

East and West

by

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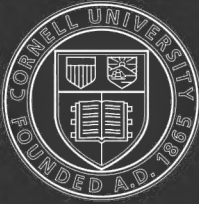
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By STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM

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“The charm of the East is pastoral.”

EAST AND WEST

COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF NATURE
IN EASTERN AND WESTERN
STATES

BY

STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM

AUTHOR OF
"IN THE OPEN," "MEXICAN TRAILS," ETC.

Illustrated

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
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PREFACE

IF this book is inspired by love of that beautiful estate which has descended to us by inheritance, it is inspired even more by love of the open, which is in a still deeper sense our native land. While these woods and streams, these mountains and deserts, are the legacy of the American people, the chief beauty and interest of this country is the inheritance of such of them alone as are qualified by understanding and by sympathy to receive it—they who having eyes, see, and having ears, hear. There are many, however, who, engrossed in affairs, have sold their birthright, this finer, more beautiful inheritance, for a mess of pottage. To them, above all, this book is addressed in the hope that it may call them back to their own—to their native land.

S. D. K.

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EAST AND WEST

EAST AND WEST

CHAPTER I

THE INHERITANCE

IN an annual migration from East to West I have become increasingly aware of the immensity of that inheritance in Nature which has descended to us Americans. Here we have room under the stars. Here we have the most beautiful playground in the world. Such has been my own enjoyment in it; so great a resource has it been that, as a naturalist and one of the inheritors, it appeals to me as an agreeable duty, a slight return for benefits received, that I should say some word—inadequate as it must be—in appreciation of that vast estate which we happily share in common, we who have eyes and ears. In this wonderful garden which lacks neither mountains, deserts nor forests, which includes all zones from the alpine to the

tropical, and whose flora and avifauna are unrivalled in extent, naturalists and poets, hunters and fishermen, and all lovers of the open, may claim their inheritance, each according to his capacity. While corners of this estate are charming and pastoral, others are savage and austere. So diversified is the flora and so considerable the avifauna that no one will ever have more than a passing acquaintance with either in the field. To fully know the birds and flowers of your own State may well occupy you all the days of your life. But to know those of another region, a corner remote from your own, greatly enlarges both the interest and the understanding. As to whether we call ourselves Easterners or Westerners, we are primarily Americans, and our inheritance is the length and breadth of this land—the immense beauty of the Western deserts and snow-covered ranges as well as the peaceful charm of the meadows and pastures, the woods and fields of New York and New England. It would seem but fitting that we should now and then look over this estate and not content ourselves with some little corner, and that we should cultivate an appreciation of its varied aspects.

Perhaps it is not given to any one man to



“ The peaceful charm of meadows and pastures.”

voice both the East and the West, but he at least who spends half his life in one and half in the other, may feel in sympathy with both, as he owes something to the charm of each, and may interpret some phases, if nothing more, of these two sides of his continental garden. So I hope to present the character—to reflect the very atmosphere it may be—of certain corners selected because of individuality, or for no better reason than that I am familiar with them and like them; to outline, as it were, little pictures of these chosen places with their more common birds and flowers—pictures based on subtle impressions of the true personal charm and character of each. Thus I shall bring them together—the East and the West—so that their natural characters may be tacitly compared. I would reveal in short what a fair estate is ours, rather by intimations than by any careful description—for that is the province of botanies and ornithologies; yet offering, perhaps, a stimulus to the study, not of these books, but rather of the garden itself. For this purpose I have chosen New York and the Massachusetts shore in the East, California and Arizona in the West, and while I would have included some pictures of the

Rocky Mountain country, the area already considered is more than ample, and, on the whole, better answers the purpose in view.

