep walls, the pyramids of balls and bombshells, and the heavy carronades piled in tiers, give the place rather a warlike aspect for a peaceable inland fortress.

A ride of a few miles brought us to the brow of a considerable elevation, from which we looked down upon the venerable little hamlet of Carondelet, or *Vuide Poche*, as it is familiarly termed; a *nom de nique* truly indicative of the poverty of pocket and the richness of fancy of its primitive habitans. The village lies in a sleepy-looking hollow, scooped out between the bluffs and the water; and from the summit of the hill the eye glances beyond it over the lengthened vista of the river-reach, at this place miles in extent. Along the shore a deeply-laden steamer was toiling against the current on her passage to the city. Descending the elevation, we were soon thridding the narrow, tortuous, lane-like avenues of the old village. Every object, the very soil even, seemed mossgrown and hoary with time departed. More than seventy years have passed away since its settlement commenced; and now, as then, its inhabitants consist of hunters, and trappers, and river-boatmen, absent most of the year on their various excursions. The rude, crumbling ten-

ements of stone or timber, of peculiar structure, with their whitewashed walls stained by age; the stoccade enclosures of the gardens; the venerable aspect of the ancient fruit-trees, mossed with years, and the unique and singular garb, manner, and appearance of the swarthy villagers, all betoken an earlier era and a peculiar people. The little dark-eyed, dark-haired boys were busy with their games in the streets; and, as we paced leisurely along, we could perceive in the little *cabarets* the older portion of the *habitans*, cosily congregated around the table near the open door or upon the balcony, apparently discussing the gossip of the day and the qualities of sundry potations before them. Ascending the hill in the rear of the village, we entered the rude chapel of stone reared upon its brow: the inhabitants are all Catholics, and to this faith is the edifice consecrated. The altar-piece, with its decorations, was characterized by simplicity and taste. Three ancient paintings, representing scenes in the mission of the Saviour, were suspended from the walls; the brass-plated missal reposed upon the tabernacle; the crucifix rose in the centre of the sanctuary, and candles were planted on either side. Evergreens were neatly festooned around the sanctuary, and every object betrayed a degree of taste. Attached to the church is a small burial-ground, crowded with tenants. The Sisters of Charity have an asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, in a prosperous condition. Our tarry was but a brief one, as the distrust with which our movements were regarded by the villagers was evident; nor is this

suspicion at all to be wondered at when we consider the numberless impostures of which, by immigrants, they have been made the victims.

A few miles through groves of oaks brought us in view of that beautiful spot, Jefferson Barracks. The buildings, constructed of stone, are romantically situated on a bold bluff, the base of which is swept by the Mississippi, and were intended to garrison an entire regiment of cavalry for frontier service. Three sides of the quadrangle of the parade are bounded by the lines of galleried barracks, with fine buildings at the extremities for the residence of the officers; while the fourth opens upon a noble terrace overlooking the river. The commissary's house, the magazines, and extensive stables, lie without the parallelogram, beneath the lofty trees. From the terrace is commanded a fine view of the river, with its alluvial islands, the extensive woodlands upon the opposite side, and the pale cliffs of the bluffs stretching away beyond the bottom. In the rear of the garrison rises a grove of forest-trees, consisting of heavy oaks, with broad-spreading branches, and a green, smooth sward beneath. The surface is beautifully undulating, and the spot presents a specimen of park scenery as perfect as the country can boast. A neat burial-ground is located in this wood, and the number of its white wooden slabs gave melancholy evidence of the ravages of the cholera among that corps of fine fellows which, four years before, garrisoned the Barracks. Many a one has here laid away his bones to rest far from the home of his nativity. There is another cemetery

on the southern outskirts of the Barracks, where are the tombs of several officers of the army.

The site of Jefferson Barracks was selected by General Atkinson as the station of a *corps de reserve*, for defence of the Southern, Western, and Northern frontiers. For the purpose of its design, experience has tested its efficiency. The line of frontier, including the advanced post of Council Bluffs on the Missouri, describes the arch of a circle, the chord of which passes nearly through this point; and a reserve post here is consequently available for the entire line of frontier. From its central position and its proximity to the mouths of the great rivers leading into the interior, detachments, by means of steam transports, may be thrown with great rapidity and nearly equal facility into the garrisons upon the Upper Mississippi, the Missouri, the Arkansas, Red, or Sabine Rivers. This was tested in the Black Hawk war, and, indeed, in every inroad of the Indian tribes, these troops have first been summoned to the field. When disengaged, the spot furnishes a salubrious position for the reserve of the Western army. By the latest scheme of frontier defence, a garrison of fifteen hundred troops is deemed necessary for this cantonment.

A few miles below the Barracks, along the river-bank, is situated quite a remarkable cave. I visited and explored it one fine afternoon, with a number of friends. With some difficulty, after repeated inquiry, we succeeded in discovering the object of our search, and from a neighbouring farmhouse

furnished ourselves with lights and a guide. The latter was a German, who, according to his own account, had been something of a hero in his way and day; he was with Napoleon at Moscow, and was subsequently taken prisoner by Blucher's Prussian Lancers at Waterloo, having been wounded in the knee by a musket-ball. To our edification he detailed a number of his "moving accidents by flood and field." A few steps from the farmhouse brought us to the mouth of the cavern, situated in the face of a ragged limestone precipice nearly a hundred feet high, and the summit crowned with trees and shrubbery; it forms the abrupt termination to a ravine, which, united to another coming in on the right, continues on to the river, a distance of several hundred yards, through a wood. The entrance to the cave is exceedingly rough and rugged, piled with huge fragments of the cliff which have fallen from above, and it can be approached only with difficulty. It is formed, indeed, by the rocky bed of a stream flowing out from the cave's mouth, inducing the belief that to this circumstance the ravine owes its origin. The entrance is formed by a broad arch about twenty feet in altitude, with twice that breadth between the abutments. As we entered, the damp air of the cavern swept out around us chill and penetrating. An abrupt angle of the wall soon shut out the daylight, and we advanced by the light of our candles. The floor, and roof, and sides of the cavern became exceedingly irregular as we proceeded, and, after penetrating to the depth of several hundred yards,

the floor and ceiling approached each other so nearly that we were forced to pursue our way upon our hands and knees. In some chambers the roof and walls assumed grotesque and singular shapes, caused by the water trickling through the porous limestone. In one apartment was to be seen the exact outline of a human foot of enormous size; in another, that of an inverted boat; while the vault in a third assumed the shape of an immense coffin. The sole proprietors of the cavern seemed the bats, and of these the number was incredible. In some places the reptiles suspended themselves like swarms of bees from the roof and walls; and so compactly one upon the other did they adhere, that scores could have been crushed at a blow. After a ramble of more than an hour within these shadowy realms, during which several false passages upon either side, soon abruptly terminating, were explored, we at length once more emerged to the light and warmth of the sunbeams, thoroughly drenched by the dampness of the atmosphere and the water dripping from the roof.

Ancient Indian tumuli and graves are often found in this neighbourhood. On the *Rivière des Pères*, which is crossed by the road leading to the city, and about seven miles distant, there are a number of graves which, from all appearance, seem not to have been disturbed for centuries. The cemetery is situated on a high bluff looking down upon the stream, and is said to have contained skeletons of a gigantic size. Each grave consisted of a shallow basin, formed by flat stones

planted upon their edges; most of them, however, are mossed by age, or have sunk beneath the surface, and their tenants have crumbled to their original dust. Some years since, a Roman coin of a rare species was found upon the banks of the *Rivière des Pères* by an Indian. This may, perhaps, be classed among the other antiquities of European origin which are frequently found. A number of Roman coins, bearing an early date of the Christian era, are said to have been discovered in a cave near Nashville, in the State of Tennessee, which at the time excited no little interest among antiquaries: they were doubtless deposited by some of the settlers of the country from Europe. Settlements on the *Rivière des Pères* are said to have been commenced at an early period by the Jesuits, and one of them was drowned near its mouth: from this circumstance it derived its name. In the bed of this stream, about six miles from the city, is a sulphur spring, which is powerfully sudorific; and, when taken in any quantity, throws out an eruption over the whole body. A remarkable cavern is said to be situated on this river, by some considered superior to that below the Barracks. A short distance from *Vuide Poche* are to be seen the remains of a pile of ruins, said to be those of a fort erected by La Salle when, on his second visit, he took possession of the country in the name of the King of France, and in honour of him called it Louisiana.

St. Louis.

XIV.

"Here I have 'scaped the city's stifling heat,
Its horrid sounds and its polluted air;
And, where the season's milder fervours beat,
And gales, that sweep the forest borders, bear
The song of bird and sound of running stream,
Have come a while to wander and to dream."

BRYANT.

"I lingered, by some soft enchantment bound,
And gazed, enraptured, on the lovely scene;
From the dark summit of an Indian mound
I saw the plain outspread in living green;
Its fringe of cliffs was in the distance seen,
And the dark line of forests sweeping round."

FLINT.

THERE are few things more delightfully refreshing, amid the fierce fervour of midsummer, than to forsake the stifled, polluted atmosphere of the city for the cool breezes of its forest suburbs. A freshened elasticity seems gliding through the languid system, bracing up the prostrated fibres of the frame; the nerves thrill with renewed tensity, and the vital flood courses in fuller gush, and leaps onward with more bounding buoyancy in its fevered channels. Every one has experienced this; and it was under circumstances like these that I found myself one bright day, after a delay at St. Louis which began at length to be intolerably tedious, forsaking the sultry, sun-scorched streets of

the city, and crossing the turbid flood for a tour upon the prairies of Illinois. How delightful to a frame just freed from the feverish confinement of a sick-chamber, brief though it had been, was the fresh breeze which came careering over the water, rippling along the polished surface, and gayly riding the miniature waves of its own creation! The finest point from which to view the little "City of the French" is from beneath the enormous sycamores upon the opposite bank of the Mississippi. It is from this spot alone that anything approaching to a cosmorama can be commanded. The city, retreating as it does from the river's brink—its buildings of every diversity of form, material, and structure, promiscuously heaped the one upon the other, and the whole intermingled with the fresh green of forest-trees, may boast of much scenic beauty. The range of white limestone warehouses, circling like a crescent the shore, form the most prominent feature of the foreground, while the forest of shrub-oaks sweeps away in the rear. For some time I gazed upon this imposing view, and then, slowly turning my horse's head, was upon the dusty thoroughfare to Edwardsville. For the first time I found myself upon the celebrated "American Bottom," a tract of country which, for fertility and depth of soil, is perhaps unsurpassed in the world. A fine road of baked loam extended along my route. Crossing Cahokia Creek, which cuts its deep bed diagonally through the bottom from the bluffs some six miles distant, and threading a grove of the beautiful *pecan*, with its long trailing boughs and

delicate leaves, my path was soon winding gracefully away among those venerable monuments of a race now passed from the earth. The eye is struck at first by the number of these eminences, as well as by their symmetry of form and regularity of outline; and the most familiar resemblance suggested is that of gigantic hay-ricks sprinkled over the uniform surface of the prairie on every side. As you advance, however, into the plain, leaving the range of mounds upon the left, something of arrangement is detected in their relative position; and a design too palpable is betrayed to mistake them for the handiwork of Nature. Upward of one hundred of these mounds, it is stated, may be enumerated within seven miles of St. Louis, their altitude varying from ten to sixty feet, with a circumference at the base of about as many yards. One of these, nearly in the centre of the first collection, is remarked as considerably larger than those around, and from its summit is commanded an extensive view of the scene. The group embraces, perhaps, fifty tumuli, sweeping off from opposite the city to the northeast, in form of a crescent, parallel to the river, and at a distance from it of about one mile: they extend about the same distance, and a belt of forest alone obstructs their view from the city. When this is removed, and the prairie is under cultivation, the scene laid open must be beautiful. The outline of the mounds is ordinarily that of a gracefully-rounded cone of varying declivity, though often the form is oblong, approaching the rectangle or ellipse. In some instances

they are perfectly square, with a level area upon the summit sufficient for a dwelling and the necessary purlieus. Most of them are clothed with dense thickets and the coarse grass of the bottom; while here and there stands out an aged oak, rooted in the mould, tossing its green head proudly to the breeze, its rough bark shaggy with moss, and the pensile parasite flaunting from its branches. Some few of the tumuli, however, are quite naked, and present a rounded, beautiful surface from the surrounding plain. At this point, about half a mile from the river-bank, commencing with the first group of mounds, extends the railroad across the bottom to the bluffs. The expense of this work was considerable. It crosses a lake, into the bed of which piles were forced a depth of ninety feet before a foundation for the tracks sufficiently firm could be obtained. Coal is transported to St. Louis upon this railway direct from the mines; and the beneficial effects to be anticipated from it in other respects are very great. A town called *Pittsburg* has been laid out at the foot of the coal bluffs.

Leaving the first collection of tumuli, the road wound away smooth and uniform through the level prairie, with here and there upon the left a slight elevation from its low surface, seeming a continuation of the group behind, or a link of union to those yet before. It was a sweet afternoon; the atmosphere was still and calm, and summer's golden haze was sleeping magnificently on the far-off bluffs. At intervals the soft breath of the "sweet South"

came dancing over the tall, glossy herbage, and the many-hued prairie-flowers flashed gayly in the sunlight. There was the *heliotrope*, in all its gaudy but magnificent forms; there the deep cerulean of the fringed *gentiana*, delicate as an iris; there the mellow gorgeousness of the *solidago*, in some spots along the pathway, spreading out itself, as it were, into a perfect "field of the cloth of gold;" and the balmy fragrance of the aromatic wild thyme or the burgamot, scattered in rich profusion over the plain, floated over all. Small coveys of the prairie-fowl, *tetrao pratensis*, a fine species of grouse, the ungainly form of the partridge, or that of the timid little hare, would appear for a moment in the dusty road, and, on my nearer approach, away they hurriedly scudded beneath the friendly covert of the bright-leaved sumac or the thickets of the rosebush. Extensive groves of the wild plum and the crab-apple, bending beneath the profusion of clustering fruitage, succeeded each other for miles along the path as I rode onward; now extending in continuous thickets, and then swelling up like green islets from the surface of the plain, their cool recesses affording a refreshing shade for the numerous herds. The rude farmhouse, too, with its ruder outbuildings, half buried in the dark luxuriance of its maize-fields, from time to time was seen along the route.

After a delightful drive of half an hour the second group of eminences, known as the "Cantine Mounds," appeared upon the prairie at a distance of three or four miles, the celebrated "Monk Hill," largest monument of the kind yet discovered in North America, heaving up its giant, forest-clothed

form in the midst. What are the reflections to which this stupendous earth-heap gives birth? What the associations which throng the excited fancy? What a field for conjecture! What a boundless range for the workings of imagination! What eye can view this venerable monument of the past, this mighty landmark in the lapse of ages, this gray chronicler of hoary centuries, and turn away uninterested?

As it is first beheld, surrounded by the lesser heaps, it is mistaken by the traveller for an elevation of natural origin: as he draws nigh, and at length stands at the base, its stupendous magnitude, its lofty summit, towering above his head and throwing its broad shadow far across the meadow; its slopes, ploughed with yawning ravines by the torrents of centuries descending to the plain; its surface and declivities perforated by the habitations of burrowing animals, and carpeted with tangled thickets; the vast size of the aged oaks rearing themselves from its soil; and, finally, the farmhouse, with its various structures, its garden, and orchard, and *well* rising upon the broad area of the summit, and the carriage pathway winding up from the base, all confirm his impression that no hand but that of the Mightiest could have reared the enormous mass. At that moment, should he be assured that this vast earth-heap was of origin demonstrably artificial, he would smile; but credulity the most sanguine would fail to credit the assertion. But when, with jealous eye, slowly and cautiously, and with measured footsteps, he has circled its base; when he has surveyed its slopes and declivities from every position, and has

remarked the peculiar uniformity of its structure and the mathematical exactitude of its outline; when he has ascended to its summit, and looked round upon the piles of a similar character by which it is surrounded; when he has taken into consideration its situation upon a river-bottom of nature decidedly diluvial, and, of consequence, utterly incompatible with the *natural* origin of such elevations; when he has examined the soil of which it is composed, and has discovered it to be uniformly, throughout the entire mass, of the same mellow and friable species as that of the prairie at its base; and when he has listened with scrutiny to the facts which an examination of its depths has thrown to light of its nature and its contents, he is compelled, however reluctantly, yet without a doubt, to declare that the gigantic pile is incontestibly the WORKMANSHIP OF MAN'S HAND. But, with such an admission, what is the crowd of reflections which throng and startle the mind? What a series of unanswerable inquiries succeed! When was this stupendous earth-heap reared up from the plain? By what race of beings was the vast undertaking accomplished? What was its purpose? What changes in its form and magnitude have taken place? What vicissitudes and revolutions have, in the lapse of centuries, rolled like successive waves over the plains at its base? As we reflect, we anxiously look around us for some tradition, some time-stained chronicle, some age-worn record, even the faintest and most unsatisfactory legend, upon which to repose our credulity, and relieve the inquiring solicitude of the mind. But

our research is hopeless. The present race of aborigines can tell nothing of these tumuli. To them, as to us, they are veiled in mystery. Ages since, long ere the white-face came, while this fair land was yet the home of his fathers, the simple Indian stood before this venerable earth-heap, and gazed, and wondered, and turned away.

But there is another reflection which, as we gaze upon these venerable tombs, addresses itself directly to our feelings, and bows them in humbleness. It is, that soon *our* memory and that of our *own* generation will, like that of other times and other men, have passed away; that when these frail tenements shall have been laid aside to moulder, the remembrance will soon follow them to the land of forgetfulness. Ah, if there be an object in all the wide universe of human desires for which the heart of man yearns with an intensity of craving more agonizing and deathless than for any other, it is that the memory should live after the poor body is dust. It was this eternal principle of our nature which reared the lonely tombs of Egypt amid the sands and barrenness of the desert. For ages untold have the massive and gloomy pyramids looked down upon the floods of the Nile, and generation after generation has passed away; yet their very existence still remains a mystery, and their origin points down our inquiry far beyond the grasp of human ken, into the boiling mists, the "wide involving shades" of centuries past. And yet how fondly did they who, with the toil, and blood, and sweat, and misery of ages, upreared these stupendous piles, anticipate

an immortality for their name which, like the effulgence of a golden eternity, should for ever linger around their summits! So was it with the ancient tomb-builders of this New World; so has it been with man in every stage of his existence, from the hour that the giant Babel first reared its dusky walls from the plains of Shinar down to the era of the present generation. And yet how hopeless, desperately, eternally hopeless are such aspirations of the children of men! As nations or as individuals, our memory we can never embalm! A few, indeed, may retain the forlorn relic within the sanctuary of hearts which loved us while with them, and that with a tenderness stronger than death; but, with the great mass of mankind, our absence can be noticed only for a day; and then the ranks close up, and a gravestone tells the passing stranger that we lived and died: a few years—the finger of time has been busy with the inscription, and we are *as if we had never been.* If, then, it must be even so,

"Oh, let us keep the soul embalm'd and pure
In living virtue; that, when both must sever,
Although corruption may our frame consume,
Th' immortal spirit in the skies may bloom."

