



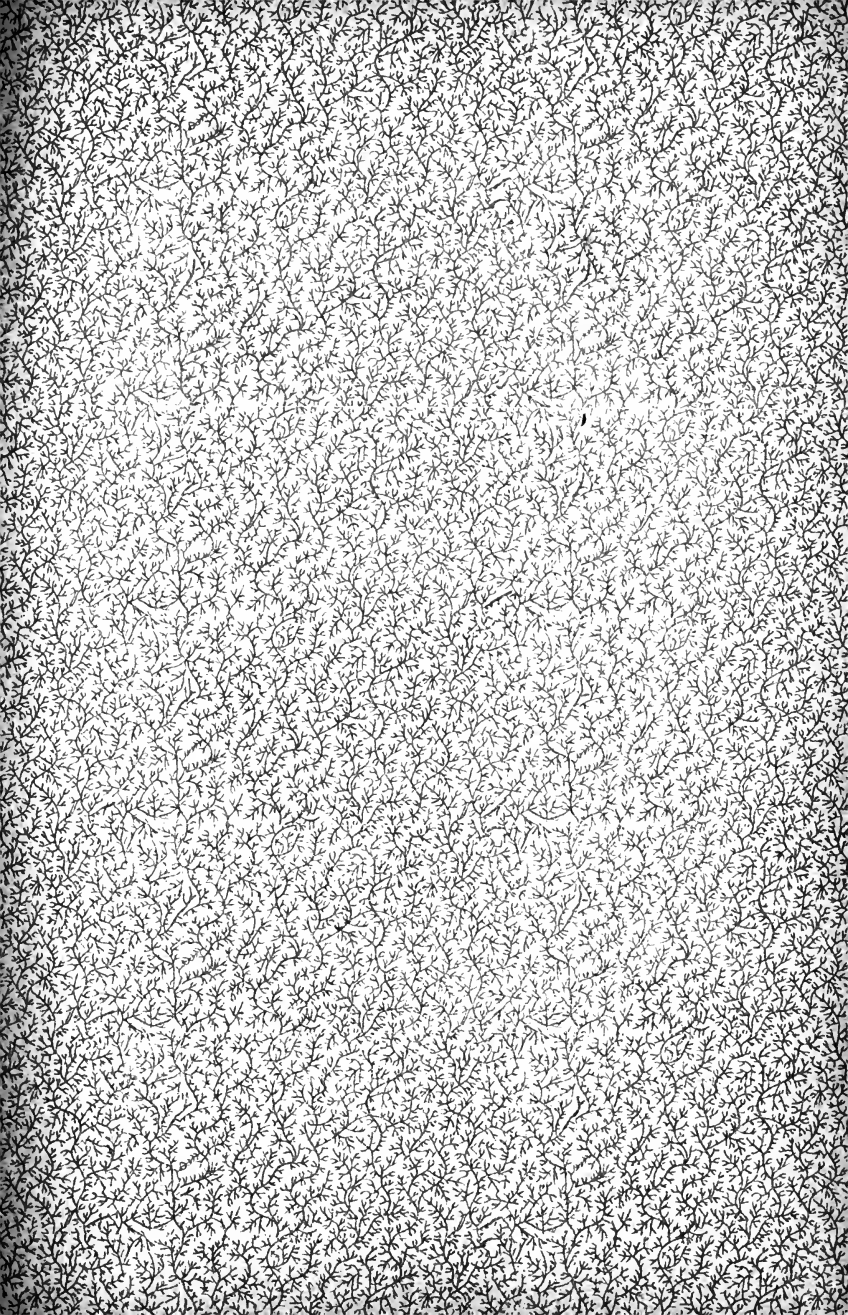
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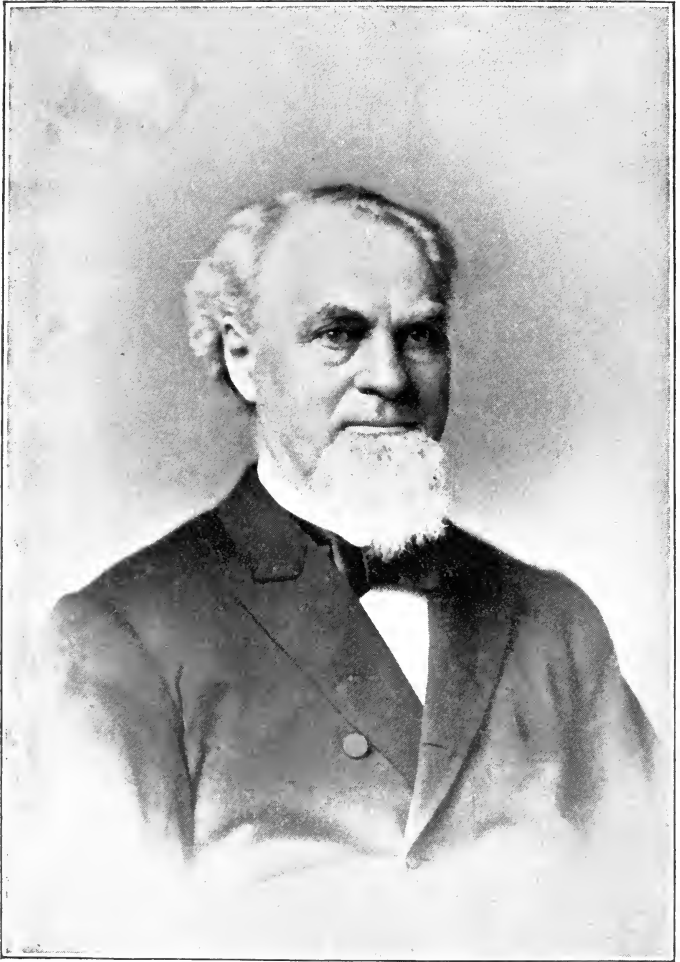
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To my dear grand daughter  
Marion S. Bristow  
with <sup>the</sup> compliments of  
Philander Stevens  
June 1896







Very Truly Yours  
Philander Stevens



RECOLLECTIONS  
AND  
INCIDENTS of a LIFETIME;

OR,  
Men and Things I Have Seen.

*In a Series of Familiar Letters  
to a Friend.*

Historical, Autobiographical, Anecdotal  
and Descriptive.

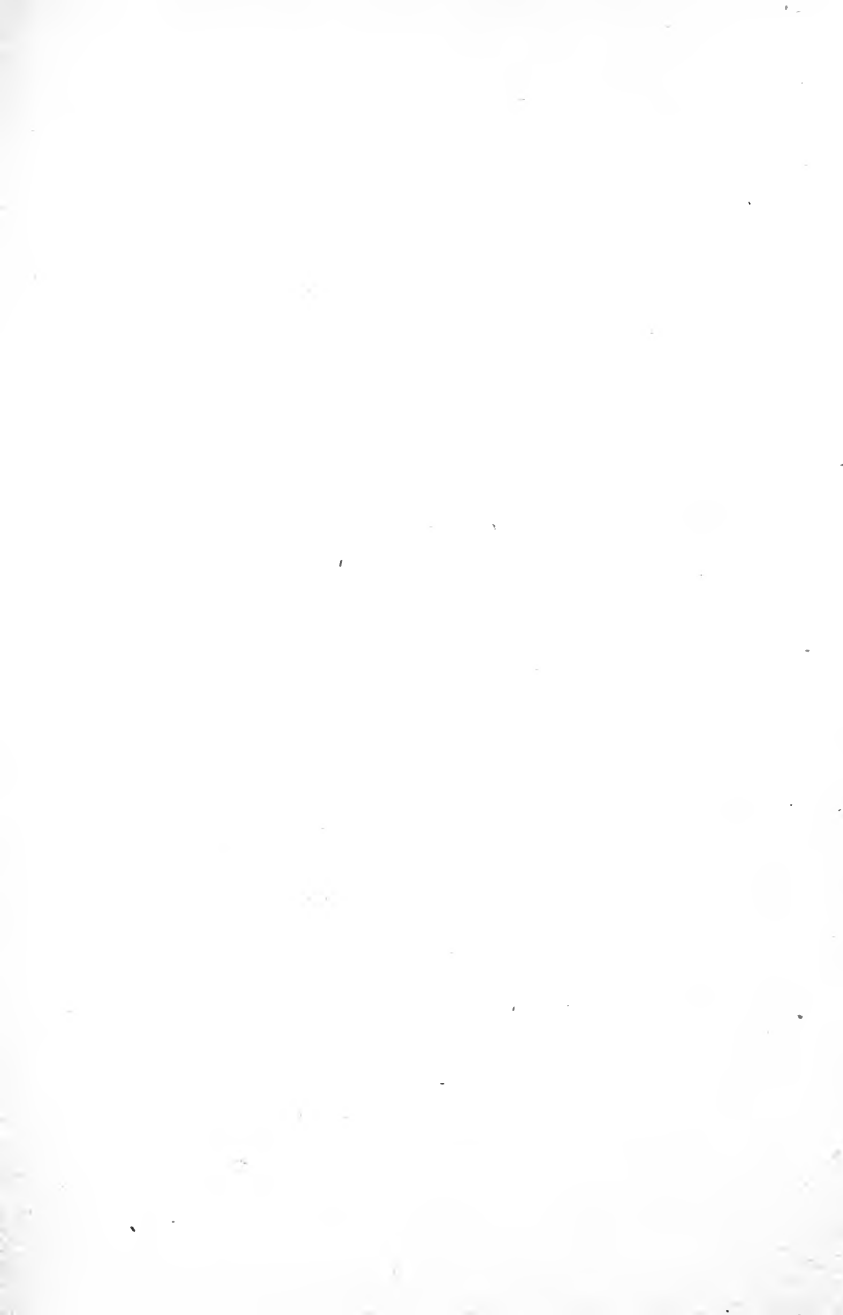
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By PHILANDER STEVENS.

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BROOKLYN, N. Y.

1896.



To the memory of my sainted wife,  
the loved companion  
for more than fifty years in my life's journey,  
is this simple narrative  
most affectionately dedicated by her  
sorrowing husband.



## INTRODUCTORY.

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### LETTER I.

MY DEAR H.—

In your last letter, received a few days since, you referred to some incidents of my life which I had related, and expressed a desire to know still further of the incidents and events of my long and busy life, already prolonged beyond the allotted three score and ten years.

I have, therefore, actually determined upon carrying out your suggestion to write a memoir of my life and times—a sort of personal narrative.

The only thing that makes me hesitate is a fear that an autobiography must essentially be a personal history, and would be very likely to be flavored with egotism, a sentiment I detest. I shall, however, try to divest this simple history of the air of egotism as far as I can do so, and, perhaps, the best form in which I can give the details will be in the form of letters to you ; thus telling a simple story, in a simple way, to an old and very dear friend

I will, therefore, invite you to go with me, in imagination, over the principal scenes I have witnessed, carrying you back to my boyhood days—to my early country life, in which I was born and bred.

The history will be, essentially, a personal narrative—simple, commonplace, nothing marvelous, or out of the beaten track of common experience.

In regard to many of the events I shall have occasion to describe, the character and characteristics of men and things I shall portray, my connection was only that of a spectator.

How far the recollection of those early days will serve me as I try to arrange them upon the thread of my memory, remains to be seen ; and I must crave your kind indulgence to overlook all mistakes.

PHILANDER STEVENS.

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# Recollections and Incidents of a Lifetime.

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## LETTER II.

MY DEAR H.—

You will, of course, expect that in the beginning of my story, I make you acquainted with the place where I was born, as well as the objects surrounding it.

In the mountainous part of the State of New York, in the western range of the Catskills, in the southern corner of Schoharie County, is a small village by the name of Gilboa.

Near this village, in a one-and-a-half story, plain farm house, I was born on the 16th day of November, 1819. The town was at that time named Broome, but has since been named after the principal village, Gilboa.

This village lies in a hollow or basin surrounded on all sides by mountains. These mountains in my boyhood days seemed the very Alps in dimensions ; but in later years,

like most things of our boyish imaginations, diminish to but small affairs.

The Schoharie Kill Creek, a rapid and turbulent stream, which rises in the Catskills, a few miles only from the Hudson River, taking a westerly course through the gorges of the mountains, finds its way into the Mohawk and thence back again after a journey of some two or three hundred miles to the Hudson, and within a few miles of its source. This creek was the southern boundary of my father's farm, where I was born and spent my boyhood days. From our house this creek (perhaps it should be called a river) was in full view for a mile or more, the view including the "Stevens Falls" a veritable Niagara in a freshet. These falls were the waters of the Manor Kill, another mountain stream, which emptied into the Schoharie Kill, immediately below the falls.

As I said, the Schoharie Kill was a rapid, turbulent stream. The spring freshets caused by the melting of the accumulated winter snows in the mountains, were something grand and terrible; the ice two and three feet thick would be broken up by the

rushing waters, often forming dams and overflowing whole valleys before giving way and then carrying everything before it—bridges, mills, houses, barns, cattle, hogs, and sometimes human beings were swept away.

I remember one winter, my father wanted to secure some pine logs—the trees growing on the bank of the creek, just below the “Stevens Falls,” and there was no way except to get them on the ice, and then down the creek on the ice, a half mile to a sloping bank.

We succeeded in getting all the logs on the ice. They were large logs, some two or three feet in diameter and twelve and fourteen feet long. The ice was thick and solid and we commenced to haul the logs with a double team, a yoke of oxen, and span of horses ahead. Night came on after we had secured a few of the logs, and we intended to secure the rest next day, but during the night a tremendous rain came on, and in the morning it continued to rain and the water was running a foot deep over the ice, but those pine logs were too valuable to lose, and my father was one of those determined

men who would never yield, even to the elements, when he resolved on doing a thing, so we harnessed the horses and yoked the oxen, and waded the water running over the ice and commenced hauling the rest of the logs.

I shall never forget the fear and dread of that forenoon in the rain and deepening water, running swiftly over the ice, and the dark, yellow, muddy water just above us, pouring over the "Stevens Falls," the Manor Kill having already broken up.

I well remember my father's anxious look as we drove back for the last log, and how glad we all were when it was landed safely on the bluff with the rest, and we, my father, myself and the hired man, with the teams, all safe.

While we were at dinner, an hour later, we heard the roar of the waters, and on looking out the sight was one never to be forgotten. The breaking up of the thick ice, the rolling and tumbling of great blocks as large as a house floor, forming dams which would resist the gathering waters for a few minutes and then giving way carrying all before it, like some resisting army, yielding inch by

inch to a superior force, until swept away, pursued and pursuer, pell mell in a race, the one for victory and destruction, the other for life, all sweeping on in a confused mass, victors and vanquished struggling together.

I believe these sudden freshets seldom occur since the country is cleared up and the land tilled ; the snows melt more gradually and the ground holds the water.

While speaking of this creek, there were many incidents during my boyhood days connected with it. It was a great stream for eels. I used to set my poles over night with line and hook, the hook baited with a small fish ; often in the morning I would haul in two or three eels. This was about the extent of my fishing, the reason being I had not the time—always had more important work to do.

I remember one morning, I missed one of my poles, and, in my own mind, charged a neighboring boy with stealing it. I had no evidence, but firmly believed him guilty. In the summer we boys often went swimming in the “deep hole,” a little below my eeling place. In wading about I felt a pole

lodged and held between rocks, and on pulling it out found it was my pole, and on the hook was the largest eel I ever saw, a monster two or three feet long, dead, of course, and decayed. He had dragged away the pole and lodged it with himself among the rocks and there died. It was one of the lessons I have learned—to lay up nothing against anybody on suspicion.

This deep hole was the sheep washing place ; a yard was built on its bank, where the sheep were driven in, and one by one taken out in the water waist deep, where the sheep would float without being able to touch bottom and its fleece washed white as snow. When all were washed, they were driven to a pasture nearby, where there was no dirt, or chance to get the wool soiled, and kept a few days until perfectly dry and then taken to the barn for shearing.

This sheep shearing was quite an event. We boys became quite expert ; could often take off the fleece whole or nearly so, like taking off a shirt by turning it wrong side out.

The sheep was robbed of its fleece by laying it flat on the barn floor, and commencing



ing at the head and shearing towards the tail turning the fleece wrong side out as you proceed and finishing at the tail. The poor sheep making no resistance, perhaps not realizing it was being robbed.

I heard a good story told by Marshall P. Wilder. He said he was going through the country the next summer after the last Presidential election and seeing a man shearing a sheep and shearing from the tail towards the head, he stopped and told the man he was shearing the wrong way; the right way was to commence at the head and shear towards the tail. "Yes," the man said, "I know it but I voted the Democratic ticket last fall, and ever since I have been ashamed to look a sheep in the face." Well, I don't wonder; a sheep ought to know better than that.

There are a great many risks in raising sheep; they are of all animals the weakest for self defence—a very little dog will race a flock of sheep and kill many, often in sport, as it is natural for a dog to chase anything that runs from it. Wild animals, too, often kill sheep; and in some communities there are lovers of mutton who

will steal sheep—they are such easy and noiseless victims.

To go back a little in my narrative: I was the ninth child of a family of eleven children, all of whom lived to grow up and all but one lived to be married and settled in life and all but four are still living.

Of the eleven children eight were sons and three daughters. My sisters were all older than myself—Cynthia, the eldest, married, before I can remember, James Rose. She was the mother of a large family. The next sister, Phebe Ann, married John Schermerhorn. She died of consumption leaving a large family of young children. The third sister was Elizabeth, who never married. She was the nearest to an angel of any human being I ever knew. She lived a life of self-sacrifice for the rest of the family.

Of the brothers, Ozias, the eldest, left home when fifteen years of age and became a clerk in the store of Uncle Alfred Hand in Durham; this before my remembrance. When he became of age he opened a store in Gilboa, where he conducted a successful business for forty years or more.

My next brother, Alanson, learned the trade of a tanner, and while yet a young man carried on the tannery of my father and Uncle Smith Stevens until he moved to Wisconsin where he is still living, a prosperous farmer.

My next brother, Hiram was, as a child in feeble health, not considered strong enough for the hard life of a farmer, and so he studied medicine and became a skillful physician and lived to a good old age, dying two years ago. After these my brothers Jason, Ezra and Calvin became clerks successively for brother Ozias, and finally became merchants themselves as did my youngest brother Edward, so that I being the only one left, became the boy farmer and lived at home until fully grown up.

To go back again in my narrative, I will speak of parents and grandparents. My grandfather, Gershom Stevens, sen., was born in Stratford, Fairfield County, Connecticut, in 1741, and his wife, my grandmother Phebe Henry, at the same place, in 1744. I have not been able to trace the genealogy of my grandparents back more than two

hundred years. It is well known, however, that their ancestors came from England, if not with the Pilgrims very soon thereafter; they were thoroughly New England people.

My grandfather was one of the heroes of the Revolution. He was a blacksmith by trade and carrying on a successful business when the war broke out. He left his shop and joined the little band of patriots when the trouble first began.

There was a scarcity of blacksmiths to do the army work, repair locks, shoe horses and other army work and he was assigned to this work as an artisan with commission and pay of a major. Among the duties which he performed was overseeing and helping to make the big chain across the Hudson River at West Point. Was often on expeditions with the army, was in many of the battles and vicissitudes of the war, and was one of the sufferers of that terrible winter at Valley Forge. He lived at Danbury, Conn.—at least his home was there and his family resided there during the war. When the British and Tories burned that place, his house and shop were burned with

all their contents. I have often listened to my grandmother's narratives of these events, until I felt I could go out and thrash some Briton or Tory, no matter how big he was.

I have but a faint recollection of my grandfather who died in 1825, but my grandmother (and she was a grand old lady) lived in my father's family after my grandfather died, until her death in 1831.

They were both buried in the old burying ground in Gilboa, with some of their oldest children beside them.

For some reason or through carelessness or without any reason, these graves were neglected for half a century, until the old brown stones had crumbled and the letters nearly obliterated.

Some eight or ten years ago my cousin D. T. Stevens and myself resolved to erect a monument on the spot, and now at the head of the plot, near the entrance to the old cemetery, is a granite monument, the base of which has in large deep-cut letters "Stevens" and on the monument inscribed :

Sacred to the Memory  
of

GERSHOM STEVENS, Sen.,

A Hero of the Revolution,  
1741—1825.

And his wife, PHEBE HENRY,  
1744—1831.

Here also rest the remains of their children :

OZIAS STEVENS, Sen.

LEVI STEVENS, Sen.

CHARITY, wife of REV. CHARLES TUCKER.

ANNA, wife of WOODHULL HELM.

LOIS, wife of JOHN DECKER.

THALIA, wife of JOHN PARKER.

Erected by D. T. & P. STEVENS.

There are several other Revolutionary soldiers buried in this old cemetery ; and all these graves, with my grandfather's, are cared for by the Grand Army Veterans of the late war and are decorated with flowers on every Decoration Day.

My father and mother are buried in the same cemetery, in a lot of their own, with several members of the family.

My grandfather was quite a character according to tradition. I have heard many anecdotes about him. A neighbor was cut-

ting logs and grandfather accused him of being over the line on his land, and a quarrel ensued. Grandfather said for three cents he would kick him off the log; the neighbor dared him to do it, and said he would give him the three cents to do it, whereupon grandfather walked up the log and kicked him headlong off the log, and then went and got out a summons and sued him for the three cents.

These were in the rough times, in a rough country, and men became rough. These two men were really good, kind-hearted men and, as I heard the story, were afterward good friends—would do anything for each other.

Another story was: among a New England Puritan community in his younger days a prominent citizen was accidentally drowned from a boat in which were two other men. At the funeral held in the church, the clergyman said it had been decreed from the foundation of the world that this man should be drowned; hence it was no accident but a divine decree.

After the services, grandfather objected to the doctrine of the preacher and used some

very emphatic language and said: "If I had been in that boat, by the eternal I would have broken the decree." If I remember right the story was: he was tried and punished by the church, which was then the civil authority in such cases.

My father partook something of his sturdy character, indomitable perseverance, a will to overcome all obstacles, a strong constitution, untiring; it was work, work, work, twelve and fifteen hours a day; nothing too much for him to undertake.

He with my Uncle Smith Stevens, during my boyhood days and long before I can remember, were engaged together in many enterprises, and they always took the brunt of the hardest work. They built and carried on a grist mill, two saw mills, one of which was worked by eight horses—an invention of their own—the other by water, a shingle factory and turning works, also run by water, a tannery, besides carrying on, each, a large farm.

If anybody thinks the boys of such fathers had an easy time they are very greatly mistaken. About my chance for an education, I will leave that for another letter.



## LETTER III.

MY DEAR H.—

In my last letter I mentioned something about my grandparents and my father and mother. I will tell you a little more about my parents, to give you a better idea of my early surroundings and advantages.

As I said before, my father was a man of indomitable perseverance, and the immense amount of labor together with the economical habits of himself and family would, in almost any other section of our country, have made him independent. As it was it was terrible uphill work,—mills and machinery constantly breaking down, supplies for repairs and millwrights so hard to be got—the distance from the nearest market town, Catskill, forty miles over hard mountain roads,—lumber from the mills to be hauled to Catskill and sold, or shipped by sloop to a New York market. It was a three days' trip to haul a load to Catskill, and one thousand feet of hemlock boards was a good load for those roads, and if I remember right, the price obtained in

Catskill was less than ten dollars a thousand feet.

It is easy to see how big a dollar seemed in those days. Many and many a time was I sent with a load of lumber to Catskill before I was twelve years old, generally, however, in company with one or two other teams driven by a hired man or one of my cousins.

We always took with us our lunch box and bag of oats for the horses, as the profits would not afford paying the tavern bills; only for stable room for the horses and the rick of hay, and a bed for us.

There were special rates for lumber men and teamsters at the taverns. The price for meals, if we felt sometimes by the third day out like eating a good square meal, was one shilling (12 1-2 cents). Even these small expenses, with the gate money, four toll gates between Gilboa and Catskill, made quite a hole in the price received for the lumber.

I remember on one occasion my load was to be shipped to New York on a sloop.

I drove to the dock. The captain of the sloop, standing on the sloop deck, asked for

my memorandum of the number of feet in the load.

I opened my wallet to get the memorandum when every penny of money I had (all in change) dropped out between the dock and the sloop into the river.

I have often met losses since of many thousands of dollars, but never one that I felt the loss as I did this. I was forty miles from home; it seemed to me I was ruined, stranded and strapped.

I had friends, however, who came to my relief, lent me the money I needed, and encouraged me not to take the loss too much to heart.

I believe the amount was something like two dollars, all in silver and pennies; but it was a big sum in those days.

I sometimes, now, look back on those long, tedious trips of my boyhood days and the incidents connected therewith with a sort of nightmare feeling. In crossing the mountain, there were three miles of steep hill to climb, and every few yards the horses would stop to breathe, and I had to be ready with a stone to block the wheel; often with the most desperate straining only a few

feet could be made without a stop. The utmost strength of a team could be, generally, pretty accurately gauged.

One man I knew said he could load his team so exact that if he threw his mittens on the load they would be just enough to stick his team.

There were many incidents which I well remember; some narrow escapes from disaster. On one occasion, after the long climb up the mountain and commencing to go down on the other side, the bolt holding the single whiffletree of the off horse dropped out, letting the whiffletree drop down under the horse's heels. The horse made a sudden jump which let the tongue of the wagon drop out of the ring of the neck yoke.

This was at the top of a long, steep hill and the situation was extremely critical. Soon the horses were under a full run, with the heavy loaded wagon of lumber at their heels, one horse still fastened to the wagon, and the other with the whiffletree at his heels. Of course the horses and wagon were entirely unmanageable; a deep gully on one side of the road, and I, a boy of

twelve or thirteen years, on top of the load of lumber. I was powerless, as the oldest and best teamster in the world would be under the circumstances.

My cousin, Alfred Stevens, was driving the team ahead far enough to be out of danger.

The team behind was driven by Jake Dixon, who described the affair afterwards.

He said, when he noticed my horses were running away and the wagon zig-zagging now on one side of the road just on the edge of the precipice, and then on the other side, that I was standing up straight with a line in each hand holding the horses with all the strength I had until near the bottom of the hill, when I pulled the horses suddenly to the left up against the hill, still holding on to the reins, and jumped clear of the wagon, the near horse breaking loose as the wagon went over the bank.

I did not receive a scratch, but was badly frightened. The horses were not much injured, only some cuts on their legs made by the splintered wagon tongue ; but they were also badly scared and

stood trembling while some kindly farmers and carpenters, working on a new building near, came and put liniment on the horses' legs and coddled me quite a good deal on my narrow escape and helped my cousin and Dixon repair the wagon and re-load the lumber and start me again on my trip.

I have often been over that same road since and always stop to see the place that came so near ending my earthly career. When I remember how many narrow escapes from disaster and imminent peril I have passed through, it seems to me my life has been a charmed one. The dear Lord has often allowed me to see the brink of peril and danger, and then snatched me, as it were, from the very jaws of death.

I remember about this time, my father with several hired men were up in the mountain, some three or four miles from home, peeling bark. They would leave home early in the morning returning at evening. I used to drive an old horse and wagon and carry their dinner to them.

Sometimes my brother Calvin, a younger brother, would accompany me. On one

occasion when he was with me we both desired to stay and see the great trees chopped down and fall. One was a giant hemlock ; father stationed us behind where the tree was expected to fall ; where he considered it perfectly safe for us to stand. This tree in falling struck another tree, uprooting and carrying it down with it. The roots of this tree, however, uprooted another tree standing close to it, throwing it back directly where we stood. Father called loudly, "run, boys, run," and I did just dodge the tree, but not so my little brother ; the body of the tree struck him on his head and shoulders, and only for a small log which it fell across would have crushed him into the earth. As it was, when he was pulled out from under the tree, he was limp and lifeless ; we all supposed he was dead.

Father, who under all circumstances never lost his head, called for water, which he dashed in his face, rubbed him, tried every way possible to bring back the spark of life, but failing to bring him to, took him in the wagon down to the nearest house—Mr. Street's—a mile away, hurried a man off on horseback to Gilboa for the

nearest doctor, three miles away. Meantime father tried everything he could think of, even to opening a vein in the arm with a penknife, which in those days was considered the thing to do in such cases. About the time we who were watching saw the doctor and messenger coming in the distance, their horses on a full run, my brother began to show signs of life and soon was able to look around and to enquire what was the matter.

After a few hours, father took him in his arms on a pillow in an easy buck-board wagon, and under careful nursing he recovered.

Owing to the log, which was providentially just on that spot and held up the tree, no bones were broken or any vital organs injured. The shock, however, nearly terminated his life, and the fright to me and all the rest was terrible.

As before remarked the country was new and rough; all the social life partook largely of the unrefined and rougher side of human nature. The holidays were, for the men and boys, days of rough games. Wrestling, racing, jumping, shooting at



chickens twelve paces off (the chickens tied to a tree or fence) for five cents a shot ; if a shot drew blood or broke a bone the shooter won the chicken. Sometimes it would take a dozen shots before the chicken was hit, and again the first shot might take it.

The older marksmen would shoot at turkeys or geese at much longer distance with a rifle and at rest, the price for each shot would be double or more, as geese and turkeys were more valuable. In these days this kind of sport would be called cruel, and rightly so ; but nobody in those days seemed to make any objection.

I have often seen some of these men and boys trudging their way home with a load of fowls over their shoulder, the triumph of their skill during the day.

The principal occasions that brought together the boys and girls were apple bees, husking bees, logging bees, quilting bees, and the like.

The logging bees were to clear up a piece of timber land which had been cut and burned over. The logs were to be cut in suitable lengths and drawn together with oxen or horses and piled in huge piles to

be burned. This was the way all that country was cleared for tillage. The men with their teams would come in the afternoon and work faithfully until night. The women folks would prepare a sumptuous supper; in the evening the young people would remain and others come in and have a merry time; if a fiddler could be obtained, a dance would be in order.

The quiltings would be the same, only the girls and women would meet in the afternoon and work. The young men came in the evening and had the usual frolic.