Surely in no part of the world has spring a more subtle attraction than in the North-Eastern States and this is enhanced by the rigour which precedes it. April and May have here some peculiar quality—spiritual it would seem, and certainly psychic—which appeals to those emotions responsive to music and poetry. Spring is a resurrection and its significance cannot be other than solemn and beautiful to the thoughtful mind. The blossoming of red maple, alder, and birch, the appearance of bloodroot, hepatica, and arbutus, of coltsfoot, dicentra, and saxifrage, mark in the sensitive observer certain phases of spring in himself, as if the flowers were his thoughts made manifest. The peeping of the hyla, the arrival of redwings, bluebirds, and meadow-larks, the migration of warblers, are never without some inner response in him.

In the West, spring makes no such poetic and intimate appeal to us, for there spring is not intrinsically a season as it is in the East. Instead of our seasons the year is marked by a dry and a rainy period. In Southern California after the first autumn rains, one sees

signs of spring in the blossoming gooseberry in the cañons and the wild currant on the mountains. The season of quiescence—the sleeptime—is marked, not by a mantle of snow, but by a golden cloak of dried grasses over all the hills. It is not to be supposed, however, that in California one has no feeling of spring. The majority of wild flowers do not appear, in any abundance at least, till April, when they have begun to blossom with us in the East. But the significance of the season is less marked, takes accordingly less hold upon the imagination and is productive of less feeling. Undoubtedly in the East the contrast of winter and spring does much to heighten the effect—a stage trick by which we are readily duped and which somehow we are never weary of observing.

Autumn, too, in the East, is a season incomparable—a mood in Nature, an emotion in us, and nowhere else does one have precisely the same feeling. On the Pacific slope and in the South-West, not only the difference in climatic conditions but the relative scarcity of deciduous trees conspire to deprive one of the full import of that mysterious mood of Nature, the haunting sadness so beautiful in that expression which we name autumn. In

December, the Arizona cottonwoods are shedding their leaves, but early in January, before they are all off, the trees are in bloom and the hum of bees resounds in the dry creek beds. That gorgeous colouring, that splendour of maple and sumac, of scarlet oak and Virginia creeper has no counterpart in the West. The year must seem to be born and seem to die to yield us the æsthetic and spiritual consciousness, the true sense of spring and of autumn.

When we go West we must put aside the old feeling for Nature which we have cherished on the Atlantic side of our estate, prepared to be solaced by other joys. The charm of the Western winter, aside from the mildness of the climate and the greater amount of sunshine, is in the continued evidence of life. Always some birds are singing, some flowers are blooming. Winter in the East is a recession to the glacial period and life is at a standstill. Its beauty is the cold beauty of marble. But on the Pacific Slope, Nature is awakening from a summer nap; winter is a growing time, and in the more arid regions at least, a sunny season as well.

North of Mexico, the most delightful climate is that of the high Sierra Nevada in

summer and of central and southern Arizona in winter—delightful that is to those who esteem dry air and sunshine, rather than to those lovers of mist and dampness in whom some subconscious longing for a semi-aquatic life still obtains.

Climatic conditions of Southern California are essentially different from those of Arizona, New Mexico, or Mexico, all of which differ from each other. Winter is here the rainy season. Farther south on the west coast of Mexico, and everywhere on the plateau of Mexico, it is the dry season. On the east coast of Mexico, every month is the rainy season. In New Mexico, generally speaking, the winter is dry but cold with snow in the mountains; in central and southern Arizona, dry and warmer but with light rain; in northern Arizona, dry and cold with some snow. Conditions vary so greatly with altitude and proximity to the sea that it is difficult to generalise, though this is usually attempted.

In California, the climate of the Sierra Nevada in summer is very similar to the winter climate of the Sierra Madre in the States of Michoacan, Morelos, and Guerrero. But, the winter climate of Santa Barbara—and of the entire coast country—is not perpetual

sunshine nor is it dry. There is none of the magic in the air which constitutes the charm of Western Mexico, for it is damp air. An adobe brick in Morelos will dry in a short time; how the old Spaniards ever dried adobe bricks in Santa Barbara, I do not know, but the fact remains that they did. It is certainly rainless in summer but there is fog—and adobe needs sunshine and abundance of it.