St. Clair Co., Illinois.

XV.

"Are they here,
The dead of other days? And did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? All is gone;
All, save the piles of earth that hold their bones,
The platforms where they worshipp'd unknown gods,
The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay."

The Prairies.

The antiquity of "Monk Mound" is a circumstance which fails not to arrest the attention of every visiter. That centuries have elapsed since this vast pile of earth was heaped up from the plain, no one can doubt: every circumstance, even the most minute and inconsiderable, confirm an idea which the venerable oaks upon its soil conclusively demonstrate. With this premise admitted, consider for a moment the destructive effects of the elements even for a limited period upon the works of our race. Little more than half a century has elapsed since the war of our revolution; but where are the fortifications, and parapets, and military defences then thrown up? The earthy ramparts of Bunker Hill were nearly obliterated long ago by the levelling finger of time, and scarce a vestige now remains to assist in tracing out the line of defence. The same is true with these works all over the country; and even those of the last war—those at Baltimore, for exam-

ple—are vanishing as fast as the elements can melt them away. Reflect, then, that this vast earth-heap of which I am writing is composed of a soil far more yielding in its nature than they; that its superfices are by no means compact; and then conceive, if you *can*, its stupendous character before it had bided the rains, and snows, and storm-winds of centuries, and before the sweeping floods of the "Father of Waters" had ever circled its base. Our thoughts are carried back by the reflection to the era of classic fiction, and we almost fancy another war of the Titans against the heavens—

> "Conati imponere Pelio Ossam—
> —atque Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum,"

if a quotation from the sweet bard of Mantua, upon a topic like the present, may be pardoned. How large an army of labourers, without the use of iron utensils, as we have every reason to suppose was the case, would be required for scraping up from the prairie's surface this huge pile; and how many years would suffice for its completion? No one can doubt that the broad surface of the American Bottom, in its whole length and breadth, together with all the neighbouring region on either bank of the Mississippi, once swarmed with living men and animals, even as does now the depths of its soil with their remains. The collection of mounds which I have been attempting to describe would seem to indicate two extensive cities within the extent of five miles; and other groups of the same character may be seen upon a lower section of the bottom, to say nothing of those within the more immediate vicinity of St.

Louis. The design of these mounds, as has been before stated, was various, undoubtedly; many were sepulchres, some fortifications, some watch-towers or videttes, and some of the larger class, among which we would place Monk Hill, were probably devoted to the ceremonies of religion.

The number of the earth-heaps known as the Cantine Mounds is about fifty, small and great. They lie very irregularly along the southern and eastern bank of Cahokia Creek, occupying an area some miles in circuit. They are of every form and every size, from the mere molehill, perceptible only by a deeper shade in the herbage, to the gigantic Monk Mound, of which I have already said so much. This vast heap stands about one hundred yards from the creek, and the slope which faces it is very precipitous, and clothed with aged timber. The area of the base is about six hundred yards in circumference, and the perpendicular altitude has been estimated at from ninety to upward of a hundred feet. The form is that of a rectangle, lying north and south; and upon the latter extremity, which commands a view down the bottom, is spread out a broad terrace, or rather a steppe to the main body, about twenty feet lower than the summit, extending the whole length of the side, and is one hundred and fifty feet in breadth. At the left extremity of this terrace winds up the sloping pathway from the prairie to the summit of the mound. Formerly this road sloped up an inclined plane, projecting from the middle of the terrace, ten feet in breadth and twenty in extent, and seemed graded for that purpose at

the erection of the mound. This declivity yet remains, but now forms part of a corn-field.

The view from the southern extremity of the mound, which is free from trees and underbrush, is extremely beautiful. Away to the south sweeps off the broad river-bottom, at this place about seven miles in width, its waving surface variegated by all the magnificent hues of the summer Flora of the prairies. At intervals, from the deep herbage is flung back the flashing sheen of a silvery lake to the oblique sunlight; while dense groves of the crab-apple and other indigenous wild fruits are sprinkled about like islets in the verdant sea. To the left, at a distance of three or four miles, stretches away the long line of bluffs, now presenting a surface naked and rounded by groups of mounds, and now wooded to their summits, while a glimpse at times may be caught of the humble farmhouses at their base. On the right meanders the Cantine Creek, which gives the name to the group of mounds, betraying at intervals its bright surface through the belt of forest by which it is margined. In this direction, far away in blue distance, rising through the mist and forest, may be caught a glimpse of the spires and cupolas of the city, glancing gayly in the rich summer sun. The base of the mound is circled upon every side by lesser elevations of every form and at various distances. Of these, some lie in the heart of the extensive maize-fields, which constitute the farm of the proprietor of the principal mound, presenting a beautiful exhibition of light and shade, shrouded as they are in the dark, twinkling leaves. The most

remarkable are two standing directly opposite the southern extremity of the principal one, at a distance of some hundred yards, in close proximity to each other, and which never fail to arrest the eye. There are also several large square mounds covered with forest along the margin of the creek to the right, and groups are caught rising from the declivities of the distant bluffs.

Upon the western side of Monk Mound, at a distance of several yards from the summit, is a well some eighty or ninety feet in depth; the water of which would be agreeable enough were not the presence of sulphur, in some of its modifications, so palpable. This well penetrates the heart of the mound, yet, from its depth, cannot reach lower than the level of the surrounding plain. I learned, upon inquiry, that when this well was excavated, several fragments of pottery, of decayed ears of corn, and other articles, were thrown up from a depth of sixty-five feet; proof incontestible of the artificial structure of the mound. The associations, when drinking the water of this well, united with its peculiar flavour, are not of the most exquisite character, when we reflect that the precious fluid has probably filtrated, part of it, at least, through the contents of a sepulchre. The present proprietor is about making a transfer, I was informed, of the whole tract to a gentleman of St. Louis, who intends establishing here a house of entertainment. If this design is carried into effect, the drive to this place will be the most delightful in the vicinity of the city.

Monk Mound has derived its name and much of

its notoriety from the circumstance that, in the early part of the present century, for a number of years, it was the residence of a society of ecclesiastics, of the order *La Trappe*, the most ascetic of all the monastic denominations. The monastery of La Trappe was originally situated in the old province of Perche, in the territory of Orleannois, in France, which now, with a section of Normandy, constitutes the department of Orne. Its site is said to have been the loneliest and most desolate spot that could be selected in the kingdom. The order was founded in 1140 by Rotrou, count of Perche; but having fallen into decay, and its discipline having become much relaxed, it was reformed in 1664, five centuries subsequent, by the Abbé Armand Rance. This celebrated ecclesiastic, history informs us, was in early life a man of fashion and accomplishments; of splendid abilities, distinguished as a classical scholar and translator of Anacreon's Odes. At length, the sudden death of his mistress Montbazon, to whom he was extremely attached, so affected him that he forsook at once his libertine life, banished himself from society, and introduced into the monastery of La Trappe an austerity of discipline hitherto unknown. The vows were chastity, poverty, obedience, and perpetual silence. The couch was a slab of stone, the diet water and bread once in twenty-four hours, and each member removed a spadeful of earth every day from the spot of his intended grave. The following passage relative to this monastery I find quoted from an old French author; and as the

language and sentiments are forcible, I need hardly apologize for introducing it entire.

"*C'est la que se retirent, ceux qui ont commis quelque crime secret, dont les remords les poursuivent; ceux qui sont tourmentes de vapeurs mélancoliques et religieuse; ceux qui ont oublie que Dieu est le plus misericordieux des pères, et qui ne voient en lui, que le plus cruel des tyrans; ceux qui reduisent à vieu, les souffrances, la mort et la passion de Jesu Crist, et qui ne voient la religion que du cote effrayent et terrible: c'est la que sont pratique des austerite qui abregent la vie, et sont injure à la divinité.*"

During the era of the Reign of Terror in France, the monks of La Trappe, as well as all the other orders of priesthood, were dispersed over Europe. They increased greatly, however, notwithstanding persecution, and societies established themselves in England and Germany. From the latter country emigrated the society which planted themselves upon the American Bottom. They first settled in the State of Kentucky; subsequently they established themselves at the little French hamlet of Florisant, and in 1809 they crossed the Mississippi, and, strangely enough, selected for their residence the spot I have been describing. Here they made a purchase of about four hundred acres, and petitioned Congress for a pre-emption right to some thousands adjoining. The buildings which they occupied were never of a very durable character, but consisted of about half a dozen large structures of logs, on the summit of the mound about fifty yards to the right

of the largest. This is twenty feet in height, and upward of a hundred and fifty feet square; a well dug by the Trappists is yet to be seen, though the whole mound is now buried in thickets. Their outbuildings, stables, granaries, &c., which were numerous, lay scattered about on the plain below. Subsequently they erected an extensive structure upon the terrace of the principal mound, and cultivated its soil for a kitchen-garden, while the area of the summit was sown with wheat. Their territory under cultivation consisted of about one hundred acres, divided into three fields, and embracing several of the mound.

The society of the Trappists consisted of about eighty monks, chiefly Germans and French, with a few of our own countrymen, under governance of one of their number called Father Urbain. Had they remained, they anticipated an accession to their number of about two hundred monks from Europe. Their discipline was equally severe with that of the order in ancient times. Their diet was confined to vegetables, and of these they partook sparingly but once in twenty-four hours: the stern vow of perpetual silence was upon them; no female was permitted to violate their retreat, and they dug their own graves. Their location, however, they found by no means favourable to health, notwithstanding the severe simplicity of their habits. During the summer months fevers prevailed among them to an alarming extent; few escaped, and many died. Among the latter was Louis Antoine Langlois, a native of Quebec, more familiarly known as François

Marie Bernard, the name he assumed upon entering the monastery. He often officiated in the former Catholic church of St. Louis, and is still remembered by the older French inhabitants with warm emotions, as he was greatly beloved.

The Trappists are said to have been extremely industrious, and some of them skilful workmen at various arts, particularly that of watchmaking; insomuch that they far excelled the same craft in the city, and were patronised by all the unruly timepieces in the region. They had also a laboratory of some extent, and a library; but the latter, we are informed, was of no marvellous repute, embracing chiefly the day-dreams of the Middle Ages, and the wondrous doings of the legion of saints, together with a few obsolete works on medicine. Connected with the monastery was a seminary for the instruction of boys; or, rather, it was a sort of asylum for the orphan, the desolate, the friendless, the halt, the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, and also for the aged and destitute of the male sex. They subjected their pupils to the same severe discipline which they imposed upon themselves. They were permitted to use their tongues but two hours a day, and then very *judiciously:* instead of exercising that "unruly member," they were taught by the good fathers to gesticulate with their fingers at each other in marvellous fashion, and thus to communicate their ideas. As to juvenile sports and the frolics of boyhood, it was a sin to dream of such things. They all received an apprenticeship to some useful trade, however, and were no doubt trained

up most innocently and ignorantly in the way they should go. The pupils were chiefly sons of the settlers in the vicinity; but whether they were fashioned by the worthy fathers into good American citizens or the contrary, tradition telleth not. Tradition doth present, however, sundry allegations prejudicial to the honest monks, which we are bold to say is all slander, and unworthy of credence. Some old gossips of the day hesitated not to affirm that the monks were marvellously filthy in their habits; others, that they were prodigiously keen in their bargains; a third class, that the younger members were not so obdurate towards the gentler part of creation as they *might have been;* while the whole community round about, *una voce*, chimed in, and solemnly declared that men who neither might, could, would, or should speak, were a little worse than dumb brutes, and ought to be treated accordingly. However this may have been, it is pretty certain, as is usually the case with our dear fellow-creatures where they are permitted to know nothing at all about a particular matter, the good people, in the overflowings of worldly charity, imagined all manner of evil against the poor Trappist, and seemed to think they had a perfect right to violate his property and insult his person whenever they, in their wisdom and kind feeling, thought proper to do so. But this was soon at an end. In 1813 the monks disposed of their personal property, and leaving fever and ague to their persecutors, and the old mounds to their primitive solitude, forsook the country and sailed for France.

Though it is not easy to palliate the unceremonious welcome with which the unfortunate Trappist was favoured at the hand of our people, yet we can readily appreciate the feelings which prompted their ungenerous conduct. How strange, how exceedingly strange must it have seemed to behold these men, in the garb and guise of a distant land, uttering, when their lips broke the silence in which they were locked, the unknown syllables of a foreign tongue; professing an austere, an ancient, and remarkable faith; denying themselves, with the sternest severity, the simplest of Nature's bounties; how strange must it have seemed to behold these men establishing themselves in the depths of this Western wilderness, and, by a fortuitous concurrence of events, planting their altars and hearths upon the very tombs of a race whose fate is veiled in mystery, and practising their austerities at the forsaken temple of a forgotten worship! How strange to behold the devotees of a faith, the most artificial in its ceremonies among men, bowing themselves upon the high places reared up by the hands of those who worshipped the Great Spirit after the simplest form of Nature's adoration! For centuries this singular order of men had figured upon the iron page of history; their legends had shadowed with mystery the bright leaf of poetry and romance, and with them were associated many a wild vision of fancy. And here they were, mysterious as ever, with cowl, and crucifix, and shaven head, and the hairy "crown of thorns" encircling; ecclesiastics the most severe of all the orders of monachism. How strange must it all

have seemed! and it is hardly to be wondered at, unpopular as such institutions undoubtedly were and ever have been in this blessed land of ours, that a feeling of intolerance, and suspicion, and prejudice should have existed. It is not a maxim of *recent* date in the minds of men, that "whatever is peculiar is false."

Madison County, Ill.

XVI.

"Let none our author rudely blame,
Who from the story has thus long digress'd."

DAVENANT.

"Nay, tell me not of lordly halls!
My minstrels are the trees;
The moss and the rock are my tapestried walls,
Earth sounds my symphonies."

BLACKWOOD'S *Mag.*

"Sorrow is knowledge; they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth;
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life."

MANFRED.

THERE are few lovelier villages in the Valley of the West than the little town of Edwardsville, in whose quiet inn many of the preceding observations have been sketched. It was early one bright morning that I entered Edwardsville, after passing a sleepless night at a neighbouring farmhouse. The situation of the village is a narrow ridge of

land swelling abruptly from the midst of deep and tangled woods. Along this elevation extends the principal street of the place, more than a mile in length, and upon either side runs a range of neat edifices, most of them shaded by forest-trees in their front yards. The public buildings are a courthouse and jail of brick, neither of them worthy of farther mention, and two plain, towerless churches, imbosomed in a grove somewhat in the suburbs of the village. There is something singularly picturesque in the situation of these churches, and the structures themselves are not devoid of beauty and symmetrical proportion. At this place, also, is located the land-office for the district. On the morning of my arrival at the village, early as was the hour, the place was thronged with disappointed applicants for land; a lean and hungry-looking race, by-the-by, as it has ever been my lot to look upon. Unfortunately, the office had the evening before, from some cause, been closed, and the unhappy speculators were forced to trudge away many a weary mile, through dust and sun, with their heavy specie dollars, to their homes again. I remember once to have been in the city of Bangor, "away down East, in the State of Maine," when the public lands on the Penobscot River were first placed in the market. The land mania had for some months been running high, but could hardly be said yet to have reached a crisis. From all quarters of the Union speculators had been hurrying to the place; and day and night, for the week past, the steamers had been disgorging upon the city their ravenous freights. The impor-

tant day arrived. At an early hour every hotel, and street, and avenue was swarming with strangers; and, mingling with the current of living bodies, which now set steadily onward to the place of sale, I was carried resistlessly on by its force till it ceased. A confused murmur of voices ran through the assembled thousands; and amid the tumult, the ominous words "*land—lumber—title-deed*," and the like, could alone be distinguished. At length, near noon, the clear tones of the auctioneer were heard rising above the hum of the multitude: all was instantly hushed and still; and gaining an elevated site, before me was spread out a scene worthy a Hogarth's genius and pencil. Such a mass of working, agitated features, glaring with the fierce passion of avarice and the basest propensities of humanity, one seldom is fated to witness. During that public land-sale, indeed, I beheld so much of the selfishness, the petty meanness, the detestable heartlessness of man's nature, that I turned away disgusted, sick at heart for the race of which I was a member. We are reproached as a nation by Europeans for the contemptible vice of avarice; is the censure unjust? Parson Taylor tell us that Satan was the first speculator in land; for on a certain occasion he took Jesus up into an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory thereof, and said to him, "All these things will I give to thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me," when, in fact, the devil did not own one inch of land to give!

"Think of the devil's brazen phiz,
When not an inch of land was his!"

Yet it is to be apprehended that not a few in our midst would not hesitate to barter soul and body, and fall down in worship, were a sufficient number of *acres* spread out before them as the recompense.

Among other objects worthy the traveller's notice in passing through Edwardsville is a press for the manufacture of that well-known, agreeable liquid, *castor oil:* it is situated within the precincts of what is termed, for distinction, the "Upper Village." The apparatus, by means of which the oil is expressed from the bean and clarified, is extremely simple, consisting merely of the ordinary jack-screw. One bushel of the castor beans—*palma Christi*—yields nearly two gallons of the liquid. The only previous preparation to pressing is to dry the beans in an oven. This establishment* has been in operation upward of ten years, and has rendered its proprietor, Mr. Adams, a wealthy man. He has a delightful villa, with grounds laid out with taste; and though many years have passed away since he left his native New-England, yet the generosity of his heart and the benevolence of his character tell truly that he has not yet ceased the remembrance of early principles and habits. The village of Edwardsville and its vicinity are said to be remarkably healthy; and the location in the heart of a fertile, well-watered, heavily-timbered section of country, tilled by a race of enterprising yeomanry, gives promise of rapid advancement. The town plat was first laid off in 1815; but the place advanced but little in importance until five years afterward, when a new

* In May, 1838, it was entirely consumed by fire.

town was united to the old. About twelve miles southeast from Edwardsville is situated the delightful little hamlet of Collinsville, named from its founder, to which I paid a hasty visit during my ramble on the prairies. It was settled many years ago, but till very recently had not assumed the dignity of a town. Its site is the broad, uniform surface of an elevated ridge, ascending gently from the American Bottom, beautifully shaded by forest-trees, and extending into the interior for several miles. It is almost entirely settled by northern emigrants, whose peculiarities are nowhere more strikingly exhibited. Much attention is bestowed upon religion and education; not a grocery exists in the place, nor, by the charter of the town, can one be established for several years. This little village presents a delightful summer-retreat to the citizens of St. Louis, only ten miles distant.