The apple bees, however, were really the most popular of all. At these bees, the boys and girls would all work together, peeling and quartering apples until nine o'clock. Then a nice supper or refreshments and the usual play or dance, kept up until midnight or after. How many happy matches were made and declarations of love on these occasions can never be known. One of the exercises of these apple bees was to swing an apple peel around the head three times and let it fall behind the back. This peeling, with the help of a little imagination, would form some initial letter of the

future husband or wife of the thrower. The most interested party would, of course, want to make the letter what he or she desired it to be.

I set out in this letter to tell you something of my father and mother; but you see I have been digressing. As I said, my father was a man of indomitable perseverance, no obstacle could discourage him.

Besides the great amount of work he always had on hand, he held the office of justice of the peace for many years. In those days a justice's court was a very democratic affair. The spare room in the house was usually where his courts were held, unless some very important case, a horse case, or trespass, or something which would draw a crowd. In such cases the court would adjourn to the barn, where tables, benches and chairs would be provided, and plenty of standing room on the clean swept barn floor. A jury of six men would often sit all day to hear and decide a case involving a few dollars. The lawyers who would try these cases were generally farmers who had somehow got hold of a copy of some old law-book and a little smattering of law,

and the way they would lay it down to the justice and jury was something wonderful and often very ridiculous. In these justice's courts very much latitude was allowed. The lawyers would generally abuse the opposing lawyer and his client, as though this was the best part of his duties.

When a case was put on the calendar and the issues joined, before trial, the plaintiff would make out his brief and file it with the justice giving the particulars of his claim and what he proposed to prove "a bill of particulars."

Then the defendant would also file his brief in reply, which would generally deny every one of the plaintiff's allegations and state what he proposed to prove, and neither party could go into any proof not mentioned in these briefs; hence it was important that every possible ground of allegation or defence should be fully covered.

For instance, John Smith sued George Jones for a potash kettle which he had borrowed and returned broken. The brief would be something of this style :

“The said kettle was whole when he borrowed it and was broken when he returned it, to his damage ten dollars.” The defendant’s reply would be something like this: “The kettle was broken when we borrowed it; it was whole when we returned it, and beside this we never had his kettle.”

This seems very ridiculous, but so do many technical forms of law as still practiced in our courts.

In those days a debtor could be sent to jail if he could not pay his debts; a barbarous relic of barbarous times.

I remember one poor debtor begging his creditor not to send him to jail, promising to pay as soon as he possibly could. My father also interceded for him. If I remember right, the man was not sent to jail, though the commitment was made out; but it was only through the mercy of the creditor, and no thanks to the statute laws of our state.

Thanks to the progressive spirit of civilization and Christianity this barbarous law was long since repealed.

Like slavery and some other relics of

heathendom, men were slow to realize the terrible wickedness and cruelty which for ages disgraced our race.

As I said, my father was one of the busiest of men, and yet often a whole day would be taken up with some little frivolous matter. Still, as I remember, the community were a peaceable quiet people, set, of course, in their own way, and perhaps a little tenacious of what they considered their rights.

I must add a word in regard to my mother. She was in all respects the best of mothers, patient, untiring in her devotion to her family, the best and most even tempered woman I ever knew. Her maiden name was Abigail Hand, of Suffolk County, New York. Her father was Captain Hand, an old sea captain of a whale ship. In those days the whaling business was one of the leading enterprises of New England and Long Island. The descendants of Captain Hand are among the first citizens of the country.

I must not forget to speak of the schools of those early days. The only school I attended was in the old school house on

the hill, near where the Presbyterian Church now stands in Gilboa. I well remember just how it looked; the desks along the wall on two sides of the room and one end, and the board seats in front of the desks. The girls sitting on one side and the boys on the other, some of the larger girls and boys at the end, the teacher's desk separating them.

At the other end of the room was a large open fireplace, originally where great logs were burned; but, later, this was boarded up and a large box stove put up which would take in wood four feet long, and had to be kept red hot to make the room any way comfortable in cold weather.

The wood was drawn as required by different patrons of the school, and cut at recess or before school hours by the boys; sometimes the teacher helping. Teachers always boarded around. I well remember the first day I ever went to school. The teacher, a Mr. Freese, who was boarding at our house, took me with him. I was called up to his desk to say A, B, C, and I remember the laugh of the school at my bashfulness and awkwardness.

As a rule, strict discipline was required during school hours, and the schoolmaster did not spare the rod ; but when school was out the master often joined with the boys in games. Base ball was popular then as well as now, and snow-forts were built, defended by one party and attacked by another, often leading to real fights and bloody noses before the fort was captured or the aggressors repulsed.

Every young man from the age of 18 to 45 years had to be enrolled, had to own a gun with all the accouterments, and turn out two days in each year for manual exercise and military tactics. Company training was held in each town some day in the early fall, and then a few weeks later the general training, where all the companies in the county would convene at some central place and go through all the evolutions ; the colonel, lieutenant-colonel and staff officers, equipped in showy uniform, mounted on fiery steeds.

The first time I ever attended one of these general musters, my eldest brother, Ozias, was the colonel. I was then a boy not old enough to be a soldier ; but I well



remember my boyish enthusiasm as I watched the evolutions of that regiment of a thousand men.

I have seen the Army of the Potomac, at least one hundred thousand men, with all the appliances of actual war, with not half the enthusiasm I felt on that first general training day.

The military ardor in those days was the still burning embers of the Revolution and the War of 1812. There were many Revolutionary soldiers still living. Mr. Williams, one of the captors of Major Andre, was one, living in our town and a frequent visitor at our house. There were several noted Indian fighters. I remember one in particular, old Mr. Ellerson. I have often listened to his harrowing tales of Indian massacres; some of his own family were killed by the Indians and he had many hair-breadth escapes. He was one of a few men who held the fort at Schoharie, filled with women and children, against a great force of Indians and Tories until relief came from Albany. Schoharie, County was the great Indian fighting ground during the Revolution.

I remember a show coming to the village, and some real Indian riders were a part of the show, and they rode through the streets in the afternoon in their Indian dress and war-paint, and gave their old time war-whoop. Old Mr. Ellerson could not stand this. He wanted to borrow a gun and fire away at them ; he remembered the old days and what he had suffered from these "Red Devils," as he called them. Well, these old patriots have all passed away. Some of them lie in the cemetery in Gilboa, where my grandfather lies, and the Grand Army boys and veterans of our late war on Decoration days bring flowers and decorate their graves with the graves of their comrades of the Civil War. Heroes all of them ; and it shows the patriotism of the American people to hold in sacred reverence the men who gave their lives for their country.

Daily newspapers were not then known. The weekly papers were watched for on the day they were expected, and the old *Catskill Recorder* and *Albany Argus* and *Christian Advocate and Journal* were our weekly supply of reading matter. All these papers are still published.

The Gilboa post-office was then kept at the parsonage, Rev. Winslow Paige being postmaster under President Jackson's administration.

His was the next house from my father's, and the stage driver would begin to blow his horn as he passed our house to notify the postmaster to be ready for the mail.

This Mr. Paige was one of the best of men—courtly dignified, though cheerful and social.

He was very much respected by the entire community. His remains lie beside his wife in the old cemetery at Gilboa.

I always, when visiting Gilboa, love to stand by the graves of the old patriots and go back in memory to my boyhood days. The almost forgotten incidents come back freshly to my mind.

The line fence between adjoining farms generally caused a good deal of trouble. A neighbor whose farm adjoined Mr. Paige's on one side, one Sunday morning discovered some of Mr. Paige's cattle in his cornfield; he was mad and rushed to Mr. Paige's house, found him reading his bible. The

story as told by John Layman, the faithful hired man, was about as follows :

Without any preliminary words, he blurted out, "Mr. Paige, Mr. Paige ! here you sit, the word of God in your mouth, the devil in your heart and your cattle in my corn."

Mr. Paige, like most clergymen in those times, kept a side-board with a few decanters, and after sending John to see about the cattle, mollified the neighbor by a little something from the side-board.

Mr. Paige was an educated man, and probably on this account some of the other preachers, the hallelujah ! and amen ! shouters, gave him the cold shoulder.

They did not believe education was conducive to religion, but rather a hindrance.

In a discussion on this question of an educated ministry, it was said one of the leading opponents settled the question in his own mind, if he convinced nobody else. He said : "There was St. Paul, the greatest preacher that ever lived, he wasn't '*educated*'; wasn't he brought up at the foot of *Gamel Hill*, the poorest country and among the poorest people in the world?" These preachers were popular and drew the

masses; no doubt, did much good. They certainly had access among the plain people that more cultivated preachers did not have. They were not above work; indeed, many of them were farmers and mechanics, and worked six days in a week and preached twice or three times on Sunday. As a rule they were a jovial, jolly set, quick at repartee and ready for a joke.

At a gathering of preachers, standing on the piazza in front of a house, a brother preacher, coming up the walk, slipped on the ice and fell. One of the brothers on the piazza called out to him: "Brother, the wicked stand on slippery places." "Yes," he replied, "I see they do, but I can't."

They were hard workers, as were all the people; had no time for rest. Their idea of heaven, no doubt, was as a place of rest—eternal rest.

The hymns most popular and sang with greatest zest were those of "Rest for the Weary."

"Oh land of rest, for thee I sigh;  
When will the moments come?"

These hard toilers were good men and

women ; they longed for something different, and rest, eternal rest, seemed to them the acme of bliss, and so they sang, and dreamed and believed their future reward would be "Rest for the Weary."

The story is told of the early missionaries in Greenland. They told these poor, frozen heathens of a place of heat, of fire, of everlasting burning ; but that seemed what these people most wanted. They had no desire for anything better than fire, everlasting fire, and while the missionaries preached that doctrine, that was the main thing they wanted to hear about.

And so it seems "The heaven of each is what each desires."

I remember a good many of the old inhabitants, and many of their peculiarities. They are all now gone ; some of their descendants remain ; but mostly a new generation occupy the country.

The opening up of the great West has induced emigration from the sterile, rough farms of the East. The growing cities have offered attractions and allurements for the young men, so that but few of the descendants of the old first settlers remain.

The conditions, however, in that once isolated section have greatly changed for the better. Railroads have twined themselves around the mountains ; telegraphs have put people in communication with the rest of the world ; steam has superseded water power.

The old tanneries that used to give employment to hundreds of men have all rotted down, the country having been long since stripped of its hemlock bark. The old tanners of those days, the men of enterprise, of power in the community, all gone. There was Col. Pratt, Major Dickerman, the Tuttles, the Strykers, Mr. Crosswell, the Stevens—my father and Uncle Smith Stevens,—all passed away. With the failure of the bark in that country, nearly all of the tanners gave up the business. Not so, however, with the Stevens family. The sons of my Uncle Smith Stevens struck out for new fields. They purchased a large tract of hemlock timber land in Sullivan County, New York, built a large tannery, founded a settlement, building a church and school house, and a thriving village which the people of that section insisted upon naming “Stevensville.” For

twenty years they carried on a successful business, until the hemlock bark became scarce, when they struck out again for new fields, and selected a large territory of bark land in Pennsylvania, where my cousin, D. Tompkins Stevens and his son Morris, are, at this time, carrying on one of the largest tanneries in the country with great success. I ought to speak, in passing, more of this dear Uncle Smith Stevens. He and my father were, during nearly all their lives, working together in one interest, all their enterprises being carried on together except their farms.

The relations between the families were the most cordial ; never a particle of friction. Their enterprises were, in the main, unprofitable ; at least they never accumulated any wealth, and only by great industry and strict economy were able to make ends meet after paying their debts. Their debts were to them sacred, and no man ever lost a dollar by them. In all that country no man ever questioned the honesty of these men. Their bond was always good, their note always good, and their word as good as their bond or note.



There was one debt that hung over my father which kept him financially embarrassed from my earliest recollection, nearly all through my boyhood days. This was a debt he owed the Catskill Bank, of a few hundred dollars, being for a note of my Uncle Levi Stevens which my father had indorsed.

This uncle had built a store and hotel, and carried on merchandizing. He died suddenly, leaving his business quite unsettled. In closing it up there was just enough to pay everything in full, except this note which my father had to pay.

Through the kindness of Orrin Day, the president of the Bank, the collection of the note was not pressed, but was renewed, year after year, upon paying the interest every six months.

The recollection of this note has been a life-long lesson to me against indorsements. One word more in regard to these men. I have no doubt they were both true Christians. My uncle was, all his life, one of the leading members and supporters of the Methodist Church; his house was always open to its ministers. My

father was also a supporter of and attended its meetings with the family, and ministers were always welcome at our house and were often entertained. Yet he did not unite with the church until quite late in life, when he and my mother both publicly professed their faith in Christ, and I believe were true followers of the Lord Jesus until their death.

My father died suddenly, at Conesville, in August, 1848, in the 68th year of his age.

My mother also died suddenly at Gilboa, in November, 1869. She had lived in the family of my brother Ozias, for 21 years, since the death of my father. She was in the 87th year of her age. She was as tenderly cared for and watched over by my brother's wife and all the family, and loved by them as devotedly as if she had been their own mother.

They lie side by side in the old cemetery in Gilboa. They left to their children a precious memory. They were faithful to every duty; they did what they could. Their example and precepts were all they were able to leave to their children.

A small, rough, farm where my father died in Conesville, was all the property he had saved during his life of toil, and the proceeds of this barely supported my mother the 21 years she survived.

## LETTER IV.

MY DEAR H.—

These disconnected thoughts of my early days, you see, I put down as they come up in my mind. When I was, I think, about 14 years of age, my brother, Ozias, had a large quantity of hemlock bark to peel on his farm on Clay Hill.

To get a few dollars of spending money I would, when I could be spared for a day, go and work for him, and he paid me 50 cents a day. It came towards haying and harvest time, and father thought I could not be spared any longer; but I begged to go one more day, and this day proved to be a very unfortunate one. In trimming a tree, my axe glanced and made a deep gash in my knee. Brother Ozias harnessed his horse and took me home with my leg all bandaged up.

My father, as I have said, never lost his head, but his methods sometimes were what might be called heroic. In this case, he washed out the deep gash in my knee, which extended into the bone, called for a

needle and thread and just sewed up the gash as he would a cut in a garment, bandaged it up, and, thanks to my good condition of health, it soon healed up; but a deep scar has ever been a reminder of the event.

During that same summer or the next, I am not positive which, occurred the most serious sickness I ever experienced. We were getting in hay; I became overheated and, feeling faint and sick, begged to lie down in the barn until they brought another load. I remember nothing further until weeks after. I learned that when they came with another load they could not wake me, and carried me to the house and I was out of my head for days. Doctor Fanning was with me almost day and night, typhoid fever set in, and only by the most careful nursing of my dear mother and sister was I carried through. I became almost a skeleton, so wasted away, and was afflicted with abscesses in my side and limbs. The doctor and the family all claimed it was a miracle that I recovered.

In speaking of the work in those days,

there was no eight hour law practiced or thought of. A day's work was from daylight till dark, with very short intermissions for meals ; and when the sun crossed the line, September 20th, evening work commenced. My own evening work was either in my father's blacksmith shop as assistant, blowing the bellows and using the sledge hammer or pointing horse shoe nails, heading nuts or something of the sort ; or in the barn, husking corn or turning fanning mill. When I went to school the work of the day was always planned in reference to the boy's work at night.

When I was not going to school I worked with the hired man and father, chopping wood, threshing, plowing, hoeing corn, digging potatoes, cutting logs, haying and harvesting, all done by hand—no mowing machines or reapers, or even hay rakes ; all hard handwork.

After the day's work was done, then came the chores, milking eight or ten cows, bringing in wood, bringing water from the spring, feeding the pigs, churning, watering and caring for the horses, going to the post-office for weekly papers, and at long

intervals finding a letter from some thoughtful friend.

There was no time for play, and but little for rest. On the Fourth of July when we had finished our stint, hoeing a certain patch of corn or potatoes, we could go to the village and see the sports. Always some sort of doings—a grove meeting, and a speech by some young lawyer, or prominent citizen, and cannon firing, gatherings at the tavern or stores, and Revolutionary stories by some of the old Revolutionary soldiers. The village band—consisting of a bass drum, a small drum, a fife and bugle—would enliven the day, and the young people had a dance in the evening.

On one notable Fourth of July, the one which I remember most distinctly of any, there was a procession led by Col. Pratt, as Marshal, an oration read by Mr. Croswell, firing cannon, and music by the band.

In the procession, all the men and boys of the village and surrounding country fell in line, led by the band, and marched to a grove near the school house, where Mr. Croswell read his oration. I

took my position as near as possible, and seem to remember that oration better than any speech I now recall. He commenced his oration in these words.

“Fellow citizens, friends and neighbors: Fifty-six years ago to-day our fathers declared themselves free and independent.”

This would fix the date of that celebration July 4th, 1832. On the same day, after the oration, while the cannon was being fired as rapidly as possible, there was a premature discharge and one of the prominent men of the village, a Mr. Woolsey, who was helping load the cannon, had his arm shot off. I was standing quite close to him, and so well remember all the circumstances; the force of the explosion whirled him around like a top before he fell to the ground.

There was, of course, great excitement. Dr. Benham and Dr. Knapp were soon there, but they were neither of them surgeons; at least, the case was so serious that some one was sent on a fleet horse to Oak Hill, some 15 miles, for Dr. Hamlin. He came in the evening, and amputated his arm at the shoulder, but the poor man died



next day, and one of the largest funerals ever held in the village was attended by people far and near. Mr. Paige preached the funeral sermon.

My brother Jason had been for several years a clerk in my brother Ozias' store, but on coming of age, in the spring of 1836, he started out in business for himself. He went to Cairo, where he invested the few hundred dollars he had been able to save up in buying out Col. Lucius D. Hill's country store, and there in that village, for the past sixty years, he has carried on the same business which he now, in his eighty-second year of his age, with his son, De Alanson, still carries on.

His going into business there was largely influential in shaping my whole business life. My custom had been to attend the district school during the winter; but as brother Jason needed a clerk, he proposed that I should come to Cairo and help him in his store instead of going to school for the winter, and this was so arranged; and for two winters I was clerk in his store, going back early in the spring to work on the home farm.

When in my 18th year, Mr. Andrew Rickey, a cousin by marriage, proposed to my father to go in partnership and start a country store; he to furnish the capital and father to put in my services and my two winters' experience against his capital and services, and this was done.

A store was built for them in Conesville, near the Humphry tavern in that town, an isolated, scattered population of farmers.

Mr. Rickey and my father concluded there was an opening to build up a trade here, and they seemed to have the idea that I could manage the thing successfully; and that was where I commenced my mercantile life, as I said, in the 18th year of my age.

Neither Mr. Rickey or my father had the slightest knowledge of merchandizing, either buying or selling goods; they trusted it all to me.

I had never been to New York. I got the names of merchants from whom my brothers Ozias and Jason bought goods. I went to these houses and bought our goods. We ran this store about a year and a half, until the summer of 1839, when Mr. Rickey was offered an interest in his

father-in-law's tannery at Strykersville, and the store was removed to that place. My father gave up his interest then in the business, coming out just even—no profit or loss; my services had been thrown in for nothing. Mr. Rickey and Uncle Smith desired me to stay with them on a salary, and offered me quite liberal inducement. I remained with them a few months, but the lease of the store in Conesville had two years to run at a very low rent, and some of the people in that section urged me to come back and open the store again. I took the matter into serious consideration.

At this time I think my entire capital was something less than \$50. In talking the matter over with my father, he thought it utterly impossible; and brother Ozias said it was absurd and preposterous to even think of it. I was not yet 20 years of age, no capital and no credit; at least being a boy under age, he did not suppose I could get credit.

He thought, as I would myself, if I had had more experience and seen more of the world; but I felt sanguine and determined. One of our old customers at Conesville, Mr.

Elias Thompson, kindly offered to lend me \$50 for a year with my father's indorsement, and my father said he would indorse the note, and this settled it. I borrowed the money and in October 1839, went to New York, called on the merchants whom I had bought goods from as a clerk, explained the whole situation to them ; that my age was under 20 years, had no capital but good health, strong determination and confidence ; that I would succeed ; light expenses, and I knew the people and they knew me. After talking with each of the firms from whom I desired to buy goods, I found every one of them willing to sell me on the usual credit of four months for groceries, and six months for dry goods, hardware, crockery, drugs and medicines. Not one of them asked me for an indorser, and all seemed anxious to sell me even more than I felt it prudent to buy.

I was rather a green-looking boy, I believe, but they seemed to think I had an honest face ; indeed one of the merchants, Mr. Edward Corning, of whom I shall speak hereafter, said to me : " Yes, I will trust you for your face."

In all my mercantile and business experience, I never knew a similar instance—a boy under age, with no capital, buying a full stock of goods on credit, with no guarantee or even a recommend ; it has always been a mystery to me.

The old merchants of New York were different men from the later class, depended much less on capital and more on character. The first inquiry of the modern merchant is : “ What is your capital ? ” If that is satisfactory, the rest is likely to pass.

I believe the old merchants made fewer mistakes, though they seemed to take more risks.

The merchants with whom I commenced business were the grandest men I have ever done business with. If I could find a single member of any of the firms, it would afford me the greatest pleasure to visit them. I kept up an acquaintance with them all, as long as they were in business ; but the changes in houses gradually replaced them, one after another, until their names are scarcely remembered in business circles ; and doubtless not a single member of any

of these firms is now living. The firms were: Dry goods, Jackson & Duel, on Pearl street; groceries, Van Vliet & Wycoff, on West street; hardware, Edward Corning, on Maiden Lane; crockery, John Thompson, on Pearl street.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to think and to say that these men never lost a penny by me, nor did any other merchant. I never failed in business, nor compromised with a creditor, nor paid less than one hundred cents on a dollar.

About the first of November, 1839, my stock of goods arrived and made a very respectable showing in the old store. The aggregate amount of my stock was about \$1,500.

I had fitted up the store to make it as attractive as possible. There was a small back room which I fitted up for a bedroom, and my mother furnished me with bed and bedding, and there I slept.

I engaged board at Deacon Daniel Richtmeyer's, only a short walk from the store, for which I paid \$1.50 per week, which included also my washing. I kept no clerk, used to get up and open the store

at daylight, sweep out and get ready for business, then hang a card on the door, "gone to breakfast, will be back in a few minutes;" same for dinner, and same for supper. Customers would wait; there was no other store. I kept the store open till bed time. Indeed as I slept in the store it was always open for business, except three times a day when I was absent to my hasty meals.

The sparsely populated community seemed friendly and gave me their patronage; most of it, however, was on credit or barter. As spring approached I was exceedingly anxious to collect all the money I could and get ready to go to New York. I got my father to indorse a bank note with me for \$300, on four months' time; and, with what money I had collected from my winter's sales, started for the city.

The president of the Tanners' Bank in Catskill, had known my father for many years, and with his indorsement, I could always get a small bank loan. With this money, and \$700 or \$800 beside which I had collected, I went to see my creditors; told them frankly all about the business,

what I had collected, and what I had borrowed and what I proposed to do—to divide the money pro rata, which would leave about 25 per cent. of their bills unpaid, which I proposed to send them as soon and as fast as I could. They all seemed pleased, made not the slightest objection, and all of them complimented me on my success. They were perfectly willing to sell me all I wanted. Old Mr. Corning was so cordial and fatherly, he said he would wait on me himself. He being the head of the firm, this was a very unusual thing for him to do.

He taught me some things about selling goods, which I have always remembered and followed; that was, not to urge goods on a buyer for the sake of making a sale, but to look at the interest of the buyer as well as the seller, and rather make the customer feel sorry that he had not bought more, than that he had bought too much.

I shall speak again of this good man and successful merchant later.

When obliged to be absent, I had my nephew, Orrin J. Rose, attend the store. He was a young lad, bright and smart. He became a successful merchant in Chicago ;



representing our country, later on, as consul to Germany. Returning home in the fall of 1872, he was taken sick in New York, and died. His remains rest in my family lot in Greenwood.

I carried on the business in Conesville for more than three years.

I was, naturally, of a social disposition, and had a large acquaintance among the young people, and though my business kept me much confined, still I had Sundays and occasionally managed to attend parties; but never felt that I could afford to neglect business for anything else.

Among all the young ladies of my acquaintance, there was one to whom I was attracted from the first time I saw her—Miss Sarah Delia Cornwell, second daughter of Mr. Gilbert Cornwell, of Strykersville. She was nearly a year younger than myself. The attachment was mutual, and in due time we talked over the matter of marriage.

There were young ladies of my acquaintance who, I had every reason to believe, would be willing to share my fortune, though at this time my fortune was all in

anticipation, and they could have brought financial aid, which I so much needed ; but I wisely preferred the little girl I loved, though I well knew I would get only herself. Her fortune, like my own, was willing hands and a warm heart.

On the 10th of February, 1841, we were married. I had only just passed my 21st birthday, and she her 20th ; were only children in years, but we were both more experienced in work and cares than most young people of that age.

She was the second daughter, as I have said, and had ten brothers and sisters younger. Her mother was not a strong woman ; her eldest sister was much attached to books, and at an early age became a school teacher, so that from early childhood, Sarah D. had been about the head of this large family. She was, therefore, fully competent to become the head of another household.

I made no mistake in my choice of a wife ; no man ever had a better. She was a helpmeet in every sense of the word. Neglected no duty, was affectionately devoted to her husband and family, un-

selfish and untiring. She was in all respects a model wife and mother.

Her memory, which is all that is left, is very precious to me ; while her dear body lies in yonder Greenwood, beside our first and last born darlings.

Almost immediately after our marriage, we commenced housekeeping in a house not far from my store, where we lived two years.

Our first born, Marion, saw the light of day there. I can never forget how we almost worshipped this baby, she was an angel to us. Of course, we had our trials as all mortals have—sickness, anxieties and worries ; but we were hopeful and always tried to look on the bright side of things.

When business matters began to look a little brighter, and we were feeling more hopeful for the future, and exceedingly happy with our darling little one, our happiness was suddenly marred by a very unlooked-for event.

One morning, on opening my store, I found robbers had been in during the night and carried off a large portion of the goods. They had broken open a back window ; had taken plenty of time to assort and take

out the best of my stock. We found, under the window, tools stolen from a neighboring blacksmith shop, which had been used to pry open the shutters and we concluded the robbers were not professionals, but possibly somebody, living not far off, familiar with the surroundings. The neighbors got together and proposed to form parties and search all the neighboring houses, barns, and places where goods might be secreted. One or two houses were suspected, but as there were no suspicious circumstances to warrant search-warrants, a voluntary search was proposed and carried out ; but nothing was found, and to this day it is a mystery.

This was a terrible blow to us, as the goods were not paid for, my credit at stake, a family on my hands, and altogether a discouraging outlook.

Soon after this I collected all the money I could from my customers, borrowed at the bank my usual amount, and went, with my heart in my mouth, to New York, to see my creditors. I told them just what had happened and how I stood. These grand men, without exception, offered to compromise and throw off part of their account, which

I declined. I only asked a little more time, and told them I should work it out. They were pleased, and complimented me on my pluck. I divided up my money among them on account, and purchased another stock of goods, and continued the business in Conesville until the spring of 1843.

At the first town meeting, after my coming of age, I was nominated and elected a Commissioner of Common Schools for the town. This was, at that time, quite a responsible office. It involved the receiving and disbursing the public money of the state for common schools—to apportion the same among the districts. The duties were to visit the district schools of the town, and write a report of their condition to the county superintendent; to settle disputes between school districts and establish the boundaries; to inspect teachers. All this was entirely new business for me, but I felt honored with the office, and devoted time and study for its details, and believe I succeeded in fulfilling its duties to the satisfaction of the people.

I declined a renomination, as it involved being absent too much from my business.

## LETTER V.

MY DEAR H.—

In the spring of 1843, my brother Ezra, who had been in business several years in Cairo, proposed to sell out to me his goods, and lease his store and house. We finally concluded the bargain, and I closed up my Conesville store, shipping my goods and household effects, and moving my little family, wife and baby, Marion, then just a year old, to Cairo.

This was quite a change for us. Cairo was then a thriving village, with several stores, churches, schools, and good society. We soon formed pleasant acquaintances, and enjoyed the best social life of the place.

In this village we passed ten years of our lives. Here our two other children were born, Florence and Ella.

I look back to the ten years of our residence in Cairo with a good deal of interest; we had very dear friends there.

My brother, Jason, carried on the largest mercantile business in the place. He was

a bachelor, and boarded with us until about 1849, when he married Miss Rebecca King, of Freehold, N. Y. They are both still living, and they have ever made us welcome guests at their house ; it has always seemed like going home, to visit them.

The decade we spent in Cairo were years of many changes—years of labor and trials.

I met with some severe losses, which, at the time, seemed almost unbearable.

On the whole, however, I might say my business was reasonably successful.

I built, while there, the store and house which I sold to my brother Edward, where he lived and traded for many years, and which is now occupied by his son, Allie B. Stevens.

During this time my dear sister, Elizabeth, died. As I have said in a former letter, she was the nearest human being to an angel I ever knew. She devoted her life to the care of our parents in their declining years.

She was also an angel of comfort to the sick, poor, and sorrowing in all that country; a devoted Christian herself, she did missionary work for the Master.

But right in the midst of her usefulness, when it seemed she could not be spared; an inscrutable Providence laid her on a sick bed, with typhoid fever, from which she never arose.

The family were living in Conesville; we were sent for, myself and wife, as were other members of the family, but her mind wandered—she never recognized any of us.

Oh, how we prayed for the life of this precious one; but the dear Lord knew best, and He took her.

With agonized hearts and helpless hands,  
 “ We watched her breathing through  
 the night,  
 Her breathing soft and low,  
 As in her breast the wave of life  
 Kept heaving to and fro.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our very hopes belied our fears,  
 Our fears, our hopes belied ;  
 We thought her dying, when she  
 slept,  
 And sleeping when she died.”