Plants respond to their environment so closely that by a mere glance at the flora a naturalist can tell something of the climatic conditions. Lichens, ferns, and mosses are as certain evidence of humidity as cacti of dryness, and wherever they abound you may know, all assertions to the contrary, that a damp climate prevails. It is usually assumed that the air of the mountains is dry. It is true the air is purer and that on mountain slopes at a slight elevation, as along the foothills of the Santa Inez in what is called the lemon belt, the air is drier and warmer than at the seashore; but on mountain summits, except in dry climates, the air is moisture laden, and on the summits of the Catskills and Adirondacks are always found water-loving plants.

With some of the heirs of this estate, climate

is not the only thing that lures westward each winter. There is a spirit of the West, a something in the Western country capable of satisfying that in us which the East forever leaves unsatisfied. Broadly speaking the charm of the East is pastoral, of the West, heroic. We need the distance, the great silent spaces, sometime in the year; we need its colour—its savage reds and yellows, its opal desert tints. The aboriginal self in us comes to the fore, that primitive untrammelled man who must have room and broad vistas and silence; who is not content with hills and brooks but demands mountain chains, the forest, and the desert for his portion; who is at home in the splendid, untamed, savage West.

Equally, I think, we need our green little world of the East, its meadows and pastures, its old orchards and bees and wrens. We do not always wish to sit in vast baronial halls but take comfort in snug little rooms, and perhaps, as we grow older, find them more to our liking. These little mountains, these quiet fields, these village elms and pastoral scenes appeal to some cultivated and finished part of us and inspire gentle and cultured thoughts. Nature has here so many moods.

She is as subtle and mysterious as she is changeful and elusive. She is glad, she is sad in the sky; she whispers, she storms in the wind, and all the trees whisper and sigh with her. She is a child and anemones and bluets are her child-thoughts; she is voluptuous and flaunts herself for an hour in ironweed and milkweed, in goldenrod and asters. The birds are more intimately related to us than in the West—everything is nearer, the world is smaller. Somehow the Western birds do not come into one's thought-life quite as do the Eastern; the robin is not so much a part of the lawn, the oriole of the orchard, or the thrush of the wood-lot. Perhaps it is because we have in the West a more distant horizon and thus hold everything farther from us.

An Eastern bird lover, for the first time in California or Arizona, will rejoice to find so many relatives of his old friends, for it will make him feel at home; and yet at the same time he will recognise that in some subtle distinctions they are different from their Eastern congeners. Thus there are Western bluebirds, Western robins, Western hermits—meadow larks, mocking-birds, vesper, song, and chipping sparrows, gnatcatchers, and kinglets. Juncos, chickadees, goldfinches,

flickers, jays, swifts, swallows, vireos, orioles, humming-birds, cardinals, and purple finches will all appear familiar and yet all are different species from those to which he is accustomed. He will quickly recognise kingbirds and phoebes but not those he has known of old. The spurred towhee will suggest the chewink; Parkman's wren the wren of the apple orchard; Audubon's warbler the myrtle bird; the pileolated warbler the blackcap; and any one of several thrashers, though different in dress from the Eastern bird, will plainly declare itself a thrasher. Cañon wren and rock wren will instantly proclaim themselves of the delightful family of wrens; but the cactus wren will appear a strange offshoot and the greentailed, California, and cañon towhees very distant connections of the Eastern chewink. One may thus feel somewhat at home in this new bird world before cultivating the acquaintance of such distinctly Western birds as the wren-tits and bush-tits, the phainopeplas, solitaires, and ouzels.

There is a rare pleasure in recognising members of particular families of birds and plants, even if one does not know the name of the individual. Peculiarities of the family are

recalled with a thrill of satisfaction at one's own discernment and the consciousness of a varied acquaintance. It is presumably with much the same feeling that your worldly dame, observing through her lorgnette some newcomer, recognises him from his nose and manner and recalls and recapitulates his family traits and family connections. Birds have so many little traits that reveal relationship. Their manner of flight, of feeding and singing; their bills, their feet, their tails, speak of this and that family or genus, so that you know that your strange bird is a cousin at least of some old friend. But to know not a bird or a flower, nor even to recognise a member of a familiar family, is to be a stranger indeed in a strange land, and to miss the delight which we owe to the companionship of friends and the recognition of celebrities in Nature.