The sun had not yet risen when I left Edwardsville, after a pleasant visit, and, descending into the Bottom, pursued my route over the plain to Alton. The face of the country, for a portion of the way, is broken, and covered with forests of noble trees, until the traveller finds himself on the deep sand-plains, stretching away for some miles, and giving support to a stunted, scragged growth of shrub-oaks. The region bears palpable evidence of having been, at no distant period, submerged; and the idea is confirmed by the existence, at the present time, of a lake of considerable extent on the southern border, which, from the character of the surface, a slight addition of water would spread for miles. I shall not

soon forget, I think, the day I entered Alton for the second time during my ramble in the West. It was near the noon after an exceedingly sultry morning; and the earth beneath my horse's hoofs was reduced by protracted drought to an impalpable powder to the depth of several inches. The blazing sunbeams, veiled by not a solitary cloud, reflected from the glassy surface of the Mississippi as from the face of an immense steely mirror, and again thrown back by the range of beetling bluffs above, seemed converged into an intense burning focus along the scorched-up streets and glowing roofs of the village. I have endured heat, but none more intolerable in the course of my life than that of which I speak.

In the evening, when the sultriness of the day was over, passing through the principal street of the town, I ascended that singular range of bluffs which, commencing at this point, extend along the river, and to which, on a former occasion, I have briefly alluded. The ascent is arduous, but the glorious view from the summit richly repays the visiter for his toil. The withering atmosphere of the depressed, sunburnt village at my feet was delightfully exchanged for the invigorating breezes of the hills, as the fresh evening wind came wandering up from the waters. It was the sunset hour. The golden, slanting beams of departing day were reflected from the undulating bosom of the river, as its bright waters stretched away among the western forests, as if from a sea of molten, gliding silver. On the left, directly at your feet, reposes the village of Alton, overhung by hills, with the gloomy, castellated

walls of the Penitentiary lifting up their dusky outline upon its skirts, presenting to the eye a perfect panorama as you look down upon the tortuous streets, the extensive warehouses of stone, and the range of steamers, alive with bustle, along the landing. Beyond the village extends a deep forest; while a little to the south sweep off the waters of the river, bespangled with green islands, until, gracefully expanding itself, a noble bend withdraws it from the view. It is at this point that the Missouri disgorges its turbid, heavy mass of waters into the clear floods of the Upper Mississippi, hitherto unchecked by a stain. At the base of the bluffs, upon which you stand, at an elevation of a hundred and fifty feet, rushes with violence along the crags the current of the stream; while beyond, upon the opposite plain, is beheld the log hut of the emigrant couched beneath the enormous sycamores, and sending up its undulating thread of blue, curling smoke through the lofty branches. A lumber steam-mill is also here to be seen. Beyond these objects the eye wanders over an interminable carpet of forest-tops, stretching away till they form a wavy line of dense foliage circling the western horizon. By the aid of a glass, a range of hills, blue in the distance, is perceived outlined against the sky: they are the bluffs skirting the beautiful valley of the Missouri. The heights from which this view is commanded are composed principally of earth heaped upon a massive ledge of limerock, which elevates itself from the very bed of the waters. As the spectator gazes and reflects, he cannot but be amazed that the

rains, and snows, and torrents of centuries have not, with all their washings, yet swept these earth-heaps away, though the deep ravines between the mounds, which probably originated their present peculiar form, give proof conclusive that such diluvial action to some extent has long been going on. As is usually found to be the case, the present race of Indians have availed themselves of these elevated summits for the burial-spots of their chiefs. I myself scraped up a few decaying fragments of bones, which lay just beneath the surface.

At sunrise of the morning succeeding my visit to the bluffs I was in the saddle, and clambering up those intolerably steep hills on the road leading to the village of Upper Alton, a few miles distant. The place is well situated upon an elevated prairie; and, to my own taste, is preferable far for private residence to any spot within the precincts of its rival namesake. The society is polished, and a fine-toned morality is said to characterize the inhabitants. The town was originally incorporated many years ago, and was then a place of more note than it has ever since been; but, owing to intestine broils and conflicting claims to its site, it gradually and steadily dwindled away, until, a dozen years since, it numbered only *seven* families. A suit in chancery has happily settled these difficulties, and the village is now thriving well. A seminary of some note, under jurisdiction of the Baptist persuasion, has within a few years been established here, and now comprises a very respectable body of students. It originated in a sem-

inary formerly established at Rock Spring in this state. About five years since a company of gentlemen, seven in number, purchased here a tract of several hundred acres, and erected upon it an academical edifice of brick; subsequently a stone building was erected, and a preparatory school instituted. In the year 1835, funds to a considerable amount were obtained at the East; and a donation of $10,000 from Dr. Benjamin Shurtliff, of Boston, induced the trustees to give to the institution his name. Half of this sum is appropriated to a college building, and the other half is to endow a professorship of belles lettres. The present buildings are situated upon a broad plain, beneath a walnut grove, on the eastern skirt of the village; and the library, apparatus, and professorships are worthy to form the foundation of a *college*, as is the ultimate design, albeit a Western college and a Northern college are terms quite different in signification. I visited this seminary, however, and was much pleased with its faculty, buildings, and design. All is as it should be. What reflecting mind does not hail with joy these temples of science elevating themselves upon every green hill and broad plain of the West, side by side with the sanctuaries of our holy religion! It is intelligence, *baptized intelligence*, which alone can save this beautiful valley, if indeed it is to be saved from the inroads of arbitrary rule and false religion; which is to hand down to another generation our civil and religious immunities unimpaired. In most of the efforts for the advancement of education in

the West, it is gratifying to perceive that this principle has not been overlooked. Nearly all those seminaries of learning which have been established profess for their design the culture of the *moral* powers as well as those of the *intellect.* That *intelligence* is an essential requisite, a prime constituent of civil and religious freedom, all will admit; that it is the *only* requisite, the *sole* constituent, may be questioned. "Knowledge," in the celebrated language of Francis Bacon, "is power;" ay! POWER; an engine of tremendous, incalculable energy, but blind in its operations. Applied to the cause of wisdom and virtue, the richest of blessings; to that of infidelity and vice, the greatest of curses. A lever to move the world, its influence cannot be over-estimated; as the bulwark of liberty and human happiness, its effect has been fearfully miscalculated. Were man inclined as fully to good as to evil, then might knowledge become the sovereign panacea of every civil and moral ill; as man by nature unhappily *is*, "the fruit of the tree" is oftener the stimulant to evil than to good. Unfold the sacred record of the past. Why did not intelligence save Greece? Greece! the land of intellect and of thought; the birthspot of eloquence, philosophy, and song! whose very populace were critics and bards! Greece, in her early day of pastoral ignorance, was free; but from the loftiest pinnacle of intellectual glory she fell; and science, genius, intelligence, all could not save her. The buoyant bark bounded beautifully over the blue-breasted billows; but the helm, the helm of

moral culture was not there, and her broad-spread pinions hurried her away only to a speedier and more terrible destruction.

Ancient Rome: in the day of her rough simplicity, *she* was free; but from her proudest point of *intellectual* development—the era of Augustus—we date her decline.

France: who will aver that it was popular *ignorance* that rolled over revolutionary France the ocean-wave of blood? When have the French, *as a people*, exhibited a prouder era of mind than that of their sixteenth Louis? The encyclopedists, the most powerful men of the age, concentrated all their vast energies to the diffusion of science among the people. Then, as now, the press groaned in constant parturition; and essays, magazines, tracts, treatises, libraries, were thrown abroad as if by the arm of Omnipotent power. Then, as now, the supremacy of human reason and of human society flitted in "unreal mockery" before the intoxicated fancy; and wildly was anticipated a career of upward and onward advancement during the days of all coming time. France was a nation of philosophers, and the great deep of mind began to heave; the convulsed labouring went on, and, from time to time, it burst out upon the surface. Then came the tornado, and France, refined, intelligent, scientific, etherealized France, was swept, as by Ruin's besom, of every green thing. Her own children planted the dagger in her bosom, and France was a nation of scientific, philosophic parricides! But "France was pois-

oned by infidelity." Yes! so she was: but why was not the subtle element neutralized in the cup of *knowledge* in which it was administered? Is not "knowledge omnipotent to preserve; the salt to purify the nations?"

England: view the experiment there. It is a matter of parliamentary record, that within the last twenty years, during the philanthropic efforts of Lord Henry Brougham and his whig coadjutors, crime in England has more than tripled. If knowledge, pure, defecated knowledge, be a conservative principle, why do we witness these appalling results?

What, then, shall be done? Shall the book of knowledge be taken from the hands of the people, and again be locked up in the libraries of the few? Shall the dusky pall of ignorance and superstition again be flung around the world, and a long starless midnight of a thousand years once more come down to brood over mankind? By no means. *Let* the sweet streams of knowledge go forth, copious, free, to enrich and irrigate the garden of mind; but mingle with them the pure waters of that "fount which flows fast by the oracles of God," or the effect now will be, as it ever has been, only to intoxicate and madden the human race. There is nothing in cold, dephlegmated intellect to warm up and foster the energies of the moral system of man. Intellect, mere intellect, can never tame the passions or purify the heart.

Upper Alton, Ill.

XVII.

"The fourth day roll'd along, and with the night
Came storm and darkness in their mingling might.
Loud sung the wind above; and doubly loud
Shook o'er his turret-cell the thunder-cloud."

The Corsair.

"These
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The prairies."

BRYANT.

WHOEVER will take upon himself the trouble to run his eye over the "Tourist's Pocket Map of Illinois," will perceive, stretching along the western border of the state, parallel with the river, a broad carriage highway, in a direction nearly north, to a little village called Carlinville; if then he glances to the east, he may trace a narrow pathway striking off at right angles to that section of the state. Well, it is here, upon this pathway, just on the margin of a beautiful prairie, sweeping away towards the town of Hillsborough, that I find myself at the close of the day, after a long and fatiguing ride. The afternoon has been one of those dreary, drizzly, disagreeable seasons which relax the nerves and ride like an incubus upon the spirits; and my route has conducted me over a broad-spread, desolate plain; for, lovely as may appear the prairie when its bright flowerets and its tall grass-

tops are nodding in the sunlight, it is a melancholy place when the sky is beclouded and the rain is falling. There is a certain indescribable sensation of loneliness, which steals over the mind of the solitary traveller when he finds himself alone in the heart of these boundless plains, which he cannot away with; and the approach to a forest is hailed with pleasure, as serving to quiet, with the vague idea of *society*, this sense of dreariness and desertion. Especially is this the case when rack and mist are hovering along the border, veiling from the view those picturesque woodland-points and promontories, and those green island-groves which, when the sky is clear, swell out upon every side into the bosom of the plain. Then all is fresh and joyous to the eye as a vision: change the scene, and the grand, gloomy, misty magnificence of old ocean presents itself on every side. The relief to the picture afforded by the discovery of man's habitation can hardly be described.

It was near nightfall when, wearied by the fatigue of riding and drenched with mist, I reached the log-cabin of an old pioneer from Virginia, beneath whose lowly roof-tree I am seated at this present writing; and though hardly the most sumptuous edifice of which it has been my lot to be an inmate, yet with no unenviable anticipations am I looking forward to hearty refreshment and to sound slumber upon the couch by my side. There are few objects to be met with in the backwoods of the West more unique and picturesque than the dwelling of the emigrant. After selecting an elevated spot as

a site for building, a cabin or a log-house—which is somewhat of an improvement upon the first—is erected in the following manner. A sufficient number of straight trees, of a size convenient for removing, are felled, slightly hewn upon the opposite sides, and the extremities notched or mortised with the axe. They are then piled upon each other so that the extremities lock together; and a single or double edifice is constructed, agreeable to the taste or ability of the builder. Ordinarily the cabin consists of two quadrangular apartments, separated by a broad area between, connected by a common floor, and covered by a common roof, presenting a parallelogram triple the length of its width. The better of these apartments is usually appropriated to the entertainment of the casual guest, and is furnished with several beds and some articles of rude furniture to correspond. The open area constitutes the ordinary sitting and eating apartment of the family in fine weather; and, from its coolness, affords a delightful retreat. The intervals between the logs are stuffed with fragments of wood or stone, and plastered with mud or mortar, and the chimney is constructed much in the same manner. The roof is covered with thin clapboards of oak or ash, and, in lieu of nails, transverse pieces of timber retain them in their places. Thousands of cabins are thus constructed, without a particle of iron or even a common plank. The rough clapboards give to the roof almost the shaggy aspect of thatch at a little distance, but they render it impermeable to even the heaviest and

most protracted rain-storms. A rude gallery often extends along one or both sides of the building, adding much to its coolness in summer and to its warmth in winter by the protection afforded from sun and snow. The floor is constructed of short, thick planks, technically termed "puncheons," which are confined by wooden pins; and, though hardly smooth enough for a ballroom, yet well answer every purpose for a dwelling, and effectually resist moisture and cold. The apertures are usually cut with a view to free ventilation, and the chimneys stand at the extremities outside the walls of the cabin. A few pounds of nails, a few boxes of glass, a few hundred feet of lumber, and a few day's assistance of a house-carpenter, would, of course, contribute not a little to the comfort of the *shieling;* but neither of these are indispensable. In rear of the premises rise the out-buildings; stables, corn-crib, meat-house, &c., all of them quite as perfect in structure as the dwelling itself, and quite as comfortable for residence. If to all this we add a well, walled up with a section of a hollow cotton-wood, a cellar or cave in the earth for a pantry, a zigzag rail fence enclosing the whole clearing, a dozen acres of Indian corn bristling up beyond, a small garden and orchard, and a host of swine, cattle, poultry, and naked children about the door, and the *tout ensemble* of a backwoods farmhouse is complete. Minor circumstances vary, of course, with the peculiarities of the country and the origin of the settlers; but the principal features of the picture everywhere prevail. The present mode of culti-

vation sweeps off vast quantities of timber; but it must soon be superseded. Houses of brick and stone will take the place of log-cabins; hedgerows will supply that of rail enclosures, while coal for fuel will be a substitute for wood.

At Upper Alton my visit was not a protracted one. In a few hours, having gathered up my *fixens* and mounted my *creetur*, I was threading a narrow pathway through the forest. The trees, most of them lofty elms, in many places for miles locked together their giant branches over the road, forming a delightful screen from the sunbeams; but it was found by no means the easiest imaginable task, after once entering upon the direct route, to continue upon it. This is a peculiarity of Western roads. The commencement may be uniform enough, but the traveller soon finds his path diverging all at once in several different directions, like the radii of a circle, with no assignable cause therefor, and not the slightest reason presenting itself why he should select one of them in preference to half a dozen others, equally good or bad. And the sequel often shows him that there in reality existed no more cause of preference than was apparent; for, after a few tortuosities through the forest, for variety's sake, the paths all terminate in the same route. The obstacle of a tree, a stump, a decaying log, or a sand-bank often splits the path as if it were a flowing stream; and then the traveller takes upon him to exercise the reserved right of radiating to any point of the compass he

may think proper, provided always that he succeeds in clearing the obstruction.

Passing many log-cabins, such as I have described, with their extensive maize-fields, the rude dwelling of a sturdy old emigrant from the far East sheltered me during the heat of noon; and having luxuriated upon an excellent dinner, prepared and served up in right New-England fashion, I again betook myself to my solitary route. But I little anticipated to have met, in the distant prairies of Illinois, the habitation of one who had passed his life in my own native state, almost in my own native village. Yet I know not why the occurrence should be a cause of surprise. Such emigrations are of constant occurrence. The farmer had been a resident eight years in the West; his farm was under that high cultivation characteristic of the Northern emigrant, and peace and plenty seemed smiling around. Yet was the emigrant satisfied? So far from it, he acknowledged himself a disappointed man, and sighed for his native northern home, with its bleak winds and barren hill-sides.

The region through which, for most of the day, I journeyed was that, of very extensive application in the West, styled "Barrens," by no means implying unproductiveness of soil, but a species of surface of heterogeneous character, uniting prairie with *timber* or forest, and usually a description of land as fertile, healthy, and well-watered as may be found. The misnomer is said to have derived its origin from the early settlers of that section of Kentucky south of Green River, which, presenting

only a scanty, dwarfish growth of timber, was deemed of necessity *barren*, in the true acceptation of the term. This soil there and elsewhere is now considered better adapted to every variety of produce and the vicissitudes of climate than even the deep mould of the prairies and river-bottoms. The rapidity with which a young forest springs forward, when the annual fires have once been stopped in this species of land, is said to be astonishing; and the first appearance of timber upon the prairies gives it the character, to some extent, of barrens. Beneath the trees is spread out a mossy turf, free from thickets, but variegated by the gaudy petals of the heliotrope, and the bright crimson buds of the dwarf-sumach in the hollows. Indeed, some of the most lovely scenery of the West is beheld in the landscapes of these barrens or "oak openings," as they are more appropriately styled. For miles the traveller wanders on, through a magnificence of park scenery on every side, with all the diversity of the slope, and swell, and meadow of human taste and skill. Interminable avenues stretch away farther than the eye can reach, while at intervals through the foliage flashes out the unruffled surface of a pellucid lake. There are many of these circular lakes or "sinkholes," as they are termed in Western dialect, which, as they possess no inlet, seem supplied by subterraneous springs or from the clouds. The outline is that of an inverted cone, as if formed by the action of whirling waters; and, as sinkholes exist in great numbers in the vicinity of the rivers, and possess an outlet

at the bottom through a substratum of porous limestone, the idea is abundantly confirmed. In the State of Missouri these peculiar springs are also observed. Some of them in Greene county burst forth from the earth and the fissures of the rocks with sufficient force to whirl a *run* of heavy buhrstones, and the power of the fountains seems unaffected by the vicissitudes of rain or drought. These same sinkholes, circular ponds, and gushing springs are said to constitute one of the most remarkable and interesting features of the peninsula of Florida. There, as here, the substratum is porous limestone; and it is the subsidence of the layers which gives birth to the springs. The volume of water thrown up by these boiling fountains is said to be astonishingly great; many large ones, also, are known to exist in the beds of lakes and rivers. From the circumstance of the existence of these numerous springs originated, doubtless, the tradition which Spanish chroniclers aver to have existed among the Indians of Porto Rico and Cuba, that somewhere among the Lucayo Islands or in the interior of Florida there existed a fountain whose waters had the property of imparting *rejuvenescence* and perpetuating perennial youth. Only twenty years after the discoveries of Columbus, and more than three centuries since, did the romantic Juan Ponce de Leon, an associate of the Genoese and subsequent governor of Porto Rico, explore the peninsula of Florida in search of this traditionary fountain; of the success of the enterprise we have no account. Among the other poetic founts of the "Land of

Flowers," we are *told* of one, situated but a few miles from Fort Gaines, called "Sappho's Fount," from the idea which prevails that its waters impart the power of producing sweet sounds to the voices of those who partake of them.