It was a terrible blow to all of us, but



for poor mother it was well nigh crushing. Yet God tempers the wind to his shorn lambs. She never murmured or rebelled; her sweet temper and Christian faith sustained her.

They procured a housekeeper. My youngest brother, Edward, was then at home, and the children and grandchildren visited them as often as possible, trying to comfort and cheer the dear ones.

It seems, often, the old saying comes true :

“When sorrows come they come not single spies, but in battalions.”

The next summer a messenger came one Sunday afternoon, in August, 1848, telling us father was dead. He died suddenly, of heart failure, while sitting by the table talking with mother about some book he was reading. It was a great shock for poor mother. We were all sent for, and, again, the old home was a house of mourning.

The funeral was held in the Methodist Church in Strykersville, the same place where sister Elizabeth's funeral was held the year before, and the sermon preached by the same preacher, the presiding elder,

Rev. Mr. Buck, and remarks also by the local preachers.

It was a very impressive funeral. He was one of the oldest inhabitants, loved and respected by the entire community. I well remember every incident; the long procession from the house in Conesville, to the church, and from the church to the cemetery in Gilboa. The chapter read before the sermon, being the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, beginning: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come," and the lesson drawn from the whole chapter, and a very affecting incident.

Uncle Smith Stevens had been laid up for weeks with inflammatory rheumatism, but he was brought to the Church, and before the coffin lid was closed, he was helped to the coffin and gazed, with all the intense affection he felt, into the face of his dear brother with whom he had walked so lovingly during their whole lives long. Before he was helped away from the coffin, he cried out, in the most pathetic and loving voice, never to be forgotten, "Farewell, dear brother Gershom, farewell, farewell!"

The whole church and the preachers broke down, and for several minutes nothing but sobs could be heard. It was one of the most affecting incidents I ever saw at any funeral.

This grand old man, himself seeming just on the brink of the grave, bidding farewell to a dear brother from whom he had never been separated before. This dear Uncle, who was one of the best loved men in all that country, lived several years after this, and with his dear wife lies, not far from my father and mother, in the old Gilboa cemetery.

Several years since the old Methodist Church in Gilboa was burned; but a new and larger church was built and dedicated some two or three years ago.

A fine bell was donated, and a beautiful memorial window put in by Mr. D. Tompkins Stevens, to the memory of his father and mother. He also assisted materially in building the church.

In the early days of Methodism, in the beginning of this century, before many Methodist churches were built in that section, grandfather Stevens built and kept a hotel,

and, as was the custom then in the country, a ball-room was an indispensable appendage to a country tavern.

This ball-room of grandfather's was always open for a Methodist preacher to hold his meetings, and the preachers were always welcome guests without charge. The sons inherited this same feeling, especially Uncle Smith, whose house was never too small to accommodate the brethren and sisters.

At the quarterly meetings, people came from many miles distant on Saturday and remained over Sunday. These people were apportioned off among the local brethren.

The names of those desiring accommodation were handed in to the presiding elder or the local preacher at the Saturday meeting, and the number publicly announced.

Then the preacher would inquire of the brethren how many they could accommodate, calling each by name. Uncle Smith would say, "accommodate all who desire to take guests, and send all the rest to him; he could take as many as he had boards in the floor;" and Aunt Anna was just as willing, and they usually had their house filled

on those occasions, and these good Methodist brethren and sisters would have a happy, joyous time, even before the public "love-feast" of Sunday.

This dear uncle was a many-sided man ; he was a thorough Christian gentleman, kind and gentle in his manner, courteous and affable to all ; yet he was firm and determined, if occasion required.

I remember an incident to illustrate this. There was a big boy in the neighborhood, the terror of all the boys. He delighted in quarrelling and fighting with smaller boys, and even boys of his own size ; would assault them just for fun, without any reason.

This boy, I understand, turned out to be quite a respectable man, and is now a practicing physician ; so I will withhold his name.

Uncle Smith's son, Fletcher, was one of this boy's victims ; had often been chased and beaten by him. But he grew fast, and one day he made up his mind he would not run again from him, but would stand his ground, and he did. This boy came at him, and they had the hardest boy fight ever

known in that region. It was nip and tuck, but, finally, Fletcher got the best of him, and he improved his opportunity, and pounded him to his heart's content—he paid him back, with interest.

This boy's father was a doctor, and he had a patient on his hands, to bind up his bruises. He went to see Uncle Smith, "mad as a March hare," demanded satisfaction, and that Fletcher be punished severely.

Uncle Smith heard him patiently, then called Fletcher, and, in the presence of the doctor, said: "Fletcher, did you whip——?" Fletcher said, "yes, sir." Uncle Smith said, "can you do it?" Fletcher said, "yes, sir." Uncle Smith said, "then you see that he behaves himself."

This was not the kind of satisfaction the doctor expected, but it was all he got, and I believe the lesson to the boy was of great benefit to him.

During this time the great Miller excitement occurred, the time for the ending up of all earthly things. The end of the world had about come and the time was fixed.

These Millerites had figured out from the book of Daniel the "Times and Times and

a half and the dividing of Time," to bring it to a certain day, I believe in July; if I remember it was 1843, and the time was 12 o'clock of that day.

As strange as it may seem, many believed it. Some became insane, and the excitement grew as the time approached. Meetings were held, preparations made, confessions for sins and restitution where real or fancied wrongs had been committed, as far as possible, and ascension robes provided.

If it had not been so serious, it would have been laughable.

Many stories were told afterward which showed the ridiculousness of the whole thing.

A certain deacon in New England used to hold meetings and exhort the people. He felt sure no mistake had been made, and the end of all things was at hand. As far as he was concerned, he would say, "it mattered not; he was ready, fully prepared, felt sure he was saved."

When the day arrived, he walked out to view the surroundings and to watch the coming of his Lord. As the time drew

near, he climbed on a stack of hay, to get a better view, and it being a hot day, and having passed sleepless nights, tired nature gave out, and he fell asleep. Some wicked boys, knowing the deacon's peculiarity, set fire to the stack of hay, and as the flames loomed up around the deacon, he awoke in great fright, throwing up his arms above his head, screaming at the top of his voice : "In hell, just as I expected."

He escaped the flames without much damage, but he lost confidence in the interpretation of the book of Daniel.

It was during this decade, 1846, the war with Mexico was precipitated on the country by the Southern slave oligarchy, in the interest of the extension of slavery. The great excitement was begun by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the declaration of the Southern slave holders and Democrats of the North that slavery was a national institution, and had a right to go in the territories and be protected, the same as any other property.

This question of slavery had developed a few Abolitionists, sincere conscientious men ; but both the great political parties,



Whig and Democratic, tolerated the institution, seeing no way to abolish it where it already existed. But when it was asserted by the Democratic party, that slavery was national, instead of being a local institution, thinking men of the North began to feel it was time to call a halt. There was quite a large element of such men in both political parties.

These men called a national convention, which met at Buffalo, and formed what was called the "Free Soil party." This simply meant, and their platform so stated, that the normal condition of the new territories was free soil and slavery could not exist there; but they did not contemplate any interference with slavery in the states where it already existed.

Another element in both parties believed it best to leave the question to the people of the territories, to vote whether slavery should, or should not, exist. This was called "squatter sovereignty," and the leader of this party was Stephen A. Douglas.

This squatter sovereignty doctrine was so absurd, involving, as it did, border war and

neighborhood fights, it obtained but a small following.

The Democratic party, then ruled as it had been for a generation by the Southern oligarchy, clung to the doctrine of state rights and nationalization of slavery. Between these different policies, I much preferred the Free Soil. I detested, with all my soul, any doctrine that tolerated human slavery.

During these exciting times the Democratic party (or rather the Southern leaders of that party, which meant the same thing) procured a decision from Judge Taney, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the Dred-Scott case, the most abominable ever promulgated from the bench of any court in Christendom ; it was that the negro had no rights that white men were bound to respect. This decision, handed down from the bench of the highest court in the United States, was accepted as sound doctrine by the Democratic party, North and South.

It did seem that this cursed system of human slavery, "the sum of all villainies," was to be firmly fixed as a permanent insti-

tution in our country. This doctrine was so repugnant to every instinct of decency, of humanity, of civilization, to say nothing of Christianity, or the spirit of the age in all Christendom, save of these United States, that I wondered decent men could tolerate such an infernal doctrine. I must say, my blood boiled with indignation; my soul cried out in protest and shame at the outrage.

It was, to my mind, inconceivable that any person of any self-respect, or feeling of common humanity, could tolerate such an edict. I shall have more to say in regard to this matter in a subsequent letter.

It is a great satisfaction that the best portion of all parties at the North did revolt, and not only repudiated this doctrine, but, within a few years, passed laws, not only that negroes had rights that white men were bound to respect, but that dumb beasts had rights that all persons were bound to respect.

Those party zealots swallowed every doctrine and platform of their party, no matter how absurd. Like the old preacher whose morning lesson in the Bible he had marked

to read, being the account of Noah and the ark. Some wicked boys got hold of the Bible, and, with scissors and paste, doctored the passage to read, "When Noah was one hundred and twenty years old, he married a wife one hundred and twenty fathoms long and twenty fathoms deep; was pitched without and within." He fixed his spectacles and read it over again, and finally said: "Brethren, I don't remember to have read this before, but it is there and must be true. It illustrates the saying, 'we are fearfully and wonderfully made.'"

## LETTER VI.

MY DEAR H.—

In my last letter I spoke of several incidents which occurred during our residence in Cairo. Both myself and my dear wife applied ourselves to business and to work. Our three little girls were our constant care ; but great pets, and fully repaid us.

There were no kindergarten schools thought of then ; but, in reality, there was such a school in Cairo. Miss Louisa Prout, a maiden lady of fifty years, or thereabouts, kept a private school in her own house for little girls, some of them mere infants. Mothers felt perfectly safe in entrusting their little ones to her care.

She not only taught them their letters and little lessons, but also sewing, knitting, and everything that is now taught in the kindergarten schools. She dearly loved the children and they all loved her. She passed away many years since, and her memory is precious among many mothers and grandmothers, who remember her care of them and teaching when they were infants. Her

rooms were a combination of nursery and kindergarten; she was well adapted for both.

The great West was developing, and large emigration from the East drifting that way. My father-in-law sold his farm in Strykersville, and moved to Illinois, taking his entire family, except my wife and another daughter (the eldest) the wife of Vincent Sitzer, living in Livingstonville, Schoharie County, and the eldest son, Ashabel, who was then in business with Mr. Sitzer. This son died soon after, and Mr. Sitzer, a year or two later. His wife, with three children—a son and two daughters—went to her father's house in Illinois.

They settled in Tazewell County, near Peoria, a fine farming country. The sons and daughters all married and settled down in homes of their own, and as years passed by, father and mother died, the farm passed into other hands, and only a precious memory of the kindest and best of Christian parents is left to the numerous children and grandchildren surviving.

The reports coming from the West, and accounts of the marvelous growth of

Chicago, made us feel like trying our fortune there.

In the spring of 1852, after a nine years residence in Cairo, my youngest brother, Edward, then married, proposed to buy me out—my house, store, and goods—and we soon after completed the arrangement. I was to continue the business until fall, to reduce my stock as much as possible, not replenishing, and then turn over what I had left, at a discount of twenty-five per cent. below cost or current market price. The stock being so reduced—many unsalable goods, remnants, etc.—the arrangement was mutually satisfactory ; we both felt we had made a good trade.

I then began to cast about for a new field for business.

Our minds, however, were strongly inclined towards Chicago.

The latter part of May in that year I left my store in charge of my clerk, Sherman Lennon, and an old gentleman, Wm. Pierson, to assist as needed, and our young children in care of my niece, Hattie E. Schermerhorn, and we started on our journey for the West, combining the prospecting for

business and visiting my wife's family in central Illinois.

Travelling was very different in those days from the present. There was no railroad between Buffalo and Detroit or Cleveland, and only a short line completed in Illinois, between Chicago and Freeport.

We took a lake steamboat at Buffalo for Detroit, and rail from there to Chicago.

A combination of circumstances caused us to weaken in our enthusiasm for moving west. Sea-sickness and storms on the lakes; Chicago was then a mud hole, the streets almost impassible. Foundations of houses and stores, and public buildings, were being laid in mud; no cellars could be made.

The board sidewalks, in walking over, would spurt up water through the cracks, to the great disgust of the ladies; and to crown all a cholera scare, and many cases of cholera in Chicago and all over the West. Scarcely nothing else was talked of.

We neither of us felt well, during the week we staid in Chicago, and I made no arrangement for going into business there. Indeed, it was then about the most uninviting place I had ever seen.



I had the refusal of one store of a block commenced (the brick walls being just out of the mud) on a lease of five years, at \$1,200 a year. This same store was soon after leased by Mr. Potter Palmer, the millionaire, who made his fortune in Chicago.

Chicago was a very different city then from what it became afterward. The whole city having been raised out of the mud, ten to fifteen feet, and filled in.

After we had carefully looked over Chicago and made up our minds that we would not settle there, we arranged to visit my wife's family in central Illinois. To do this we had to travel one hundred miles on a canal boat, our first experience in this mode of travel. This canal, the Henepin, ran from Chicago to LaSalle on the Illinois River. The trip occupied just 24 hours, being a packet express boat, and with frequent changes of horses, were enabled to make the rapid progress of four miles an hour. The journey became a little monotonous, but, on the whole, a rather pleasant experience. About the only drawback that I remember, was the cloud of mosqui-

toes that followed, and enveloped our boat, and disturbed our night's sleep.

Instead of meeting the regular steamboat, running between Peoria and Lasalle, as we expected, we found that a prolonged drought had dried up the river, so that even the flat bottom boat could not come up any further than Henry, and we had to take a stage the thirty miles or more from Lasalle to Henry, and there found the boat waiting.

This flat bottom boat, as I remember, was nothing more than a raft with an engine on it, which propelled a stern wheel, and several times got stuck in the muddy bottom of the river. We finally reached Peoria late at night, found accommodation at an over crowded hotel, where the women occupied cots and space on the parlor floor, and the men were distributed in the other rooms of the house.

A state convention in the city had crowded all the hotels.

Next day I procured a horse and buggy, and drove out ten miles to Morton, where my wife's parents were living. It was a joyful meeting. They had passed through many vicissitudes of pioneer life; but were

then beginning to reap the reward of their enterprise, being settled in a new, comfortable house, and their farm under good cultivation; some of the daughters married and were nicely settled; the sons both engaged and soon after married. Altogether, our visit was exceedingly enjoyable.

After spending a few weeks with our friends in Tazewell County, we concluded to visit my wife's sister, Rebecca, and her husband, Rufus K. Frisbee, whom we had never seen.

Their home was in Ogle County, a journey of more than 100 miles, mostly over an unbroken prairie; a mere track for a road, and cabins generally miles apart—a good three days' journey.

With a fine span of horses and easy carriage, my wife's father and mother, my wife and self, went on this journey; it was an enjoyable trip.

The entertainments on the way were quite plain, but exceedingly bountiful. The early settlers were mostly pioneers from the East, and eastern people were very welcome guests; indeed, we had to insist

upon paying for entertainments, which they were loth to receive.

The country was new and wild. Myriads of prairie chickens would fly up as we passed, and young broods ran ahead of us on the road. The prairies were filled with these fowl.

Along the bluffs of rivers and streams, there was timber extending back a quarter to half a mile on each side. In this timber we often saw deer and beautiful speckled fawn, and wild turkeys. They sought this timber for shade and access to water. After spending a few days in Ogle county with brother and sister Frisbee, father Cornwell took us to Rockford, some forty miles, to the nearest railroad station, on the only railroad built in Illinois, then just finished to Rockford. We then turned our faces homeward, visiting Niagara Falls on the way; reaching home in due time, after an absence of over two months.

We had never been separated before from the dear children, and were overjoyed to see them, and they had been counting the days and hours, watching for us.

We had seen much of the country. A

journey like that, in those days, was very different from traveling, in these later times, by lightning express and Pullman cars; such expedition and luxury was undreamed of. I have often traveled over the same roads since, and on new roads, all over the great West, not then even thought of, retiring at night, in the ample berths of the luxuriant Pullman and waking, rested and fresh in the morning, several hundred miles on my journey during the night's sleep.

Should you arrive at the place of your destination before morning, a small fee to the porter would insure your being waked in due time.

Sometimes a porter would make a mistake and either forget, or would wake up the wrong passenger. Such an incident is said to have occurred on the New York Central.

A gentleman, taking a Pullman in the evening at Albany, being very tired, was afraid he would over-sleep, and be taken past his place, Rochester. So he called the porter, and gave him a big fee to wake him in time to get off, and cautioned him to be

sure and see he got off, as sometimes, when suddenly awakened, he was a little dazed and might resist being woke up and put off. The darkey said, "all right, boss, I'll be sure and put you off."

In the morning the gentleman woke up as the conductor called out Buffalo. He inquired for the darkey porter, and, after searching, found him in the porter's saloon with his face all plastered up and his eyes blackened.

The gentleman was mad, and upbraided him for being so forgetful. The darkey was so amazed, he fairly turned pale. He said: "Why, fo, de laud sake, is you the genman who gave me de five dollars to put him off at Rochester; den who was de genman I did put off?"

When some of those new western roads were first built their time tables were very slow, and, generally, they were behind even the slow time. Many jokes were got off at the expense of the roads. On one road it was recommended by some wag to put the cow-catcher on the rear end of the train, so the cattle would not run over the train.

Tramps, then, as now, bothered conductors

by boarding trains, expecting to be put off ; but they would be several miles on their journey before the conductor came around. The president of the road happened to be in the car when one of these tramps was discovered by the conductor. He said he would attend to his case himself, and proceeded to put him off with a kick. When the train stopped, some twenty miles from where the tramp was supposed to have been put off, the president discovered him on the platform among the passengers. He went for him and wanted to know how he got there. The tramp said in a mock whisper, "talk low, be more quiet, I don't want to give your darned old road away, I walked." He had boarded the last car, unnoticed by the conductor or president.

Some good stories are told about these tramps. One being half starved, concluded he would get one good square meal anyway. He walked into a hotel dining-room at the dinner hour, and having filled his empty stomach, walked boldly up to the office and told the clerk he had eaten dinner, but didn't have a penny to pay for it. The clerk opened a drawer and took out a pistol.

The tramp started back with fright, saying, "What's that?" The clerk said, "It's a pistol, and if you don't pay for that dinner I'll blow your head off." The tramp looked relieved, and said, "Oh! only a pistol; I don't care for that; blow away; I thought it was a stomach-pump."

On arriving home in the early fall, we began to make preparations for turning over the store and house to my brother. We secured a part of Capt. Sayre's house for the winter, and moved in, and in October, 1852, I gave up the keys of my store and walked out, a retired merchant; of course, retired only temporarily.

I immediately turned my attention to collecting and settling up my business matters in Cairo. Went to New York and conferred with some of my best friends among the merchants with whom I had done business many years.

I felt it very important that I should make no mistake in locating myself in business again. My preference was some large town or city and, after much consideration, I finally accepted the offer of Mr. Richard D. Lathrop, of the firm of Lathrop, Luding-



ton & Co. He proposed that I take his nephew, Charles D. Lathrop, as a partner, and lease a store up-town in the city of New York.

This Charles D. Lathrop had been in the wholesale store of his uncle from boyhood, and had worked his way up to be one of the leading salesmen. Mr. Lathrop offered, in lieu of capital, which his nephew had not, to furnish goods from their wholesale house at about cost; never to exceed five per cent. above cost on imported goods, while domestic goods would be sold to us at cost. This seemed to offer a great advantage, and, beside, the connection with their house would be of further advantage by way of advertisement, and they would see that our credit was as good as their own. We drew up the partnership papers, and, after looking around for a location, decided upon taking a lease, for five years, of a store in Bleeker Street, to commence on January 1st, 1853.

The capital of our new enterprise was between \$8,000 and \$9,000 (depending somewhat on my collections in Cairo) furnished entirely by myself. The style of the firm

was "Stevens & Lathrop." After completing my arrangements, I returned to Cairo, and soon after my dear wife was taken very ill with what was called remittent, or forty day fever. Dr. King attended her. She became extremely weak, and it seemed doubtful whether I could leave her.

After New Year's she began to feel a little stronger, and insisted upon my carrying out my arrangement. I left her with a heavy heart. The children were getting to be quite helpful, the eldest, Marion, being then just eleven years old, and a little woman about the house.

I came to New York and spent several weeks arranging the store, painting and getting ready for business, and early in February we put in a fine general assortment of dry goods.

I had not decided on a house, though I had several in view. My wife was desirous, as I was, before deciding this question, to come and see for herself. Having gained sufficient strength she wrote me she would come to the city, and see the different houses I had looked at.

The rent seemed a pretty heavy item for us, the success of the business being uncertain.

The store that we had leased, included the second floor, consisting of three or four rooms, which had been occupied as living rooms by the previous occupants of the store. I had not expected to use this floor except for storage.

My practical wife, when she came to look at the houses and consider the rent and expense of furnishing, while these rooms were comparatively unused, advised it was by far the best to commence living there. We therefore had these rooms painted, papered and put in order, sofa-beds and conveniences for living, making it much more comfortable than I expected we could.

She went back home, but did not gain strength as we hoped, and when I went to Cairo, to move the family to the city, the first of May, I found her scarcely able to sit up, and under the doctor's care.

She was, however, brave, and our plans having been made, she was very anxious to go at the appointed time. We had a Cairo girl engaged to go with us as a servant.

With many misgivings I provided an easy carriage, and we started one beautiful morning, early in May, 1853, for our new home in the great city.

She tried to encourage the children and myself to think she was well enough to stand the journey, but it soon became evident she was not.

We called at the house of her cousin, Mr. Daniel Rugg, in Catskill, to rest before going to the boat; but we all felt, as she did herself, that it was not prudent to tax her strength any further, and at their kind invitation, and indeed urgent solicitation, it was finally decided for her to remain with them until she got stronger.

With heavy hearts we bade her good bye. It was a sad parting for all of us; we all tried to cheer each other, though it seemed there was scarcely a silver lining to the dark cloud that hung over us.

The three children, myself and the girl, came on the night boat to the city. We went, for a few days, to the house where I had boarded, until we got the rooms in order and partly settled. Meantime every mail brought letters rather encouraging about

my wife. We were hoping she would be able to be with us in a week or two, when one morning a carriage drove up and brought her unexpected. She felt she could not be separated from us any longer; that she must be with us to direct and do what she could in getting things in order.

We were all delighted, of course, and so thankful to have her with us, even though unable to render us any assistance.

I immediately called Dr. Kinsley, who was highly recommended. He carefully diagnosed her case and gave us great encouragement to hope for her speedy recovery.

She did improve, and for a year after enjoyed better health. She was, however, never well after this; only her indomitable determination and heroic courage kept her up.

We lived quite comfortably in our rooms over the store, and never regretted starting in that way. Indeed it was part of the religion of us both, never to incur any expense until we felt sure we were able to do so, and it was well in this case we did not, as the business did not prove a success.

It did not take very long, after we got

settled and fairly started, before I began to feel I had made a mistake. My partner had never had any experience in a retail store, and his experience in a wholesale house was no benefit to us in the retail business. Business was conducted so different, that my experience in a country store was not much benefit to me.

We had a bright young man as clerk, used to city trade, but his methods were such I could not approve. He was unscrupulous, indeed dishonest, though he insisted it was the only way business in the city could be done successfully. He would have several prices for the same grade of goods, taking for granted that a lady would always be willing to pay a little more to get the best article, and, as a rule, a lady would judge the article by its price, and the salesman could generally mislead a customer.

I could not tolerate this way of doing business, and changed clerks until I thought I found one who believed that honesty was the best policy.

Very soon after this the methods in all large city retail stores was changed.

Mr. A. T. Stewart started and set the example, to have one price marked in plain figures and no deviation. Strange, this had not been adopted long before. Lying, cheating, and deception had been the rule previous to this ; but, thereafter, when this method became established, a child could go and buy goods as safely as an experienced person, as far as price was concerned.

Although our expenses were not large, yet the business was unsuccessful from the beginning.

On taking account of stock at the end of the first year, it became apparent we were running behind, and six months thereafter we felt sure it was only a question of time, if we continued, when we could not pay our debts. After several confidential interviews with Mr. Richard Lathrop, it was finally decided best to take steps towards winding up the business.

We advertised to sell our lease and goods, had several applications, and finally closed a bargain with a Mr. Davidson to take our lease off our hands, and whatever goods we had left on the first of January,

1855, at 75 cents on the dollar of cost price.

This gave us about two months' time to run our stock down, and, as the time drew near, we had auction sales evenings, so that when we turned our stock over to Mr. Davidson it consisted mostly of remnants, so that we considered we got about full value for our stock.

The two years' experience in the retail business in the city are not years which I can look back to with pleasure.

My wife's health broke down again the second year, and it was decided that she try what was then considered the best thing for weak and run-down women, the water cure. We were afterward convinced it was not the best for her; but we felt we must do something, and this, at the time, seemed best.

We took the three children to my brother's house near Gilboa, where they had the best of care on a farm; and my wife went to a water cure, at Northampton, Mass., called "Round Hill," for the summer.

The rest and country air, no doubt, was



beneficial and she did improve ; but as for the water cure and treatment, it was all a fallacy.

It was, beside, an expensive experiment and a great sacrifice, involving as it did, separation from each other and from the children, breaking up our home in the city, and to make it seem worse to me, day after day I felt my little capital was diminishing, business running behind, and time rapidly drawing near when I could not pay my debts. I shall never forget the miseries of that summer. But all things have an end, and, as I have said, the business was closed up at the end of that year.

Before the year expired, however, I had made arrangements to go with the house of Lathrop, Ludington & Co., as general salesman, to commence on the first of January, 1855, on a salary of \$1,000 the first year. We rented a cottage in West 48th street, and moved in. At that time this was quite out, almost in the suburbs of the city.

I began immediately in my new vocation, and commenced hunting up customers among all my mercantile acquaintances and as many new ones as possible. Salaries

were based on the amount a salesman could sell.

The firm paid travelling expenses and salesmen were expected to travel during the dull season, a couple of months in the winter and a few weeks in the summer, drumming up trade.

I happened to have quite a large acquaintance among country merchants, quite a number of relatives, and these not only gave me their custom, but influenced their friends also, to buy their goods of me. Some of my acquaintances were already customers of the house, but were kindly turned over to me as my customers.

My trade increased; I made new customers, and held my old ones. Merchants seemed to give me their confidence. My experience as a country merchant, in buying goods, was of great benefit to me as well as to my customers. I was careful never to urge a merchant to buy more than I believed for his interest to buy; I never deceived him or misrepresented the goods. I tried to gain the confidence of my customers by fair dealing, and it is very gratifying to think my business acquaintances

remained my personal friends. I never forgot my lesson in buying my first goods in New York, when that successful merchant prince, Edward Corning, waited on me and gave me practical lessons in the art of selling goods. It is a good rule to have in mind, either real or imaginary, some model as near perfection as possible to follow, to think of that model, and then try to be that.

This man, whom I may speak of again, was a model, as a merchant, a business man and Christian gentleman; one whom any man might be proud to follow.

I tried to look out for the interest of my patrons equally with my own interest or that of my employers. I believed this to be the best policy, and best for all parties.

From the start I determined to make my services indispensable to the firm. I don't think I was naturally lazy, and I felt it necessary to exert every faculty to the utmost to make success sure. I was always, as a rule, at the store early in the morning, and remained as long as there was work to be done. In the business season it was often eleven and twelve

o'clock at night before I left ; then riding an hour on the horse car, often falling asleep, being tired out, and carried half a dozen blocks beyond my street to the car stables, unless the conductor was thoughtful enough to wake me. Then would be up to breakfast and back to the store before eight o'clock.

A less strong constitution than I was blessed with could not have stood the strain.

It was customary, in those days, for each salesman when he got through with his customer, to truck his goods to the packing room himself, sort them out, and when entered, call them back. If he had customers to keep him busy during the day, as he usually had in the business season, he would have to do this trucking goods at night, hence the night work spoken of.

A few years later, all this was changed ; elevators were put in, porters employed to run the goods to the packing room, and the salesman's duty ended when he had sold the goods and entered the tills and departments in the till book.

After being in the store a few weeks, to become a little familiar with the stock and prices, I took a trip West to Chicago and other western cities, making new acquaintances, returning in time for the opening of spring trade.

My sales were successful the first year beyond my expectation. The firm increased my salary to \$1,500 the second year, and advanced each year, until my salary reached \$2,500. Then the great political excitement came in '59 and '60; business men became fearful, civil war was threatened, all business was contracted, expenses curtailed, and salaries greatly reduced, many thrown out of employment. I believe I was the only salesman in the house whose salary was not materially reduced. My salary was not reduced, nor did I ask, or expect any increase; it remained the same for a year or two, until I had it changed to a commission.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR H.—

After some two years and a half in the wholesale trade, the panic of 1857 came on. It came suddenly, as panics usually do, and the country was unprepared for it.

It was a fearful time for business men. Banks generally suspended or failed. Exchange from western cities rose to ten and fifteen per cent., and on western bank bills there was a still greater discount; it was impossible to collect.

Many houses failed, and the best and strongest houses had all they could do to pull through. In October of that year the firm desired me to travel through the western states, to collect and secure doubtful debts, to compromise with bankrupts, to ascertain the standing of their customers, and look after their business generally.

I left home, as I said, in October; went directly to Chicago, Milwaukee, Dubuque, Peoria and to almost every city and large

town in the West, and did not return until Christmas eve.

I had not expected to be absent more than a month ; but being in constant communication with the firm, they kept me advised by letter and telegrams of real or anticipated failures requiring immediate attention, often hundreds of miles apart, involving much night travel.

I was given *carte-blanche* to secure or compromise and make settlements, as I concluded each case required ; to find out the condition of each customer.

Failures all over the country were of daily occurrence ; confidence was shaken ; everybody distrusted everybody else.

It was a very responsible mission, and I felt, of course, great anxiety ; many thousands of dollars were at stake.