When it comes to a comparison of the songs of Eastern and Western birds, I am not yet prepared to commit myself. Certainly the Western meadow lark is far superior to the Eastern as a songster. Its song is, in fact, a heavenly strain always to be cherished. The blackheaded grosbeak is a splendid songbird and a better vocalist than the rose-

breasted; several of the thrashers are equal or superior to our bird; the greentailed towhee is of course a much better singer than our chewink; the plain titmouse has a beautiful call note, superior to that of the Eastern tufted titmouse; Say's phoebe has a softer note than our pewee, and the vermilion flycatcher might almost be called a songster; the song of the water ouzel is one of the wildest and most sylvan in Nature; and finally, the solitaire ranks high among American songbirds. As for the others, the Western robin is a shy silent bird and neither he nor the Western song sparrows seem to play the same familiar and lovable part in the outdoor world that our Eastern birds do. While the thrushes are well represented in the West, their songs have seemed to me, at least, less in evidence than with us. I have heard nothing equal to our hermits and veeries in the Catskills or the wood thrush in the Long Island woods; nor have I ever heard in the West such splendid daybreak choruses as one hears in favoured localities in the East. Toward the Pacific, one misses the bobolink, which however is moving westward; while the Baltimore oriole is replaced by three handsome birds—the Arizona, Bullock's, and Scott's.

We must accord, I believe, the Eastern hermit and wood thrush the first place among North American songsters. Theirs and the veery's are certainly the most spiritual voices in Nature, as the song of the bobolink is the most blithesome and gay. Of all bird utterances, one of the most significant is the *O-ka-lee* of the redwing, but this is due largely to association and can never obtain with the same force and beauty on the Pacific Slope that it does in the East when, on some misty morning, we hear that voice of prophecy in the grey swamp and the face of the world seems changed in an instant. To me, the most truly sylvan voice is that of the ruby-crowned kinglet, while the wildest note that Nature utters through the throat of a bird is the song of the water ouzel. Our Eastern water thrushes also give expression to the wild and primeval in Nature. Both the Eastern and the Western cardinals have splendid rollicking voices and all the thrashers, like the mocking birds, are dramatic and finished singers, albeit too self-conscious. Some of the Western species are more voluble, and, if anything, better songsters than the Eastern. Of the wrens no more hopeful, ringing, divinely cheering voice is to be heard

from Atlantic to Pacific than the song of the Carolina; and it is equally true that no American bird has a more touching and beautiful quality of voice than is revealed in those descending notes of the cañon wren, heard in the wild rocky gorges of the South-West.

As with the birds, so with the flowers; the botanist newly arrived in California will recognise quickly many well-known families and will be pleasantly aware of family traits: Crowfoot, Mustard, Pink, Mallow, Pea, Spurge, Buckthorn, Saxifrage, Stonecrop, Composite, Heath, Lily, Rose, Mint, Milkweed, Waterleaf, Borage, Convolvulus, Nightshade, Figwort, and others. But he will soon discover that these orders are largely represented by other genera than those to which he is accustomed. Thus *Ceanothus*, *Arctostaphylos* or Manzanita, Lupine, *Gilia*, *Phacelia*, *Pentstemon*, *Calochortus*, *Castilleia*, and *Audibertia* are in the ascendant, and throughout the arid parts of the South-West, the various genera of the Cacti, the *Yucca*, the genus *Acacia*, *Prosopis* the mesquite, and *Astragalus* the locoweed are plants as typical as mullein, bayberry, and sweetfern of a New England pasture. In our winter migration not only do we meet Western members of the

families we know best, but we come to know and feel an attachment for families essentially Western, like the Cacti, the Phlox, and the Waterleaf.