It was near evening, when, emerging from the shades of the *barrens*, which, like everything else, however beautiful, had, by continuous succession, begun to become somewhat monotonous, my path issued rather unexpectedly upon the margin of a wide, undulating prairie. I was struck, as is every traveller at first view of these vast plains, with the grandeur, and novelty, and loveliness of the scene before me. For some moments I remained stationary, looking out upon the boundless landscape before me. The tall grass-tops waving in billowy beauty in the breeze; the narrow pathway winding off like a serpent over the rolling surface, disappearing and reappearing till lost in the luxuriant herbage; the shadowy, cloud-like aspect of the far-off trees, looming up, here and there, in isolated masses along the horizon, like the pyramidal canvass of ships at sea; the deep-green groves besprinkled among the vegetation, like islets in the waters; the crimson-died prairie-flower flashing in the sun—these features of inanimate nature seemed strangely beautiful to one born and bred amid the bold mountain scenery of the North, and who now gazed upon them "for the first."

> "The prairies! I behold them for the first,
> And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
> Takes in the encircling vastness."

As I rode leisurely along upon the prairie's edge, I passed many noble farms, with their log-cabins couched in a corner beneath the forest; and, verily, would a farmer of Yankee-land "stare and gasp" to behold the prairie cornfield of the Western emigrant; and yet more would he be amazed to witness the rank, rustling luxuriance of the vegetable itself. Descending a swell of the prairie near one of these farms, a buck with his doe leaped out from a thicket beside my path, and away, away bounded the "happy pair" over the grass-tops, free as the wind. They are often shot upon the prairies, I was informed by an old hunter, at whose cabin, in the middle of the plain, I drew up at twilight, and with whom I passed the night. He was a pioneer from *the dark and bloody ground*, and many a time had followed the wild buck through those aged forests, where Boone, and Whitley, and Kenton once roved. Only fifty years ago, and for the first time were the beautiful fields of Kentucky turned up by the ploughshare of the Virginia emigrant; yet their very descendants of the first generation we behold plunging deeper into the wilderness West. How would the worthy old Governor Spotswood stand astounded, could he now rear his venerable bones from their long resting-place, and look forth upon this lovely land, far away beyond the Blue Ridge of the Alleghany hills, the very passage of which he had deemed not unworthy "the horseshoe of gold" and "the order tramontane." "*Sic juvat transcendere montes.*" Twenty years before Daniel Boone, "backwoodsman of Kentucky," was

born, Alexander Spotswood, governor of Virginia, undertook, with great preparation, a passage of the Alleghany ridge. For this expedition were provided a large number of horseshoes, an article not common in some sections of the "Old Dominion;" and from this circumstance, upon their return, though without a glimpse of the Western Valley, was instituted the "*Tramontane Order*, or *Knights of the Golden Horseshoe*," with the motto above. The badge of distinction for having made a passage of the Blue Ridge was a golden horseshoe worn upon the breast. Could the young man of that day have protracted the limits of life but a few years beyond his threescore and ten, what astonishment would not have filled him to behold *now*, as "the broad, the bright, the glorious West," the region *then* regarded as the unknown and howling *wilderness beyond the mountains!* Yet even thus it is.

A long ride over a dusty road, beneath a sultry sun, made me not unwilling to retire to an early rest. But in a few hours my slumbers were broken in upon by the glare of lightning and the crash of thunder. For nearly five weeks had the prairies been refreshed by not a solitary shower; and the withered crops and the parched soil, baked to the consistency of stone or ground up to powder, betrayed alarming evidence of the consequence. Day had succeeded day. The scorching sun had gone up in the firmament, blazed from his meridian throne, and in lurid sultriness descended to his rest. The subtle fluid had been gathering and concentrating in the skies; and, early on the night of

which I speak, an inky cloud had been perceived rolling slowly up from the western horizon, until the whole heavens were enveloped in blackness. Then the tempest burst forth. Peal upon peal the hoarse thunder came booming over the prairies; and the red lightning would glare, and stream, and almost hiss along the midnight sky, like Ossian's storm-spirit riding on the blast. At length there was a hush of elements, and all was still—"still as the spirit's silence;" then came one prolonged, deafening, terrible crash and rattle, as if the concave of the firmament had been rent asunder, and the splintered fragments, hurled abroad, were flying through the boundlessness of space; the next moment, and the torrents came weltering through the darkness. I have witnessed thunder-storms on the deep, and many a one among the cliffs of my native hills; but a midnight thunder-gust upon the broad prairie-plains of the West is more terrible than they. A more sublimely magnificent spectacle have I never beheld than that, when one of these broad-sheeted masses of purple light would blaze along the black bosom of the cloud, quiver for an instant over the prairie miles in extent, flinging around the scene a garment of flame, and then go out in darkness.

"Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman!"

"Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,
A portion of the tempest and of thee!"

And a sharer in the tempest surely was "a certain weary pilgrim, in an upper chamber" of a certain log-cabin of the prairie. Unhappily for his repose or quiet, had he desired either, the worthy host, in laudable zeal for a window when erecting his hut, had thought proper to neglect or to forget one of the indispensables for such a convenience in shape of sundry panes of glass. Wherefore, as is easy to perceive, said aperture commanding the right flank of the pilgrim's dormitory, the warring elements without found abundant entrance for a by-skirmish within. Sad to relate, the pilgrim was routed, "horse, foot, and dragoons;" whereupon, agreeable to Falstaff's *discretionary* views of valour, seizing upon personal effects, he beat a retreat to more hospitable realms.

Greene County, Ill.

XVIII.

"What earthly feeling unabash'd can dwell
In Nature's mighty presence? mid the swell
Of everlasting hills, the roar of floods,
And frown of rocks and pomp of waving woods?
These their own grandeur on the soul impress,
And bid each passion feel its nothingness."

HEMANS.

"La grace est toujours unie à la magnificence, dans les scenes de la nature."—CHATEAUBRIAND'S "*Atala.*"

IT was morning. The storm had passed away, and the early sunlight was streaming gloriously over the fresh landscape. The atmosphere, discharged of its electric burden, was playing cool and free among the grass-tops; the lark was carolling in the clouds above its grassy nest; the deer was rising from his sprinkled lair, and the morning mists were rolling heavily in masses along the skirts of the prairie woodlands, as I mounted my horse at the door of the cabin beneath whose roof I had passed the night. Before me at no great distance, upon the edge of the plain, rose an open park of lofty oaks, with a mossy turf beneath; and the whole scene, lighted up by the sunbeams breaking through the ragged mists, presented a most gorgeous spectacle. The entire wilderness of green; every bough, spray, leaf; every blade of grass, wild weed, and floweret, was hung with trem-

bling drops of liquid light, which, reflecting and refracting the sun-rays, threw back all the hues of the iris. It was indeed a morning of beauty after the tempest; and Nature seemed to have arrayed herself in her bridal robes, glittering in all their own matchless jewellery to greet its coming.

Constituted as we all naturally are, there exist, bound up within the secresies of the bosom, certain emotions and sentiments, designed by our Creator to leap forth in joyousness in view of the magnificence of his works; certain springs of exquisite delicacy deep hidden in the chambers of the breast, but which, touched or breathed upon never so lightly, strike the keys of feeling and fill the heart with harmony. And I envy not the feelings of that man who, amid all "the glories of this visible world," can stand a passionless beholder; who feels not his pulses thrill with quickened vibration, and his heart to heave in fuller gush as he views the beneficence of his Maker in the magnificence of his works; who from all can turn calmly away, and in the chill, withering accents of Atheism, pronounce it the offspring of blind fatality, the resultant of meaningless chance!

When we look abroad upon the panorama of creation, so palpable is the impress of an omnipotent hand, and so deeply upon all its features is planted the demonstration of design, that it would almost seem, in the absence of reason and revelation, we need but contemplate the scenery of nature to be satisfied of the existence of an all-wise, all-powerful Being, whose workmanship it is. The

firmament, with its marshalled and glittering hosts; the earth, spread out in boundlessness at our feet, now draperied in the verdant freshness of spring-time, anon in the magnificent glories of summer sultriness, again teeming with the mellow beauty of autumnal harvesting, and then slumbering in the chill, cheerless desolation of winter, all proclaim a Deity eternal in existence, boundless in might. The mountain that rears its bald forehead to the clouds; the booming cataract; the unfathomed, mysterious sounding ocean; the magnificent sweep of the Western prairie; the eternal flow of the Western river, proclaim, in tones extensive as the universe—tones not to be misunderstood, that their CREATOR lives.

It is a circumstance in the character of the human mind, which not the most careless or casual observer of its operations can fail to have remarked, that the contemplation of all grand and immeasurable objects has a tendency to enlarge and elevate the understanding, lend a loftier tone to the feelings, and, agreeable to the moral constitution of man, carry up his thoughts and his emotions directly to their Author, "from Nature up to Nature's God." The savage son of the wilderness, as he roams through his grand and gloomy forests, which for centuries have veiled the soil at their base from the sunlight, perceives a solemn awe stealing over him as he listens to the surges of the winds rolling among the heavy branches; and in Nature's simplicity, untaught but by her untutored promptings, he believes that "the Great Spirit is whispering in

the tree-tops." He stands by the side of Niagara. With subdued emotions he gazes upon the majestic world of floods as they hurry on. They reach the barrier! they leap its precipice! they are lost in thunder and in foam! And, as the raging waters disappear in the black abyss; as the bow of the covenant, "like hope upon a deathbed," flings its irised arch in horrible beauty athwart the hell of elements, the bewildered child of nature feels his soul swell within his bosom; the thought rises solemnly upon him, "the Great Spirit is here;" and with timid solicitude he peers through the forest shades around him for some palpaple demonstration of His presence. And such is the effect of all the grand scenes of nature upon the mind of the savage: they lead it up to the "Great Spirit." Upon this principle is the fact alone to be accounted for, that no race of beings has yet been discovered destitute of *all* idea of a Supreme Intelligence, to whom is due homage and obedience. It is *His* voice they hear in the deep hour of midnight, when the red lightning quivers along the bosom of the cloud, and the thunder-peal rattles through the firmament. It is *He* they recognise in the bright orb of day, as he blazes from the eastern horizon; or, "like a monarch on a funeral pile," sinks to his rest. *He* is beheld in the pale queen of night, as in silvery radiance she walks the firmament, and in the beautiful star of evening as it sinks behind his native hills. In the soft breathing of the "summer wind" and in the terrible sublimity of the autumn tempest; in the gentle dew of heaven and

the summer torrent; in the sparkling rivulet and the wide, wild river; in the delicate prairie-flower and the gnarled monarch of the hills; in the glittering minnow and the massive narwhal; in the fairy humbird and the sweeping eagle; in each and in all of the creations of universal nature, the mind of the savage sees, feels, *realizes* the presence of a Deity.

"Earth with her thousand voices praises God!"

is the beautiful sentiment of Coleridge's hymn in the Vale of Chamouni; and its truth will be doubted by no man of refined sensibility or cultivated taste. In viewing the grand scenery of nature, the mind of the savage and the poet alike perceive the features of Deity; on the bright page of creation, in characters enstamped by his own mighty hand, they read his perfections and his attributes; the vast volume is spread out to every eye; he who will may read and be wise. And yet, delightful and instructive as the study of Nature's creations cannot fail to be, it is a strange thing that, by many, so little regard is betrayed for them. How often do we gaze upon the orb of day, as he goes down the western heavens in glory to his rest; how often do we look away to the far-off star, as it pursues in beauty its lonely pathway, distinct amid the myriads that surround it; how often do we glance abroad upon the splendours of earth, and then, from all this demonstration of Omnipotent goodness, turn away with not *one* pulsation of gratitude to the Creator of suns and stars; with not one aspiration of feeling, one acknowledgment of regard to

the Lord of the universe? Yet surely, whatever repinings may at times imbitter the unsanctified bosom in view of the moral, the intellectual, or social arrangements of existence, there should arise but one emotion, and that—*praise* in view of *inanimate* nature. Here is naught but power and goodness; now, as at the dawn of Creation's morning, "all is very good." But these are scenes upon which the eye has turned from earliest infancy; and to this cause alone may we attribute the fact, that though their grandeur may never weary or their glories pall upon the sense, yet our gaze upon them is often that of coldness and indifferent regard. Still their influence upon us, though inappreciable, is sure. If we look abroad upon the race of man, we cannot but admit the conviction that natural scenery, hardly less than climate, government, or religion, lays its impress upon human character. It is where Nature exhibits herself in her loftiest moods that her influence on man is most observable. 'Tis there we find the human mind most chainlessly free, and the attachments of patriotic feeling most tenacious and exalted. To what influence more than to that of the gigantic features of nature around him, amid which he first opened his eyes to the light, and with which from boyhood days he has been conversant, are we to attribute that indomitable hate to oppression, that enthusiastic passion for liberty, and that wild idolatry of country which characterizes the Swiss mountaineer? *He* would be free as the geyer-eagle of his native cliffs, whose eyrie hangs in the clouds, whose eye brightens in

the sunlight, whose wild shriek rises on the tempest, and whose fierce brood is nurtured amid crags untrodden by the footstep of man. To *his* ear the sweep of the terrible *lauwine*, the dash of the mountain cataract, the sullen roar of the mountain forest, is a music for which, in a foreign land, he pines away and dies. And all these scenes have but one language—and that is chainless *independence!*

It is a fact well established, and one to be accounted for upon no principle other than that which we advance, that the dwellers in mountainous regions, and those whose homes are amid the grandeur of nature, are found to be more attached to the spot of their nativity than are other races of men, and that they are ever more forward to defend their ice-clad precipices from the attack of the invader. For centuries have the Swiss inhabited the mountains of the Alps. They inhabit them still, and have never been entirely subdued. But

> "The free Switzer yet bestrides *alone*
> His chainless mountains."

Of what *other* nation of Europe, if we except the Highlands of Scotland, may anything like the same assertion with truth be made? We are told that the mountains of Caucasus and Himmalaya, in Asia, still retain the race of people which from time immemorial have possessed them. The same accents echo along their "tuneful cliffs" as centuries since were listened to by the patriarchs; while at their base, chance, and change, and conquest, like successive floods, have swept the delta-plains of

the Ganges and Euphrates. These are but isolated instances from a multitude of similar character, which might be advanced in support of the position we have assumed. Nor is it strange that peculiarities like these should be witnessed. There must ever be *something* to love, if the emotion is to be permanently called forth; it matters little whether it be in the features of inanimate nature or in those of man; and, alike in both cases, do the boldest and most prominent create the deepest impression. Just so it is with our admiration of character; there must exist bold and distinctive traits, good or bad, to arouse for it unusual regard. A monotony of character or of feeling is as wearisome as a monotony of sound or scenery.

But to return from a digression which has become unconscionably long. After a brisk gallop of a few hours through the delightful scenery of the Barrens, I found myself approaching the little town of Carlinville. As I drew nigh to the village, I found it absolutely reeling under the excitement of the "Grand Menagerie." From all points of the compass, men, women, and children, emerging from the forest, came pouring into the place, some upon horses, some in farm-wagons, and troops of other some on foot, slipping and sliding along in a fashion most distressing to behold. The soil in this vicinity is a black loam of surpassing fertility; and, when saturated with moisture, it adheres to the sole with most pertinacious tenacity, more like to an amalgam of soot and soap-grease than to any other substance that has ever come under my cognizance. The inn

was thronged by neighbouring farmers, some canvassing the relative and individual merits of the *Zebedee* and the *Portimous;* others sagely dwelling upon the mooted point of peril to be apprehended from the great *sarpent—Boy Contractor;* while little unwashen wights did run about and dangerously prophecy on the recent disappearance of the big elephant.

Carlinville is a considerable village, situated on the margin of a pleasant prairie, on the north side of Macoupin Creek, and is the seat of justice for the county. The name *Macoupin* is said to be of aboriginal derivation, and by the early French chroniclers was spelled and pronounced *Ma-qua-pin*, until its present uncomely combination of letters became legalized on the statute-book. The term, we are told by Charlevoix, the French *voyageur*, is the Indian name of an esculent with a broad corolla, found in many of the ponds and creeks of Illinois, especially along the course of the romantic stream bearing its name. The larger roots, eaten raw, were poisonous, and the natives were accustomed to dig ovens in the earth, into which, being walled up with flat stones and heated, was deposited the vegetable. After remaining for forty-eight hours in this situation, the deleterious qualities were found extracted, and the root being dried, was esteemed a luxury by the Indians. The region bordering upon Carlinville is amazingly fertile, and proportionally divided into prairie and timber—a circumstance by no means unworthy of notice. There has been a design of establishing

here a Theological Seminary, but the question of its site has been a point easier to discuss than to decide. My tarry at the village was a brief one, though I became acquainted with a number of its worthy citizens; and in the log-office of a young limb of *legality*, obtained, as a special distinction, a glance at a forthcoming "Fourth-of-July" oration, fruitful in those sonorous periods and stereotyped patriotics indispensable on such occasions, and, at all hazard, made and provided for them. As I was leaving the village I was met by multitudes, pouring in from all sections of the surrounding region, literally thronging the ways; mothers on horseback, with young children in their arms; fathers with daughters and wives *en croupe*, and at intervals an individual, in quiet possession of an entire animal, came sliding along in the mud, in fashion marvellously entertaining to witness. A huge cart there likewise was, which excited no small degree of admiration as it rolled on, swarmed with women and children. An aged patriarch, with hoary locks resting upon his shoulders, enacted the part of charioteer to this primitive establishment; and now, in zealous impatience to reach the scene of action, from which the braying horns came resounding loud and clear through the forest, he was wretchedly belabouring, by means of an endless whip, six unhappy oxen to augment their speed.

I had travelled not many miles when a black cloud spread itself rapidly over the sky, and in a few moments the thunder began to bellow, the lightnings to flash, and the rain to fall in torrents.

Luckily enough for me, I found myself in the neighbourhood of man's habitation. Leaping hastily from my steed, and lending him an impetus with my riding-whip which carried him safely beneath a hospitable shed which stood thereby, I betook myself, without ceremony or delay, to the mansion house itself, glad enough to find its roof above me as the first big rain-drops came splashing to the ground. The little edifice was tenanted by three females and divers flaxen-pated, sun-bleached urchins of all ages and sizes, and, at the moment of my entrance, all in high dudgeon, because, forsooth, they were not to be permitted to drench themselves in the anticipated shower. Like Noah's dove, they were accordingly pulled within the ark, and thereupon thought proper to set up their several and collective *Ebenezers*.