I adopted a plan of my own which, I am sure, indeed, I demonstrated it to be more successful than any other.

Instead of going to a merchant as though I believed he was about to abscond or do something dishonest, I made him feel that I was his friend. I did not pretend this merely, but did feel real sympathy for

these men, most of whom were in the same boat, struggling with adversity.

I put myself in their place, and thought : “What would I do under like circumstances ?” I generally got their confidence, and drew from them a full statement of their condition.

Of course, I did not forget the business maxim, and I believe it is a rule of law as well, that a diligent creditor may reap the benefit of his diligence. With an insolvent debtor, I looked out for my own claim first, in preference to other creditors, but was always candid with the debtor, and tried to give him the best advice I could to help him out of his difficulties.

Experience is a good school-master, and I learned, while coming in contact with these business men, how much better it was to have their good-will, their confidence, than to arouse antagonism, and make them feel I was trying to get the best of them.

Of course there were dishonest men I had to deal with. I could generally tell, however, by a little manœuvring, what the intentions of these men were. If I suspected they were trying to cover up their



affairs, or get the best of their creditors, I would deal with them accordingly.

I will mention one or two incidents going to show the different phases of human nature.

I found a merchant of Chicago, a Mr. Jones, who owed our firm \$2,500. He had made an assignment and preferred creditors enough to cover his entire assets. Some New York creditors had attached his stock, and were trying to break the assignment.

I followed my plan of trying mildness and suavity, rather than threats and anger, and got him to give me a statement of his affairs. I believed it was a case tinctured with fraud. I saw his lawyer who was one of the sharpest in Chicago ; retained him to look after our interest in case the assignment which he was defending should be broken, as I believed it would be.

I found out that Jones' wife had means separate from her husband, and advised him and his lawyer to come to New York and try to get a compromise with the creditors rather than fight them in the courts.

I offered to help them all I could ; they were thankful, and partly promised to do so. I informed them when I expected to be home, after Christmas.

I had not been back long, before Mr. Jones and his lawyer called to see me ; they had come on to try to settle by paying, I believe, some 25 per cent.

I privately advised our firm not to accept, nor to positively refuse, but wait till they had seen other creditors.

In a day or two Mr. Jones, with his lawyer, came in the store accompanied by a deputy sheriff who had arrested him for fraud on the complaint of a creditor.

He was to be taken to Eldridge street jail unless he could procure bail for \$5,000, and came to me for help.

I took Mr. Jones and his lawyer into a private office, and with both Mr. Lathrop and Mr. Ludington, talked over the matter. His lawyer thought it was no case for arrest, and was sure he would get clear on trial, but must have bail or go to jail.

Mr. Jones finally admitted he had securities with him, which he would put up to secure the bail, and proceeded to partly

disrobe, and took off a belt containing bonds and diamonds, which he said belonged to his wife, and were worth over \$5,000.

This belt and contents was finally given to me for safe keeping as security, and bail was furnished, Mr. Green and myself going on the bond. Mr. Jones agreed to remain in New York until the warrant proceedings were decided, and for fear of further arrest, he took board at a private house, near Harlem, where he was to remain secreted until the matter was settled. His lawyer, Stewart by name, returned to Chicago, leaving Mr. Jones' case in the hands of the lawyer acting for Lathrop, Ludington & Co.

In a few days, thereafter, followed a course of proceeding by this lawyer which flavored so strongly of sharp practice that I remonstrated and protested, believing it to be a breach of faith and trust; but our lawyer believed Mr. Jones to be a swindler; that his intention was to beat us as well as the rest, and he went ahead.

He procured an attachment, and had it served on me for the securities placed in my hands, which I was obliged to deliver up,

and they were seized for the debt which Jones owed our firm.

He then had the bail-bond released and Mr. Jones delivered up to the sheriff and locked up in Eldridge Street jail.

This seemed to me a dishonorable thing to do, and I protested and urged our firm not to do it; but they said it was in the hands of their lawyer, and they were acting under his advice.

I visited Mr. Jones in jail as often as I could; assured him of my sympathy. He at once sent for his wife. I invited her to my house, and assisted her in securing a boarding place near the jail, where she could see her husband frequently, the rules of Eldridge Street jail being not so strict as other prisons.

Mr. Lathrop, himself, regretted what had been done, and, personally, contributed towards paying Mrs. Jones' expenses.

The firm, however, secured their claim in full. Some friends of Mrs. Jones' redeemed the securities and paid the debt with interest and costs.

I believe Jones finally got a settlement

with his creditors, paying a small percentage of their claims.

I will mention another case. We had a customer by name of Kelly, at Milledgeville, in Carroll County, Illinois, who owed us near \$3,000. I went there and found another man, his brother-in-law, in possession who said he had bought out the stock and paid for it, and that Kelly had moved his family and himself to Canada. After making further inquiries, I came to the conclusion that the whole transaction was a fraud.

The hotel proprietor gave me further information. He said Kelly had been in the habit of coming to his brother-in-law's house on Saturday nights, and staying till Monday morning, and believed he would come that night, it being Saturday.

There was no lawyer in the place, nor nearer than Mt. Carroll, the county seat, some 18 miles distant. Acting upon the information the hotel keeper had given me, I determined to go to Mt. Carroll and get a warrant for his arrest. There was a deputy sheriff residing at Milledgeville. I had my horse brought up, bade the landlord good-

by ; nobody suspected where I was going, only the landlord who was in the secret. I had to make a confidant of him to get his assistance.

I returned to the hotel at midnight, after a horseback ride of 36 miles, a pretty tired and sore man. The landlord had kept watch, and Kelly had not come. I kept close in my room all day Sunday, and the landlord kept watch, but Kelly did not make his appearance.

On Monday I rode to Sterling, some 12 miles in Whiteside County, where the landlord said Kelly had been seen the week before, and thought he might be at the hotel there.

Before going, however, I saw the deputy sheriff and gave him the order of arrest, with instructions to keep a sharp look out for Kelly, and if he came to the place, to arrest him at once, and either take him to jail or get bail, and I would be back in a day or two, all of which he promised.

The only thing now was to find Kelly. Sterling was in another county, and my purpose was, if I found him, to induce him to go to Milledgeville.

As I was riding into the village of Sterling I met Mr. Kelly on the road, knew him by sight, expressed sympathy for his misfortunes; told him I was traveling through the country to see how our customers were standing the hard times; sorry he had gone out of business, but hoped he would soon be all right again. He talked about a settlement if his creditors would compromise for about 10 cents on the dollar, if his brother-in-law, to whom he had sold out, would indorse his notes. He said he expected to be in Milledgeville in a few days, and would meet me there if I would settle on those terms.

I told him I had to see some parties and would go back to Milledgeville next day, and proposed that he ride my horse that night, and I would come next day, as my horseback riding had about used me up.

He fell into the trap and I saw him off, headed for Milledgeville. After supper and late in the evening, as I wanted the sheriff to have ample time to see Kelly, I went to a livery and took a buggy and driver for Milledgeville, arriving there at midnight.

I knew I was dealing with a sharp rascal and made up my mind to trap him if I could. There had been a light fall of snow during the evening, but had cleared off. The landlord had seen Kelly come. He had brought the horse to him as directed, and he was sitting up expecting me. He had watched the sheriff's house, and said the sheriff was still up, as the lights had not been put out.

I immediately went to the sheriff's house; he was up; said he knew Kelly had come and was at his brother-in-law's house; but he thought he would not arrest him until morning, and then take him directly to the county seat and jail.

I did not like this delay. The deputy-sheriff said he would go and arrest him at once, if I said so. I did say so, and we both went to the house. He knocked, a light was struck, and he was admitted. I remained outside keeping watch. He came out and said Kelly was up-stairs dressing, and I had better come in as it was cold. I declined, preferring to watch the only other door by which he could escape, and a cellar door on the same side of the house.



After a long time, as it seemed to me, the sheriff came out and asked if I had been around on the other side of the house. I said no; I had been where I could see the front door and the cellar door. Then he said, "Kelly has skipped." He said he had seen somebody pass a window on the other side of the house.

We went around there, and sure enough, footprints in the new fallen snow leading from the window out to the cattle yard, and then across the prairie, was evidence enough that our bird had flown.

It was very evident, too, that the sheriff had been in collusion and let him escape.

He pretended to feel badly about it, and as the morning light began to grow, and the snow having stopped falling, we could easily follow his tracks across the prairie.

We followed the trail two miles to a farm house; found he had only stopped there a moment to try to get a horse to go to Mt. Carroll, but did not succeed.

We followed him a mile further or more, and found he had again tried to get a horse for the same purpose. The sheriff refused

to follow any further, but said he would go back home and get his horse and ride to Mt. Carroll, and might meet or find him there. I continued alone on the trail. About half way to Mt. Carroll, I should say eight or ten miles from where we started, I found he had procured a horse, and had half an hour's start of me.

The ranchman had two other horses, and was willing to let me have one and he take the other and follow Kelly.

When I told him he was fleeing from the sheriff, both himself and wife expressed a fear that their horse would not come back, which fear I did not attempt to allay.

While the horses were being brought out, I swallowed a hasty breakfast (the family having just finished), which, I remember, consisted of corn or rye coffee (lukewarm), cornbread, fried pork (cold), and pumpkin pie; but, after my night's travel and morning race, my appetite was equal to any kind of a breakfast, and I enjoyed it.

The good woman wanted to prepare me a better breakfast, but my time was too precious.

Kelly had taken the only saddle, and I

had to be satisfied with a sheep skin in lieu, and the back of my horse was very sharp.

The ranchman's horse was an unbroken colt, and he preferred to ride bareback.

We rode along until we approached the village where I dismounted, the ranchman leading my horse.

Keeping my eyes open, I discovered Kelly among a group of men in front of the principal hotel ; it being court week an unusual number of men had gathered.

He saw me before I got very near him and instantly started on a run down a side street and up a steep hill, I followed about fifty feet behind, both on a full run.

This narrow street seemed to end at the wide open door of a brewery ; a dense steam coming out of the door hid from view everything within. I rushed in calling loudly, "hello! hello!" A man came forward out of the steam. I told him I was after a criminal, whom I had chased to the door and he must have gone in. He said nobody had come in there.

I searched the place and all the buildings in the vicinity, and every hiding place I could find, a crowd of men and boys.

following, all wanting to know what was the matter. I had no time to explain, only that the man was escaping from arrest.

I finally had to give up the search and go back to the hotel.

By this time I was about used up; my clothing, even to my overcoat, was drenched with perspiration. I sat down in the barroom, began to feel dizzy and faint. A man came to me with a glass of brandy, bathed my face and head with cold water, helped me off with my overcoat and assisted me to the sitting room to a lounge.

The hotel keeper also was very kind, as was the whole crowd.

I explained to them the situation, and that Deputy Sheriff Johnson was on the way with the order of arrest. I believed Kelly was in hiding not very far off, and offered twenty-five dollars to any one to find him.

A general search began immediately, and it was not long before I heard a shout: "He's found! He's found!" My strength came back at once, and I was out in the

midst of the crowd, and sure enough they had Kelly.

The sheriff of the county joined the crowd and took charge of Kelly, and we all marched to the court house. We went into a vacant room and closed the door, locking out the crowd.

I explained to the sheriff the situation; he took me aside and said he had no authority to keep him a moment. I assured him that his deputy, Johnson, was on the way with the warrant, and might be expected any moment, and that he must hold Kelly until he arrived. I told him, also, my belief that his deputy was in collusion with Kelly to let him escape.

While we were talking I kept looking out of the window, watching for Johnson; and to my great relief he soon came in sight, riding slowly up the hill towards the court house.

Though I felt very angry at him, I never was so glad to see any man before in my life. He came in and I could not contain myself any longer; my pent up anger and excitement burst out. In the presence of the sheriff, I told him what I thought of him;

that he had purposely permitted Kelly to escape, and I believed had assisted him out of the window, and given him time to get a good start before informing me of his escape. I then pointed to Kelly, and said: "Here is your prisoner, and I hold your bondsmen for his safe-keeping; I wouldn't trust you to arrest a cat." He talked back and so did the sheriff; but I was in no humor to argue, and when I had my say, went back to the hotel.

I found some boys had crawled under a barn, and there found Kelly, who crawled out the other side, and started to run when a man caught him. This man was entitled to the reward, but he generously waived it and said: "Open the bar for the boys, and that would be sufficient." This was done at an expense of about \$10. The deputy-sheriff, after drinking a few times, and after dinner, proposed that we hire a double team, and he, Kelly and myself go back to Milledgeville, as Kelly could get no bondsman elsewhere. I agreed; my horse being there, I had to go, and, if they were willing, I did not mind riding with them. Johnson was pretty mellow and Kelly not

much behind. I was master of the situation, and felt pretty good.

I remained over night at the tavern in Milledgeville; the whole village came in; I was quite a lion there. The hotel-keeper thought he had a second Napoleon for a guest. It was the general belief that I had out-generaled both the sheriff and Kelly.,

Next day the sheriff informed me that Kelly had procured one bondsman, and thought he could get another that day, but said Kelly was anxious to settle. Before I left he and Kelly both came to the hotel to see me. Kelly thought he could get his brother-in-law to indorse notes and pay us 75 per cent. I had ascertained that the brother-in-law was perfectly good, and agreed to take notes for three and six months; but it must be for the whole amount, interest and costs; and I would be at my brother-in-law's house in Polo Ogle County, some twelve miles from Milledgeville, for three days. If, during that time, he wanted to pay or secure our claim, he could let me know; otherwise, I should appear against him and he must take the consequences.

Next day he came to Polo on horseback, and concluded to settle our claim, and I met him and his brother-in-law next day, at Stirling, and completed the settlement by his paying us in full, and the notes were paid at maturity.

I understood, afterward, that no other creditors received one penny—it was a case of clear attempted swindling.

Without going into details about other cases, many of them quite similar, I will only say that I had many doubts and misgivings, whether to believe in the doctrine of “total depravity” or not. A few such cases (indeed there were quite a good many) almost inclined me to this belief, and that every man had his price; but, on the whole, believe the good overbalances the bad, and that untoward circumstances often induce men to listen to suggestions of the evil one, while under ordinary circumstances they would have remained loyal to honesty and truth.

While traveling, I fell in with and became acquainted with many commercial travelers.

They were, generally, a jolly, free and



easy set of men; many of them given to drink and carousing. Often, on a Saturday night they would get together and have what they called a high old time; to put it mildly, they would get drunk. I am thankful that I never had any inclination in that direction. It always seemed to me disgraceful in the extreme, unmanly and bestial. Many of these commercial travelers came to miserable ends.

Of course, there were sterling men engaged in this legitimate business, who despised these dissipations and always kept their garments unspotted, and held the respect of their fellow men.

In those days, before the Pullmans were thought of, or palace cars, the best cars were reserved for ladies, and gentlemen accompanied by ladies; while men unaccompanied by ladies had to herd together in poorer cars or go in the smoker.

For an all night's ride, it was, therefore, quite an object to get a seat in a reserved car.

I learned the ropes, and would generally stay in the waiting room, until I saw some ladies or a party with ladies going to the

train, when I would walk along with them, and when near the man on guard would say, "this is the ladies' car," and march in with them, thus securing a first-class seat, and often with good company.

A commercial traveler, if he keeps his eyes and ears open, can see and hear many phases of human nature, especially as it existed in the West at that time.

I remember some incidents, related as facts, which illustrate the condition and habits of the people.

A judge in one of the border counties was rather given to drink; indeed, sometimes got quite boozy, and when in this condition was very pious. He attended a revival meeting, taking a front seat. The preacher expatiated on the evils of intemperance, and in an impassioned manner exclaimed: "Show me the drunkard." To the astonishment of the audience, the judge pulled himself up, and said, with a hiccough: "Here I am." He was not too drunk to remember the custom of the court, requiring a criminal when receiving his sentence to stand up. After the excitement had become somewhat allayed, the

preacher, in the same manner, excoriated the hypocrite and exclaimed: "Show me the hypocrite!"

The judge again arose, and reaching over with his cane to the deacon's seat, with a hiccough, called out: "Deacon Jones, why the devil don't you respond when you are called?" "I did."

Of course this was too much, and the judge's friends quietly got him outside until he sobered off.

One of these commercial travelers, of whom I spoke, one night tried a new kind of drink which just touched the spot; it was mint julep. He kept the waiter busy bringing him mint julep, and fearing he might get in a condition when the waiter wouldn't understand what he wanted, called him, and said: "Look here, waiter, if anything happens during the night, and you don't understand what I want, keep bringing me mint julep."

A man committed suicide by hanging. His wife was the first one who discovered him. The coroner, at the inquest, asked her why she didn't cut him down; she naively replied, "She didn't know that he was dead."

A good country parson, in a car, noticed some young men very hilarious, one of whom was profane and loud. The parson went to him, and said: "Young man, do you not know you are on the road to perdition?" The young man looked up in great surprise, and said: "On the road to perdition! just my confounded luck, I bought my ticket for Chicago."

As I said, this trip, during the panic of 1857, kept me on the road and under a constant strain, mentally and physically, for nearly three months.

Many incidents and narrow escapes from imminent peril occurred. A runaway of a vicious team of broncoes on the prairie smashed the wagon, throwing me and the driver out on the frozen ground, bruising us both badly.

The village doctor, a bottle of liniment, a little work by a tailor, and a day or two of rest, repaired my damages.

I was in one collision, when the baggage and express cars were telescoped and three men killed, several badly injured, while I escaped without a scratch.

Another time, the rear car which I was in

jumped the track and went bumping over the ties ; it seemed to me a mile, but probably not a quarter that distance. We were going fast, and the passengers were shaken up like corn in a popper—very exciting while it lasted, but nobody hurt.

I need not say how glad I was to get back and to see my dear ones at home. My trip had been a successful one ; the firm were more than satisfied. They gave me a Christmas present of a suit of fine clothes, including overcoat, from a Broadway tailor, and to my wife an elegant mink set of furs, cape, muff and cuffs—a beautiful Christmas present, which I esteemed highly as a testimonial from the firm of their appreciation of my services.

In this connection I will say, that during the fourteen years I remained with this firm I never received anything but the most gentlemanly treatment ; was always on the most cordial and friendly terms with every member of the firm.

Mr. Lathrop, the head of the firm, was a prince among men ; I never knew his equal ; prosperity never elated him ; he had a kind word for every man and boy in his

employ, from the heads of departments down to the office boys and porters in the packing room.

I had especial reason for loving and admiring him. On closing out the retail business of Stevens & Lathrop, of which I have spoken, Mr. Lathrop requested me to figure out the loss, and take notes of his nephew, Charles D. Lathrop, for his share of the loss, saying that sometime he might be in position to pay.

I did this, and when the firm began to recuperate somewhat after the panic, Mr. Lathrop one day asked me how much those notes amounted to; I informed him, and soon after he gave his check for the amount, some \$1,500. It was a most generous act; entirely voluntary on his part. He was under no obligation to pay this or any part of it.

This Richard D. Lathrop was the most perfect Christian gentleman I ever knew. His charities were boundless, yet so unostentatious, that his nearest friends seldom heard of them.

Many a young man was indebted to him for his first start in business.

## LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR H.—

During the years after the panic, from 1857 until the commencement of the war, I frequently made trips in different parts of the country to look after what was called, in mercantile parlance, “Lame Ducks.”

The city recuperated from the effects of the panic sooner than the country did. Many country merchants became discouraged, and felt like giving up. My sympathies were with these men who had struggled hard to keep up, and I look back with great satisfaction to my efforts in their behalf.

Our firm nobly responded to my intercession for them; and in no case, unless it was very apparent that fraud was intended, did they attempt to enforce collection or distress them.

On the contrary, they often came to the relief of an embarrassed merchant, whose other creditors were pushing him into bankruptcy.

On one of these trips, during the winter

of '58-'59, I received a beautiful letter from my dear wife, telling me that she and our daughter, Marion, were to unite with the church which we were attending, the Broome Street Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. Dr. Wood was pastor, and she so much desired that I should be home at the time, and prayed that we might start in the Christian life together.

I was detained much longer than I expected, and found it impossible to be with them on the occasion ; but I was with them in spirit all that Sunday, as I thought of these dear ones, and, retiring to my room, read over and over again the letter, and wished with all my heart that I was with them.

I resolved that day that I would join with my wife, and with her and our dear children, henceforth try to lead a Christian life.

On this particular Sunday, the hotel in which I was stopping at Milledgeville, Illinois (the place and occasion referred to in another letter) was filled with a boisterous crowd of rough men, drinking and carousing.



I realized more than ever the natural depravity of men when unrestrained by Christian principle.

I called to mind the many providential escapes and deliverances from great perils, where I believed a divine Providence had interfered in my behalf, and felt a strong conviction that I ought to return thanksgiving and praise to God for all his mercies to me. I remember kneeling down by my bedside and, praying for strength and help, I then and there made a firm resolve to henceforth live a Christian life. On my return home, I greatly rejoiced my wife and family by telling them of my firm resolve to commence at once, with God's help, the new life, and at the next communion, our second daughter, Florence, and myself, made a public profession of religion, and united with the same church. A family altar was set up in our home ; soon thereafter, our youngest daughter, Ella, made a public profession of religion, making a united family. Parents and children, all trying to walk in the straight and narrow way pointed out by the Master.

I would say in this connection, that my

family and myself were regular attendants and supporters of the church, and firm believers in the Christian religion from our childhood.

Our children were brought up to attend Sunday School and the church, and in joining the church, with them, I am sure, was only a matter of form. I verily believe they were Christians from their birth. I never saw more conscientious children, so free from deception or guile.

Although not members of the church, both my wife and myself tried to obey all the precepts of the Bible. We believed in and read it habitually; the historical portion, and the book of Job, the Psalms, and Proverbs, especially, always had a peculiar interest for me.

In regard to making a public profession of religion and unity with the church, for many years I did not feel it an important duty; I believed it possible to enjoy religion and be a follower of Christ outside of any church connection.

I am convinced, however, it is much easier to live a Christian life with church connections and Christian fellowship.

I count it very fortunate that I always had an attractive home. I was glad to return to my family at the earliest possible moment that business would permit.

It is quite likely that I never should have run into dissipation, as many whose business called them a large part of the time to be absent, as my natural inclinations did not lead me in that direction; but I am convinced that many a dissipated man has become so, largely through an unattractive home, and lack of sympathy and affection in the home circle.

How true it is that we are

“Like webs that whiten in the sun,  
Grow pure by being purely shone upon.”

While on the other hand, association with dissipated and unprincipled men is apt to corrupt the morals of even naturally good men.

“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen:  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

I have mentioned, in my former letters,

some incidents which occurred during my journeyings and what has always seemed to me providential. One of these incidents which occurred in the summer of 1859, seems such a marked interposition of an overruling Providence in my behalf.

I had and still have, if he is living, a very dear friend, a merchant in Bennington, Vermont, Daniel McEowen. I had finished my business in that city, and expected to take the earliest train for home.

My friend called at my hotel after breakfast, and invited me to ride to the top of the highest point of the Green Mountains, some eight miles from Bennington, where, he said, the finest view could be had in all that country, and also drink from a natural ice spring, which we would pass on the way. I said I would gladly go with him, only I must surely be back in time for the twelve o'clock train, as there was no other until next morning.

He said we would certainly be back in time, as he drove a fast horse.

We drove to the top of the mountain, and Mr. McEowen then proposed to drive across a plateau or table-land, which he said he

had driven across years before, some two miles to another road, by which we would return to Bennington. He supposed he knew the direction and the distance, and doubtless he did; but as it sometimes happens, as I learned afterward, the top of these mountains suddenly becomes enveloped in a cloud so dense that one can scarcely see the horse he is driving, and this happened with us before we had proceeded half way across the plateau. Mr. McEwen owned he was not sure of the direction at all, and said our only way was to retrace our steps; but this was more difficult than we supposed. There being no road, we had to search for the prints of the horse's feet in the wet grass and brush, and this was no easy matter. We could make but slow progress; he going ahead, searching for these prints and wagon tracks, often losing the trail and having to search a long time to find it, while I drove the horse and followed him.

We finally emerged from the opening into the road, when we found we were within less than an hour of train time, and eight miles away. We did our very best to reach it, but missed by a few minutes.

I never felt more disappointed, but had to submit to what seemed an adverse fate.

After changing my underclothes and drying my other garments the best I could, I tried to resign myself and to wait patiently for next morning's train.

During the afternoon dispatches came and bulletins announced a terrible railroad catastrophe. The train which I should have taken had gone down with the bridge at Schadicoke, and every person on the train either killed or seriously injured. I remember very distinctly the sensations I felt at this interposition of Providence by which I was spared. My very flesh crawled and my hair seemed to raise on my head; I could scarcely speak. The interposition seemed so tangible and plain I felt I was in the hollow of God's hand, snatched, as it were, from the very jaws of death.

The train which I took next morning proceeded to the bridge; the passengers, with myself, walked down the banks, some hundred feet or more, where the three or four cars lay at the bottom, smashed almost into kindling wood, with the timbers of the

bridge all piled in a confused mass. The train from Troy was waiting on the other side, and, as soon as the baggage was carried across and passengers transferred, we proceeded on our journey.

I have never, since then, murmured at any misconnection of trains. I believe Providence often overrules, and what seems exceedingly vexatious and adverse is often our salvation.

I look back now to many incidents during my life in which I feel sure a divine protecting hand guided me ; the reason, I do not pretend to fathom. I can easily see the reason why some lives have been providentially preserved to benefit the race, or for some wise purpose, which was apparent to themselves and others ; but, in my own case, I cannot perceive this. My life has been quiet and domestic, and seems to me could have been blotted out without leaving scarcely a ripple, except to my family and immediate surroundings.

The years 1859 and '60 were years of great political excitement. The new Republican party, which was composed of the free-soil element of both of the old parties, was

conscientiously opposed to any further extension of slavery.

The solid South was, of course, in favor of slavery, and when it became probable that the anti-slavery people of the North would elect their president, they began to make preparations to secede and to set up an independent confederate government of their own, with slavery as the corner stone.

Strange as it may seem, the old Democratic party of the North sympathized with these conspirators; denouncing as "Negro Worshippers," "Abolitionists" and "Black Republicans" the loyal men who dared to assert themselves in favor of "free soil."

The cabinet of James Buchanan was composed mostly of southern men and sympathizers in the secession movement, including his vice-president, Breckinridge. These men had been for years undermining the government, crippling its resources, and yet, during all this time, while the Republican party was sounding the alarm and warning the country of its peril, this old copperhead Democratic party went on with its preparations, and in its national conven-



tion proceeded to nominate and to vigorously prosecute the canvass to elect these very conspirators who were then ready to capture the government, having already stolen its arms and crippled its resources.

The firing upon Fort Sumter caused a great reaction. Some of the Democratic leaders, and many of the rank and file of the party came out as "War Democrats;" but, finding no half-way station between the two great antagonistic parties, joined manfully and loyally the Union Republican ranks, and with that party, fought for and preserved the Union and saved the country.

Many of these War Democrats became, during and after the war, the most radical and loyal Republicans, indorsing the policy of the party and its reconstruction measures, and the constitutional amendments forever abolishing slavery and making the freedmen citizens of a free and united country. All honor to such men, who refused to follow the conspirators or to fight under any other flag than "Old Glory," the beloved stars and stripes of our beloved country.

The old Democratic party hated these

men, whom they termed "turncoats," more than they did the "Black Republicans," as they called them. I must think that many of these men, who made up the Democratic party during the war, were honest and patriotic; but, oh! how mistaken. Their national and state, and county conventions, and "peace meetings," all had the effect of encouraging the rebels to hold out long after it was evident to the whole world they were beaten. Many thousand lives were lost on both sides, and millions and millions of money expended, as I verily believe, on account of the disloyalty and sympathy with the secessionists of the old Democratic party of the northern states. It is a sad thought to me that many dear friends whom I esteem very highly, were numbered among that party, and who really favored a dissolution of the Union, rather than to coerce the South. I desire to say here, that I was a Republican from the formation of that party; the blackest kind of a "Black Republican;" an old Abolitionist as far as the Government had the right to abolish slavery, and where it was bound to tolerate

it, I would hedge it up within its lawful limits as I would any infectious disease.

I had many discussions with my Democratic friends on this subject; some intimate friendships broken; the lines were pretty closely drawn.

At this writing, more than three decades since the war closed, some of these Obstructionists, to use a mild term, are trying to make themselves and the rising generation believe they were always union men, and that the Martyr Lincoln was a good man, and not the "ignorant backwoods man" of thirty-five years before. Some of the younger generation may believe them, but with those like myself, who remember those dark days, all this is idle talk.

I sometimes feel as did the old Indian when he said he "could forgive and forget, but he tarnally remembered."

## LETTER IX.

MY DEAR H.—

As I said in my previous letter, the years immediately preceding the election of Lincoln and the war were years of great excitement ; the future seemed dark indeed. A civil war at home imminent, and a possible war with England, and the country just emerging from the effects of the panic of 1857, all tended to forebode disaster, and men dreaded the dark cloud that was already looming up in the distance.

To the credit of the descendants of the Pilgrims they did not flinch ; but, in the face of threats from the disloyal South and their stanch supporters in the North, that : “ If you elect for president, the Black Republican, Lincoln, the Union is split, and war will follow.” I say to the credit of these true Northern men, they defied the threats, and elected the man of their choice ; and, sure enough, war did follow. That war is history now ; but when it was in progress, it was a time, indeed, that tried men’s souls.

Although I was not in the military service of the country, my whole heart was bound up in the cause of the Union. I stood my draft, but was not drafted; I helped pay for substitutes for fellow clerks who were drafted and so situated that they could not go.

I did, however, join an association of several hundred men in South Brooklyn, headed by the pastor of my church, the late Rev. Dr. Spear. Meetings were held weekly in a large hall, and we were drilled in military tactics by an elder of the church, who had been an officer of the regular army in the Mexican war.