Trees even more than flowers help to form that environment with which our thought-life and associations are so involved, and here the change is very radical in going from the Atlantic to the Pacific Slope. While hemlock, spruce, and white pine play some part with us, our associations are in far greater degree with hardwoods, with red, scarlet, and white oaks, with shellbark, pignut, and chestnut, with black, white, and yellow birch, with red, white, and sugar maples, and with beech and elm. It is these trees, so exquisitely vernal in May, so radiant in October, so sombre and austere in winter, which are chiefly responsible for our tree-thoughts, our sylvan impressions. They, with here and there a pine or hemlock, constitute our Eastern tree-world. The splendid sugar maples of the Catskills, the great yellow birches of the Adirondacks, the beautiful domes which the elms make in the fields of Western New York, and the feminine white birch of Eastern woods, are the decided features of this corner of our estate.

While in the cañons of Southern California there is a beautiful sycamore and an alder which, unlike the Eastern, becomes a large tree, and in some localities there is a white oak, it is, above all, the live oak along the coast and in the valleys which will give you your tree-impressions and which will be to you the tree of trees. In the high Sierra, on the other hand, one has little or no association with hardwoods and it is the great coniferous forest of cedar, fir, and pine, and of Sequoia in restricted areas, a forest having no counterpart east of the Cascade,—vast, open, and majestic,—which is the essential characteristic of our wild garden. In the arid South-West, except at high elevations adapted to conifers, the cottonwood of the dry creek beds is the all-important tree; unless indeed we consider the giant cactus of Arizona a tree—which it properly is—but a tree so peculiar and so remote from one's idea of trees, that it accords us impressions of a wholly different character.

Differences in mammalian fauna of East and West, while equally great, are much less striking for the simple reason that we see as a rule very little of wild animals. They live by concealment or by their wits; they are

largely crepuscular or nocturnal in their habits and keep out of man's way. Various rats and mice are peculiar to the South-West but as they are all nocturnal one is seldom aware of their existence, unless it is by their depredations. In Arizona the large, clumsily built nests of the trade or pack rats are everywhere in evidence, heaps of sticks and rubbish covered often with joints of the cholla cactus by way of armour. Squirrels, chipmunks, and skunks abound but all are different species from our own. The various zones from desert to snowline have each their characteristic kinds and it is one of the remarkable features of both Arizona and California that one may traverse all the zones by climbing a mountain;—that is to say, one travels from Mexico to the Arctic circle within these few miles of ascent.

If one encounters a deer, it will very likely be the blacktail which largely replaces our whitetail. Formerly in riding in the Cocoino forest I often started antelope and these encounters were the chief pleasure of any excursion. The sight of a wild animal alert and free in its native haunts is still to me one of the rarely stimulating influences. Bears or panthers are now seldom to be met

with unless systematically hunted, and this is also true of wildcats, though these are still abundant. There are two animals, however, that one sees frequently—the coyote and the jackrabbit, both very characteristic of the West, and one's impressions of any South-Western landscape are apt to be coloured by the sudden leaping of a jackrabbit over a ridge, his great ears showing for an instant over the skyline, or the swift, silent skulking in the distance of a coyote; and if one is a student of animal life, the wonderful ease and freedom of motion, the implied potential energy will always hold the eye.

One other feature of the fauna, particularly of Southern California, which will make an impression on the Eastern mind is the abundance of lizards. This radical difference in the reptilian fauna of East and West is apparent when we consider that in his *Reptiles of the Pacific Coast and Great Basin*, Van Denburgh enumerates forty species of lizards and only three species of turtles. All, with the one exception of the Gila monster, are harmless, while the rattlesnake is the only poisonous serpent. Some of these lizards are graceful and rather pretty, albeit cursed with reptilian features. Wherever one goes,

whether under the live oaks or on bare rocky desert places, they dart hither and thither. The whiptail scurries from under the feet with such lightning speed as to appear like a streak across the road; fence lizards raise and lower themselves in their strange automatic fashion upon boulders and tree trunks as they observe the intruder; the alligator lizard, which resembles a small alligator, hangs by his tail and feet in the lower branches of the live oaks, waiting for insects; the blue-tail gleams on the banks amidst the coffee ferns; or a horned toad crawls sluggishly out of the way over the rocks and sand. True, they are reptiles, but fortunately, with few exceptions, they rarely give one that uncanny sensation, that subconscious racial repulsion, which appears to be inseparable from the sight of a serpent.