"Well!" was my exclamation, in true Yankee fashion, as I bowed my head low in entering the humble postern; "we're going to get pretty considerable of a sprinkling, I guess." "I reckon," was the sententious response of the most motherly-seeming of the three women, at the same time vociferating to the three larger of the children, "Oh, there, you Bill, Sall, Polly, honeys, get the gentleman a cheer! Walk in, sir; set down and take a seat!" This evolution of "setting down and taking a seat" was at length successfully effected, after sundry manœuvrings by way of planting the three pedestals of the uncouth tripod upon the same plane, and avoiding the fearful yawnings in the *puncheon* floor. When all was at length quiet, I

improved the opportunity of gazing about me to explore the curious habitation into which I found myself inserted.

The structure, about twenty feet square, had originally been constructed of rough logs, the interstices stuffed with fragments of wood and stone, and daubed with clay; the chimney was built up of sticks laid crosswise, and plastered with the same material to resist the fire. Such had been the backwoodsman's cabin in its primitive prime; but time and the elements had been busy with the little edifice, and sadly had it suffered. Window or casement was there none, neither was there need thereof; for the hingeless door stood ever open, the clay was disappearing from the intervals between the logs, and the huge fireplace of stone exhibited yawning apertures, abundantly sufficient for all the purposes of light and ventilation to the single apartment of the building. The *puncheon* floor I have alluded to, and it corresponded well with the roof of the cabin, which had never, in its best estate, been designed to resist the peltings of such a pitiless torrent as was now assailing it. The water soon began trickling in little rivulets upon my shoulders, and my only alternative was my umbrella for shelter. The furniture of the apartment consisted of two plank-erections designed for bedsteads, which, with a tall clothes-press, divers rude boxes, and a side-saddle, occupied a better moiety of the area; while a rough table, a shelf against the wall, upon which stood a water-pail, a gourd, and a few broken trenchers, completed the household paraphernalia

of this most unique of habitations. A half-consumed flitch of bacon suspended in the chimney, and a huge iron pot upon the fire, from which issued a savoury indication of the seething mess within, completes the "still-life" of the picture. Upon one of the beds reclined one of the females to avoid the rain; a second was alternating her attentions between her infant and her needle; while the third, a buxom young baggage, who, by-the-by, was on a visit to her sister, was busying herself in the culinary occupations of the household, much the chief portion of which consisted in watching the huge dinner-pot aforesaid, with its savoury contents.

After remaining nearly two hours in the cabin, in hopes that the storm would abate, I concluded that, since my umbrella was no sinecure *within* doors, it might as well be put in requisition *without*, and mounted my steed, though the rain was yet falling. I had proceeded but a few miles upon the muddy pathway when my compass informed me that I had varied from my route, a circumstance by no means uncommon on the Western prairies. During the whole afternoon, therefore, I continued upon my way across a broad, pathless prairie, some twelve or eighteen miles in extent, and dreary enough withal, until nightfall, when I rejoiced to find myself the inmate of the comfortable farm-house upon its edge from which my last was dated.

Hillsborough, Ill.

XIX.

"Skies softly beautiful, and blue
As Italy's, with stars as bright;
Flowers rich as morning's sunrise hue,
And gorgeous as the gemm'd midnight.
Land of the West! green Forest Land,
Thus hath Creation's bounteous hand
Upon thine ample bosom flung
Charms such as were her gift when the green world was young!"

GALLAGHER.

"Go thou to the house of prayer,
I to the woodlands will repair."

KIRKE WHITE.

"There is religion in a flower;
Its still small voice is as the voice of conscience."

BELL.

MORE than three centuries ago, when the romantic Ponce de Leon, with his chivalrous followers, first planted foot upon the southern extremity of the great Western Valley, the discovery of the far-famed "Fountain of Youth" was the wild vision which lured him on. Though disappointed in the object of his enterprise, the adventurous Spaniard was enraptured with the loveliness of a land which even the golden realms of "Old Castile had never realized; and *Florida*,* "the Land of Flowers," was the poetic name it inspired. Twenty years, and the bold soldier Ferdinand de Soto, of Cuba,

* Others say the peninsula was discovered on Easter-day; *Pasqua de flores*, feast of flowers; whence the name.

the associate of Pizarro, with a thousand steel-clad warriors at his back, penetrated the valley to the far-distant post of Arkansas, and "*El padre de los aguas*" was the expressive name of the mighty stream he discovered, beneath the eternal flow of whose surges he laid his bones to their rest.* "*La Belle Rivière!*" was the delighted exclamation which burst from the lips of the Canadian voyageur, as, with wonder hourly increasing, he glided in his light pirogue between the swelling bluffs, and wound among the thousand isles of the beautiful Ohio. The heroic Norman, Sieur La Salle, when for the first time he beheld the pleasant hunting-grounds of the peaceful Illini, pronounced them a "Terrestrial Paradise." Daniel Boone, the bold pioneer of the West, fifty years ago, when standing on the last blue line of the Alleghanies, and at the close of a day of weary journeying, he looked down upon the beautiful fields of "Old Kentucke," now gilded by the evening sun, turned his back for ever upon the green banks of the Yadkin and the soil of his nativity, hailing the glories of a new-found home.

"Fair wert thou, in the dreams
Of elder time, thou land of glorious flowers,
And summer winds, and low-toned silvery streams,
Dim with the shadows of thy laurel bowers."

And thus has it ever been; and even yet the "pilgrim from the North" rejoices with untold joy over the golden beauties of the Valley beyond the Mountains.

* See Appendix.

It was a fine Sabbath morning when I mounted my steed at the gate of the log farmhouse where I had passed the night, to pursue my journey over the prairie, upon the verge of which it stood. The village of Hillsborough was but a few miles distant, and there I had resolved to observe the sacredness of the day. The showers of the preceding evening had refreshed the atmosphere, which danced over the plain in exhilarating gales, and rustled among the boughs of the green woodlands I was leaving. Before me was spread out a waving, undulating landscape, with herds of cattle sprinkled here and there in isolated masses over the surface; the rabbit and wildfowl were sporting along the pathway, and the bright woodpecker, with his splendid plumage and querulous note, was flitting to and fro among the thickets. Far away along the eastern horizon stretched the dark line of forest. The gorgeous prairie-flower flung out its crimson petals upon the breeze, "blushing like a banner bathed in slaughter," and methought it snapped more gayly in the morning sunbeams than it was wont; the long grass rustled musically its wavy masses back and forth, and, amid the Sabbath stillness around, methought there were there notes of sweetness not before observed. The whole scene lay calm and quiet, as if Nature, if not man, recognised the Divine injunction *to rest;* and the idea suggested itself, that a solitary Sabbath on the wild prairie, in silent converse with the Almighty, might not be all unprofitable.

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die."*

From the centre of the prairie the landscape rolled gracefully away towards the eastern timber, studded along its edge with farms. The retrospect from beneath the tall oaks of the prairie over which I had passed was exceedingly fine; the idea strikes the spectator at once, and with much force, that the whole plain was once a sheet of water. Indeed, were we to form our opinion from the *appearance* of many of the prairies of Illinois, the idea would be irresistible, that this peculiar species of surface originated in a submersion of the whole state. There are many circumstances which lead us to the conclusion that these vast meadows once formed the bed of a body of water similar to the Northern lakes; and, when the lowest point at the *Grand Tower* on the Mississippi was torn away by some convulsion of nature, a uniform surface of fine rich mud was left. The ravines were ploughed in the soft soil by subsequent floods, and hence, while the elevated lands are fertile, those more depressed are far less so. The soil of the prairies is of a character decidedly alluvial, being composed of compact strata of loam piled upon each other, like that at the bottom of bodies of water long stagnant. The first stratum is a black, pliable mould, from two feet to five in depth; the second a red clay, amalgamated with sand, from

* George Herbert.

five to ten feet in thickness; the third a blue clay, mixed with pebbles, of beautiful appearance, unctuous to the feeling, and, when exposed to the atmosphere, of a fetid smell. Lakes are often found in the prairies abounding in fish, which, when the waters subside, are removed by cartloads. The origin of these vast prairie-plains is, after all, no easy matter to decide; but, whatever the cause, they have doubtless been perpetuated by the autumnal fires which, year after year, from an era which the earliest chronicles of history or tradition have failed to record, have swept their surface; for, as soon as the grass is destroyed by the plough, the winged seeds of the cotton-wood and sycamore take root, and a young growth of timber sprouts forth. The same is true along the margin of creeks and streams, or upon steril or wet prairies, where the vegetation does not become sufficiently heavy or combustible for conflagration to a great extent. These fires originated either in the friction of the sear and tinder-like underbrush, agitated by the high winds, or they were kindled by the Indians for the purpose of dislodging game. The mode of hunting by circular fires is said to have prevailed at the time when Captain Smith first visited the shores of Chesapeake Bay, where extensive prairies then existed. These plains, by cultivation, have long since disappeared. Mungo Park describes the annual fires upon the plains of Western Africa for a similar purpose and with the same result. Tracts of considerable extent in

the older settlements of the country, which many years since were meadow, are clothed with forest.

"Coot morning, shur! A pleashant tay, shur! Coome in, shur!" was the hospitable greeting of mine host, or rather of the major domo of the little brick hostelrie of Hillsborough as I drove up to the bar-room entrance. He was a comical-looking, bottle-shaped little personage, with a jolly red nose, all the brighter, doubtless, for certain goodly potations of his own goodly admixtures; with a brief brace of legs, inserted into a pair of inexpressibles *à la Turque*, a world too big, and a white capote a world too little, to complete the Sunday toilet. He could boast, moreover, that amazing lubricity of speech, and that oiliness of tongue wherewith sinful publicans have ever been prone to beguile unwary wayfarers, *taking in* travellers, forsooth! Before I was fully aware of the change in my circumstances, I found myself quietly dispossessed of horse and equipments, and placing my foot across the threshold. The fleshy little Dutchman, though now secure in his capture, proceeded to redouble his assiduities.

"Anything to trink, shur? Plack your poots, shur? shave your face, shur?" and a host of farther interrogatories, which I at length contrived to cut short with, "Show me a chamber, sir!"

The Presbyterian Church, at which I attended worship, is a neat little edifice of brick, in modern style, but not completed. The walls remained unconscious of plaster; the orchestra, a naked scaffolding; the pulpit, a box of rough boards; and,

more *picturesque* than all, in lieu of pews, slips, or any such thing, a few coarse slabs of all forms and fashions, supported on remnants of timber and plank, occupied the open area for seats. And marvellously comfortless are such seats, to my certain experience. In the evening I attended the "Luteran Church," as my major domo styled it, at the special instance of one of its worthy members. This house of worship is designed for a large one—the largest in the state, I was informed—but, like its neighbour, was as yet but commenced. The external walls were quite complete; but the rafters, beams, studs, and braces within presented a mere skeleton, while a few loose boards, which sprang and creaked beneath the foot, were spread over the sleepers as an apology for a floor. There's practical utility for an economist! Because a church is unfinished is no good and sufficient reason why it should remain unoccupied!

As we entered the building, my *cicerone* very unexpectedly favoured me with an introduction to the minister. He was a dark, solemn-looking man, with a huge Bible and psalm-book choicely tucked under his left arm. After sundry glances at my dress and demeanour, and other sundry whisperings in the ear of my companion, the good man drew nigh, and delivered himself of the interrogatory, "Are you a clergyman, sir?" At this sage inquiry, so sagely administered, my rebellious lips struggled with a smile, which, I misdoubt me much, was not unobserved by the dark-looking minister;

for, upon my reply in the negative, he turned very unceremoniously away, and betook him to his pulpit. By-the-by, this had by no means been the first time I had been called to answer the same inquiry during my ramble in the West.

On returning to our lodgings after service, we found quite a respectable congregation gathered around the signpost, to whom my pink of major domos was holding forth in no measured terms upon the propriety of "letting off the pig guns" at the dawning of the ever-memorable morrow,* "in honour of the tay when our old farders fought like coot fellows; they tid so, py jingoes; and I'll pe out at tree o'glock, py jingoes, I will so," raphsodied the little Dutchman, warming up under the fervour of his own eloquence. This subject was still the theme of his rejoicing when he marshalled me to my dormitory and wished me "pleashant treams."

The first faint streak of crimson along the eastern heavens beheld me mounting at the door of the inn; and by my side was the patriotic domo, bowing, and ducking, and telling over all manner of kind wishes till I had evanished from view. A more precious relic of the true oldfashioned, swaggering, pot-bellied publican is rarely to be met, than that which I encountered in the person of the odd little genius whose peculiarities I have recounted: even the worthy old "Caleb of Ravenswood," that miracle of major domos, would not

* July 4.

have disowned my *Dutchy* for a brother craftsman. The village of Hillsborough is a pleasant, healthy, thriving place; and being intersected by some of the most important state routes, will always remain a thoroughfare. An attempt has been made by one of its citizens to obtain for this place the location of the Theological Seminary now in contemplation in the vicinity rather than at Carlinville, and the offer he has made is a truly munificent one. The site proposed is a beautiful mound, rising on the prairie's edge south of the village, commanding a view for miles in every direction, and is far more eligible than any spot I observed in Carlinville

After crossing a prairie about a dozen miles in width, and taking breakfast with a farmer upon its edge, I continued my journey over the undulating plains until near the middle of the afternoon, when I reached my present stage. The whole region, as I journeyed through it, lay still and quiet: every farmhouse and log-cabin was deserted by its tenants, who had congregated to the nearest villages to celebrate the day; and, verily, not a little did my heart smite me at my own heedless desecration of the political Sabbath of our land.

Vandalia, Ill.

XX.

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes—"

Childe Harold.

"The sun in all his broad career
Ne'er looked upon a fairer land,
Or brighter skies or sweeter scenes."

Ever since the days of that king of vagabonds, the mighty Nimrod of sacred story, and, for aught to the contrary, as long before, there has existed a certain roving, tameless race of wights, whose chief delight has consisted in wandering up and down upon the face of the earth, with no definite object of pursuit, and with no motive of peregrination save a kind of restless, unsatisfied craving after change; in its results much like the migratory instinct of passage-birds, but, unlike that periodical instinct, incessant in exercise. Now, whether it so be that a tincture of this same vagrant, Bohemian spirit is coursing my veins under the name of "Yankee enterprise," or whether, in my wanderings through these wild, unsettled regions, I have imbibed a portion thereof, is not for me to decide. Nevertheless, sure it is, not unfrequently are its promptings detected as I journey through this beautiful land.

It is evening now, and, after the fatigues of a pleasant day's ride, I am seated beneath the piazza

of a neat farmhouse in the edge of a forest, through which, for the last hour, my path has conducted, and looking out upon a broad landscape of prairie. My landlord, a high-minded, haughty Virginia emigrant, bitterly complains because, forsooth, in the absence of slave-labour, he is forced to cultivate his own farm; and though, by the aid of a Dutchman, he has made a pretty place of it, yet he vows by all he loves to lay his bones within the boundaries of the "Ancient Dominion." My ride since noon has been delightful; over broad plains, intersected by deep creeks, with their densely-wooded bottoms. These streams constitute one of the most romantic features of the country. I have crossed very many during my tour, and all exhibit the same characteristics: a broad, deep-cut channel, with precipitous banks loaded with enormous trees, their trunks interwoven and matted with tangled underbrush and gigantic vegetation. As the traveller stands upon the arch of the bridge of logs thrown over these creeks, sometimes with an altitude at the centre of forty feet, he looks down upon a stream flowing in a deep, serpentine bed, and winding away into the dusky shades of the overhanging woods, until a graceful bend withdraws the dark surface of the waters from his view. In the dry months of summer, these creeks and ravines are either completely free of water, or contain but a mere rivulet; and the traveller is amazed at the depth and breadth of a channel so scantily supplied. But at the season of the spring or autumnal rains the scene is changed: a deep, turbid torrent rolls

wildly onward through the dark woods, bearing on its surface the trunks of trees and the ruins of bridges swept from its banks; and the stream which, a few weeks before, would scarcely have wet the traveller's sole, is now an obstacle in his route difficult and dangerous to overcome.

Within a few miles of my present quarters an adventure transpired of some slight interest to *myself*, at least, as it afforded me a weary trudge beneath a broiling sun. As I was leisurely pursuing my way through the forest, I had chanced to spy upon the banks of the roadside a cluster of wild flowers of hues unusually brilliant; and, with a spirit worthy of Dr. Bat,* I at once resolved they should enrich my "*hortus siccus.*" Alighting, therefore, and leaving my steed by the roadside, I at length succeeded, after most laudable scramblings for the advancement of science, in gathering up a bouquet of surpassing magnificence. Alas! alas! would it had been less so; for my youthful steed, all unused to such sights and actions, and possessing, moreover, a most sovereign and shameful indifference to the glories of botany, had long, with suspicious and sidelong glances, been eying the vagaries of his truant master; and now, no sooner did he draw nigh to resume his seat and journey, than the ungracious and ungrateful quadruped flung aloft his head, and away he careered through the green branches, mane streaming and saddle-bags flapping. In vain was the brute addressed in language the most mild and conciliatory that ever insinuated itself into horse's lug; in vain was he ordered,

* The Prairie.

in tones of stern mandate, to cease his shameless and unnatural rebellion, and to surrender himself incontinently and without delay to his liege: entreaty and command, remonstrance and menace, were alike unsuccessful; and away he flew, "with flowing tail and flying mane," in utter contempt of all former or future vassalage. At one moment he stood the attitude of humbleness and submission, coolly cropping the herbage of the high banks; and then, the instant the proximity of his much-abused master became perilous to his freedom, aloft flew mane and tail, and away, away, the animal was off, until an interval consistent with his new-gained license lay behind him. After an hour of vexatious toiling through dust and sun, a happily-executed manœuvre once more placed the most undutiful of creatures in my power. And then, be ye sure, that in true Gilpin fashion, "whip and spur did make amends" for all arrears of unavenged misbehaviour.

> "'Twas for your pleasure that I *walked*,
> Now you shall RUN for mine,"

was the very Christian spirit of retaliation which animated the few succeeding miles.