The purpose of the association was to be organized; and if necessity required, by an invasion or any emergency, we would be ready to respond at a moment's notice. As the Civil War is historical, I will not dwell upon it only so far as my own personal history is concerned.

When the war commenced, the future was so dark and uncertain all business men felt it incumbent to reduce expenses. Salaries were cut down, often fifty per cent. and more. It has always been very gratifying

to me, that the firm I was with, not only did not reduce my salary, but made a material advance ; I being the only one, as I remember, among some two hundred and fifty employés, that was not reduced.

I never felt, however, that this was through any favoritism, but that my services were really worth all I received.

It was the wish of the firm that I should be on a salary rather than a commission, as were many of the salesmen, for the reason they desired me to look after outside matters, as mentioned in a former letter.

This branch of the business, however, became so distasteful to me, that I finally declined to continue it, and insisted upon being put on a commission, and before the war closed, my income was changed from a salary to a commission ; by this arrangement my income was more than doubled. From that time I never worked on a salary, but always on a commission, paying my own traveling expenses and hiring my own assistants ; this being more independent and satisfactory every way.

I am diverging and getting ahead of my

story. To go back to the early incidents of the war.

Our firm had a large trade in some of the southern states, and this trade was, of course, all cut off when the war commenced, and collections were impossible, as all communications between the North and the South was suddenly stopped in the beginning of the war.

There were about a dozen or more merchants in the two counties of Accomac and Northampton, Virginia, owing our firm a considerable amount. These counties are what is known as the eastern shore or peninsula, separated from the rest of the state by the Chesapeake.

In the month of January, 1862, a dispatch in the morning papers told of a secret expedition that had marched down the peninsula, and that not only the rebel force, but many merchants and farmers, and inhabitants had fled before our little army, taking boats and whatever would float them across the Chesapeake, out of the reach of the Yankee troops, leaving their stores, their stock, their houses, and everything ; expecting, if caught, to be hung as traitors.

When this news came to New York our firm desired me to go immediately to Baltimore or Washington, and procure a pass, if possible, from the government or commanding-general, and to go to that part of Virginia and see what could be done. Of course, they could give me no instructions; there were no precedents; communication all cut off, except for military operations. I was given *carte-blanche* as to the manner of getting there and to manage the affairs as I considered best. It was a new experience, and I was only too glad to enter upon it. I started as soon as I could go home and pack a few things in my grip, taking leave of my little family, and went immediately to Baltimore; obtained an interview with General Dix, the commandant of that district, and, after some delay, obtained a pass from him to go by government transport to Fortress Monroe, which was as far as he could pass me. General Wool was in command at Fortress Monroe.

I had quite an experience at Fortress Monroe. Arriving there in the early morning I found everything about the docks and barracks in disorder. The secret expedition



of General Burnside had sailed from there the evening before, with sealed orders, which proved to be to go to Hatteras Inlet and North Carolina.

I obtained lodging at the only public house in the place, "Willard's," and soon as possible obtained an interview with General Wool; stated to him my business and my desire for a pass to the eastern shore. The old general flatly refused upon the ground that all civil business must be subordinate to the military; he would allow no civilian to go through the lines. I appealed to his sympathies for loyal creditors who were suffering so much by the South; to his sense of justice; but he only referred me to the authorities at Washington. This would involve a delay of a week at least in the then state of traveling; but he was firm. I went back to my hotel and passed nearly a sleepless night thinking over the matter and what course I had better pursue.

I concluded to try once more, and in the morning went again to his headquarters, determined, if possible, to overcome his scruples. I found he was willing to argue

the point with me, and began to feel the battle was half won. I offered to pay for dispatches if he would telegraph to Washington; told him the nature of my business and its urgent needs. The old general began to soften and finally yielded, and gave me the pass; and, following me to the walls of the fortress, pointed out the dock from which a transport, with supplies, would sail next morning; and, shaking my hand, wished me success.

Next morning I was at the dock designated, waiting for a boat but none was there. An officer came to me and asked my business. I told him I was waiting for the boat for the eastern shore. He said the boat would sail from another dock, where she was then loading, half a mile away, and he pointed it out to me. I told him General Wool had told me the boat was to go from that dock. He replied General Wool didn't know; that he was captain of the port and knew all about it. Upon this information I started to walk to the other dock, but before reaching it the boat started, and I turned to walk back to the first dock, thinking it would stop there; and it did, just for a moment

for some officer to jump on board, and then steamed off and was soon nearly out of sight. I found, by the captain of the port, that the boat had indeed gone, and no other boat would go to the eastern shore in four days. Everything seemed to be in confusion. The captain took the blame on himself for not stopping the boat and waiting for me. He excused himself by saying he had not slept for three days and nights, and been at work every moment getting off the secret expedition.

The four days that I was thus obliged to spend at Fortress Monroe were full of incidents. The captain, to soften my disappointment, gave me special privileges, and an opportunity to see the military operations, among which was one that I was very much impressed with—the first exchange of prisoners. I was invited to go out on the flag-of-truce boat to meet the flag-of-truce boat of the rebels near Norfolk. Several hundred of our brave boys who had been in Libby Prison since the “Bull Run” battle, more than six months, were brought on the boat; many of them, sick and wounded, had to be carried on

litters, quite a number entirely helpless. Several died at Fortress Monroe before they could be sent on North; a pitiful sight it was, and haunted me for weeks.

General Butler was stationed at Newport News, some ten miles from Fortress Monroe, with an army of fifteen to twenty thousand men; and two men-of-war, the "Cumberland" and "Congress," were stationed off Newport News, at the mouth of James River, to blockade the river. Provisions and fresh water for his army had to be sent from Fortress Monroe by boats.

I was invited by the port captain to accompany one of these supply boats. The boat was loaded with provisions, some horses, and several officers, and was towing a water boat with a tank containing hundreds of hogsheads of water. Of course we made slow progress, and I noticed our captain and some of the officers were intently watching with their glasses a queer sort of craft in the distance steaming directly towards us. When it came within perhaps half or three-quarters of a mile it commenced firing, and we could see the water plowed up in a direct line towards us, and

kept approaching nearer and nearer to us.

The captain remarked he had no fear for his vessel ; but might, if pressed too closely, have to cut loose from the water boat, and we all felt anxious until we came under the guns of the "Cumberland" and "Congress," when we felt safe.

This queer looking craft was the noted rebel ram, the iron-clad "Merrimac," which only a few days later came out and sank the two government ships, the "Cumberland" and "Congress;" their guns making no impression on the iron-clad, many of the brave sailors going down with their ship.

General Butler's army stationed on the bluff overlooking these ships and watching the unequal fight, was powerless to help.

It will be remembered, however, that the next morning when it was expected the "Merrimac" would come out and complete its work of destruction in Hampton Roads, and open up the James and Chesapeake, the little turreted "Monitor" hove in sight, looking, as was said, like a cheese box on a raft, and met this floating monster, and the world-renowned battle ensued,

revolutionizing maritime warfare throughout the world. I missed seeing this fight, but having seen the monster, and been in range of its guns so recently, I could realize its significance and the danger the country barely escaped.

There was only a small force stationed at Old Point Comfort where I was stopping ; and just across Hampton Roads, in sight, was stationed a large rebel army. Everything was kept in readiness for an attack, and I experienced my first sensation of war.

All night long, every hour, I could hear a sentinel call out, "twelve o'clock, and all's well," "one o'clock, and all's well," and so on, every hour of the night.

I asked my friend, the captain, why people had to be awakened and told that all was well ; why did they not allow them to sleep until it was necessary to wake them for some actual danger. "Oh," he said, "this calling out by the sentinels assured the army and the people that all was well, and they could rest in safety."

At the expiration of the four days the little transport was again loaded, and, I on board, headed for the eastern shore

some thirty miles across the Chesapeake. It was a cloudy day, and in the afternoon a dense fog settled down. Our captain slowed his engine, took soundings, feeling his way, hoping to make the landing before night, when suddenly our boat struck bottom, and we were fast aground. We were not certain just where we were, and settled down, expecting to stay on board all night until we could have daylight and high tide to float us off; there were no accommodations for sleeping, or scarcely room to sit down.

About sunset, however, the fog began to lift, and we could see the shore some three or four miles away; but we were fast and could not move. We noticed, just before it became dark, a small boat pull off from the shore, and it came direct to our boat. The rowers were soldiers, who said there was a camp of one or two hundred soldiers at that point; they were expecting their Colonel and came to see if he was on board. He was not on board; only myself and a Mr. Dibble beside the captain and crew. We prevailed on the soldiers to take us to the shore. On nearing the shore we were challenged by the

sentinel on duty: "Who comes there?" We replied, "Friends with a pass." Then came, "Advance one and show your pass." As the boat touched the shore, I stepped off and showed my pass from General Wool; then Mr. Dibble, who had a general pass as he had a contract to buy pine wood for the Navy, and was on that business.

The soldiers, true to their discipline, marched us single file to headquarters, we stated our business to the commandant and were given a grand reception by the boys. They were starving for news, not having heard a word in four days, and supposed there had been battles, and feared that Washington had been captured, and all sorts of disasters, until we assured them to the contrary and gave them late papers. They gave us a supper, the best they had, and when they found we desired to go to Eastville, which was ten miles, they offered to harness a team and drive us out that night.

Where they were stationed was an old plantation owned by a Mr. Custis, a descendant of the Washington-Custis family; a large house which the officers occupied.

In their flight they had left everything—



a fine span of horses, wagons, a pen full of fat hogs, cows, chickens, etc.; so the boys were faring nicely.

After supper they harnessed the horses, and putting hay in the bottom of the wagon, Mr. Dibble and myself sat down on the hay while two soldiers sat on a seat in front and four behind us, all ready for a skirmish in case of attack from bushwhackers, who were reported lurking about. We were not molested, however, and reached Eastville in a couple of hours.

This place, Eastville, was a real secession-hole, being in Gov. Wise's congressional district. He was a fire eater—a red-hot secessionist; and this people, his constituents, were the same sort. The most prominent people had fled; the leaders and all who had taken up arms expected to be hung if captured; hence their speedy flight when the hated Yankee blue coats so suddenly pounced down upon them.

From this point I traveled over the two counties of Northampton and Accomac, having procured a horse and buggy and a driver, until I got somewhat accustomed to the country.

One day while driving alone rain came on so hard that I stopped at a country tavern—the most dilapidated, isolated, tumble-down place I ever saw used for public accommodation. The rain continued, and I concluded to have my horse put up and to remain over night. During the afternoon and evening, the bar room filled up with the hardest looking set of men and boys I ever saw together. Poor whites, long, lank, jaundiced-looking, ragged and rough. They were all secessionists, of course, and the idea that the South could be conquered by the Yankees was, to them, the most preposterous idea imaginable.

They were testing new and heavy guns at Fortress Monroe that day, and these men had been listening to the distant thunders some thirty miles away, and felt sure there had been a battle, and sure, also, that Fortress Monroe was captured by the secessionists, as in their then state of feeling, a battle meant to them certain rebel victory. These men became very hilarious as the afternoon and evening advanced, and were really abusive. I did

not then, nor never did, suppress my Union sentiments, and on this occasion I did not mince words with these men.

On retiring for the night, many of these fellows were still in the bar room, and very noisy. It occurred to me that if the news should come, as these men expected and were waiting for—of a battle and rebel victory—perhaps my own personal safety might be in danger. I carried a revolver at that time, and after making my door as secure as I could, I saw that my revolver was in order and handy before I lay down on my corn-husk bed. I was not molested, however, and the morning opened bright. I had breakfast alone, was served by the landlady with fried pork and corn cakes, and a compound for coffee of burned grain of some sort, the woman remarking that it was “not store coffee as they did not use store coffee or store tea, or anything that paid any duty to the Yankee government.”

I found some of the stores closed, the owners having fled. Those not closed, the merchants were sitting around doing nothing, waiting for something to turn up. They had some Virginia bank bills, and

Confederate money, but nothing I could take.

The closed stores had been taken possession of by the quartermaster of the Union army. I filed our claim as loyal creditors with the quartermaster, with the approval and advice of the commanding officers. Eventually when the merchants felt safe to return, they did so ; and on taking the oath of allegiance were permitted to go on with their business. The merchants, who had remained, seemed willing to do anything they could, and I made arrangements with a Mr. Moore and Mr. Dibble, who were buying Virginia pine wood and supplies for the army and navy, to secure our claims for a moderate commission ; which they eventually did, so that my trip was most successful, not only in that section, but these men being large contractors followed our army, and as the Union lines were pushed further into the rebel territory they, being on the ground, were able to secure claims which otherwise would have been lost. On my return to Baltimore, I concluded to visit Washington ; Congress being in session, they were having ex-

citing times. I shall never forget the discussions I heard in both houses of Congress on that occasion.

In the House a bill was under discussion to make the railroads of the country military highways. Some of the roads, whose managers were secessionists, had given preference to moving freight, rather than moving the army. This bill was to compel them to give precedence, in all cases, to military operations.

I heard a speech full of fire and patriotism from that grand old man, Thaddeus Stevens, who, by the way, belonged to a branch of our family.

I felt proud of him, and shall never forget the old hero as he strode down the aisle, hurling invectives against the Copperheads who urged the lawful right of railroads to load their cars with lumber or iron, if they chose, rather than armed men and cannon. I could have embraced the old man, homely and rough as he was said to be, though he did not seem so to me.

In the Senate, I remember, a resolution was being discussed to expel from the Senate a Democratic senator from Indiana,

Jesse Bright, who had been writing to the rebel authorities in Richmond, recommending to them some new invention of a gun more effective and destructive than any they had in use. His letters were addressed to the "Hon. Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States." As I remember, the correspondence was not denied by him or his Democratic friends ; but they argued his lawful right to do so if he chose. I believe nearly every Democratic senator took that view of it ; but the loyal Republicans took a decidedly different view, and Senator Bright got his walking papers from the Senate Chamber to his home in Indiana, instead of the gallows as he richly deserved. In the beginning we played war, but learned better as it progressed.

While in Washington I attended a public reception at the White House, where I saw President and Mrs. Lincoln, and many notables—members of the cabinet, senators, congressmen and foreign ministers, governors, and prominent men from all over the country.

The grandest figure of all, to my mind, was President Lincoln. His greeting and

hand-grasp was most cordial, and his pleasant smile lit up his homely features, making them beautiful to me. His wearied, anxious look, however, showed the awful burden he was carrying—a nation's fate on his shoulders.

No picture of ancient or modern history ever left such an impression on my mind. It seemed nearest to the picture of our Saviour bearing the sins and guilt of the world.

I had seen Mr. Lincoln before he was nominated for president, and heard his famous Cooper Union speech. I was deeply impressed at that time with the man, but it was under vastly different circumstances. He did not make the same impression on me as did his appearance at this reception. At that time he was only known from his debates with Mr. Douglas, in Illinois, and his fame had not become national. There was a sort of independent, western boldness in his speech, not so refined and cultured as some speeches delivered in the same course of lectures by such men as Edward Everett, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner and others; but it was solid as

the mountains, and every proposition was nailed and clinched. It was a speech full of texts for loyal men. I have always remembered, with great satisfaction, having heard this speech of our martyr president, and of taking his hand two years later as our loved president, and saying to him, as did hundreds of others that night, "God bless you!" and this came from the very bottom of the hearts of millions of men and women the world over.



## LETTER X.

MY DEAR H.—

In my last letter I told you something of my experience on the rebel lines in Virginia and in Washington. During the spring of that year, 1862, our firm obtained permission from the government to ship to ports in the South, opened by our army and navy, dry goods, boots and shoes, and other merchandise. They believed this business could be extended very largely as our army should open the gate-ways of trade.

They desired me to take the management of this entire business, and offered to more than double my salary, which was, at that time, \$2,500 a year, making it \$5,000, or even \$6,000; which offer I would not entertain for a moment.

They finally made a proposition to continue my salary of \$2,500 and to give me ten per cent. of the profits; which offer I finally accepted, and entered heartily into the enterprise.

Our first point for operation was to be

Newbern, N. C., a city then just captured by our army ; and from this point I was to be governed as circumstances indicated ; to follow up the opening of new places, and establish stores or trading points, and to have help sent to me as was needed.

It was no small undertaking. We looked about to find a suitable vessel, as there was no established freight lines then to any southern ports. We finally selected and chartered an old style, centre board, flat-bottom schooner, intended to sail in the shallow waters of the sounds and rivers as well as on the ocean. Our purpose was to go up the Neuse and Tar Rivers, Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds in North Carolina, as circumstances should indicate and as I considered it safe to do.

The name of this schooner was the "Julius Webb," commanded by Captain Eldridge, with a mate and six seamen and colored cook. Captain Eldridge was an old man ; had been captain of a whale ship many years, and knew all about the sea.

I selected four of the best young men in our store and one from a boot and shoe house to handle that part of our stock.

The name of this young man was Luther Bingham, of whom I shall speak hereafter.

We proceeded to select from our store, and to buy outside, a general assortment of merchandise which we considered suitable, and loaded our schooner with goods amounting to between \$30,000 and \$40,000, had them insured, and when everything was ready, I bade good-by to my dear ones at home, and with the young men went aboard the schooner.

It was late in the day before we got started, too late to pass Sandy Hook before dark, so we cast anchor in the bay to wait until next morning for a fair wind and daylight to pass the narrows and out to sea. It was a long, doleful night to me; I scarcely slept at all, but stood on the deck looking over the city where my loved ones were, whom I had left in tears a few hours before.

I will say here that my dear wife was one of the bravest of women.

She had borne up bravely all through my preparations; given all the help and encouragement she could possibly give without a discouraging word; but at the last moment her feelings overcame her, as did

mine, and the leave taking was like tearing asunder our very heart strings.

As I said, it was a long, doleful night. The very memory of it clings to me, and I can say, as did Job of old, "Let darkness seize upon it: let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months;" it was my Gethsemane. I felt then if I could only go back and give up this untried and uncertain expedition, I would give anything in the world. The anticipated fortune I cared nothing for as I felt then; but I had gone too far to back out, and it would be unmanly and dishonorable to do so, or even think of, and so all I had to do was as Pizarro did—destroy the bridges behind so he could not retreat.

It was on the 20th day of May, 1862, when we passed Sandy Hook, and found ourselves out on the broad Atlantic. It is said the bravest soldiers feel shaky, and their knees tremble just before going into a battle; but when the fight commences this feeling all passes away, and so it was with me.

As soon as we were at sea and headed

down the coast, this terrible feeling of home and heart sickness, and terrible forebodings passed away; and I began to feel the responsibility of the situation.

It was a most eventful voyage. We had head winds all the way down the coast to Cape Hatteras. Some days we made scarcely no progress at all, though we kept tacking, trying to gain a little in this way. I was not very sea-sick, just riled enough to destroy my appetite, and the sight of the cooking cabin and old colored man cook and his methods of preparing the meals was not calculated to tempt our appetites. The gulf stream, as is well known, is a current some eight or ten miles wide, running six or eight miles an hour up the coast, and from ten to twenty miles from shore. Sailing vessels bound south, unless they have a strong fair wind, try to keep out of the gulf stream, either outside to sea or inside near the coast. In our case we kept inside, to avoid its current; but the constant head winds made our progress very slow.

At Cape Hatteras, the gulf stream runs nearer the shore or point called the cape, and

much of the space between the gulf stream and the shore is covered with breakers. All steamers and heavy vessels go outside of the gulf stream, in passing Cape Hatteras; but with our flat-bottom schooner and light freight, Captain Eldridge decided to keep inside, as the wind had then begun to favor us, but this decision came very near being fatal. We had noticed a gathering blackness in the west, a little ominous, and Captain Eldridge ordered on all sail, for the purpose of driving past the dangerous cape before the storm should reach us. But here was his great mistake. The storm, which proved to be a tornado, came whirling down, striking us with all our sails set, and drove us immediately upon the breakers and on our beams' end. It was too late then to take in the sails, and we were whirled and pitched about among the breakers like a chip in a boiling cauldron. It was only a few moments before the fastening of our main boom gave way and the boom came sweeping back and forth over the deck. The captain was at the wheel, and I standing by him, just holding on with all our might, when the boom came sweeping towards us. We

both dropped flat on the deck and it passed over us, but struck the wheel, breaking it off even with the deck.

The mate meantime with the sailors, were engaged cutting away the sails, which they finally accomplished, and all our sails were washed overboard and lost. This was a terrible plight to be in. The captain said afterward, "The nastiest scrape he ever got in, in all his sea experience."

While the tornado lasted (perhaps three quarters of an hour) all we could do was to hang on to a stanchion or rail, or anything we could cling to to keep from being washed overboard ; our vessel being part of the time on top of a breaker, and then down in the gulf between the breakers ; sometimes on her beams' end and almost bottom up, whirling about in the great maelstrom that seemed to have us in its clutches.

There was no use to give any orders ; nothing could be done only to hang on, which we all did for dear life, until the gale was partly spent when the genius of our old Captain showed itself.

This Captain Eldridge was a splendid

sailor and had some peculiarities, one of which I will mention. Just before the gale struck us he reached his hand in a little entry way at the door of his cabin and took out a yellow oilcloth coat and put it on, buttoning it up to his chin; the two side pockets were both filled with fine cut tobacco, with which he filled his mouth. I remember speaking with him about it after the storm, and that he eat tobacco as a sheep eats hay, just wagging his jaw, letting the juice run down over his chin and on his clothes, and very frequently spitting out the tobacco, and filling his mouth again and again while the storm lasted.

Yes, he said, he always did this, and had the pockets of his storm coat always loaded in case of need. He said it stimulated him and kept his wits active, but it was all mechanical; after he got to chewing, he had no recollection of changing the quids though he knew a pound of tobacco disappeared in a short time.

As soon as he and the sailors could stand without holding on, he ordered scantling and a saw, and axe, and ropes, and soon had a temporary wheel fixed up so we could get



a little steerage way, and after a little while he ordered more scantling and sails, of which all sailing vessels carry some extra, stowed away in a scupper in case of need, and they went to work and in an hour we had storm sails up, and the wind came fair for us and we were soon past the breakers and out of danger, and at sunset that night we cast anchor just outside of Hatteras Inlet. Though the sea was terrible, Captain Eldridge said he had two big anchors formerly used on a much larger vessel, and he knew they would hold, no matter how the wind blew or the sea tumbled; so we felt comparatively safe and so thankful for what we considered a providential preservation from what seemed, a few hours before, certain destruction.

This Luther Bingham, of whom I have spoken, was as fine a fellow as ever lived, and a devoted Christian. As I may not have occasion to speak of him again, I will say here, after returning from this expedition in the fall, he volunteered in the army; was appointed quartermaster and, with his own and several other regiments, was sent to Hilton Head, S. C.

He gave his young life to his country's cause, and died in the service a year later, loved by the officers and soldiers, and was buried at Hilton Head with military honors. His father, Rev. Dr. Bingham, published a memorial, entitled "The Young Quartermaster," in which he speaks of this terrible storm through which we passed, and our providential escape.

After we had dropped anchors and had our supper, young Bingham asked the captain if he had any objection to having prayers in the cabin. The captain gladly gave his consent, and we all gathered there, the captain and mate and all the sailors that could be spared. Young Bingham read one of the beautiful psalms, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;" and then led in a most touching and appropriate prayer in thankfulness for our preservation, and asking God to keep us and the loved ones at home. Several of us prayed, and, doubtless, the most heartfelt prayers ever offered, for all felt we had been snatched from the very jaws of death. Tears coursed down the cheeks of Captain Eldridge and several of the

rough sailors, and when they bade us good-night as we retired to our bunks, they shook our hands as they went to their watch on deck.

We were not so safe after all as we supposed when we cast our two big anchors. Two or three other sailing vessels cast their anchors in sight of us, waiting for the sea to become more calm, and for daylight, before passing in the Inlet. We had noticed before dark one of the largest of these vessels was heavily loaded, having a locomotive and cars on her deck. In the night, while our vessel was tossing and pitching and tugging at her anchors, the watchman on deck came to the cabin-door screaming, "Captain Eldridge, come quick; a ship is on us!" The captain was on deck in a second, and I as quickly, and at this moment the heavily loaded vessel drifted past us, having broken loose from her anchors, and grazed our vessel, barely touching it as it passed and drifted out to sea. I did not, for the moment, realize our danger until Captain Eldridge and the sailor both exclaimed, "Thank God!" They said if it had struck our vessel

squarely, nothing could have saved us from being sunk in a moment, this vessel being so large and heavy; and our big, strong anchors would have held, and the weight of the vessel would have carried us down instantly. This was another manifestation of divine protection.

Next morning a pilot came to us in a small boat from shore in response to our signal. We raised our anchors and the wind being fair sailed through the Inlet into Pamlico Sound, and thence up the Neuse River to the place of our destination, Newbern, N. C.

This city had been captured by the army under General Burnside only a few weeks before, after a hard fought battle a few miles from the city. Most of the prominent white inhabitants had fled, leaving their chattels, including most of their slaves, behind.

There were plenty of vacant stores, one of which I secured, paying rent to the United States, through the quartermaster who had the abandoned property in charge.

We filled this store and began our trade. The amount of sales were not as large as we

had expected, but we felt hopeful that it would improve, and besides I expected to open stores in other places when our army could make it safe to do so.

After getting the business pretty well established in Newbern, I began to look around for openings ; and for this purpose went up the Tar River some hundred miles or more from Newbern to Washington, a flourishing little city before the war, recently captured from the rebels and held by a couple of regiments and a gunboat in the river. I had no difficulty in securing a vacant store and made preparation for sending a stock of goods, and two or three young men to run it.

The rebel forces were stationed only a few miles out, in much larger force than our army in the city, only our army was protected by the gunboat whose guns commanded the city. I hesitated about taking the chances, and it was very fortunate I did, as about this time occurred the defeat of McClellan's army in Virginia; and our forces in North Carolina were reduced to two or three regiments in Newbern and a single regiment in Wash-

ington, and notwithstanding the protection of the gunboats, these places were considered very insecure. Indeed Washington, N. C., was very soon thereafter recaptured by the rebels and nearly destroyed by fire and shells from our gunboat. Our little army and every Union man there was driven out or captured. Of course, if I had been established there the goods would certainly have been lost, and myself and my men very likely sent to a rebel prison.

I always considered this a very narrow escape. On account of this great reduction of our forces, I did not consider it prudent to take the risk of establishing any more trading posts, except at Roanoke Island. This I put in charge of an experienced man by name of Ray and two helpers.

During our three months' stay in Newbern, we were almost constantly expecting an attack from the rebels who were stationed only about two miles outside of the city in large force. The sentinels on both sides were near enough often to converse together.

I was invited to ride out with a staff officer on one occasion. We rode within plain

sight, less than a mile, of the rebel lines; with a glass we could easily see their artillery and fortifications and the sentinels on post. Neither side wanted to bring on a battle, and so we were not molested.

This state of things continued during the whole time we were in Newbern. Our artillery used to practice daily its tactics for street fighting directly in front of our store, which was near the junction of three streets. We would hear the bugles and then the caissons and cannon, drawn by four horses with riders, would come dashing down the street on a full run, wheel and go through all the evolutions of loading and firing as rapidly as possible.

The men and horses were trained to obey the sounds of the bugle. It was wonderful to watch the manœuvres, so quickly did they plant themselves so as to rake the streets in all directions, and how quickly they would unlimber and limber up and change their positions and go to other points, and through the same manœuvres. After sunset civilians were not allowed on the street without giving the pass-word for the day to the sentinel of the beat. These

sentinels were stationed on nearly every corner.

My young men and myself always had the pass-word, as we often had occasion to pass from the store to our hotel after sunset. As we would approach the sentinel he would challenge us, "Who comes there?" Our answer would be, "Friends with the pass." He would say: "Advance one and give the pass." Only one at a time could be passed. The word would be the name of some officer, or some place or some ship. We could get the word in the morning from some officer. Several officers boarded at the the same hotel, the Gaston House, one of the largest in the city, which had been abandoned by its owners on the approach of the Yankee army, and was now kept by an enterprising northern man.

The discipline in the city was most strict. A sentinel at a certain point in the outskirts of the city had been fired on from a row of frame houses or the shrubbery, while on his patrol in the night, and had his knee joint broken.

Next morning General Foster, who was



then in command, ordered a search of every house in the block. They all declared they knew nothing about it. He then informed them that if the person who fired the shot was not given up during the day, next morning, at eight o'clock, every house in the block would be leveled with the ground.

They all protested their innocence. In one house a woman was sick. General Foster sent a surgeon to see if she could be moved with safety, and he reported she could.

At precisely eight o'clock next morning, nearly a regiment of soldiers, having provided themselves with large ropes and cables from the shipping, went to the place and ordered every house to be vacated immediately, and cleared of its furniture if they desired to save it. I saw the whole proceeding; it was pitiable. Men, women, and children carrying out their furniture, bedding, stoves, crockery, etc., piling it up in a vacant lot across the street. Many of them in tears and wringing their hands in despair. The soldiers, with ladders, would go up to the top of a corner post, cut or tear off the boards, and fasten around the

post the cable ; then two or three hundred soldiers would take hold of the rope, and pull the house down, and this was continued until all the houses—a half-dozen or more—were leveled with the ground. It seemed most cruel. I never had my sympathies so aroused in my life. Most of these people were certainly innocent, and possibly all of them. It was, perhaps, a necessary thing to do. War is not boys' play ; sentinels must be protected as far as possible. There was no more firing from ambush in that city, and the inhabitants were as peaceful as kittens after this.

The port of Beaufort, N. C., was opened and Fort Macon captured while I was in Newbern, and the railroad between Newbern and Beaufort, some thirty-five miles, opened, though the enemy was in possession of the country between, except at a few points where a small force was stationed.

A train of cars was run over this road about once a day for supplies, but always carried an armed force for protection. A car was fitted up, covered with iron sheathing, bullet proof. This car was called "The Monitor," and had a couple of

cannon planted at a door in front and on each side, with gunners standing by to repel any attack. This car was pushed ahead of the engine, and soldiers were also on each car behind. The cars were often fired on from ambush in passing through timber and wild places.