It is a beautiful estate that has descended to us—this continental garden bordering two oceans; a wild garden to cherish and enjoy—and to preserve. Our grandchildren will not thank us for cutting off the forests, drying up the streams, killing all the big game, and defacing the charming pastoral landscapes of New England and New York with the evidences of a commercial depravity. They

will go to the museums we have bequeathed them as their portion, and looking at drawings and sections of forest trees, and at stuffed bison, wapiti, antelope, mountain sheep, and egrets—all designated as extinct—will reflect upon the uses we made of our patrimony. And they will turn to the herbaria for many flowers of our wild garden that shall have ceased to exist—uprooted by the thoughtless.

But they shall not say we have failed to protect our songbirds. Nor shall they say we have made no effort to save the forest—even though too late. They will merely wonder why we did not begin in time; that anything so obvious could for so long have escaped our attention. They will feel that some of us loved our great wild garden; that some of the old heirs cherished their beautiful estate and strove to preserve, or at least not to mar it, that in so far as we could further it, the children we loved and their children's children should come into their inheritance. And more than this, they shall truly feel that at least we taught them to know their estate—its birds and flowers and trees—in a way and to an extent that we ourselves had not been taught.

Among these future heirs will doubtless

be—as with us—some difference of opinion as to who has inherited the chief portion. Some will aver they are the principal heirs because of certain deeds relative to a few acres here or there—even so. Others will lament and deem themselves defrauded of their heritage—having no deeds at all. A goodly number will sell their birthright for a mess of pottage and will go through life without ever really seeing the splendid estate which was rightfully theirs. Lastly a few—a chosen few—shall know that the true inheritance, which is of God and not of man, is the love of the open,—the eye and the ear and the heart; the feeling for birds and for flowers, the companionship of the woods and fields, of the primeval forest, the everlasting hills and the mysterious opal deserts. And these shall not be concerned as to who owns most or least—seeing that their portion is the beauty of this estate, that to them, and to them alone, Nature yields herself as to the true inheritors of the land.

CHAPTER II

CAPE ANN

IF ever a land bore the impress of the sea, that land is Cape Ann. It is dominated by the sea as by a vast and mysterious presence. Its hemlock swamps, its pine woods, its boulder-strewn pastures are all under this spell of the ocean gods. The storm and passion of the sea have left their indelible mark upon the granite shore. Here two forces forever contend; the sea restless, passionate, feline; the granite, grim, ponderous, inert. This ceaseless contest, this ever-present necessity of confronting the sea, shows itself as well in the faces of the fisherfolk which have become like granite. The bewitching sea lures them all their days; it croons their cradle song; it chants their requiem. The sea is their life and the sea is their death.

So if you go down to Cape Ann you shall come under the mighty spell of the sea and you shall feel it not alone on the weathered

rocks of Halibut Point and the dunes of Squam, but on the Dogtown pastures and in the depths of Coltsfoot swamp. You shall have a sense of the sea by day and by night; it shall be in your nostrils, in your ears, in your thoughts—the wonderful sea which was never young and never grows old. For you must know, however matter of fact you may be, that where the sea is, there is mystery and there is poetry. A man may look at it and think of the price of fish, but the sea, like music, shall compel him to think also of other things.