"But something too much of this." Some pages back I was entering the capital of Illinois. The town is approached from the north, through a scattered forest, separating it from the prairies; and its unusually large and isolated buildings, few in number as they are, stationed here and there upon the eminences of the broken surface, give the place a singularly novel aspect viewed from the adjacent

heights. There is but little of scenic attraction about the place, and, to the traveller's eye, still less of the picturesque. Such huge structures as are here beheld, in a town so inconsiderable in extent, present an unnatural and forced aspect to one who has just emerged from the wild waste of the neighbouring prairies, sprinkled with their humble tenements of logs. The scene is not in keeping; it is not picturesque. Such, at all events, were my "first impressions" on entering the village, and *first* impressions are not necessarily false. As I drew nigh to the huge white tavern, a host of people were swarming the doors; and, from certain uncouth noises which from time to time went up from the midst thereof, not an inconsiderable portion of the worthy multitude seemed to have succeeded in rendering themselves gloriously tipsy in honour of the glorious day. There was one keen, bilious-looking genius in linsey-woolsey, with a face, in its intoxicated state, like a red-hot tomahawk, whom I regarded with special admiration as high-priest of the bacchanal; and so fierce and high were his objurgations, that the idea with some force suggested itself, whether, in the course of years, he had not screamed his lean and hungry visage to its present hatchet-like proportions. May he forgive if I err. But not yet were my adventures over. Having effected a retreat from the abominations of the bar-room, I had retired to a chamber in the most quiet corner of the mansion, and had seated myself to endite an epistle, when a rap at the door announced the presence of mine host, leading along an old

yeoman whom I had noticed among the revellers; and, having given him a ceremonious introduction, withdrew. To what circumstance I was indebted for this unexpected honour, I was puzzling myself to divine, when the old gentleman, after a preface of clearings of the throat and scratchings of the head, gave me briefly to understand, much to my admiration, that I was believed to be neither more nor less than an "Agent for a Western Land Speculating Company of the North," etc., etc.: and then, in a confidential tone, before a syllable of negation or affirmation could be offered, that he "owned a certain tract of land, so many acres prairie, so many timber, so many cultivated, so many wild," etc., etc.: the sequel was anticipated by undeceiving the old farmer forthwith, though with no little difficulty. The cause of this mistake I subsequently discovered to be a very slight circumstance. On the tavern register in the bar-room I had entered as my residence my native home at the North, more for the novelty of the idea than for anything else; or because, being a sort of cosmopolitan, I might presume myself at liberty to appropriate any spot I thought proper as that of my departure or destination. As a matter of course, and with laudable desire to augment their sum of useful knowledge, no sooner had the traveller turned from the register than the sagacious host and his compeer brandy-bibbers turned towards it; and being unable to conceive any reasonable excuse for a man to be wandering so far from his home except for lucre's sake, the conclusion at once and irresistibly followed that

the stranger was a land-speculator, or something thereunto akin; and it required not many moments for such a wildfire idea to run through such an inflammable mass of curiosity.

With the situation and appearance of Vandalia I was not, as I have expressed myself, much prepossessed; indeed, I was somewhat disappointed. Though not prepared for anything very striking, yet in the capital of a state we always anticipate something, if not superior or equal, at least not inferior to neighbouring towns of less note. Its site is an elevated, undulating tract upon the west bank of the Kaskaskia, and was once heavily timbered, as are now its suburbs. The streets are of liberal breadth—some of them not less than eighty feet from kerb to kerb—enclosing an elevated public square nearly in the centre of the village, which a little expenditure of time and money might render a delightful promenade. The public edifices are very inconsiderable, consisting of an ordinary structure of brick for legislative purposes; a similar building originally erected as a banking establishment, but now occupied by the offices of the state authorities; a Presbyterian Church, with cupola and bell, besides a number of lesser buildings for purposes of worship and education. A handsome structure of stone for a bank is, however, in progress, which, when completed, with other public buildings in contemplation, will add much to the aspect of the place. Here also is a land-office for the district, and the Cumberland Road is permanently located and partially constructed to the

place. An historical and antiquarian society has here existed for about ten years, and its published proceedings evince much research and information. "The Illinois Magazine" was the name of an ably-conducted periodical commenced at this town some years since, and prosperously carried on by Judge Hall, but subsequently removed to Cincinnati. Some of the articles published in this magazine, descriptive of the state, were of high merit. It is passing strange that a town like Vandalia, with all the natural and artificial advantages it possesses; located nearly twenty years ago, by state authority, expressly as the seat of government; situated upon the banks of a fine stream, which small expense would render navigable for steamers, and in the heart of a healthy and fertile region, should have increased and flourished no more than seems to have been the case. Vandalia will continue the seat of government until the year 1840; when, agreeable to the late act of Legislature, it is to be removed to Springfield, where an appropriation of $50,000 has been made for a state-house now in progress.

The growth of Vandalia, though tardy, can perhaps be deemed so only in comparison with the more rapid advancement of neighbouring towns; for a few years after it was laid off it was unsurpassed in improvement by any other. We are told that the first legislators who assembled in session at this place sought their way through the neighbouring prairies as the mariner steers over the trackless ocean, by his knowledge of the cardinal points.

Judges and lawyers came pouring in from opposite directions, as wandering tribes assemble to council; and many were the tales of adventure and mishap related at their meeting. Some had been lost in the prairies; some had slept in the woods; some had been almost chilled to death, plunging through creeks and rivers. A rich growth of majestic oaks then covered the site of the future metropolis; tangled thickets almost impervious to human foot surrounded it, and all was wilderness on every side. Wonderful accounts of the country to the north; of rich lands, and pure streams, and prairies more beautiful than any yet discovered, soon began to come in by the hunters.* But over that country the Indian yet roved, and the adventurous pioneer neither owned the soil he cultivated, nor had the power to retain its possession from the savage. Only eight years after this, and a change, as if by magic, had come over the little village of Vandalia; and not only so, but over the whole state, which was now discovered to be a region more extensive and far more fertile than the "sacred island of Britain." The region previously the frontier formed the heart of the fairest portion of the state, and a dozen new counties were formed within its extent. Mail-routes and post-roads, diverging in all directions from the capital, had been established, and canals and railways had been projected. Eight years more, and the "Northern frontier" is the seat of power and population; and

* Hall.

here is removed the seat of government, because the older settlements have not kept pace in advancement.

It was a fine mellow morning when I left Vandalia to pursue my journey over the prairies to Carlisle. For some miles my route lay through a dense clump of old woods, relieved at intervals by extended glades of sparser growth. This road is but little travelled, and so obscure that for most of the way I could avail myself of no other guide than the "*blaze*" upon the trees; and this mark in many places, from its ancient, weather-beaten aspect, seemed placed there by the axe of the earliest pioneer. Rank grass has obliterated the pathway, and overhanging boughs brush the cheek. It was in one of those extended glades I have mentioned that a nobly-antlered buck and his beautiful doe sprang out upon the path, and stood gazing upon me from the wayside until I had approached so near that a rifle, even in hands all unskilled in "gentle woodcraft," had not been harmless. I was even beginning to meditate upon the probable effect of a pistol-shot at twenty paces, when the graceful animals, throwing proudly up their arching necks, bounded off into the thicket. Not many miles from the spot I shared the rough fare of an old hunter, who related many interesting facts in the character and habits of this animal, and detailed some curious anecdotes in the history of his own wild life. He was just about leaving his lodge on a short hunting excursion, and the absence of a rifle alone prevented me from accepting a civil request to bear him company.

Most of the route from Vandalia to Carlisle is very tolerable, with the exception of one detestable spot, fitly named "Hurricane Bottom;" a more dreary, desolate, purgatorial region than which, I am very free to say, exists not in Illinois. It is a densely-wooded swamp, composed of soft blue clay, exceedingly tenacious to the touch and fetid in odour, extending nearly two miles. A regular highway over this mud-hole can scarcely be said to exist, though repeated attempts to construct one have been made at great expense: and now the traveller, upon entering this "slough of despond," gives his horse the reins to slump, and slide, and plunge, and struggle through among the mud-daubed trees to the best of his skill and ability.

Night overtook me in the very heart of a broad prairie; and, like the sea, a desolate place is the prairie of a dark night. It demanded no little exercise of the eye and judgment to continue upon a route where the path was constantly diverging and varying in all directions. A bright glare of light at a distance at length arrested my attention. On approaching, I found it to proceed from an encampment of tired emigrants, whose ponderous teams were wheeled up around the blazing fire; while the hungry oxen, released from the yoke, were browsing upon the tops of the tall prairie-grass on every side. This grass, though coarse in appearance, in the early stages of its growth resembles young wheat, and furnishes a rich and succulent food for cattle. It is even asserted that, when running at large in fields where the young wheat covers the

ground, cattle choose the prairie-grass in the margin of the field in preference to the wheat itself. A few scattered, twinkling lights, and the fresh-smelling air from the Kaskaskia, soon after informed me that I was not far from the village of Carlisle. This is a pleasant, romantic little town, upon the west bank of the river, and upon the great stage-route through the state from St. Louis to Vincennes. This circumstance, and the intersection of several other state thoroughfares, give it the animated, business-like aspect of a market town, not often witnessed in a village so remote from the advantages of general commerce. Its site is elevated and salubrious, on the border of a fertile prairie: yet, notwithstanding all these advantages, Carlisle cannot be said to have increased very rapidly when we consider that twenty years have elapsed since it was first laid off for a town. It is the seat of justice for Clinton county, and can boast a wooden courthouse in "ruinous perfection." In its vicinity are some beautiful country-seats. One of these, named "Mound Farm," the delightful residence of Judge B——, imbowered in trees and shrubbery, and about a mile from the village, I visited during my stay. It commands from its elevated site a noble view of the neighbouring prairie, the village and river at its foot, and the adjacent farms. Under the superintendence of cultivated taste, this spot may become one of the loveliest retreats in Illinois.

Clinton county, Ill.

XXI.

"To him who, in the love of Nature, holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language."

THANATOPSIS.

"The sunny Italy may boast
The beauteous tints that flush her skies,
And lovely round the Grecian coast
May thy blue pillars rise:
I only know how fair they stand
About my own beloved land."

The Skies.—BRYANT.

To the man of cultivated imagination and delicate taste, the study of nature never fails to afford a gratification, refined as it is exquisite. In the pencilled petals of the flower as it bows to the evening breeze; in the glittering scales of the fish leaping from the wave; in the splendid plumage of the forest-bird, and in the music-tinklings of the wreathed and enamelled sea-shell rocked by the billow, he recognises an eloquence of beauty which he alone can appreciate. For him, too, the myriad forms of animate creation unite with inanimate nature in one mighty hymn of glory to their Maker, from the hum of the sparkling ephemeroid as he blithely dances away his little life in the beams of a summer sun, and the rustling music of the prairie-weed swept by the winds, to the roar of the shaggy woods upon the mountain-side, and the fierce, wild shriek of the ocean-eagle. To inves-

tigate the more minute and delicate of Nature's workings is indeed a delightful task; and along this fairy and flowery pathway the cultivated fancy revels with unmingled gratification; but, as the mind approaches the vaster exhibitions of might and majesty, the booming of the troubled ocean, the terrible sublimity of the midnight storm, the cloudy magnificence of the mountain height, the venerable grandeur of the aged forest, it expands itself in unison till lost in the immensity of created things. Reflections like these are constantly suggesting themselves to the traveller's thoughts amid the grand scenery of the West; but at no season do they rise more vividly upon the mind than when the lengthened shadows of evening are stealing over the landscape, and the summer sun is sinking to his rest. This is the "magic hour" when

> "Bright clouds are gathering one by one,
> Sweeping in pomp round the dying sun;
> With crimson banner and golden pall,
> Like a host to their chieftain's funeral."

There is not a more magnificent spectacle in nature than summer sunset on the Western prairie. I have beheld the orb of day, after careering his course like a giant through the firmament, go down into the fresh tumbling billows of ocean; and sunset on the prairies, which recalls that scene, is alone equalled by it.

Near nightfall one evening I found myself in the middle of one of these vast extended plains, where the eye roves unconfined over the scene, for miles unrelieved by a stump, or a tree, or a thicket, and meets only the deep blue of the horizon on

every side, blending with the billowy foliage of the distant woodland. Descending a graceful slope, even this object is lost, and a boundless landscape of blue above and green below is unfolded to the traveller's vision; again, approaching the summit of the succeeding slope, the forest rises in clear outline in the margin of the vast panorama. For some hours the heavens had been so enveloped in huge masses of brassy clouds, that now, when the shadows deepened over sky and earth, one was at a loss to determine whether the sun had yet gone down, except for a broad zone of sapphire girding the whole western firmament. Upon the superior edge of this deep belt now glistened the luminary, gradually revealing itself to the eye, and blazing forth at length "like angels' locks unshorn," flinging a halo of golden effulgence far athwart the dim evening prairie. A metamorphosis so abrupt, so rapid, so unlooked for, seemed almost to realize the fables of enchantment. One moment, and the whole vast landscape lay veiled in shadowy dimness; the next, and every grass blade, and spray, and floweret, and nodding wild-weed seemed suffused in a flood of liquid effulgence; while far along, the uniform ridges of the heaving plain gleamed in the rich light like waves of a moonlit sea, sweeping away, roll upon roll, till lost in distance to the eye. Slowly the splendid disk went down behind the sea of waving verdure, until at length a single point of intense, bewildering brightness flamed out above the mass of green. An instant, this too was gone—as

> "An angel's wing through an opening cloud,
> Is seen and then withdrawn:"—

and then those deep, lurid funeral fires of departing day streamed, flaring upward even to the zenith, flinging over the vast concave a robe of unearthly, terrible magnificence! Then, as the fount of all this splendour sank deeper and deeper beneath the horizon, the blood-red flames died gently away into the mellow glories of summer evening skylight, bathing the brow of heaven in a tender roseate, which hours after cheered the lonely traveller across the waste.

The pilgrim wanderer in other climes comes back to tell us of sunnier skies and softer winds! The blue heavens of Italy have tasked the inspiration of an hundred bards, and the warm brush of her own Lorraine has swept the canvass with their gorgeous transcript! But what pencil has wandered over the grander scenes of the North American prairie? What bard has struck his lyre to the wild melody of loveliness of the prairie sunset? Yet who shall tell us that there exists not a glory in the scene, amid the untrod wastes of the wilderness West, which even the skies of "sunny Italy" might not blush anew to acknowledge? No wandering Harold has roamed on a pilgrimage of poetry over the sublime and romantic scenery of our land, to hymn its praise in breathing thoughts and glowing words; yet here as there,

> "Parting day
> Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
> With a new colour as it gasps away:
> The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray!"

I cannot tell of the beauties of climes I have never seen; but I have gazed upon all the varied loveliness of my own fair, native land, from the ri-

sing sun to its setting, and in vain have tasked my fancy to image a fairer.

A pleasant day's ride directly west from Carlisle, over extensive and beautiful prairies, intersected by shady woods, with their romantic creeks, and the traveller finds himself in the quiet village of Lebanon. Its site is a commanding, mound-like elevation in the skirts of a forest, swelling gently up from the prairie on the west bank of Little Silver Creek. This stream, with the larger branch, received its name from the circumstance that the early French settlers of the country, in the zeal of their faith and research for the precious metals, a long while mistook the brilliant specula of *horneblende* which flow in its clear waters for silver, and were unwilling to be undeceived in their extravagant anticipations until the absence of the material in their purses aroused them from their error. In the neighbourhood of Rock Spring a shaft for a mine was sunk.* It was early one beautiful morning that I found myself approaching the village of Lebanon, though many miles distant in the adjacent plain; appropriately named for its loveliness the "Looking-glass Prairie." The rosy sunbeams were playing lightly over the pleasant country-seats and neat farmhouses, with their white palings, sprinkled along the declivity before me, imbowered in their young orchards and waving maize-fields; while flocks and herds,

* *Tradition* telleth of vast treasures here exhumed; and, on strength of this, ten years ago a company of fortune-seekers dug away for several months with an enthusiasm worthy of better success than awaited them.

gathered in isolated masses over the intervening meadow, were cropping the rich herbage. To the right and left, and in the rear, the prairie stretches away beyond the view. The body of the village is situated about one mile from these suburbs, and its character and history may be summed up in the single sentence, *a pleasant little Methodist country village.* The peculiarities of the sect are here strikingly manifested to the traveller in all the ordinary concerns and occupations of life, even in the every-day garb and conversation of its sober-browed citizens. It presents the spectacle, rare as it is cheering, of an entire community characterized by its reverence for religion. Located in its immediate vicinity is a flourishing seminary, called M'Kendreean College. It is under the supervision of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and has at present two instructers, with about fifty pupils in the preparatory department. It has a commodious frame building, presenting from its elevated site an imposing view to the traveller. As is usually the case with these little out-of-the-world villages, when any object comes up in the midst around which the feelings and interests of all may cluster, upon this institution is centred the heart and soul of every man, to say not a word of all the women and children, in Lebanon; and everything not connected, either remotely or immediately, with its welfare, is deemed of very little, if of any importance. "*The Seminary! The Seminary!*" I defy a traveller to tarry two hours in the village without hearing rung all the changes upon that topic for his edification. The surrounding region is fertile, populous,

and highly cultivated; and for an inland, farming village, it is quite as bustling, I suppose, as should be expected; though, during my visit, its streets—which, by-the-by, are of very liberal breadth—maintained a most Sabbath-like aspect.

The route from Lebanon to Belleville is, in fine weather, very excellent. Deep woods on either side of the hard, smooth, winding pathway, throw their boughs over the head, sometimes lengthening away into an arched vista miles in extent. It was a sultry afternoon when I was leisurely travelling along this road; and the shadowy coolness of the atmosphere, the perfume of wild flowers and aromatic herbs beneath the underbrush, and the profusion of summer fruit along the roadside, was indescribably delightful. Near sunset, a graceful bend of the road around a clump of trees placed before me the pretty little village of Belleville; its neat enclosures and white cottages peeping through the shrubbery, now gilded by the mellow rays of sunset in every leaf and spray. Whether it was owing to this agreeable coincidence, or to the agreeable visit I here enjoyed, that I conceived such an attachment for the place, I cannot say; but sure it is, I fell in love with the little town at *first* sight; and, what is more marvellous, was not, according to all precedent, cured at second, when on the following morning I sallied forth to reconnoitre its beauties "at mine own good leisure." Now it is to be presumed that, agreeable to the taste of six travellers in a dozen, I have passed through many a village in Illinois quite as attractive as this same Belleville: but to convince me of the fact would be no

easy task. "Man is the sport of circumstance," says the fatalist; and however this may be in the moral world, if any one feels disposed to doubt upon the matter in the item before us, let him disembark from a canal-boat at Pittsburgh on a rainy, misty, miserable morning; and then, unable to secure for his houseless head a shelter from the pitiless peltings, let him hurry away through the filthy streets, deluged with inky water, to a crowded Ohio steamer; and if "*circumstances*" do not force him to dislike Pittsburgh ever after, then his human nature is vastly more forbearing than my own. Change the picture. Let him enter the quiet little Illinois village at the gentle hour of sunset; let him meet warm hospitality, and look upon fair forms and bright faces, and if he fail to be pleased with that place, why, "he's not the man I took him for.

The public buildings of Belleville are a handsome courthouse of brick, a wretched old jail of the same material, a public hall belonging to a library company, and a small framed Methodist house of worship. It is situated in the centre of "Turkey-hill Settlement," one of the oldest and most flourishing in the state, and has a fine timber tract and several beautiful country-seats in its vicinity.