I traveled over this road twice, but on neither occasion were we molested; but the precautions were always the same.

## LETTER XI.

MY DEAR H.—

As you will infer from my last letter the prospect of a very large business in the South was not as bright as I had expected. The withdrawal of a large portion of our army from that section to reinforce McClellan's defeated army in Virginia, and the consequent great reduction in the amount of money circulated, beside the fear of an attack by an overwhelming force of rebels, who were constantly threatening us, in which case the loss of our goods would have been almost certain, as the city would assuredly be set on fire by one army or the other, or by the shells of the gunboats.

I, therefore, deemed it best not to prolong our stay, and I was glad, indeed, when the time came to turn my face homeward. We had been in a southern city more than three months, during one of the hottest summers I ever experienced, and had suffered greatly. Flies, fleas, wood-ticks, and vermin of all kinds abounded.

Our hotel table was abundant, but the cooking was simply villainous ; the kitchen being outside of the hotel, as in most hotels and houses in the South, nothing was hot when brought on the table, and the waiters were such as the hotel could pick up—poor trash, unwashed and unclean. It is not strange that I lost my appetite for all sorts of food.

I thought I would be safe on boiled eggs ; but I remembered the story of a man in the same condition who had lost confidence in his cook. He had, time and again, ordered the cook to bring hash on one plate and hair on another, and he could mix them to suit himself ; and he was finally driven to eat only boiled eggs, thinking, poor man, these were safe. But one day, when he happened to see the cook take a hairpin out of her hair and prick the boiled eggs to see if they were done, he gave it up ; and so, in my case, I just shut my eyes and accepted whatever they gave me ; concluding everything was about as bad as it could be.

The cooks and waiters having curly heads didn't use hairpins, and they were men

too ; but I noticed a wonderful sight of head scratching.

On the Fourth of July we hired a small rowboat and, with one of the poor whites for a guide, rowed down the Neuse River to the battlefield, some five or six miles from Newbern. This poor white was in the battle on the Confederate side. His description of the fight and the rebel panic was very amusing. They had made preparations for defense which seemed almost impregnable. A heavy breastwork of timber and earth was thrown up, commencing at the Neuse River and running over two miles to a swamp; and in front of the breastwork was a deep ditch filled with water; and in front of this, for a quarter or third of a mile, was fallen trees, the only opening through which was the railroad running from Newbern to Beaufort. This opening was protected by their heaviest cannon and sharpshooters, which, they supposed, could sweep the track of every living thing that ventured on it. Our guide explained to us how the works were captured. He said two Yanks rode out from the timber on the railroad track and, with

their glasses, surveyed the field a minute or two, during which time hundreds of shots were fired at them. Soon they wheeled and went back out of sight in the woods; but immediately there appeared a dense column of blue coats who, notwithstanding the raking fire from all along their line, marched right up the track, through the opening, and began to fire on them behind their breastworks. There was a hand-to-hand fight at close quarters, and the Yankees kept pressing through the opening, and soon the rebels broke and ran towards Newbern, setting fire to the bridge after they had crossed it and also to the city itself; but the Yankees, he said, were at their heels and put out the fires before they got under very great headway, and took possession. A great panic ensued; everybody that could leave left instantly, leaving everything behind. They had considered Newbern safe; had no idea the Yankees could capture it.

This man was a fair specimen of the poor whites of the South—ignorant, poor, lazy, shiftless. He cut a bundle of small sticks of sweet, green wood, about the size and

length of a lead pencil. I asked him what he wanted to do with them; he said they were snuff sticks for his old woman. These poor whites, and other natives, take snuff in the mouth—the cheap, yellow Scotch snuff. They take one of these sticks and chew the end of it, making it something like a brush, which they dip in the snuff and rub their teeth and gums with it, and chew the stick when filled with snuff. These women and men, too, smoke, also, the rankest kind of tobacco, which they raise themselves, and their pipe is usually a corn cob dug out, with a goose quill for a stem.

Their dialect is something impossible to describe. In speaking of the northern and southern soldiers they would invariably say, “you’uns” and “we’uns.”

While in Newbern I learned much of the internal history of the slave system. I said “internal;” the most proper word would be “infernal.”

This poor white, the guide I spoke of, would hang about our store, to pick up a few dimes we would give him for odd jobs occasionally.



I noticed the court house grounds had pens around it, and asked him what they were for, and he went with me one day and explained about it. He said, every court week slaves were brought by their owners or speculators, to be sold at auction. They were kept locked up in these pens, and brought out, one at a time, and stood on the block in front of the court house, where buyers would examine them from head to foot. I questioned this man as to how it was done. Oh, he said, they tried his eyesight, examined his teeth and every muscle of the body, stripping them nearly naked to do so (men, women and children all the same), and then they were auctioned off to the highest bidder—a husband to one, his wife to somebody else, and the children to anybody who would pay the most.

Often, he said, when a husband or wife were sold, they would beg their new master to buy, also, his wife or her husband or their child or children.

Sometimes, he said, this was done; but, as a rule, no attention was paid to it.

The buyer would march his new purchase off as he would a horse or a cow.

I asked him if these slaves did not sometimes make a hard time when separated. Oh yes ! he replied, they would make a big fuss, of course, but it wouldn't last long. He said the men would soon get another wife, the women another husband, and forget all about it.

The poor slaves, however, would tell me a very different story. I never heard or read of anything like the pitiable tales they told me of separations. One old colored woman said her husband was sold away from her many years before to go South to the cotton fields. The poor old creature cried as if her heart would break while telling me. She said a colored man told her he saw him in a chain-gang marching South and that was the last she ever heard of him. After her husband was sold, she said all her children were sold, the last one being a daughter, grown up, who was bought by a man from Richmond, and she had never heard from her since. And this is only one of many similar tales told me by these poor heart-broken creatures.

It does not seem possible to me that these things could have been tolerated in the

nineteenth century in Christian America, and not only tolerated, but excused and apologized for, and sanctioned by some Christian people, and even ministers of the gospel.

All these things happened less than a third of a century ago, and yet it is hard to believe anything short of the Dark Ages could have tolerated such wickedness. Not only "the sum of all villainies," as good Charles Wesley branded it, it was diabolical, inhuman, an outrage upon every instinct of humanity.

The prejudice against colored people, even at the North, was something terrible. A colored man or woman, however respectable, was not allowed to ride in any of the public conveyances. The street cars in the city of New York, chartered by the great state of New York to carry passengers, carried the sign in large letters: "Colored persons not allowed in this car." While any half drunken vagabond, no matter how filthy, could always find a seat. What a travesty on Christianity and Civilization!

During reconstruction times, when the rebel states had no voice in making the

laws, it was proposed to do a little something to help the freedmen get a start, and for this purpose an organization was formed, composed of men of unimpeachable character, which was called "The Freedman's Bureau."

To the ignorant negro haters of the North, the very name of "Freedman's Bureau" was like a red flag to a mad bull. Demagogues used it in their speeches to their followers.

They made many of the ignorant voters believe that the "Freedman's Bureau" was organized for the purpose of "giving every d——d nigger a bureau."

A far different feeling prevails all over the country to-day. Scarcely an apologist for slavery can be found, and the revilers of President Lincoln now pretend to revere his memory.

As I said, we concluded it best to close up the business, which we did by selling out part of our stock of goods to a party in Newbern, and shipping the balance back to New York, and I was glad enough to set my face toward home, and to meet the dear ones from whom the separation had seemed an age. The net profits of the expedition

were not what I had expected, yet the experience and observation on the border line, between the two gigantic forces, with the excitement and deep interest in the great struggle, was an event of a lifetime never to be forgotten.

I felt the deepest sympathy for the poor slaves who had been abandoned by their masters, and were in such mortal fear these masters would return with the rebel army and drive the Yankees out, and make them slaves again.

Our negro man, Jacob, whom we had to sweep and do odd jobs, begged me to take him with me to the North. He called me "massa," and begged so hard, I had almost a mind to bring him; but not knowing what I could do with him, had to leave him. He was a good faithful fellow but so childlike. He was suddenly attacked one day with colic pains; had probably drank too much ice water, something he had been unused to. I gave him a little brandy, of which we had a small demijohn in case of sickness.

After this, Jacob was very often taken with colic pains, and a little brandy always relieved him at once.

I had occasion to visit Newbern again, twenty years after, spending several days at the same hotel, the "Gaston House." I met some of the old inhabitants, whom I had seen before, but they were mostly returned refugees and new men.

They professed loyalty to the government, said they were glad they did not succeed in establishing the confederacy they fought for; expressed satisfaction that the system of slavery was done away with. Some, however, took the other view and mourned "the lost cause."

The magnanimity of our government was something wonderful in permitting these rebels and traitors, who had taken up arms against the government, killing its defenders and firing on the flag of their country, to return to their homes and have all the rights of loyal citizens. It was something unheard of in any country or age. By making an example of a few of the ring-leaders would, no doubt, have been healthy and had good effect.

The necessarily increased taxes caused some dissatisfaction among men whose patriotism was held lightly, and free fran-

chise to those lately in arms did, at the ballot-box, what they could not do in the field—defeated the party who had saved the country, and, of course, nobody was punished.

On the other hand, many of the rebels were returned to Congress and to the Senate, and made governors of states, and judges to administer the law.

At this writing, a judge in the city of New York, who was a rebel general, and who acknowledged he spent ten thousand dollars for his election, still mourns "The Lost Cause."

How many lives must be laid to this man's hands and others like him, and awful suffering, and millions of money expended; and yet he sits in the seat of justice instead of having to stand on a scaffold, as has many and many a man far less guilty.

On my return from this expedition the firm acceded to my request, and I was placed on a commission footing with the proviso, however, that I would, during slack periods of trade, go out, if they desired, to look after and settle doubtful

claims; for which they would pay me a liberal compensation. This was a satisfactory arrangement for both, and continued for several years, until the firm retired from business. They found it necessary, however, to have, and did employ especially for this purpose, a lawyer; so that, except in a few cases, I was relieved from this undesirable business.

I employed an assistant, my trade having increased to warrant it, and for several years I had no reason to complain. I applied myself as closely to business as before, though I felt independent to go and come as I pleased.

It is not my purpose to go into detail in these letters about business matters, only as some of the incidents of my life are connected therewith.

After the close of the war, our house did quite a large trade in the reconstructed southern states and took risks, some of which proved to be very unfortunate. One of these was in Richmond, Va., where a customer failed, owing us a large amount. It was a dishonest failure—an outright attempted swindle. Our lawyer was sent



there and, in a day or two, telegraphed for me to come immediately. I went home and, while hurriedly preparing to go by the first evening train, my wife said she wished she was going too. This was only a little more than a year after the close of the war and capture of Richmond. We had read and heard so much about Richmond and Libby Prison and the capital of the Confederacy that she, as well as myself, desired to see the historic city.

When she suggested it I at once fell in with the idea, and said: "Yes, if you can get ready to go by the evening train, and take only hand baggage, I would be delighted to have you go."

I need not say she was ready on time; that was one thing my dear wife never failed in—she never kept anybody waiting for her, or ever missed a train. She could always meet an emergency, and was always on time.

We took the night train via Washington, arriving in that city at daylight next morning, and took train for Richmond via Gordonsville, Manassas, and Bull Run battle field, the section where was fought

the first battle of the war. Battle fields have always been to me places of the deepest interest. They bring to my mind, very vividly, scenes of thrilling interest where thousands and scores of thousands of men, with all the deadly appliances of destruction, struggle with other scores of thousands equally equipped, the very demons of destruction. Often the fate of nations and unborn millions hang upon the result. It was especially so in this Bull Run battle. I shall never forget that day, when the bulletins and extras announced the expected battle had come off, and our army had been defeated with terrible loss of life. It was so unexpected, and it so encouraged the enemy and the Copperheads all over the country, and so discouraged loyal people; it did seem that everything was lost.

It was, however, the very thing that was needed to arouse the North to the crisis that was impending. Hitherto, they had supposed it was something that could be put down in a few weeks, and only a police force was necessary. But this Bull Run battle removed the cloud from the horizon,

and showed the desperate situation of the country, that even the capital of the nation was in danger ; and such an uprising as followed was, perhaps, never seen before in the history of the world. It was with the remembrance of this feeling that I viewed this historic battlefield, its ravines and wooded slopes which the rebels had well chosen for defensive warfare.

As we approached Richmond, it seemed every station had its history and the whole country around was a vast battlefield—at least strategic points of more or less interest.

At Gordonsville where we dined and were obliged to stay some two hours to make connections, we fell in with a gentleman and his wife from Washington, going to Richmond. At this gentleman's suggestion, he telegraphed to the Spotswood Hotel, the proprietor being a relative of his, for rooms for himself and wife, and also for us,—he expressed it in his dispatch, "a gentleman and his wife from New York," as it was reported Richmond hotels were overcrowded, the state convention being in session and other attractions in the city at that time.

On our arrival at the hotel in the evening, we found the very best room in the house ready for us, with a glowing grate fire and most obsequious attention. It was the same room occupied by Jeff. Davis and wife, and where many of the state papers were prepared by the Confederate president, and where he was wont to meet with his cabinet ministers.

This hotel was one of the finest in the South at that time, but was destroyed by fire soon after.

It was the time of reconstruction, and the state convention was in session to make a new constitution for the state, and to codify and make new laws for the new order of things.

This convention was composed largely of colored men and ex-slaves, while their ex-masters and many ex-rebel generals and other officers congregated at the hotel to swear and curse the government "for allowing the d——d niggers to sit in their state house to make their laws."

I had many discussions with this class of men, talking very plainly the things that were uppermost in my mind to say, and

what they had not been accustomed to hear, and what would have been unsafe in former times to say anywhere in the South.

I knew they were powerless for harm; their sting had been extracted; they could "cuss" and that was about all they dared to do.

On the train from Richmond were several of these men beside three or four colored delegates; it being Saturday the convention had adjourned over Sunday. We had had a discussion on the cars and at Gordonsville where we dined, and were detained two or three hours, the discussion became quite animated, the colored people were all on the alert to catch every word. These men blamed the government for its reconstruction methods, especially for allowing their "niggers" to vote and to make laws for them, and for the hard conditions it exacted, and they went so far as to argue that they were not defeated, but compromised when they gave up fighting, and might have continued the war indefinitely.

I replied that as to the matter of allowing the colored people to make the laws, all the

government required was that loyal men should make and administer the laws, and if such could not be found among the whites, they must take the blacks; as loyalty to the government was the first condition, and the colored people were known to be loyal.

And as to the matter which they asserted that they were not defeated, but had compromised with the usual and liberal conditions of war, I replied that no people in any age of the world had ever continued to fight as did the South when it was known to all the world they were whipped; that every chance of success had left them more than two years before they surrendered, and only just brute courage and obstinacy held them up to the fighting mark. But as they had allowed their courage, which was the best part of them, to mislead their judgment they must take the consequences and not blame the government which was far more liberal than they deserved.

The colored porter, who had taken our baggage from the station to the hotel and had carried it back to the depot, refused to

accept the money I handed him, though I pressed it upon him. "No, massa," he said, "I will not take any pay from you ; I like the way you talk to dese men." He reached out and shook my hand with a grip that meant what he said.

While in Richmond, myself and wife visited Libby prison which had been left in the same condition as when our poor boys were shut up there. It was then in charge of Union officers who showed us the different rooms, and the window where several prisoners had been shot for looking out to get a breath of fresh air ; also, the underground passage which the prisoners had dug to escape and were recaptured, brought back, kept in dark dungeons and nearly starved to death.

As I said we spent a week in Richmond. The business which called me there was finally arranged, the preferred family creditors waiving their claims under the assignment, so that we got a fair percentage of our claim, and on Saturday morning we left for Washington. Arriving there on Saturday evening, we went to the National Hotel and spent three or four days in that

city. Andrew Johnson was then president, and William H. Seward, secretary of state.

We attended a public reception at the White House, a brilliant affair; so many foreign ministers and officers in their official regalia, officials from every department of our own government, ladies most richly dressed, wearing fortunes in diamonds and real laces. The president and his daughter received with grace and courtesy. I shook hands with him with a very different feeling from the honest hand of the great and good President Lincoln, which I had shaken in the same place five years before. What a history the country had passed through, and what changes had been wrought during that time!



## LETTER XII.

MY DEAR H.—

The years immediately following the close of the war were years of great political excitement and anxiety. President Johnson had changed from a radical Republican as he seemed to be when he was nominated and elected vice-president, to an out-and-out Obstructionist, opposing all the reconstruction measures of the Republican party—an original Mugwump.

The excitement throughout the country was about as great as it was during the war.

The country, however, was too strong and solid to be set back by any one man, even though that man was president, and when General Grant was triumphantly elected in 1868, confidence was fully restored, and the nation soon in the full tide of prosperity. Business was good, the country felt almost a new life and the future looked bright and promising.

The firm, with whom I had been so pleasantly and confidentially connected for more than fourteen years, stood amongst

the highest and soundest in credit and reputation and in the amount of its business, aggregating in the neighborhood of eighteen million dollars a year. No house in the city or nation stood higher. I felt proud to be connected with it and especially so, that I had the promise and expectation of becoming a partner at the expiration of the old partnership in a little more than a year.

This was something I had been working for. For years I had devoted my best energies to further the interest of the house in every way in my power, and I felt that both the interest of the house and my own would be greatly benefited by it.

What then was my astonishment on going to the store the day after Christmas, 1868, to be told by the head of the house they had failed and made an assignment. A clap of thunder out of a clear sky or any other unnatural or unlooked for occurrence, could not have been more astonishing.

I could not believe it possible; I knew the house had been prosperous. Their credit never was better; it was practically unlimited not only in our country but in all the

markets of Europe. They had the soundest and safest customers in the country and everything betokened prosperity and safety. In a moment my expectations were blasted, though I felt thankful that my desires of a partnership had not been accomplished. I was yet a free man, not a bankrupt. That was something I never had nor never have experienced, but the anticipation of being a partner in such a house, in which I had spent so many of the best years of my life in such pleasant and confidential relations, had been my guiding star for years, and to have that star suddenly eclipsed was a stunning blow.

I will say here, it was not on account of the business of the house that caused the failure, but outside speculations; something that surprised and astonished the city and the business world, as every member of the firm was supposed to be the most conservative and careful in the trade.

The firm expected, however, to arrange matters very soon—to reorganize and continue the business. They urged me to remain with them for six months under this expectation; but they were unable to

accomplish it and, on the first of July, 1869, they finally abandoned the effort and I had to make other arrangements.

I had no difficulty in making satisfactory connection with another large house. Indeed, I could have made the same arrangements with any house in the city; but I selected to go with the house of Cochran, McLean & Co., a new firm, with a large special capital. My arrangement was on a commission basis, which I much preferred to a salary, and I remained with this house seven years, until they retired from business, when I went with the house of Dunham, Buckley & Co., also a large, wealthy firm, under the same arrangement of a commission.

I remained with this house only about three years. It was a pleasant connection, but I had ceased to have any desire to be a partner in any dry goods house; my faith had been shaken and I distrusted them all.

I was, therefore, on the lookout for some other business if any that seemed feasible should offer. In the fall of 1879 such a business seemed to offer and, in company with my cousin, Rev. Levi S. Weed and

several other gentlemen, we purchased a patent and an established manufacturing business for making pressed veneer wood plates for the use of grocers, bakers, confectioners, etc., with factories at Newbern, N. C., Georgetown, Del. and Sunderland, Vt.

We had the company incorporated under the name of "The Smith & Stevens Mfg. Co." of which I was secretary, treasurer, and general manager for five years, the term for which I agreed to hold this position. At the expiration of this time or a few months later, on the first day of January, 1885, I retired from its management, and from all active business, having been engaged in business nearly fifty years, without scarcely any cessation during all that time. I desired a change, if not a rest, and felt glad to be relieved.

During my management of this business, it was thought best by the directors of the company to see if a market could not be opened for our goods in Europe, and it was deemed advisable that I should go abroad and see what could be done.

Accordingly, I made arrangements, and

with my wife sailed on the steamship Egypt, of the National line, the last of March, 1883.

The health of my wife at this time was not good, and we thought the trip would benefit her.

It was new experience for both of us and, aside from a terrible storm at sea, very enjoyable.

On our outward voyage, when off the Banks of Newfoundland, a terrible storm struck us about dark, and raged during the night; a regular March blizzard, growing into almost a hurricane before morning.

Every port hole was closed, the cabin doors battened, skylights covered, and every preparation made for a cyclone, and we came pretty near having it. There was not much sleep that night; we could hear the great waves dash against and over our ship, making her tremble from stem to stern. One giant wave fell so heavy on her deck as to break the skylight, the glass being an inch thick and covered with heavy canvass.

A great body of water came through down into the dining cabin, carrying with

it the swing shelf, containing glass and china ware and dishes, making a terrible crash and clatter. We could hear over our heads the tramping of the sailors, the rattling of cordage, the thumping of the engine, and could feel the ship part of the time submerged under the water, and again on top of a giant wave, which was indicated by the peculiar whirr of the screw as it was lifted out of the sea. It was an awful night, and next day was almost as bad. Nobody attempted to leave their staterooms, nor was any attempt made to set any table for meals. The stewards and stewardesses would bring the passengers, to their staterooms, pitchers of bouillon and soup and crackers, and a little tempting food, but there was not much appetite on that ship.

An English gentleman and his wife, who had crossed the Atlantic twenty-six times, said they never experienced anything like it.

During the day this gentleman attempted to go out of his stateroom into the cabin and, missing his hold of the rail, was thrown violently across the cabin against a post; injuring him severely, cutting his forehead

badly and nearly closing one of his eyes. He was a pitiable object to see. Next day, while the sea was still very rough, his wife attempted to go to the stewards' room with a pitcher to get some ale. She managed, by holding on to the railing, to get the pitcher filled and get back as far as their stateroom door. This door was directly opposite our stateroom door, a narrow passage way separating; my wife and myself were sitting up holding on to the edge of our berths. There was a lurch of the ship just as this woman entered the door of their stateroom and she, at the moment not having hold of any support, was pitched headlong directly against her husband who, poor man, was sitting up, nursing his bandaged head and eye; the pitcher striking him squarely in the face and blackening his other eye, spilling the whole contents of the pitcher on his face and neck. He did not take it as a joke, nor did she; they both used some expression that sounded much like "cuss words," while my wife and I, although we were both seasick, couldn't help but laugh; though careful not to let them see us. We enjoyed many a hearty



laugh about it since. It was no laughing matter to them ; they were two of the most forlorn passengers the rest of the voyage on that ship. The man was under the care of the surgeon until we landed, and the woman never smiled.

When the passengers were allowed to go up on deck the sea was still rough and looked so frightful and angry. The passengers told their experience to each other and how frightened they were, and of their mishaps trying to sit up in their state-rooms or get out in the cabin.

One timid lady called the captain when he was passing, to enquire how far we were from land. "Oh," he said, "he guessed about three or four miles." "Good! good!" said the lady, "I'm so glad we'll soon be there." "But," he said, pointing down, "it is three or four miles in this direction." Such a look of disgust as came over that woman's face! I was reminded of a story about a lot of ministers who came over to attend the evangelical alliance, and on going back were overtaken by a terrible storm and expected surely to go to the bottom.

They concluded, however, that something ought to be done; some preparation for such an event; but first thought they had better find out from the captain whether there was any hope, and appointed a delegation of their number to see the captain about it. The captain referred them to the sailors, saying that they knew just as much about it as he did.

They went forward among the sailors, and found them in the fore-castle swearing, and reported this to the captain. The captain asked them if they supposed they would be swearing if they thought the ship was going to the bottom. Why, no; they thought not, and so they reported to the rest of the ministers. After this the delegation would go forward every few minutes come back and report, "Thank God! they are swearing yet;" so while the sailors kept swearing they felt safe.

We felt very happy on the eighth day out, when the coast range of Ireland rose just above the horizon in the distance, and feeling that we were almost across the dreary waste of waters. Next day we landed in Liverpool, where we had our first

experience of custom house examination, and this only to see if we had spirituous liquors, tobacco or cigars. Of course we had none, and easily passed.

After a day or two in Liverpool, we took the express train, on the Great Northern Railroad, for London. We began immediately to see the difference between the cars in England; and, indeed, it is the same in all European countries. They have compartments. Instead of entering the car at either end, as in our country, they have the doors opening on the sides into each compartment, the seats facing each other; two seats in a compartment holding six or seven persons each, and no communication between the compartments. We had a little experience of this compartment business while traveling in Germany. Stopping for a meal—on going back to our car we stepped into the wrong compartment. Before the cars started, a high official, dressed in military with sash and epaulets, came to the door, and though we didn't understand his words, we understood, by his gestures, he desired us to get out of the car. We started to do so when he

motioned my wife to remain, and pointed to another compartment for me to go in. Of course my wife went with me. I inquired of an English speaking gentleman, what it meant; he informed me that there were compartments set apart especially for women traveling without male escorts, and that happened to be the one so set apart. While we were talking about it, this official came to the door, and in German—which the gentleman who I was talking with translated—very politely informed us that there were no such women going in that compartment and we could occupy it, which we did, and for several hours were the only passengers in that compartment.

On arriving in London, we took a cab for a boarding house in Woburn Square which had been recommended to us, and found it a pleasant place and our fellow boarders very congenial, where we remained some two weeks; and again, on our return from the Continent, two months later, we spent two weeks more. The four weeks we spent in London were very pleasant and enjoyable.

There were many places in London of great interest to us—old historic places. I will mention a few. The British Museum was one which we visited several times. Its old manuscripts and parchments, dating back to the times of the Pharaohs; its coins, dating back to before the Christian Era; its tablets, excavated from the old ruins of Babylon, Nineveh and Pompeii; its ancient histories and parchments, the oldest anywhere in the world; relics of all the ages, from the earliest history of mankind—all wonderfully interesting.

The tower of London, one of the most tragic and historic places on the globe, where can be seen the stone rooms in which state prisoners used to be confined—kings, queens, princes, and high officials, and from which they were led to execution.

In one of the rooms are kept the block and axe which were used to decapitate them, and many instruments of torture.

In this tower are kept the implements of war from the earliest historic times; war clubs succeeded by spears, swords, coats of mail, and after the invention of gunpowder the crudest kinds of fire arms, wood cannon

with iron hoops, down to the later flint locks and still more modern inventions of repeating artillery and rifled cannon.

One room in the tower contains the crown jewels and crowns of all the kings and queens of England from its earliest history, more than a thousand years, to the modern crown of Victoria.

Jewels and precious stones, amounting to many millions of dollars in value, the crowns studded with diamonds and other precious stones, the baptismal font, mace of office, sword of justice, and many other things are kept in the large glass case or cage, circular in form, perhaps ten feet high and eight or ten feet in diameter. Around this case or cage are bars of steel, and outside of all an iron rail to prevent spectators from approaching within touching distance, and as a further protection there is always a guard of two or three officials in the room; while outside, but within the grounds, are hundreds of old pensioners, ex-officers, and soldiers who have distinguished themselves in some of the wars they have been engaged in. These men are dressed very peculiar in a sort of

light gray trimmed with bright red. They are called "beef eaters;" are a hardy set of men and rank as a sort of military aristocracy.

Westminster Abbey is another historic place to visit. The tombs of the kings and queens of England for a thousand years, soldiers, statesmen, poets, and distinguished men and women, rest here. The most beautiful carved monuments, tablets, and sarcophagus in finest marble and bronze.

The houses of Parliament, called the House of Commons and the House of Lords, like our House of Representatives and Senate. We visited these houses, though Parliament was not in session. An usher showed us through, and pointed out the different sections.

I was reminded of a story, the truth of which I will not vouch for as being strictly true though it illustrates the stupidity of some public servants.

One door of the Parliament house is guarded by an usher, and only a member of the House of Lords can enter by this door. A dissenting preacher, not understanding

this, attempted to enter by this door, was stopped by the usher who told him only a lord could enter by this door. The preacher said he was not a lord, but a servant of the Lord. The usher asked what lord, and he said, "Lord Jehovah." "Never heard of him," said the usher; "but," he added, "wait a minute;" and he asked an usher inside if he ever heard of Lord Jehovah; and he said, "No, he had not;" but added, "possibly there might be such a lord who didn't come there very often, and he had better let him come in." Missionaries or the Salvation Army, I suppose, had not visited that section of London up to that time.

The Salvation Army was, at that time, just beginning its work in London and other cities. They have done wonderful work; though, perhaps, like all new converts, inclined to be fanatic and injudicious in their methods.

A young woman, a convert, thought she must do some good work in the cause, and so she procured a bundle of tracts and went into the by-ways of the city in the evening to distribute them. About the first tract



she handed out was to a gentleman standing on the corner. He held it up to the gas-light and looked at it ; then handed it back, saying, "You must excuse me ; I am a married man." She looked at the tract and discovered its heading was, "Abide with me." She gave up the attempt to distribute tracts.

## LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR H.—

I began to tell you, in my last letter, about some of the places we visited in London. I must not dwell too long on these, but will mention one other, perhaps more interesting than any. This was Windsor Castle, the residence of Queen Victoria. It was in the latter part of June, after the queen and her household had left the castle for their summer residence in Scotland. It was announced in the London papers that the castle would be open on certain days to visitors. On one of these public days, therefore, we took the train for Windsor, some twenty-five miles from London. Quite a number of visitors were on the train. Arriving at the station, nearly all walked to the castle as we did, a distance of, perhaps, a third of a mile. Windsor is an old city, with fine, broad avenues well shaded, with large parks and public grounds.

The castle itself stands in a large park on high ground overlooking the city and

surrounding country. St. George's Chapel and vaults, which contain many of the royal family, are connected or in close proximity with the castle, and with other buildings cover many acres of ground.

I was somewhat disappointed in the castle ; it was not as magnificent as I supposed, though some of the state rooms and other apartments might be called grand.