Now Cape Ann bears the impress of another force, long since dissipated, but once as dominant as the sea, which for untold ages wrapped the land in silence and cold. Everywhere the boulders and ledges, planed and scratched, speak of the touch of a vanished hand—a rude and terrible hand indeed. The ghost of the ice still haunts the lonely Dogtown Commons and the imaginative mind will not fail to conjure up the ancient glacier in sauntering over the rugged pastures: the vast snowy mantle, the bluegreen caverns of ice, the hummocks and crevasses, the silence of Arctic winter broken by the boreal song of glacial torrents. In no locality in

this latitude is one more constantly reminded of that far-off day, that long desolate glacial winter which preceded the present spring-time of the temperate zone.

In every direction ledges are planed in the characteristic fashion with gentle northerly and north-westerly slopes and abrupt southerly ones, polished as by intention, so that now and again one is inclined to rub the hand approvingly over some particularly smooth surface, as if tacitly to imply admiration for such excellent workmanship. But it is on Dogtown Commons that the spell of the departed ice is most keenly felt, for on this historic ground the glacier made its final stand and here beat its slow retreat, dissolving into vapour and leaving the terminal moraine as evidence of that great conflict of the elements. Here an endless array of mammoth boulders, like some heroic legion, turned to stone where it lay encamped upon the plain, stretches far in all directions, so imposing that it awes the saunterer who for the first time picks his way among these silent cohorts of granite. That silence is eloquent of a day that was—of the dusk of the gods.

Thus one has not only the sense of the living sea, but is haunted by the ghost of the

vanished ice. Between them, they carved and fashioned a rugged land. Scoured by the winds and lost in the fogs, it is only during the short summer and the mellow autumn that it is habitable for any but the robust, and these—fisherfolk and quarrymen, rugged as the land itself,—cling to the Cape like rockweed on the ledge or lichens on the boulders. To these weather-beaten seadogs in oilskins and sou'westers, the dapper summer visitors in tennis clothes must appear like some species of mayfly—ephemera, blown away by the first autumn gale.

It is for the most part, the rocky shore, not the beach, with which one comes to form a lasting friendship on the Cape. Bold masses of granite advance abruptly into the sea; long shelving reaches of granite dip beneath the waters, and upon these the restless surf forever dissolves in thunder. Here it foams and froths, hissing in anger as it gnaws at the wall of rock. Here again it purrs in contentment as it fawns at the feet of the imperturbable ledge. As the tide ebbs there emerges from the waters that strange region which is both of the land and of the ocean, whose fauna are molluscs and crustaceans, its flora, rockweed, sea-lettuce, red algæ, and kelp,

About this oozy strip of rocks whose uncouth and monstrous forms are clothed with dank seaweed, there is a fascination which no beach possesses, due partly to its strange inhabitants but still more to that intimate sense of the sea which it yields.

Dykes of diabase intersect the country rock and where these dykes advance into the water, the softer rock has been eaten out by the waves, leaving deep chasms which the rising tide invades with moan and swish and cavernous thunder. Their perpendicular walls are lined in places with delicate sea-anemones, revealing those marvellous hues which only the creatures of the sea possess. Scattered over this olive-brown zone of rockweed, the receding tide leaves innumerable pools. Limpid and sparkling as mountain springs, these pools are the natural aquaria over which you will spend many a pleasant hour, the smell of the sea in your nostrils and the sound of the sea in your ears.

Here are limpets, barnacles, and whelk, the latter rose colour, lemon yellow, orange, or pure white. Sea-urchins cling to the rocks and their mauve and heliotrope tints contrast with the rose and crimson and yellow of starfish, bright green sea-lettuce in clear

depths of the pool, and the olive-brown air sacs of rockweed floating on its surface. These pools are veritable gems in a rough setting and one is never tired of peering into them while the sea, fluid sapphire to the horizon line, croons at the ebb. For the sea is a kind of enchantment. There are days when an azure sky and a sapphire sea conspire to hold one spellbound upon these rocks. Not only is the somnolent murmur of the surf in the ears, the sea pervades the whole being, so that one is literally "possessed" by it; not as by a devil surely, but by an enchantress—a being all motion and music and light.