Leaving Belleville with some reluctance, and not a few "longing, lingering looks behind," my route continued westward over a broken region of alternating forest and prairie, sparsely sprinkled with trees, and yet more sparsely with inhabitants. At length, having descended a precipitous hill, the rounded summit of which, as well as the adjoining heights, commanded an immense expanse of level

landscape, stretching off from the base, I stood once more upon the fertile soil of the "*American Bottom.*" The sharp, heavy-roofed French cottages, with low verandahs running around; the ungainly outhouses and enclosures; the curiously-fashioned vehicles and instruments of husbandry in the barn-yards and before the doors; the foreign garb and dialect of the people; and, above all, the amazing fertility of the soil, over whose exhaustless depths the maize has rustled half a century, constitute the most striking characteristics of this interesting tract, in the section over which I was passing. This settlement, extending from the foot of the bluffs for several miles over the Bottom, was formed about forty years ago by a colony from Cahokia, and known by the name of "*Little French Village;*" it now comprises about twenty houses and a grog-shop. In these bluffs lies an exhaustless bed of bituminous coal: vast quantities have been transported to St. Louis, and for this purpose principally is the railway to the river designed. This vein of coal is said to have been discovered by the rivulet of a spring issuing from the base of the bluffs. The stratum is about six feet in thickness, increasing in size as it penetrates the hill horizontally. Though somewhat rotten and slaty, it is in some particulars not inferior to the coal of the Alleghanies; and the vein is thought to extend first from the mouth of the Kaskaskia to that of the Illinois. About three miles below the present shaft, a continuation of the bed was discovered by fire communicated from the root of a tree; the bank of coal burnt for upward of a

twelvemonth, and the conflagration was then smothered only by the falling in of the superincumbent soil. St. Clair county, which embraces a large portion of the American Bottom, is the oldest settlement in the state. In 1795 the county was formed by the Legislature of the Northwestern Territory, and then included all settlements in Illinois east of the Mississippi.

I had just cleverly cleared the outskirts of the little antediluvian village beneath the bluffs, when a dark, watery-looking cloud came tumbling up out of the west; the thunder roared across the Bottom and was reverberated from the cliffs, and in a few moments down came the big rain-drops dancing in torrents from the clouds, and pattering up like mist along the plain. Verily, groaned forth the wo-begone traveller, this is the home of clouds and the realm of thunder! Never did hapless mortals sustain completer drenchings than did the traveller and his steed, notwithstanding upon the first onset they had plunged themselves into the sheltering depths of the wood. A half hour's gallop over the slippery bottom, and the stern roar of a steamer's 'scape-pipe informed me that I was not far from the "great waters." A few yards through the belt of forest, and the city of San Louis, with towers and roofs, stood before me.

St. Louis.

XXII.

"I have no wife nor children, good or bad, to provide for; a mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures, and how they play their parts."—*Anat. of Melancholy.*

"Oh ye dread scenes, where Nature dwells alone,
Serenely glorious on her craggy throne;
Ye citadels of rock, gigantic forms,
Veiled by the mists, and girdled by the storms;
Ravines, and glens, and deep-resounding caves,
That hold communion with the torrent waves."

HEMANS.

AH, the single blessedness of the unmarried state! Such is the sentiment of an ancient worthy, quietly expressed in the lines which I have selected for a motto. After dozing away half his days and all his energies within the dusky walls of a university, tumbling over musty tomes and shrivelled parchments until his very brain had become cobwebbed as the alcoves he haunted, and the blood in his veins was all "adust and thin;" then, forsooth, the shameless old fellow issues forth with his vainglorious sentiment upon his lips! And yet, now that we consider, there is marvellous "method" in the old man's "madness!" In very truth and soberness, there is a blessedness which the bachelor can boast, *single* though it be, in which the "man of family," though *doubly* blessed, cannot share! To the former, life may be made one long holyday, and its path a varied and a flowery one! while to the poor

victim of matrimonial toils, *wife and children* are the Alpha and Omega of a weary existence! Of all travelling companionship, forfend us from that of a married man! Independence! He knows not of it! Such is the text and such the commentary: now for the practical application.

It was a balmy July morning, and the flutelike melody of the turtle-dove was ringing through the woodlands. Leaving the pleasant villa of Dr. F. in the environs of North St. Louis, I found myself once more fairly *en route*, winding along that delightful road which sweeps the western bottom of the Mississippi. Circumstances not within my control, Benedict though I am, had recalled me, after a ramble of but a few weeks over the prairies, again to the city, and compelled me to relinquish my original design of a tour of the extreme Northwest. Ah, the despotism of circumstance! My delay, however, proved a brief, though pleasant one; and with a something of mingled *regret* and anticipation it was that I turned from the bright eyes and dark locks of St. Louis—"forgive my folly"—and once again beheld its imposing structures fade in distance.

By far the most delightful drive in the vicinity of St. Louis is that of four or five miles in its northern suburbs, along the river bottom. The road, emerging from the streets of the city through one of its finest sections, and leaving the "Big Mound" upon the right, sweeps off for several miles upon a succession of broad plateaux, rolling up from the water's edge. To the left lies an extensive range of heights, surmounted by ancient mounds and crowned with

groves of the shrub-oak, which afford a delightful shade to the road running below. Along this elevated ridge beautiful country-seats, with graceful piazzas and green Venitian blinds, are caught from time to time glancing through the shrubbery; while to the right, smooth meadows spread themselves away to the heavy belt of forest which margins the Mississippi. Among these pleasant villas the little white farm-cottage, formerly the residence of Mr. C., beneath the hills, surrounded by its handsome grounds, and gardens, and glittering fishponds, partially shrouded by the broad-leaped catalpa, the willow, the acacia, and other ornamental trees, presents, perhaps, the rarest instance of natural beauty adorned by refined taste. A visit to this delightful spot during my stay at St. Louis informed me of the fact that, within as well as abroad, the hand of education and refinement had not been idle. Paintings, busts, medallions, Indian curiosities, &c., &c., tastefully arranged around the walls and shelves of an elegant library, presented a feast to the visiter as rare in the Far West as it is agreeable to a cultivated mind. Near this cottage is the intended site of the building of the St. Louis Catholic University, a lofty and commanding spot. A considerable tract was here purchased, at a cost of thirty thousand dollars; but the design of removal from the city has for the present been relinquished. Immediately adjoining is situated the stately villa of Colonel O'Fallon, with its highly-cultivated gardens and its beautiful park sweeping off in the rear. In a very few years this must become one of the most delightful spots

in the West. For its elegant grounds, its green and hot houses, and its exotic and indigenous plants, it is, perhaps, already unequalled west of Cincinnati. No expense, attention, or taste will be wanting to render it all of which the spot is capable.

Leaving the Bottom, the road winds gracefully off from the Mississippi, over the hard soil of the bluffs, through a region broken up by sink-holes, and covered with a meager growth of oaks, with small farms at intervals along the route, until at length the traveller finds himself at that beautiful spot on the Missouri, Belle Fontaine, fifteen miles from St. Louis. On account of the salubrity and beauty of the site, an army cantonment was located here by General Wilkinson in the early part of the present century, and fortifications consisting of palisade-work existed, and a line of log-barracks sufficient to quarter half a regiment. Nothing now remains but a pile of ruins. "The barracks have crumbled into dust, and the ploughshare has passed over the promenade of the sentinel." Jefferson Barracks, in the southern environs of the city, have superseded the old fortress, and the spot has been sold to a company, which has here laid off a town; and as most of the lots have been disposed of, and a turnpike-road from St. Louis has been chartered, a succeeding tourist may, at no distant period, pencil it in his notebook "a flourishing village." *Cold Water Creek* is the name of a clear stream which empties itself into the Missouri just above, upon which are several mill-privileges; and from the base of the bluff itself gushes a fountain, on account

of which the place received its name from the French. The site for the new town is a commanding and beautiful one, being a bold, green promontory, rising from the margin of the stream about four miles above its confluence with the Mississippi. The view developed to the eye of the spectator from this spot on a fine day is one of mingled sublimity and beauty. For some miles these old giants of the West are beheld roaming along through their deep, fertile valleys, so different in character and aspect that one can hardly reconcile with that diversity the fact that their destiny is soon to become *one* and unchangeably the same. And then comes the mighty "meeting of the waters," to which no pen can hope to render justice.

There is a singular circumstance related of the discovery of a large *human tooth* many years since at Belle Fontaine, in excavating a well, when at the depth of forty feet. This was the more extraordinary as the spot was not alluvion, and could have undergone no change from natural causes for centuries. Various strata of clay were passed through before the *tooth* was thrown up; and this circumstance, together with the situation of the place, would almost preclude the possibility of a vein of subterraneous water having conveyed it to the spot. This is mysterious enough, certainly; but the fact is authentic.

Returning at an angle of forty-five degrees with the road by which he approaches, a ride of a dozen miles up the Missouri places the traveller upon a bold roll of the prairie, from which, in the beautiful

valley below, rising above the forest, appear the steep roofs and tall chimneys of the little hamlet of Florissant. Its original name was St. Ferdinand, titular saint of its church; and though one of the most advanced in years, it is by no means the most antique-looking of those ancient villages planted by the early French. Its site is highly romantic, upon the banks of a creek of the same name, and in the heart of one of the most fertile and luxuriant valleys ever subjected to cultivation.* The village now embraces about thirty or forty irregular edifices, somewhat modernized in style and structure, surrounded by extensive corn-fields, wandering flocks of Indian ponies, and herds of cattle browsing in the plain. Here also is a Catholic Church, a neat building of brick, with belfry and bell; connected with which is a convent of nuns, and by these is conducted a Seminary for young ladies of some note. This institution—if the Hibernian hostess of the little inn at which I dined is to be credited in her statements—is the most flourishing establishment in all the region far and near! and "*heducates* the young *leddies* in everything but religion!" For the redoubtable *Tonish*, who whilom figured so bravely on the prairies and in print, I made diligent inquiry. His cottage—the best in the village—and a dirty little brood of his posterity, were pointed out to me, but the old worthy himself was, as usual, in the regions of the Rocky Mountains: when last seen, he could still tell the stoutest lie with the steadiest muscles of any man in the village, while he and his

* This valley appears to have been the bed of an ancient lake.

hopeful son could cover each other's trail so nicely that a lynx-eye would fail to detect them. In the vicinity of Florissant is a settlement called Owen's Station, formerly the site of a stoccade fort for defence against the Indians, and of a Spanish *station* on account of a fine fountain in the vicinity.

The direct route from St. Louis to Florissant is an excellent one, over a high rolling prairie, and commands a noble sweep of scenery. From several elevated points, the white cliffs beyond the American Bottom, more than twenty miles distant, may be seen, while farmhouses and villas are beheld in all directions gleaming through the groves. Scenery of the same general character presents itself upon the direct route to St. Charles, with the exception of steeper hills and broader plains. Upon this route my path entered nearly at right angles soon after leaving the French village. Upon the right shore of the Missouri, not far above Florissant, is situated *La Charbonnière*, a name given to a celebrated coal-bank in a bluff about two hundred feet in altitude, and about twice as long. The stratum of coal is about a dozen feet in thickness, and lies directly upon the margin of the river: the quantity in the bank is said to be immense, and it contains an unusual proportion of bitumen. Iron ore has also been discovered at this spot.

The road over the Missouri Bottom was detestable, as never fails to be the case after a continued rain-storm, and my horse's leg sank to the middle in the black, unctuous loam almost at every step. Upon either side, like colonnades, rose up those

enormous shafts of living verdure which strike the solitary traveller upon these unfrequented bottoms with such awe and veneration; while the huge whirls of the writhing wild-vine hung dangling, like gigantic serpents, from the lofty columns around whose capitals they clung. On descending the bluffs to the bottom, the traveller crosses a bed of limestone, in which is said to exist a fissure perfectly fathomless. In a few moments, the boiling, turbid floods of the Missouri are beheld rolling majestically along at the feet, and to the stranger's eye, at first sight, always suggesting the idea of *unusual* agitation; but so have they rolled onward century after century, age after age. The wild and impetuous character of this river, together with the vast quantities of soil with which its waters are charged, impart to it a natural sublimity far more striking, at first view, than that of the Mississippi. This circumstance was not unobserved by the Indian tribes, who appropriately named it the "*Smoky Water*:" by others it was styled the "*Mad River*," on account of the impetuosity of its current; and in all dialects it is called the "*Mother of Floods*," indicative of the immense volume of its waters. Various causes have been assigned for the turbid character of the Missouri: and though, doubtless, heavily charged by the volumes of sand thrown into its channel by the Yellow Stone—its longest tributary, equal to the Ohio—and by the chalky clay of the White River, yet we are told that it is characterized by the same phenomenon from its very source. At the gates of the Rocky Mountains, where, having torn

for itself a channel through the everlasting hills, it comes rushing out through the vast prairie-plains at their base, it is the same dark, wild torrent as at its turbid embouchure. And, strange to tell, after roaming thousands of miles, and receiving into its bosom streams equal to itself, and hundreds of lesser, though powerful tributaries, it still retains, unaltered in depth or breadth, that volume which at last it rolls into its mighty rival! Torrent after torrent, river after river, pour in their floods, yet the giant stream rolls majestically onward unchanged! At the village of St. Charles its depth and breadth is the same as at the Mandan Villages, nearly two thousand miles nearer its source. The same inexplicable phenomenon characterizes the Mississippi, and, indeed, all the great rivers of the West; for *inexplicable* the circumstance yet remains, however plausible the theories alleged in explanation. With regard to the Missouri, it is urged that the porous, sandy soil of its broad alluvions absorbs, on the principle of capillary attraction, much of its volume, conveying it by subterraneous channels to the Mississippi; and of this latter stream it is asserted that large quantities of its waters are taken up by the innumerable bayous, lakes, and lagoons intersecting the lower region of its course; and thus, unperceived, they find their way to the gulf.

The navigation of the Missouri is thought to be the most hazardous and difficult of any of the Western rivers, owing to its mad, impetuous current, to the innumerable obstructions in its bed, and the incessant variation of its channel.* Insurance and pi-

* See Appendix.

lotage upon this river are higher than on others; the season of navigation is briefer, and steamers never pursue their course after dusk. Its vast length and numerous tributaries render it liable, also, to frequent floods, of which three are expected every year. The chief of these takes place in the month of June, when the heaped-up snows of the Rocky Mountains are melted, and, having flowed thousands of miles through the prairies, reach the Mississippi. The ice and snows of the Alleghanies, and the wild-rice lakes of the far Upper Mississippi, months before have reached their destination, and thus a general inundation, unavoidable had the floods been simultaneous, is prevented by Providence. The alluvions of the Missouri are said to be higher than, and not so broad as, those of the Mississippi; yet their extent is constantly varying by the violence of the current, even more than those of the latter stream. Many years ago the flourishing town of Franklin was completely torn away from its foundations, and its inhabitants were forced to flee to the adjacent heights; and the bottom opposite St. Charles and at numerous other places has, within the few years past, suffered astonishing changes. Opposite the latter town now flow the waters of the river where once stood farms and orchards.

The source of the Missouri and that of the Columbia, we are told, are in such immediate proximity, that a walk of but a few miles will enable the traveller to drink from the fountains of each. Yet how unlike their destiny! One passes off through a region of boundless prairie equal in extent to a

sixth of our globe; and, after a thousand wanderings, disembogues its troubled waters into the Mexican Gulf; the other, winding away towards the setting sun, rolls on through forests untrodden by human footstep till it sleeps in the Pacific Seas. Their destinies reach their fulfilment at opposite extremes of a continent! How like, how very like are the destinies of these far, lonely rivers to the destinies of human life! Those who, in the beautiful starlight of our boyhood, were our schoolmates and playfellows, where are they when our sun of ripened maturity has reached its meridian? and what, and where are they and we, when evening's lengthening shadows are gathering over the landscape of life? Our paths diverged but little at first, but mountains, continents, half a world of waters may divide our destinies, and opposite extremes of "the great globe itself" witness their consummation. Yet, like the floods of the far-winding rivers, the streams of our existences will meet again, and mingle in the ocean—that ocean without a shore—*ETERNITY!*

The gates of the Rocky Mountains, through which the waters of the Missouri rush forth into the prairies of the great Valley, are described as one of the sublimest spectacles in nature. Conceive the floods of a powerful mountain-torrent compressed in mid career into a width of less than one hundred and fifty yards, rushing with the speed of "the wild horse's wilder sire" through a chasm whose vast walls of Nature's own masonry rear themselves on either side from the raging waters to the precipitous

height of twelve hundred perpendicular feet; and then consider if imagination can compass a scene of darker, more terrible sublimity! And then sweep onward with the current, and within one hundred miles you behold a cataract, next to Niagara, from all description grandest in the world. Such are some of the mighty features of the stream upon which I was now standing.

As to the much disputed question which of the great streams of the West is entitled to the name of the *Main River*, I shall content myself with a brief statement of the arguments alleged in support of the pretensions of either claimant. The volume of the Missouri at the confluence far exceeds that of its rival; the length of its course and the number and magnitude of its tributaries are also greater, and it imparts a character to the united streams. On the other hand, the Mississippi, geographically and geologically considered, is the grand Central River of the continent, maintaining an undeviating course from north to south; the valley which it drains is far more extensive and fertile than that of the Missouri; and from the circumstance of having first been explored, it has given a name to the great river of the Western Valley which it will probably ever retain, whatever the right. "*Sed non nostrum tantas componere lites.*"

St. Charles, Mo.

APPENDIX.

A. Page 20.

LOUISVILLE AND PORTLAND CANAL.

In 1804 the Legislature of Kentucky incorporated a company to cut a canal around the falls. Nothing effectual, however, beyond surveys, was done until 1825, when on the 12th of January of that year the Louisville and Portland Canal Company was incorporated by an act of the legislature, with a capital of $600,000, in shares of $100 each, with perpetual succession. 3665 of the shares of the company are in the hands of individuals, about seventy in number, residing in the following states: New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, New-York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri, and 2335 shares belong to the government of the United States.

In December, 1825, contracts were entered into to complete the work of this canal within two years, for about $375,000, and under these contracts the work was commenced in March, 1826. Many unforeseen difficulties retarded the work until the close of the year 1828. At this time the contractors failed; new contracts were made at advanced prices, and the canal was finally opened for navigation December 5th, 1830. When completed it cost about $750,000. Owing to the advanced season at which it was opened, the deposites of alluvial earth at the lower extremity of the canal, or debouchure, could not be removed; and also from the action of the floods during the succeeding severe winter on the stones that had been temporarily deposited on the sides of the canal, causing them to be precipitated into the canal, it was not used to the extent that it otherwise would have been. During the year 1831, 406 steamboats, 46 keelboats, and 357 flatboats, measuring 76,323 tons, passed through the locks, which are about one fourth the number that would have passed if all the obstructions had been removed.