Some of the walls are hung with tapestry woven figures of Queen Esther before the King, Mordecai, and other Bible scenes.

On the whole, I was not greatly impressed with the magnificence of Windsor Castle.

After spending a couple of weeks in and about London, we crossed the straits of Dover and proceeded by rail to Paris.

We spent two weeks in that city very pleasantly ; visited many places of interest. The Tuilleries, Napoleon's Tomb, Arc de Triumph, the picture galleries of Louvre and Luxemburg, the Grand Opera House, the finest in all Europe if not in the world, Champ de Mars, and took a sail on the River Seine to St. Cloud, a most beautiful place, the former residence of the great

Napoleon, and more recently of his nephew, the emperor.

The residence of these emperors was in ruins, having been burned by the German army on its approach to Paris in the late German war. The Hotel des Invalides, where are kept the old veterans of the French wars. Napoleon's tomb being near this hotel or Soldier's Home it might be called.

This tomb or grand mausoleum is one of the finest works of art, probably, in the world. It is a large granite building, nearly circular in form, with an immense dome, under which, on the ground floor which is of fine marble, is the sarcophagus standing on beautiful carved pillars containing the remains of the great Napoleon. In niches all around this circular room are life size statues of the marshals of the empire—Ney, Duroc, Murat, Prince Eugene, and scores of others. Take it altogether it is a wonderful work of art. The French people are very proud of it, and well they may be.

The streets of Paris are broad, well paved and lighted, and kept scrupulously

clean. The picture galleries are the most extensive and varied of any in the world.

The Louvre contains the world-renowned works of art in painting and sculpture and statuary, mostly quite ancient.

The Luxenburg contains the works of modern artists. These latter, to my mind, are far superior to the old masters.

Much of the statuary, and many of the pictures would scarcely be allowed in any gallery in our country ; and the same holds true as regards the galleries of other cities we visited.

On leaving Paris we took an early morning express train for Switzerland, and after a ride of some fifteen hours, arrived at Geneva late in the evening. We passed through the finest portion of France—its vineyards, wineries, beautiful villas and well-kept fields and lawns.

Geneva is one of the oldest cities in Europe. The old part looks ancient ; but the more modern section is very beautiful, with broad avenues, parks, fountains and fine public buildings. The people are very industrious. The city has every appearance of thrift and comfort, to

say nothing of luxury and wealth that seem to abound.

After leaving Geneva we had a pleasant journey through Switzerland, skirting the lake for many miles, passing through the city of Lausanne, a beautiful old cathedral city.

We spent a few hours in Berne, the capital of Switzerland, a quaint old city, and proceeded part of the distance by boat on Lake Thun, and after a day's ride reached the most beautiful little city in Switzerland, Interlachen, where we spent several days. We found here the greatest variety of scenery. We rode up to the top of one of the high points in the vicinity on donkeys; at least my wife rode a donkey, but the livery man brought to our hotel a mule instead for me, thinking my legs were rather long to stride one of his little donkeys. I was glad he did, though my wife enjoyed the donkey ride very much. We had a guide to lead each animal, as the mountain path often led along cliffs overlooking awful chasms hundreds of feet below, and these guides would walk between the

animal and the edge of the cliff steadying the animal with his strong arm.

The views from the elevation were something grand; I suppose nothing surpasses it in all Switzerland.

The valley itself, lying between snow-capped mountains, is some eight or ten miles long by one or two miles wide, and level as a house floor. The fields well cultivated, or in lawns of the most beautiful green. The two little lakes, Thun and Brienze, in full view with the connecting river between, of three or four miles, looking like a silver thread through the valley.

The sides of the mountains to the timber line are well cultivated vineyards; above this a space of bare rock, and above all the snow-capped peaks. In the distance, seeming only a few miles but in reality thirty miles, was the great glacier, Jungfrau, glistening in the sun, altogether a picture of landscape and mountain of surpassing beauty.

From Interlachen we went by diligence over the Brunig Pass and Bernese Oberland, a days' ride through Swiss scenery of remarkable beauty, to Lucerne, another Swiss

city of great interest. It is here one of the greatest works of art is to be seen, the Lion of Lucerne. It is a lion of immense size, if I remember, some thirty feet long and well proportioned, cut on the face of the solid rock. The lion is in its death agony, with an arrow penetrating its vitals. It is a world-renowned work of genius, designed by Thorwaldsen, and is a monument to commemorate the Swiss guard who fell in defense of the Tuilleries in Paris, in the French Revolution, and was erected at great expense by Napoleon the first, in 1821. From Lucerne we went to Zurich, where we spent two or three days. The Swiss national fair was being held there and much of interest to be seen; very beautiful works of art, looms in operation turning out silks and velvets and tapestries and laces and almost every other product of the loom.

Zurich is a historical city, being one of the centres of the Reformation in the time of Martin Luther and Zwingle, this being Zwingle's native city. I learned here at this national fair, from an intelligent English speaking Swiss, that the story in the school books of my boyhood days, about the tyrant



Gessler and the patriot William Tell and his shooting the apple from his boy's head, was all a myth; there was no such man as Tell. Thus another of the historic legends of our boyhood days vanishes into thin air; like the great maelstrom on the coast of Norway, and the poisonous Upas tree, as pictured in early geographies, are only myths.

Boys have many things to unlearn as well as to learn.

From Zurich we went to Shaffhausen Falls, the head of the Rhine River navigation—a sort of Niagara summer resort. We went through the Black Forest which commences at this place, a wild mountain ride through numerous tunnels and windings among the mountains. Our next stopping place was charming Baden Baden. This is a famous German watering place resembling our Saratoga. The waters here are, however, hot, and come out of the ledge of a rock instead of deep wells, as at Saratoga. The waters are all different in properties and medicinal value, and are greatly sought after. It is a great health resort for invalids; also for pleasure and gambling.

From here we went to Strasburg the cathedral city. It is in Alsace-Lorraine, formerly belonging to France, but captured by the Germans in the late war, and now held by them.

A large military force is stationed here, and we saw them drill in the public park. They are a very fine body of men, especially the officers, who were splendidly mounted and elegantly equipped.

The great cathedral here bears the marks of German cannon balls which were fired on the French occupants before the city surrendered. The cathedral was repaired, and the famous clock, which has been keeping time for hundreds of years, is still ticking away.

We waited for the time, twelve o'clock, to see the twelve apostles march out one by one from a side door, and with a hammer strike the great bell and retire as another came out, until twelve had struck the hours.

From this city we went to Heidelberg, the seat of a large university, where many American youths go to finish their education.

It is a beautiful city and what I was much interested to see was its old castle now in ruins, built many hundreds of years ago, probably by the Romans. It is on the top of a cliff, and covers several acres of ground. The wonder is, how the massive blocks of stone were ever gotten up there and into its walls. It would be a wonder in this age of invention and engineering, to say nothing of those times beyond the Dark Ages.

From Heidelberg our next stopping place was the city of Worms, the old town made famous by Martin Luther and the Reformation.

The old town hall, still standing, is said to be the same building (though now enlarged and built over) in which was held the great convention called "The Diet of Worms."

The Luther monument, built in the public square, represents him holding an open Bible in one hand, the other raised, exclaiming: "Here I stand; I cannot, and I will not retract; may God help me."

There are twelve other figures of life size in a circle around Luther,—Zwingle,

Erasmus, Knox, Melangthen, and others of the reformers.

We visited the Worms cathedral, one of the oldest in Europe, built or commenced in the year about 800 A. D., and other public buildings; but one had especial interest, if tradition is true.

This was a Jewish synagogue, said to be the oldest now in the world; built before the Christian Era.

It is a quaint one story granite building, the roof being also of granite, supported on a central column from which extends granite arches to the outer walls, the floor itself being granite or marble.

Upon payment of a small fee to the man and his wife who were in charge, we were shown the old parchments carefully kept in one of the cloisters. A German lady, who understood English, translated to us this story as it was told her: "That this synagogue was built and flourishing at the time Christ came; that information of his appearance and doings came to them, and of his persecution and crucifixion by the Jews; that the Jews of Worms were not responsible for his death; they had

sent a delegation to Jerusalem to protest against it.”

In the centre of this synagogue was hung an old lamp burning. The history of this, as they gave it, was that between seven and eight hundred years ago two men came to the Jews of Worms and notified them of a plot, an intended massacre of all the Jews on a certain day, whereupon they got together and arranged for defense, and were not harmed.

These two men were unknown, and no information could be obtained concerning them; they firmly believed they were angels sent to save their lives, and this lamp was then put up as a memorial of the interposition of divine Providence, and it had been burning there for over seven hundred years. I suggested it was not so old, but they said, of course, it was not the very same lamp, but as one burned out it was always replaced, and the light never had gone out, a very pretty story and they firmly believed it. Another legend they told us. They took us outside of the synagogue where a very narrow lane runs alongside of the granite walls in which is

an indentation just large enough for a person to stand in. The legend, as told us, is that some five or six hundred years ago the mother of the rabbi was passing through this lane, and being met by a team, she pressed her body against the granite wall and would have been crushed only by a miracle, the indentation, as now seen, was made in which she stood and was saved. They believe this implicitly.

From Worms we went to Bingen on the Rhine, a beautiful little city where we took a steamboat for Cologne. The river Rhine is noted for the beauty of its scenery and comparisons are often made by tourists between this and our own Hudson. I think most people would give the preference to our own river, but there are many points of interest on the Rhine which we don't have. The old castles, most of which are only ruins now, having been built, according to tradition, by the half civilized tribes occupying the territory against the encroachments of the Romans, in the early centuries of the Christian Era. On the mountain slopes grow the hardy grapes which produce the famous Rhine wine.

The famous Apollinaris Springs are not far from this river ; its bottling establishment is at one of the landings.

We left the boat at the city of Bonn, and proceeded by rail to Cologne. The great Cologne cathedral here is a splendid work of art, with its many spires and paintings and carvings, its gothic windows, its magnificent chime of bells—all exceedingly beautiful.

From Cologne we took an early morning train for Brussels. This is another historic city, the capital of Belgium. The royal palaces, its picture galleries and art buildings are well worth seeing. It was here, or a few miles from this city, where was fought the decisive battle of Waterloo, which crushed the great Napoleon and decided the fate of Europe.

I had intended to visit the battlefield of Waterloo, but a heavy rain, muddy road, and limited time discouraged the attempt.

I regretted very much not going out to this field; the most decisive, probably, in all history.

What American visiting Brussels does

not remember Byron's thrilling description of the opening scenes of the battle.

- “ There was a sound of revelry by night,  
 And Belgium's capital had gathered  
 then,  
 Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and  
 brave men :  
 A thousand hearts beat happily : and  
 when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spoke  
 again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell :  
 But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes  
 like a rising knell !
- “ Did ye not hear it ? No : 'twas but the  
 wind,  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street :  
 On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined  
 No sleep till morn when youth and  
 pleasure meet,  
 To chase the glowing hours with flying  
 feet.  
 But hark ! that heavy sound breaks in  
 once more,



As if the clouds its echo would repeat :  
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than  
before !  
Arm ! arm ! it is, it is the cannon's opening  
roar.

“ And there was mounting in hot haste :  
the steed,  
The mustering squadron and the clatter-  
ing car,  
Went pouring forward with impetuous  
speed :  
And swiftly forming in the ranks of  
war :  
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar :  
And near, the beat of the alarming  
drum  
Roused up the soldier ere the morning  
star :  
While thronged the citizens with terror  
dumb,  
Or whispering with white lips, ‘ the foe !  
they come ! they come ! ’ ”

From Brussels our next stopping place  
was the city of Antwerp, where we spent a  
day visiting its picture galleries, cathedral,  
parks and public buildings.

A little incident occurred at Antwerp, somewhat amusing, but a little embarrassing, at the time. We had traveled from Cologne to Brussels with an English clergyman, Canon Falconer and his wife and daughter, a miss of some fifteen years. They were with us during our stay in Brussels, and accompanied us to Antwerp, where we were to separate after a day's sight-seeing in that city ; they to take the steamer for England and we the train for Holland. We took an early morning train for Antwerp, some thirty miles ; but when we arrived the name was not called, nor could we see any name on the station. We asked the guard who was promenading up and down the platform if this was Antwerp. He did not reply, but shook his head, evidently not understanding the question ; and before we could decide, the train started and we were soon beyond the city. A new conductor came along for tickets, and we tried to explain the situation ; but he only shrugged his shoulders and held out his hand for tickets, speaking in French. Young Miss Falconer had learned a little French in school, and she tried to tell him

how it happened ; but he evidently didn't quite understand.

It was rather amusing, and we felt it was solely the fault of the railroad, and we were not going to pay for being carried where we didn't want to go. Probably the conductor would have put us off at the first stopping place, but we got the start of him. When our train stopped there was a train standing at the station, headed the other way. I said, "Let us get aboard and go back to Antwerp"; and we proceeded to change cars, rushing for the first open door. I helped my wife and Mrs. Falconer in, while the canon and his daughter, being more burdened with baggage, were a little behind. They came up to the door, and right near them came along the station-guard ; and when I reached out my hand to help Miss Falconer up the step, this official caught and, by main force, pulled her away and held her. I then perceived the cars had started, and in spite of my remonstrance, to which he replied in a jargon which, of course, I did not understand no more than he did mine. I sprang on the car, calling back to them to come on the next train and

we would wait for them at Antwerp; so our party was divided.

A new conductor came around for tickets, with the same questions and jargon, and I answered him in the same kind, and we both laughed. Of course he got no tickets or money.

When we got to Antwerp station, before the train had fairly stopped, a high official there, in his sash and military equipage, met us at the door of our compartment as we were stepping off. The conductor had notified him, probably, of an American crank on his train. He spoke very pleasantly in English, asking what was the trouble. I explained to him how it was, and he said he was very sorry for our mishap; was exceedingly pleasant; said the next train would be there with the rest of our party at twelve o'clock, and hoped the hour we would have to wait would be passed pleasantly. He pointed to a beautiful park in sight, if we preferred to wait there, which we did until the canon and his daughter came, when we all had a good laugh about it. We passed the afternoon in visiting the picture galleries, cathedral,

public buildings and parks. They took the steamer that evening for England, and we the train for Holland.

## LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR H.—

In my last letters I have been giving you some little glances of what we saw in our journeyings. I have, however, to draw on my memory for these incidents, having kept no diary or memorandum. Since writing these letters many interesting incidents occur to my mind ; but what I have written will give you some little idea of our manner of sight-seeing, and the use we made of our limited time.

After leaving Antwerp, we very soon crossed the border line between Belgium and Holland. The usual custom house formality had to be gone through on entering the new country. I don't remember the questions we were asked or how closely our baggage was examined, or the contraband articles the officials were looking after. As I remember it was a mere matter of formality, and then we found ourselves whirling through a flat country, apparently made up of about half land and half water, the water and land being about on a level, and innum-

erable bridges—it seemed we were crossing bridges nearly all the time. This was more noticeable as we were nearing Rotterdam.

I made it a point to find out in advance, either by inquiry or from our Badeker guide book, a suitable hotel.

We generally found an English speaking clerk or proprietor, and were always treated with the utmost courtesy. I believe, as a rule, Americans receive more attention at hotels than any other nationality; at least, we never had the least occasion or reason for complaint. Our bills were usually reasonable; of course the customary fee expected by waiters and servants, or anyone who has lifted a hand for you, seemed a little odd. Somehow, all these servants knew just the time guests were leaving, and were in waiting.

I understood this, and always had change provided to hand them. To simplify matters in my own mind, I made it a rule to add ten per cent. to my hotel bills, dividing it among the servants; so that if my bill was ten dollars, I would divide one dollar additional among the servants.

Rotterdam is one of the quaintest old

cities in Europe—many of the streets narrow, and houses standing close to the street, with sidewalks only wide enough for one person to walk, and some of the houses, from the second story, projecting over the street ; so that persons on the second and third stories, and above, could shake hands across the streets, or make morning calls without leaving their chambers.

The city is permeated with canals, and little steamboats which bring the country produce right up alongside of the markets and stores, and deliver their freight without any trouble.

It is the cleanest city I ever saw. In a morning walk we saw the Dutch women on their knees scrubbing the narrow sidewalk with soap and water, and the streets and fronts of their houses looked as if they had been scrubbed. These Hollanders are very fond of flowers ; their windows are filled with them.

At the large central public market, where the Dutch women go with their baskets for supplies, are the greatest quantities of flowers, and almost every woman supplies herself liberally with



these. We were quite interested in standing on the bridge leading from the market, to see the long procession of women with their market baskets loaded with provisions, and about every one of them carried a bunch of flowers.

These Hollanders seem to be a jolly people, the women look healthy and happy, and the men solid ; perhaps a better word would be stolid and contented. There are some fine buildings in Rotterdam, and a large beautiful park. A very handsome statue of Erasmus, one of the reformers and coadjutor of Martin Luther, stands in a little park in the centre of this, his native city ; and the house in which he lived is still standing, a small old-fashioned brick house.

From Rotterdam we took a steamer in the afternoon for England, crossing the North Sea—usually a very rough passage ; but it happened to be mild and pleasant, and a full moon, which seemed to rise out of the sea right behind us, almost in speaking distance.

Next day we landed on the English coast, and at evening were back at our old

quarters in Woburn Square, London, which seemed almost like getting back home. We found letters here awaiting us, with the good news that all were well.

We remained here nearly two weeks, visiting and revisiting the many places of interest—the description of which I gave in a former letter—and then took an express train on the Great Northern Railroad for Edinburgh, Scotland, having sent our baggage to the steamship office in Liverpool.

I must not dwell too long on this Scotland trip, though no country in Europe has, to my mind, so much of interest; it seemed to me the very paradise of romance. Nothing in romance can excel some of Scott's descriptive poetry, his "Lady of the Lake" and "Marmion," or the heart poetry of Robert Burns in his "Bonny Doon" and "Highland Mary," and other poems that has stirred the hearts of millions. What American boy has not been thrilled with the story of Wallace in the "Scottish Chiefs," and Douglass, and all the heroes in Scottish history. When, therefore, I crossed the borders of Scotland, and entered that romantic

country, I felt I was in the land of heroes and great men.

Our first stopping place was Edinburgh, one of the pleasantest cities in Europe, with its beautiful streets, avenues, parks, monuments, and old historic buildings.

Edinburgh castle, built hundreds of years ago, is still used as an armory. Hollyrood, the ancient residence of the Scottish kings, and where the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots lived, is still intact. Her bed-chamber has been kept just as it was when she occupied it. A large picture gallery, with very fine old paintings and portraits of the kings and queens of Scotland, is, also, one of the sights.

In the public square stands the Scott monument, a magnificent work of art. The Scotch people are very loyal to the memory of their great men, and well they may be; no country in the world has ever produced greater.

We spent a few days in Edinburgh, then went to Stirling, the old home of Wallace, the hero of the "Scottish Chiefs." Stirling castle stands as it did in his day, just back of the city on a high bluff

overlooking the city and valley, and Frith of Forth. The battle of Bannockburn was fought three miles from Stirling. We drove down to the battlefield; our guide pointed out the stone in which Bruce planted his standard when his little army of thirty thousand Scotch Highlanders routed the British army of one hundred thousand, with a loss larger than Bruce's entire army, which ended a long war, and established the independence of Scotland.

Burns' immortal poem of Bruce's address to his army on this occasion will go down the ages as a knell to tyranny and an inspiration to liberty:

“Lay the proud usurpers low!  
Tyrants fall in every foe!  
Liberty's in every blow!  
Let us do or die!”

Our journey through the trossacks, the mountain and lake region of Scotland, was very enjoyable; riding on the top of the four horse coach and sailing on the lakes, through the country of Roderick Dhu and Fitz-James of Stirling, made famous by Walter Scott's poem, “The Lady of

the Lake." The whole thing, the scenery and mountains, beautiful lakes, and bright skies, all seemed to us a poem—a romance, a landscape picture, all combined.

We spent a couple of days in Glasgow, and from this city took the train for Liverpool, and boarding our steamer, the "Spain," were again on the broad Atlantic, with our faces turned toward America—our own dear home.

Probably no travelers ever saw more of the different countries or took in more of the places of interest than did my dear wife and myself in so short a time.

My wife was a good traveler. She did not tire as do many ladies, and could adapt herself to all kinds of travel, and enjoyed new scenes; it was all recreation and pleasure to her. She grew stronger and returned to our home in much better health than when we left. Next day after leaving Liverpool, we cast anchor off the old city of Cork, in Ireland, now called Queenstown, where a steamboat came alongside of our ship, her deck crowded with over a thousand emigrants to be put on board. It was a sad sight to see these poor

creatures; whole families, men, women and children; some very old and some mere children, all carrying their baggage, mostly sacks and hemp bags; some with boxes and baskets, and some with beds and bundles. All seemed poor, wretched, and sad, many in tears; not a smile did I see in that whole surging mass.

As I stood on the deck of the ship and looked down on this crowd being marched in single file over the gangplank to the steerage, bending down under their burdens, all going to an untried, and, to them, an unknown country, among strangers, I felt sorry for the poor creatures. I could not help but feel how doomed most of them were to disappointment, though it was perhaps impossible for their condition to be much worse.

We saw but little of these steerage passengers on the voyage, as they were not allowed on the after deck where the cabin passengers were.

I would sometimes go forward and look down in the steerage and see the cooking; a sort of stew, made of corned-beef and potatoes, in a cauldron, stirred and dipped

out with a long-handled iron scoop basin.

Our voyage was comparatively pleasant and uneventful.

Exactly at twelve o'clock each day the captain would take his reckoning. I made it a point to watch for the time and stand by him and see how it was done. Modern science has invented a little instrument called a sextant, something a little larger than an opera glass, by looking into which, when the sun is exactly at zenith, the mirrors are so arranged as to show the latitude and longitude of the ship, and the number of miles we have made in the twenty-four hours since his last reckoning.

This he posts in a conspicuous place where the passengers can see it. Passengers guess and sometimes bet on the number of miles the ship would make the next twenty-four hours. I carried a map, and each day, when the captain had taken his reckoning, would mark on the map just where we were.

As we approached New York we began to be on the lookout for pilot boats. There is always great strife among pilots as to who should reach one of these big ships first ;

the pay is large—some two hundred dollars or more for piloting one of these large ships into port. Several pilot boats sighted us apparently at the same time, and then there was a friendly race. The one that comes first, near enough to speak and be answered, gets the job; and after putting a pilot on board the ship, will sail away and be on the watch for the next steamer. The pilot brought late New York papers, which were seized and read with great interest, as we had been isolated from the world for a week. The last night on the ship passengers gathered in the cabin and had a sociable—recitations, singing, speeches, stories and a right jolly time. A collection is always taken up on these occasions for the benefit of a marine hospital in Liverpool, if on an English ship. At the quarantine station, near Sandy Hook, we were detained an hour or two for the examination of our steerage passengers; but as we showed a clean bill of health, were allowed to pass, and were soon steaming up the bay and alongside of our dock in New York. Scores of long-shoremen, with our own sailors, were soon



engaged transferring baggage from the ship to the dock, where were waiting custom house officers to examine the baggage.

There is often more or less trouble here, as these custom house men use their own discretion as to how thorough they examine trunks and baggage. Sometimes they take out the entire contents of a trunk, article by article, to see if there is any dutiable goods. If they find any, away it is sent to the custom house, and, if it is found the intention was to smuggle any taxable goods, the whole contents are forfeited to the government.

Our baggage passed with little examination, the inspector only lifting the cover of the trunk and top tray and passed it.

We found at the steamship landing, waiting for us, our dear children Marion and Ella. I said, waiting for us; yes, waiting for us. These darling ones are now, at this writing, with their dear mother, the companion of my life's voyage, all now waiting, waiting for me.

They have taken their last voyage, escaped its perils and are safely landed in a haven beyond the reach of all dan-

ger, the storms of life with them being passed.

This was a joyous meeting. They were delighted to see us, to welcome us home, and we were as glad to get back to our home and loved ones; to find that no serious sickness or mishap had befallen any of them during our absence. We felt that no country or people in the wide world, could compare with our own.

We met during our travels many delightful people, and received the most courteous attention wherever we went.

There is a feeling in all European countries, especially among the common people, that America is a paradise. Their highest ambition is to be able sometime to go to that country.

We had occasion to make a little purchase in a store in Heidelberg, and the only English speaking person in the establishment was a young girl, perhaps sixteen or eighteen years of age. She asked if she should not send the article home. I said it was too far—we lived in New York. “What!” she exclaimed, “in

New York ! in America ! Oh, how I wish I was there." Poor girl, she thought if she was only in America, if she was not in paradise, it would be the very next thing to it.

The peasantry of Germany and Holland, and indeed of all European countries, have a life of toil and want, and little encouragement.

We saw, in passing through the agricultural districts, women and girls doing the most menial work, carrying burdens under which they bent—too heavy for strong men. Children looked prematurely old and careworn. They have to work for a mere pittance, and have no hope of any better condition.

As I said we were glad to get home and be with our dear ones again. Little, however, did we realize that we should so soon be called to part with our daughter Marion, this dear one who seemed so necessary to us all; the two young daughters, so dependent on a mother's care; a devoted husband, a loving father and mother and sisters, all these ties were sundered.

It was an awful and crushing blow for all of us, and one that her mother never recovered from. The years that she lingered here, before going to join her darling child, were years of suffering; and yet she was a true Christian mother, and tried to be brave and resigned, but this touched the very core of her heart.

Although this was more than ten years ago, and the flowers on her grave have budded and blossomed and been nipped by winter's frosts ten successive times, yet it seems but as yesterday when this darling one lay as if asleep, so life-like and beautiful, amid the banks of flowers which kind friends had brought and loving hands arranged so emblematic of herself; the house packed with mourners and mourning friends, who came to pay their last tribute of love and respect; the beautiful address of Dr. McLeod, her pastor, in which he paid a glowing tribute to her character as a Christian in her life, walk, and example; the choir of her church, who volunteered to come and sing some of the hymns they knew she loved.

Next day the family and nearest friends

followed her remains to her final resting place in beautiful Greenwood, where in a cemented vault, clean and white, we laid her precious remains and covered her tomb with flowers.

During her last sickness, her sister, Ella, and husband, Rev. Albert J. Lyman, were with her, both ministering angels and God's blessed comforters.

Dr. Lyman made a beautiful address at the grave, so appropriate and so expressive of all our feeling that I asked him for a synopsis, which I prize very highly.

“In the name of this family circle, and this group of kindred and friends, I now solemnly and tenderly, pronounce this our united testimony over our beloved sister Minnie's grave. Here lies the pure body of one of God's sweet saints; she walked in white while among us, and she walks in white to-day in the city of God. We have loved the light of her face; she was our sister of peace.

“The eldest born, she was the pattern of our family fidelity. Her name was the music of the home life we have shared. In her hands she held the bond of all our

fellowship, and beyond our sight she holds it still.

“We bear our witness, that as daughter, sister, wife and mother, she served with utter constancy the ends of love and duty; she was our well beloved one, and her memory is blessed for ever. Acquainted with care, she made care seem beautiful; she taught us gentleness, and Christian resignation. Suffering she bore with patience; privation with dignity; and in her words and ways dwelt to us a deathless loveliness. She won the crown she wears. We say no final farewell, she rests in God; we lay her away, not in fear, but in honor and hope; we lay her in the midst of the flowers she loved.

“Believing in nature and in God, to nature we entrust her mortal and precious form, and to God we commit her immortal spirit. Nothing of her life can fade.

“In Christ whom she trusted, she lives, and in His presence she awaits the final resurrection of the blessed.

“Rest thee in peace sweet sister, thy spirit is above, not beneath the sod; we will not suffer thy words to fail.”

After this address a dear friend of hers and of our family, Rev. Fritz W. Baldwin, made a beautiful and touching prayer and benediction. And so closed the last rites we could pay to one of God's own dear children. Her memory is very precious; her grave a Mecca to us all. Not now a lonely grave, but by her side rest her darling sister, Ella, and the dear mother of them both. Heaven is richer and earth so much poorer.

## LETTER XV.

MY DEAR H.—

In my last letter I told you of the sickness and death of our darling daughter Marion. Without going too much into detail, I will only say here, the devoted husband and the young daughters, thus suddenly bereaved, met the situation bravely. Her sisters, Ella and Florence, and her mother, and indeed all of us adopted these children who, with their early training, have developed into the noble Christian character of their sainted mother. After the death of this dear daughter, the health of my wife became more feeble. I gave up active business, and in the winter of 1886-7 we went to California, hoping the change of climate and surroundings might benefit her.

Our hopes were partially realized; she enjoyed the change, and we all felt encouraged.

My dear wife was one who loved nature and beautiful scenery, and the journey and grand scenery, and the world



of flowers in Southern California all tended to bring the wonted bloom to her cheeks and brightness to her eyes.

The journey to California was not so tiresome as we supposed it would be. The Pullman palace cars and arrangements for sleeping nights and resting, makes traveling a luxury in comparison to what it used to be. What occupies only about six days, with comforts almost like a home parlor, took six months of weary and toilsome travel for the pioneers and early settlers of that far off country.

Our journey, too, was broken by a delightful visit in Kansas with our dear sister and brother, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin R. Van Horn. After leaving this pleasant home, we were whirled over the vast plains of western Kansas, skirting the Rocky Mountains for three days and nights, through wild unsettled parts of New Mexico and Arizona, a country of lava beds and volcanic formations.

We saw several parties of Indians who had come down from their reservations, situated some twenty or thirty miles from the railroad, to see the passing trains—

something strange and wonderful to these poor savages.

The conductors are instructed to treat the Indians with civility, and let them ride, if they desire, on the platforms; otherwise they might do harm to the railroad.

At a place called "The Needles," near the border line between Arizona and California, a whole tribe, it seemed, of Indians, squaws and papooses were at the station, perhaps a hundred or more, waiting for their rations which were on one of the cars of our train—quarters of beef, carcasses of mutton, and bags of meal and other provisions.