The Louisville and Portland Canal is about two miles in length; is intended for steamboats of the largest class, and to overcome a fall of 24 feet, occasioned by an irregular ledge of limerock, through which the entire bed of the canal is excavated, a part of it, to the depth of 12 feet, is overlaid with earth. There is one guard and three lift locks combined, all of which have their foundation on the rock. One bridge of stone 240 feet long, with an elevation

of 68 feet to top of the parapet wall, and three arches, the centre one of which is semi-elliptical, with a transverse diameter of 66, and a semi-conjugate diameter of 22 feet. The two side arches are segments of 40 feet span. The guard lock is 190 feet long in the clear, with semicircular heads of 26 feet in diameter, 50 feet wide, and 42 feet high, and contains 21,775 perches of mason-work. The solid contents of this lock are equal to 15 common locks, such as are built on the Ohio and New-York canals. The lift locks are of the same width with the guard lock, 20 feet high, and 183 feet long in the clear, and contain 12,300 perches of mason-work. The entire length of the walls, from the head of the guard lock to the end of the outlet lock, is 921 feet. In addition to the amount of mason-work above, there are three culverts to drain off the water from the adjacent lands, the mason-work of which, when added to the locks and bridge, give the whole amount of mason-work 41,989 perches, equal to about 30 common canal locks. The cross section of the canal is 200 feet at top of banks, 50 feet at bottom, and 42 feet high, having a capacity equal to that of 25 common canals; and if we keep in view the unequal quantity of mason-work compared to the length of the canal, the great difficulties of excavating earth and rock from so great a depth and width, together with the contingencies attending its construction from the fluctuations of the Ohio River, it may not be considered as extravagant in drawing the comparison between the work in this and in that of 70 or 75 miles of common canalling.

In the upper sections of the canal, the alluvial earth to the average depth of twenty feet being removed, trunks of trees were found more or less decayed, and so imbedded as to indicate a powerful current towards the present shore, some of which were cedar, which is not now found in this region. Several *fireplaces* of a rude construction, with partially burnt wood, were discovered near the rock, as well as the bones of a variety of small animals and several human skeletons; rude implements formed of bone and stone were frequently seen, as also several well-wrought specimens of hematite of iron, in the shape of plummets or sinkers, displaying a knowledge in the arts far in advance of the present race of Indians.

The first stratum of rock was a light, friable slate, in close contact with the limestone, and difficult to disengage from it; this slate did not, however, extend over the whole surface of the rock, and was of various thicknesses, from three inches to four feet.

The stratum next to the slate was a close, compact limestone, in which petrified seashells and an infinite variety of coralline formations were imbedded, and frequent cavities of crystalline incrustations were seen, many of which still contained petroleum of a highly fetid smell, which gives the name to this description of limestone. This description of rock is on an average of five feet, covering a substratum of a species of cias limestone of a bluish colour, imbedding nodules of hornstone and organic remains. The fracture of this stone has in all instances been found to be irregu-

larly conchoidal, and on exposure to the atmosphere and subjection to fire, it crumbles to pieces. When burnt and ground, and mixed with a due proportion of silicious sand, it has been found to make a most superior kind of hydraulic cement or water-lime.

The discovery of this valuable limestone has enabled the canal company to construct their masonry more solidly than any other known in the United States.

A manufactory of this hydraulic cement or water-lime is now established on the bank of the canal, on a scale capable of supplying the United States with this much-valued material for all works in contact with water or exposed to moisture; the nature of this cement being to harden in the water; the grout used on the locks of the canal is already *harder* than the *stone* used in their construction.

After passing through the stratum which was commonly called the water-lime, about ten feet in thickness, the workmen came to a more compact mass of primitive gray limestone, which, however, was not penetrated to any great depth. In many parts of the excavation masses of a bluish white flint and hornstone were found enclosed in or incrusting the fetid limestone. And from the large quantities of arrow-heads and other rude formations of this flint stone, it is evident that it was made much use of by the Indians in forming their weapons for war and hunting; in one place a magazine of arrow-heads was discovered, containing many hundreds of these rude implements, carefully packed together and buried below the surface of the ground.

The existence of iron ore in considerable quantities was exhibited in the progress of the excavation of the canal, by numerous highly-charged chalybeate springs that gushed out, and continued to flow during the time that the rock was exposed, chiefly in the upper strata of limestone.—*Louisville Directory for* 1835.

B. Page 46.

Since the remarks relative to "the remarkable cavern in the vicinity of *Tower Rock*, and not far from Hurricane Island," were in type, the subjoined notice of a similar cave, probably the same referred to, has casually fallen under my observation. The reader will recognise in this description the outlines of *Rock-Inn-Cave*, previously noticed. It is not a little singular that none of our party, which was a numerous one, observed the "hieroglyphics" here alluded to. The passage is from Priest's "American Antiquities"

"*A Cavern of the West, in which are found many interesting Hieroglyphics, supposed to have been made by the Ancient Inhabitants.*

"On the Ohio, twenty miles below the mouth of the Wabash, is a cavern in which are found many hieroglyphics and representations of such delineations as would induce the belief that their authors were indeed comparatively refined and civilized. It is a cave in a rock, or ledge of the mountain, which presents itself to

view a little above the water of the river when in flood, and is situated close to the bank. In the early settlement of Ohio this cave became possessed by a party of Kentuckians called 'Wilson's Gang.' Wilson, in the first place, brought his family to this cave, and fitted it up as a spacious dwelling; erected a *signpost* on the water side, on which were these words: 'Wilson's Liquor Vault and House of Entertainment.' The novelty of such a tavern induced almost all the boats descending the river to call for refreshments and amusement. Attracted by these circumstances, several idle characters took up their abode at the cave, after which it continually resounded with the shouts of the licentious, the clamour of the riotous, and the blasphemy of gamblers. Out of such customers Wilson found no difficulty in forming a band of robbers, with whom he formed the plan of murdering the crews of every boat that stopped at his tavern, and of sending the boats, manned by some of his party, to New-Orleans, and there sell their loading for cash, which was to be conveyed to the cave by land through the States of Tennessee and Kentucky; the party returning with it being instructed to murder and rob on all good occasions on the road.

"After a lapse of time the merchants of the upper country began to be alarmed on finding their property make no returns, and their people never coming back. Several families and respectable men who had gone down the river were never heard of, and the losses became so frequent that it raised, at length, a cry of individual distress and general dismay. This naturally led to an inquiry, and large rewards were offered for the discovery of the perpetrators of such unparalleled crimes. It soon came out that Wilson, with an organized party of forty-five men, was the cause of such waste of blood and treasure; that he had a station at Hurricane Island to arrest every boat that passed by the mouth of the cavern, and that he had agents at Natchez and New-Orleans, of presumed respectability, who converted his assignments into cash, though they knew the goods to be stolen or obtained by the commission of murder.

"The publicity of Wilson's transactions soon broke up his party; some dispersed, others were taken prisoners, and he himself was killed by one of his associates, who was tempted by the reward offered for the head of the captain of the gang.

"This cavern measures about twelve rods in length and five in width; its entrance presents a width of eighty feet at its base and twenty-five feet high. The interior walls are smooth rock. The floor is very remarkable, being level through the whole length of its centre, the sides rising in stony grades, in the manner of seats in the pit of a theatre. On a diligent scrutiny of the walls, it is plainly discerned that the ancient inhabitants at a very remote period had made use of the cave as a house of deliberation and council. The walls bear many hieroglyphics, well executed, and some of them represent animals which have no resemblance to any now known to natural history.

"This cavern is a great natural curiosity, as it is connected with

another still more gloomy, which is situated exactly above, united by an aperture of about fourteen feet, which, to ascend, is like passing up a chimney, while the mountain is yet far above. Not long after the dispersion and arrest of the robbers who had infested it, in the upper vault were found the skeletons of about sixty persons, who had been murdered by the gang of Wilson, as was supposed.

"But the tokens of antiquity are still more curious and important than a description of the mere cave, which are found engraved on the sides within, an account of which we proceed to give:

"The sun in different stages of rise and declension; the moon under various phases; a snake biting its tail, and representing an orb or circle; a viper; a vulture; buzzards tearing out the heart of a prostrate man; a panther held by the ears by a child; a crocodile; several trees and shrubs; a fox; a curious kind of hydra serpent; two doves; several bears; two scorpions; an eagle; an owl; some quails; *eight* representations of animals which are now unknown. Three out of the eight are like the elephant in all respects except the tusk and the tail. Two more resemble the tiger; one a wild boar; another a sloth; and the last appears a creature of fancy, being a quadruman instead of a quadruped; the claws being alike before and behind, and in the act of conveying something to the mouth, which lay in the centre of the monster. Besides these were several fine representations of men and women, *not naked*, but clothed; not as the Indians, but much in the costume of Greece and Rome."

C. Page 75.

The following extract from the Journal of Charlevoix, one of the earliest historians of the West, with reference to the Mines upon the Merrimac, may prove not uninteresting. The work is a rare one.

"On the 17th (Oct., 1721), after sailing five leagues farther, I left, on my right, the river Marameg, where they are at present employed in searching for a silver mine. Perhaps your grace may not be displeased if I inform you what success may be expected from this undertaking. Here follows what I have been able to collect about this affair, from a person who is well acquainted with it, and who has resided for several years on the spot.

"In the year 1719, the Sieur de Lochon, being sent by the West India Company, in quality of founder, and having dug in a place which had been marked out to him, drew up a pretty large quantity of ore, a pound whereof, which took up four days in smelting, produced, as they say, two drachms of silver; but some have suspected him of putting in this quantity himself. A few months afterward he returned thither, and, without thinking any more of the silver, he extracted from two or three thousand weight of ore fourteen pounds of very bad lead, which stood him in fourteen hundred francs. Disgusted with a labour which was so unprofitable, he returned to France.

"The company, persuaded of the truth of the indications which had been given them, and that the incapacity of the founder had been the sole cause of their bad success, sent, in his room, a Spaniard called Antonio, who had been taken at the siege of Pensacola; had afterward been a galley-slave, and boasted much of his having wrought in a mine at Mexico. They gave him very considerable appointments, but he succeeded no better than had done the Sieur de Lochon. He was not discouraged himself, and others inclined to believe that he had failed from his not being versed in the construction of furnaces. He gave over the search after lead, and undertook to make silver; he dug down to the rock, which was found to be eight or ten feet in thickness; several pieces of it were blown up and put into a crucible, from whence it was given out that he extracted three or four drachms of silver; but many are still doubtful of the truth of this fact.

"About this time arrived a company of the king's miners, under the direction of one *La Renaudiere*, who, resolving to begin with the lead mines, was able to do nothing; because neither he himself nor any of his company were in the least acquainted with the construction of furnaces. Nothing can be more surprising than the facility with which the company at that time exposed themselves to great expenses, and the little precaution they took to be satisfied of the capacity of those they employed. La Renaudiere and his miners not being able to procure any lead, a private company undertook the mines of the Marameg, and Sieur Renault, one of the directors, superintended them with care. In the month of June last he found a bed of lead ore two feet in thickness, running to a great length over a chain of mountains, where he has now set his people to work. He flatters himself that there is silver below the lead. Everybody is not of his opinion, but time will discover the truth."

D. Page 81.

That the Mississippi, the Missouri, and, indeed, most of the great rivers of the West, are annually enlarging, as progress is made in clearing and cultivating the regions drained by them, scarcely admits a doubt. Within the past thirty years, the width of the Mississippi has sensibly increased; its overflows are more frequent, while, by the diminution of obstructions, it would seem not to have become proportionally shallow. In 1750, the French settlements began upon the river above New-Orleans, and for twenty years the banks were cultivated without a *levee*. Inundation was then of rare occurrence: ever since, from year to year, the river has continued to rise, and require higher and stronger embankments. A century hence, if this phenomenon continues, what a magnificent spectacle will not this river present! How terrific its freshets! The immense forest of timber which lies concealed beneath its depths, as evinced by the great earthquakes of 1811, demonstrates that, for centuries, the Mississippi has occupied its present bed.

E. Page 119.

With reference to the *human footprints in the rock at St. Louis*, I have given the local tradition. Schoolcraft's detailed description, which I subjoin, varies from this somewhat. The print of a human foot is said to have been discovered, also, in the limestone at Herculaneum. Morse, in his *Universal Geography*, tells us of the tracks of an army of men and horses on a certain mountain in the State of Tennessee, fitly named the Enchanted Mountain.

"Before leaving Harmony, our attention was particularly directed to a tabular mass of limestone, containing two apparent prints or impressions of the naked human foot. This stone was carefully preserved in an open area, upon the premises of Mr. Rappe, by whom it had previously been conveyed from the banks of the Mississippi, at St. Louis. The impressions are, to all appearance, those of a man standing in an erect posture, with the left foot a little advanced and the heels drawn in. The distance between the heels, by accurate measurement, is six and a quarter inches, and between the extremities of the toes thirteen and a half. But, by a close inspection, it will be perceived that these are not the impressions of feet accustomed to the European shoe; the toes being much spread, and the foot flattened, in the manner that is observed in persons unaccustomed to the close shoe. The probability, therefore, of their having been imparted by some individual of a race of men who were strangers to the art of tanning skins, and at a period much anterior to that to which any traditions of the present race of Indians reaches, derives additional weight from this peculiar shape of the feet.

"In other respects, the impressions are strikingly natural, exhibiting the muscular marks of the foot with great precision and faithfulness to nature. This circumstance weakens very much the supposition that they may, *possibly*, be specimens of antique sculpture, executed by any former race of men inhabiting this continent. Neither history nor tradition has preserved the slightest traces of such a people. For it must be recollected that, as yet, we have no evidence that the people who erected our stupendous Western tumuli possessed any knowledge of masonry, far less of sculpture, or that they had even invented a chisel, a knife, or an axe, other than those of porphyry, hornstone, or obsidian.

"The average length of the human foot in the male subject may, perhaps, be assumed at ten inches. The length of each foot, in our subject, is ten and a quarter inches: the breadth, taken across the toes, at right angles to the former line, four inches; but the greatest spread of the toes is four and a half inches, which diminishes to two and a half at the heel. Directly before the prints, and approaching within a few inches of the left foot, is a well-impressed and deep mark, having some resemblance to a scroll, whose greatest length is two feet seven inches, and greatest breadth twelve and a half inches.

"The rock containing these interesting impressions is a compact limestone of a grayish-blue colour. It was originally quarried on

the left bank of the Mississippi at St. Louis, and is a part of the extensive range of calcareous rocks upon which that town is built. It contains very perfect remains of the encrinite, echinite, and some other fossil species. The rock is firm and well consolidated, as much so as any part of the stratum. A specimen of this rock, now before us, has a decidedly sparry texture, and embraces a mass of black blende. This rock is extensively used as a building material at St. Louis. On parting with its carbonic acid and water, it becomes beautifully white, yielding an excellent quicklime. Foundations of private dwellings at St. Louis, and the military works erected by the French and Spaniards from this material sixty years ago, are still as solid and unbroken as when first laid. We cite these facts as evincing the compactness and durability of the stone—points which must essentially affect any conclusions to be drawn from the prints we have mentioned, and upon which, therefore, we are solicitous to express our decided opinion."

F. Page 213.

"In the year 1538, *Ferdinand de Soto*, with a commission from the Emperor *Charles V.*, sailed with a considerable fleet for America. He was a Portuguese gentleman, and had been with *Pizarro* in the conquest (as it is called) of Peru. His commission constituted him governor of Cuba and general of Florida. Although he sailed from St. Lucar in 1538, he did not land in Florida* until May, 1539. With about 1000 men, 213 of whom were provided with horses, he undertook the conquest of Florida and countries adjacent. After cutting their way in various directions through numerous tribes of Indians, traversing nearly 1000 miles of country, losing a great part of their army, their general died upon the banks of the Mississippi, and the survivers were obliged to build vessels in which to descend the river; which, when they had done, they sailed for Mexico. This expedition was five years in coming to nothing, and bringing ruin upon its performers. A populous Indian town at this time stood at or near the mouth of the Mobile, of which *Soto's* army had possessed themselves. Their intercourse with the Indians was at first friendly, but at length a chief was insulted, which brought on hostilities. A battle was fought, in which, it is said, 2000 Indians were killed and 83 Spaniards."—[*Drake's Book of the Indians*, b. iv., c. 3.]

G. Page 213.

"After a long and fatiguing journey through a mountainous wilderness, in a westward direction, I at last, from the top of an eminence, saw with pleasure the beautiful land of Kentucky. * * * It was in June; and at the close of day the gentle gales retired, and left the place to the disposal of a profound calm. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the summit of a command-

* "So called, because it was first discovered by the Spaniards on Palm-Sunday, or, as the most interpret, Easter-day, which they call *Pasqua-Florida*, and not, as Thenet writeth, for the flourishing verdure thereof."—*Purchas*, p. 769.

ing ridge, and, looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tracts below. * * * Nature was here a series of wonders and a fund of delight. Here she displayed her ingenuity and industry in a variety of flowers and fruits, beautifully coloured, elegantly shaped, and charmingly flavoured; and I was diverted with innumerable animals presenting themselves continually before my view. * * * The buffaloes were more frequent than I have seen cattle in the settlements, browsing on the leaves of the cane, or cropping the herbage on these extensive plains, fearless because ignorant of man."—[Narrative of Colonel Daniel Boone, from his first arrival in Kentucky in 1769, to the year 1782.]

H. Page 251.

The following extract from a letter dated September, 1819, addressed by Mr. Austin to Mr. Schoolcraft, respecting the navigation of the Missouri, well portrays the impetuous character of that river. It shows, too, the great improvements in the steam-engine during the past twenty years.

"I regret to state that the expedition up the Missouri to the Yellow Stone has in part failed. The steamboats destined for the Upper Missouri, after labouring against the current for a number of weeks, were obliged to give up the enterprise. Every exertion has been made to overcome the difficulty of navigating the Missouri with the power of steam; but all will not do. The current of that river, from the immense quantity of sand moving down with the water, is too powerful for any boat yet constructed. The loss either to the government or to the contractor will be very great. Small steamboats of fifty tons burden, with proper engines, would, I think, have done much better. Boats like those employed, of twenty to thirty feet beam, and six to eight feet draught of water, must have *uncommon* power to be propelled up a river, every pint of whose water is equal in weight to a quart of Ohio water, and moves with a velocity hardly credible. The barges fixed to move with wheels, worked by men, have answered every expectation; but they will only do when troops are on board, and the men can be changed every hour."

END OF VOL. I.