This was an eating station; but the sight of these filthy creatures peering into the windows of the kitchen where almost as filthy looking Chinamen were cooking, and the dining room only separated from the kitchen by a rail, with waiters of the same sort as the cooks, altogether took away the appetites of most of the passengers; beside curiosity to look at these poor half naked savages was stronger than the appetite for food under these circumstances.

After emerging from the arid plains and

lava beds through which we had been traveling for two or three days, we arrived at San Bernardino, in California. Here we got the first whiff of orange blossoms, and were in the land of flowers. Some fifty miles further is the beautiful city of Los Angeles, the place of our destination, where we spent two or three months reveling among the flowers and orange groves. The rainy season was about over, and the weather was perfect. We formed pleasant acquaintances with Eastern people, and would make frequent all day excursions many miles in the country, driving our own livery team, often making it a pic-nic day, taking our own provisions. Would get permission to drive into an orange grove, sometimes by paying a small amount, but generally they said go in, in welcome, and help yourselves.

After spreading our blankets on the ground under the shade of an orange tree, the limbs bending down under the load of its luscious fruit, we would eat our lunch and pick oranges—all we wished—just by reaching up without rising from our blanket seat on the ground. These orange

orchards of Southern California are immense—fifty and a hundred acres. Many of the trees having to be propped up, and many of the limbs broken under the great weight; the most beautiful sight imaginable.

You can see the same tree loaded down with ripe, golden, and green fruit and blossoms at the same time; the fragrance filling the air as you ride through the country.

It is something wonderful—the quantity of oranges and lemons shipped from Southern California; apparently enough to supply the world. Train after train of cars, loaded with this fruit, leave the different stations every day for eastern markets. At Riverside, in the centre of the orange belt of Southern California, some forty miles east of Los Angeles, are several large packing and shipping houses. We spent three weeks in this place very pleasantly. It is called the “Garden of California,” and rightly named. One of the finest avenues I ever saw is “Magnolia Avenue.” For nine miles this broad avenue, lined with double rows on each side of magnolia, eucalyptis,

palm and pepper trees, and all sorts of flowers, beautiful villas and endless groves of oranges, as far as the eye can reach. I used to go to the packing houses and watch the process of assorting, packing and shipping the fruit. I was told there would be shipped from that station, that season, two thousand car loads of oranges. A car load is three hundred boxes, and the average number in a box is one hundred and fifty oranges—making an aggregate of ninety millions of oranges from that one station; and that is only one out of a score of shipping stations. These packers will buy an orange orchard and pick the fruit as they require. Oranges are different from apples or most other fruit. The picking season commences in December and lasts till June, the ripening oranges keeping fresh all this time while on the tree.

It is interesting to watch the process of assorting and packing. The oranges are dumped into a hopper, through which they run down into an inclined broad wire sieve, the meshes of which are graduated for different sizes, the first meshes being small to let the small oranges drop through;

the next larger, and so on until the last; the sieve being shaken meanwhile, the oranges dropping through into canvas sacks, and carried to the packers, who lay them carefully in boxes, each orange wrapped in tissue paper, pressed down and nailed; the box marked with stencil plate, with the name of the packers, number, and brand of oranges in the box; the boxes are then run out on the platform and packed in the car. When the train of fifteen or twenty cars are loaded, away it goes on the long journey of three thousand miles to the eastern markets.

A young orange orchard in Southern California with irrigation, is worth from five hundred to a thousand dollars an acre, and some are valued much higher.

They don't count on any off years, every year is a bearing year, and the trees improve the older they grow. A frost is scarcely ever known, though there has been a little frost a few times—just enough to nip some of the fruit on the most exposed branches.

After leaving Riverside we concluded to make a trip over the Sierra Mountains to the Yosemite.

This valley of the Yosemite is one of the wonders of the world, and well worth the journey to see. Formerly it was an overland ride of a hundred miles by stage over several ranges of mountains, but has been shortened by a railroad from Berenda to Raymond, a distance of twenty-five miles, making a stage ride of seventy-five miles. We started from Raymond after an early breakfast in company with three four-horse stage loads of passengers,—eleven inside each coach, three on a seat and two with the driver. Our coach contained a jolly load, mostly gentlemen with their wives. Dr. Herrick Johnson was the third occupant of our seat, and his wife occupied the seat in front of us, with a gentleman and his wife from Auburn, N. Y. After nearly a week in the valley we came back in the same order.

The first day from Raymond we rode fifty miles, stopping once for dinner (changing horses every ten miles) bringing up at sunset at Clark's Hotel, where we enjoyed a good supper, a bright open fire-place fire and the sleep of tired travelers.

After breakfast we resumed our places in

the stages and started for the wonderful valley, a ride of twenty-five miles further. This ride took us through the finest scenery in the very heart of the Sierras, through forests of pines of enormous growth, trees six and eight feet in diameter and straight as a mast, one hundred and fifty and two hundred feet tall.

Almost the entire distance of this last twenty-five miles was a gradual ascent through these primeval forests, only very recently traversed by white men.

On emerging from the forest on the top of the mountain, our driver made a little detour from the main road to a jutting point overlooking the wonderful Yosemite Valley, called "Inspiration Point," and it is well named. The view is one never to be forgotten; all the adjectives possible grouped together would fail to give the reality. Grand! sublime! majestic! are mild terms.

The valley lay at our feet, almost perpendicular, a mile below us, seemingly walled in with granite a mile high.

My descriptive powers are inadequate to do justice to this grandest work of



nature on this continent, if not in the world.

The first white man who ever visited this valley, Mr. J. M. Hutchings, is now a resident of, and known all over California as the "Patriarch of Yosemite." He has published a book, the title is "In the Heart of the Sierras," in which he describes this wonder of nature.

During our stay in the valley I became acquainted with this man, and was charmed and thrilled with his story of early incidents in his pioneer life. From his book I gathered some of the descriptions which I fully indorse.

I will give his own description first: "Successively and successfully, we passed through dark and apparently interminable forests, penetrated brushy thickets, ascended rocky ridges, and descended talus-covered slopes until, in the afternoon of the third day of our deeply interesting expedition, we suddenly came in full view of the marvelous valley.

"The inapprehensible, the uninterpretable profound was at last opened before us.

"That first vision into its wonderful depths

was to me the birth of an indescribable 'first love' for scenic grandeur that has continued, unchangeably, to this hour, and I gratefully treasure the priceless gift.

"I trust, moreover, to be forgiven for now expressing the hope, that my long after-life among the angel-winged shadows of her glorious cliffs, has given heartfelt proof of the abiding purity, and strength of that 'first love' for Yosemite.

"This mere glimpse of the enchanting prospect seemed to fill our souls to overflowing with gratified delight, that was only manifest in unbidden tears. Our lips were speechless from thanksgiving awe. Neither the language of tongue nor pen, nor the most perfect successes of art, can approximately present that picture.

"It was sublimity materialized in granite, and beauty crystallized into object forms, and both drawing us nearer to the Infinite One."

Samuel B. Bowles, of the *Springfield Republican*, writes his first impression of the sight of Yosemite Valley from "Inspiration Point."

"The overpowering sense of the sublime,

of awful desolation, of transcendent marvelousness, and unexpectedness, that swept over us, as we reined our horses sharply out of green forest, and stood upon a high jutting rock that overlooked this rolling-up heaving sea of granite mountains, holding, far down in its rough lap, the vale of meadow, and grove, and river. Such a tide of feeling, such stoppage of ordinary emotions, comes at rare intervals in any life. It was the confrontal of God face to face, as in great danger, or sudden death.

“It was Niagara magnified. ‘All that was mortal shrunk back : all that was immortal swept to the front, and bowed down in awe.’ ”

Benjamin F. Taylor, in his “Between the Gates,” says :—“Yosemite awaited us without warning, met us without coming. Spectral white in the glancing of the sun, the first thought was that the granite ledges of all the mountains had come to resurrection, and were standing pale and dumb before the Lord. I turned to it again, and began to see the towers, the domes, the spires, the battlements, the arches, and the white clouds of solid

granite, surging up into the air, and come to everlasting anchor till 'the mountains shall be moved.' You hasten on; you hear the winds intoning in the choral galleries a mile above your heads; you hear the crash of waters as of cataracts in the sky; you trample upon broad shadows that have fallen thousands of feet down, like the cast off garments of descending night."

Albert D. Richardson, in his "Beyond the Mississippi," says:—"Nature had here lifted her curtain to reveal the vast and the infinite. It elicited no adjectives, no exclamations. With a bewildering sense of divine power and human littleness, I could only gaze in silence till the view strained my brain and pained my eyes, compelling me to turn away and rest from its oppressive magnitude."

"H. H.," in her "Bits of Travel," thus describes it:—"An indescribable delight took possession of me. The silence seemed more than silence; it seemed to quiver without sound, just as the warm air shimmered without stir, along the outlines of the rocky walls. On my left hand rose the

granite watch tower Loya (Sentinel Rock); on my right, the colossal buttress Tutock-ahnu-la (El Capitan), the Cathedral Spires, the Three Brothers—all were in full sight.

“Wherever I stood, the mountain wall seemed to shut close around me in a circle.

“I said to myself, again and again: ‘Only between three thousand and four thousand feet high.’ But the figures had lost their meaning. All sense of estimated distance was swallowed up, obliterated by the feeling of what seemed to be immeasurable height.”

I will only give one more extract from the pen of travelers to this wonderful valley. Horace Greeley said:—“Of the grandest sights I have enjoyed—Rome from the dome of St. Peter’s; the Alps from the valley of Lake Como; Mount Blanc and her glaciers from Chamouni; Niagara and the Yosemite—I judge the last named the most unique and stupendous. It is a partially wooded gorge, one hundred to three hundred rods wide and three thousand to four thousand feet deep, between almost perpendicular walls of gray granite, and here and there a dark yellow pine,

rooted in a crevice of either wall, and clinging, with desperate tenacity, to its dizzy elevation.

“The isolation of the Yosemite, the absolute wilderness of its sylvan solitudes, many miles from human settlements or cultivation, its cascade two thousand feet high, though the stream which makes this leap has worn a channel in the hard bed rock to a depth of one thousand feet, renders it the grandest marvel that ever met my gaze.”

From “Inspiration Point” our road led down the mountain side into the valley below, the road being in many places cut in the solid rock, with sharp acute angles around which our driver would crack his whip and make the turn under a full run on the very brink of the precipice, just for pure cussedness and to scare his passengers. There were some blanched faces and some protests, but our cowboy driver didn’t care a snap; it only seemed to make him more reckless and to see how near he could come to the edge of the abyss without going over.

There were three hotels in the valley. Our

party went to the Yosemite Valley Hotel, kept by Mr. J. J. Cook, a gentleman, formerly a merchant in New York way back in the fifties.

We had mutual acquaintance with many New York people, and passed hours in reminiscence of those early days.

He was very kind and showed us many attentions during our stay with him, took myself and wife in his carriage around the valley, and pointed out the most interesting features. The valley is from five to six miles long, and half to three-fourths of a mile wide, and the walls almost perpendicular, and from three thousand to four thousand feet high; not all the same height, some loom up higher than others and have been given different names such as "Cathedral Spires," from their resemblance to them; "Sentinel Dome," "Half Dome," "Three Brothers," "Clouds' Rest," "Mt. Starr King," and others.

The great rock of the valley "El Capitan" does not seem like a mountain ledge, but more like an enormous everlasting boulder with its smooth, gray sides reaching up almost to the clouds; its

measurement being, from its base in the valley, three thousand and three hundred feet—almost perpendicular.

The height of the falls which pour themselves down into the valley, through which runs the Merced River, according to the government surveyor is the "Sentinel Falls" three thousand two hundred and seventy feet. The "Yosemite Falls," two thousand five hundred and forty-eight feet; several other falls of less height.

When we consider that the Niagara Falls are only one hundred and sixty feet, it is easy to see the stupendous height of these falls. There is one or two breaks in the highest falls, though in a spring freshet Mr. Cook told me they appeared to be one tremendous fall from the top to the bottom.

The most beautiful fall is called the "Bridal Veil." The height is only eight hundred and sixty feet, but it pours over the brink in a broad stream and becomes a mist before reaching the bottom, hence its name. When the sun shines one or more rainbows are always to be seen.

The Merced river, running through this valley, is a great trout stream. The Indians



bring in long strings of these speckled beauties every day and sell them to the hotels for fifteen to twenty-five cents a pound. Our tables were abundantly supplied with these at every meal. Mr. Cook said the Indians have a knack of catching trout which no tourist or white man can attain.

At one end of the valley is a small settlement of Indians, the remnant of a native tribe, living in huts, gathering acorns which they grind between flat stones by hand and make their own acorn bread ; this with fish and small game is their daily food.

Our party made excursions, on broncoes led by half breeds and Mexicans over dangerous paths, to the Domes and different points about the valley, so that every day was fully occupied.

Our return trip was a little changed, to take in the Mariposa big tree section. Starting in the morning from Yosemite we reached Wa-Wa-Na in time for dinner. After dinner and a short rest we were driven to the wonderful big tree forest, some eight or ten miles. The whole forest of many miles in extent is covered with

trees of large dimensions, mostly pines. The noted big trees, however, are of another species called "sequois" or red wood, and are within a section of a few square miles, and perhaps numbering three or four hundred trees.

Some of the largest of these have been given names, such as "Grizzly Giant," "Mariposa," "Washington," "Grant," "Longfellow," "Wa-Wa-Na," etc. These have cards attached giving their dimensions; "Grizzly Giant," thirty-three feet in diameter; several others nearly as large, and from two hundred and fifty to two hundred and seventy-five feet high. One of these trees is called "Wa-Wa-Na" the tunnel tree, through the heart of which the road passes. At the base, this tree is twenty-eight feet in diameter, is solid wood, still alive and growing. The arch or tunnel is about ten feet in height, and nine or ten feet wide at the bottom; not quite so wide at the top, but ample room to drive our four-horse stages through, stopping in the centre for us to count the rings to see if we could approximate its age.

We could scarcely do this, but it is said as many as two thousand rings have been counted in some of these trees, making their age at least two thousand years.

One of the largest of these trees lies prostrate and is hollow. It is said two horsemen have ridden through abreast, for the distance of eighty feet.

There was a ladder against this tree, which I ascended, and walked on the top ; it seemed like walking on an arched roof of a barn or house, it was so high, and yet it was partly imbedded in the earth.

One of these trees, still standing, is hollow at the base ; said to have been burned and cut out by the Indians. The room is perhaps fifteen feet in diameter ; large enough for our three stage loads of passengers, thirty persons at least, to stand within its walls without crowding.

This Mariposa Big Tree Grove, and the Yosemite Valley are both California State Parks, and under the care of commissioners, and heavy penalties prescribed for depredations ; also, strict regulations against fires.

From here we went directly to San Francisco, where we spent two weeks

very pleasantly, visiting many places of interest. In many respects this is a wonderful city, with its enormous hotels, its palatial residences and evidences of great wealth.

The United States Mint in this city, which we visited, is the largest mint for coining money in the world. The process of rolling out the gold and silver bars in correct size for the dies of different coins, cutting and pressing them into coins is a wonderful process.

The director of the mint was exceedingly courteous, and showed us all over the establishment and explained the details. I was surprised to learn from him that the mint second in size to this, in the world, was in Japan.

In a glass case on the wall, in the coin room, are samples of every coin ever made in the mint.

In this case, also, are some valuable relics, among which are two silver spoons from Solomon's Temple, at Jerusalem. I ventured to express a little skepticism about this, but he said there was no doubt, as their history had been traced back to the

sacking of the Temple by Shishak, and these spoons were among the trophies.

On leaving San Francisco, we came by another route, the Southern Pacific, stopping a few days, and over Sunday, at Salt Lake City, the home of the "Latter Day Saints."

It is a very clean, handsomely laid out city, with some fine stores and public buildings. The tabernacle and temple are immense. We attended service on Sunday in the temple, which is said to seat ten thousand people. There were several speakers but not much worship. The organ was grand, and fairly good congregational singing. The themes of the discourse was to glorify the Mormon and the "Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints." They receive strangers visiting their city with a great deal of courtesy, and are ready, on all occasions, to argue in favor of their peculiar system.

They were quite excited at this time, on account of the Edmunds law, passed by Congress, making polygamy a crime. They were very bitter and defiant. Some of their leaders had been arrested and were in

prison ; they all talked of martyrdom and were ready to die for the cause.

I ventured to advise some of these saints that it was a good time to have a new revelation, and to soften down some of the tenets of their peculiar creed.

## LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR H.—

On leaving Salt Lake City, we came, by the Denver and Rio Grande railroad, over the Marshall Pass, to Colorado Springs, where we spent a week.

This road is over the wildest range and deepest canyons of the Rocky Mountains, and over the backbone of the continent. The head waters of the great Colorado River have their source here, running in a southwesterly direction for thousands of miles, finding an outlet in the Gulf of California; while the North Platte, having its source in the immediate vicinity, running in a directly opposite, or northeasterly direction, finds its way into the waters of the upper Missouri and, finally, into the Gulf of Mexico, more than three thousand miles from its source.

The engineering involved in building the road over this mountain range and through the deep gorges and canyons, is something marvelous.

Through the "Black Canyon" the river

rushes, with a mighty torrent, between perpendicular rocks, hundreds of feet high ; the track of the railroad being suspended on iron cranes, overhanging the rushing waters below.

Before entering the canyon, there are open platform cars attached, on which passengers can ride through this awful chasm of one or two miles. They can see, directly beneath the track upon which they are riding, the mighty rushing of the water, and above them the perpendicular wall of rock, three hundred feet, almost shutting out the light of day ; hence its appropriate name, the "Black Canyon of the Colorado."

We spent a week very pleasantly at Colorado Springs, visiting and drinking the waters of the different mineral springs in the vicinity, going through the Garden of the Gods and up the mountain of Pike's Peak. It is a beautiful place and is becoming quite a health resort, the waters being highly recommended for many diseases and the invigorating air a panacea for all lung troubles.

We also spent a week in Denver, the



great mountain city of the West, one of the most attractive cities of our country; its large stores, public buildings, churches, and boulevards, all show plainly the enterprise of its people.

After leaving Denver we came to Illinois, and although it was in midsummer and a hot season, we enjoyed visiting among our brothers and sisters there and in Wisconsin, from whom we had been separated more than forty years, some of whom we had not seen in all that time. They made family gatherings for us of all the relatives within thirty or forty miles, who could come, and the weeks we spent with them are pleasant memories; a delightful period to look back to. Quite a number of the dear ones who enjoyed these scenes with us have since joined the greater family gathering on the other side; have exchanged their earthly homes for heavenly mansions.

The health of my dear wife through these journeyings and changes seemed to improve. We all felt greatly encouraged with the hope that she would continue to gain health and strength, but were doomed to disappointment. Sometimes for months

there was no perceptible change, yet we could see the tendency was towards a decline. We tried in every way to ward off the insidious progress of the disease, gave up the care of housekeeping for three or four years, spent our summers at the best health resorts, and under the care and advice of the best physicians. Nothing was left undone that we could think of or were advised to do. She did not lose heart or courage; she was brave and patient to endure.

Our first visit to California was beneficial to her, and with the hope it might be so again, we concluded to try it; and in the fall of 1892 we crossed the continent for the third time, breaking the journey as before in Kansas, and spending the winter, over six months, in Southern California.

The disease had fastened itself so firmly in her system, even the change and healthful climate could not dislodge it. The struggle between hope and fear continued, but hope with her was always predominant. We consulted the best physicians on the Pacific coast, and omitted nothing that

could in any way conduce to her recovery or comfort. Early in the month of May, 1893, we started for our Eastern home, breaking the journey in Kansas again, and spending a couple of weeks in Barrington, near Chicago, with a dear nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Howarth, who did every thing possible for our comfort. My wife was weak and suffering, but her courage was indomitable—she desired to go to the World's Fair, in Chicago, and went with us for two days, and enjoyed it, as she always enjoyed the beautiful works of art and of nature.

While at Barrington, we received a dispatch from Dr. Lyman that Ella had had a bad turn, and desired us to keep him informed of our whereabouts in case she should get worse. We knew she had been ill, but they kept from us the serious nature of her illness ; indeed her weekly letters to us never failed. Only a day or two before the dispatch, we received a long, cheerful letter in her own hand, saying she was improving. On receipt of the dispatch, we lost no time but hastened home by fastest train, arriving on Friday P. M., driving

immediately to her house and found her very low but still hopeful of recovery. She was so weak, we could only see her a few moments. Oh what a change had come over the poor child since we left her, six months before. Then the picture of health, now the faded cheek and emaciated form, bolstered up in the bed to receive us, which she did with outstretched arms and loving embrace. It was the last loving embrace of her poor mother.

It was not thought best by the physicians for us to see her again for a day or two. I went frequently to inquire and held whispered conversations with her husband in another room ; it was impossible for her to hear—two doors between and both closed—but she sent one of the nurses to inquire if I was there, and to request me to come in, which I did.

I shall never forget the angelic look on that sweet face of my darling child. I felt sure then that she was already at the gates of the Celestial City. With both arms clasped round my neck, she whispered how glad she was that we had come home, and how she had longed to see us, and how

sorry she was to see dear mother look so poorly. She sent her love, and said, "Have her come down early in the morning, I want to see her." I promised she would. Next morning (Sunday) we went to the house and we found the spirit had departed just a few moments before our arrival. With words of love upon her lips to her dearly loved husband who had just smoothed her pillow, she said, "Thank you, dear;" her eyes closed, and her pure spirit took its departure.

"Passed through glory's morning gate  
And walked in paradise."

I shall never forget the wail that escaped from the heart-broken, loving, and dearly loved mother. Another arrow had pierced her heart through the frail tenement of clay, and it was never dislodged; the wound never healed. Henceforth the burden of her infirmities and mournings for her darlings grew too heavy, and in a little more than ten months, after much suffering borne with great patience and Christian fortitude, she joined them in the Celestial City, where the three walk in white among God's blessed angels.

I must say a word more in regard to the character of this dear one. No parents ever had a more loving or devoted child, more thoughtful and tender. And in every relation of life, as wife of the pastor of a large and influential city church, she fulfilled every duty ; always trying to bring comfort to the afflicted, and sunshine and cheerfulness into darkened and despondent hearts.

In her journeys abroad with her husband, she never omitted her weekly letter to the loved ones at home. While traveling in Palestine, she heard of the death of a child in Brooklyn whom she dearly loved. She gathered and sent flowers from Nazareth, the birthplace of our Saviour, to the mother of the child with a touching letter of sympathy.

She brought bottles of water from the river Jordan, to be used in the baptismal font for the infants, which fond mothers blessed her for.

In a word, I can conscientiously say, if one can think of what a daughter, a sister, a wife, a friend ought to be, she was that. She has left a precious memory.

At her grave in beautiful Greenwood, Rev. Dr. Baldwin, whose wife is Mr. Lyman's sister, made a short address and prayer. His words were so apt and beautiful I will copy them :

“Our Heavenly Father, in His eternal love, has spoken to our dear one and called her behind the veil. We bow, with filial reverence, before the majesty and mystery of that love. He doeth all things well.

“As our beloved was clothed in this mortal form, so now is she clothed in supernal light. Tenderly, trustingly, lovingly we lay her body to rest. Here, amidst the beauty and glory of the world, its springing life and its unchanging joy, we leave that which was so dear to us. He who lives in nature will care for what His children loved, as He cares for her and for us ; and she cares for us and is ours still. Nearer to God in that new life, nearer and dearer than ever to us. We think of her now as active, radiant and blessed in the city and home of our God. We believe, also, that she is not far from any one of us. Somehow, in God's own mysterious and blessed way, we shall feel her over watch-

ing presence, and she will serve us more divinely than ever.

“In this blessed hope let us live, and may God make us brave to endure, strong to serve, and patient to wait until our day shall dawn, and we shall greet her again, and walk by her side forever in the realms of light.”



## LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR H —

The year following the death of our dear daughter Ella was a year of suffering for my precious wife and of great anxiety for us all. The malady, which finally proved fatal, made gradual progress in spite of the best medical skill. She made a brave fight, and not only kept up her own courage but imparted courage to us all. She did not fear death, but desired to live on account of those she loved. She was no speculative Christian; she believed in a material heaven—mansions and golden streets—and that she would meet her loved ones in the Celestial City.

She loved to read about heaven. Not long before her death, she spoke of a verse she was reading: "In my Father's house are many mansions," and said, "Isn't that beautiful?"

We saw her fading and growing weaker day by day, but never despondent.

It was a source of great satisfaction that I could be constantly with her. It was a

comfort to her. It was my custom after arranging her pillow and making her as comfortable as possible, to pray by her bedside with her hand in mine. On the last night I did so and closed with the child's prayer, which she repeated with me. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." And this prayer, the first that her infant lips ever uttered, and one she taught her own little ones at her knee, were the last conscious words she ever spoke. She died with her child's prayer on her lips—she soon fell asleep; after an hour she woke, but her mind wandered, and I saw the end was near. Florence and Marguerite and I watched beside her bed. She was unable to swallow; all we could do was to moisten her lips and smooth her dying pillow.

We sent for Albert (Dr. Lyman), Mr. Smith and the grandchildren, and we were all with her when she passed away, about eight o'clock, on the morning of April 16th, 1894, like a child going to sleep, parting from the loved ones here to join the loved ones there.

Her long illness and gradual fading had in a measure prepared us for this, yet the sense of a great loss, that something had gone out of my life, overshadowed everything else; I felt alone, and more than that, that a part of myself was gone. Dear friends came and loving letters of sympathy; and many who knew and loved her sent flowers and came to pay their last respects.

Dr. McLeod, our pastor, who conducted the funeral services, paid a beautiful tribute to her Christian character and personal worth, and read a part of the last chapter of Proverbs.

“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.

“She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

“She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

\* \* \* \* \*

“She stretcheth out her hands to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

\* \* \* \* \*

“She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

“She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

“Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

“Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.”

I had often read this chapter, the description of a good wife, but the application of it on this occasion seemed most appropriate.

The leader of the choir of Clinton Avenue Church, Mr. Baird, a dear friend who was present, sang some choice selections among which was one of her favorite hymns.

“Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling  
gloom,

Lead Thou me on ;

The night is dark, and I am far from  
home,

Lead Thou me on.

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough  
for me.

\* \* \* \* \*

“So long Thy power has blest me, sure  
it still

Will lead me on

Through dreary doubt, through pain and  
sorrow, till  
    The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces  
smile,  
Which I have loved long since, and lost  
awhile."

Next morning, the family and most intimate friends followed the remains to the silent city, where, in a vaulted grave, we laid her precious remains amid the flowers she loved.

Again our dear friend, Rev. Dr. Baldwin, always ready to stand by us in our afflictions, mingling his tears with ours, spoke words of comfort and commended us to Him who grieves not willingly nor afflicts His children. The following beautiful and appropriate words were spoken by him on this occasion :

"I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself, shall be with them and be their God. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more

pain, for the former things are passed away.

“Through the mystic and shining gates of death another loved one of our circle here on earth, wife, mother, grandmother—sacred and blessed names—has passed on to greet those who dwell beyond the stars and the light of setting suns. One less at home; one more in Heaven. I love to think of these dear ones as forming a circle there. I think of them also as ministering to us in myriad and blessed ways, too blessed and divine for us to comprehend.

“Here, amidst all that is beautiful and prophetic in this present lovely world, we reverently lay to rest the earthly form of her whose spirit is with God.

“Nature will care for her own. God will care for His child, more tenderly than we could do. And may God care for us, make us brave and true, and worthy in His own time to pass on into the larger life, the holier love, the sweeter peace, of His immortal realms. Nothing is our own except our dead. They are ours; and hold in faithful keeping, safe forever, all they took away.”

Her grave beside that of dear Ella was covered with flowers, and together with the grave of our dear Marion, are tenderly cared for, decorated with flowers, watered with tears of love and affection which the grave cannot extinguish "until the daybreak."

"Day after day we'll think what they  
are doing,  
In that bright world so fair."

My narrative must now draw to a close. As I said in the beginning, it would be a simple commonplace narrative, nothing marvelous or out of the beaten track of common experience.

If it shall help any poor boy in his commencement of life's struggle, or any man in mature life surrounded by discouragements, which are inherent and come to us all as we journey through life, it will have served its purpose. I take no credit to myself for any success I may have attained, only a determination to always do what I believed to be just and honorable.

If I had but one motto to leave to be the

guide of any young man, it would be the Golden Rule :

“ Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them.”

Although I do not feel the infirmities of age, as many do who have attained to my years, yet I know in all human probability the time of my departure is not far off.

“ Beyond the smiling and the weeping  
                   I shall be soon ;  
 Beyond the waking and the sleeping,  
 Beyond the sowing and the reaping,  
                   I shall be soon ;  
 Love, rest, and home—  
 Sweet hope ! Lord, tarry not, but come.”

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“ If I should die to-night,  
 My friends would look upon my quiet face,  
 Before they laid it in its resting place,  
 And deem that death had left it almost  
     fair,  
 And laying snow white flowers against my  
     hair,  
 Would smooth it down with tearful tender-  
     ness,  
 And fold my hands with lingering caress,  
 Poor hands, so empty and so cold to-night !



“If I should die to-night,  
 My friends would call to mind with loving  
 thought  
 Some kindly deed the icy hand had  
 wrought,  
 Some gentle word the frozen lips had said :  
 Errands on which the willing feet had sped.  
 The memory of my selfishness and pride,  
 My hasty words, would all be put aside,  
 And so, I should be loved and mourned  
 to-night.

\* \* \* \* \*

“O friends, I pray to-night,  
 Keep not your kisses for my dead, cold  
 brow ;  
 The way is lonely, let me feel them now.  
 Think gently of me ; I am travel worn ;  
 My faltering feet are pierced with many a  
 thorn.  
 Forgive, O hearts estranged, forgive, I  
 plead !  
 When dreamless rest is mine, I shall not  
 need  
 The tenderness for which I long to-night.”

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