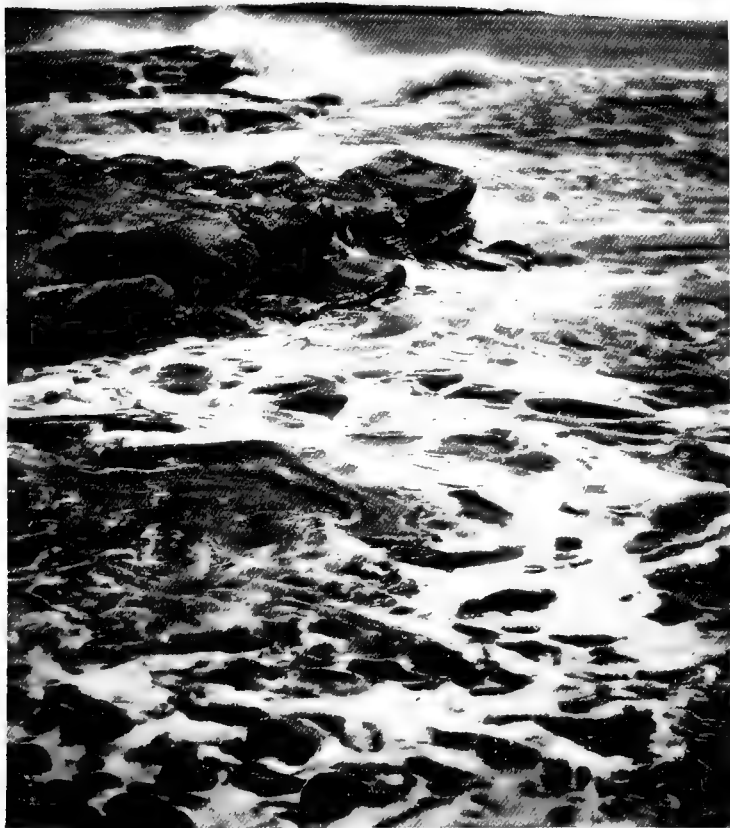
But there comes a day when you may think the sea a devil indeed, when all the wiles of the enchantress have vanished, her sapphire hues, her dancing waves, her gentle lullabies. Darkness lies over the face of the deep, and like the hiss of serpents is the sound of the fretful spray. The summer resident has departed with the summer birds and the fisherman in oilskins and sou'wester is left with the crow and the chickadee to face the winter gales. A sullen sea beats upon a desolate shore. Grey! grey! grey! The Cape, its leafless oaks and hickories chattering in the wind, lies like a gaunt skeleton of rock, its

extremities prone in the leaden sea. Recall now, if you can, the June roses which covered the rocks, the love song of the catbird in the briars. Like a sand blast the sleet cuts the face as you crawl out upon the rocks to see the schooner pounding on the ledge. With impetuous fury the great grey green combers curl and break and hurl themselves upon the land. The sea is boiling as in some vast cauldron and the hissing foam bubbles up over the granite to the very edge of the fringe of huckleberry and wild rose, while the swish and boom of the surf drowns all sounds in the world—your very thoughts as well. Like a barnacle, you cling to a slender shore besieged by an infinite sea of frenzy and passion.

Winter on the Cape will teach you how grey the world can be; it will reveal the power and vitality of the primeval sea, so that often you shall reflect—What is man indeed! Your grim companions the storms and fogs, you will have the shriek of the winds and the boom of the surf for music—Spartan music, calling to arms,—and you shall need some granite in your backbone. When the solitary Dogtown pastures lie under their covering of snow on clear crisp days, they are haunted

as at no other time by the ghost of the vanished ice, and only the cheery flock of chickadees reminds you that the land has been redeemed.

Approaching Dogtown Commons from the shore, one must first traverse a fringe of wood, now growing thin in places, which screens from the ocean the ancient pastures and the cellars marking the site of the deserted village. As one emerges from the woods and the thick coppice which replaces the primeval hemlock, pine, and oak of a generation ago, these pastures have the stern and sombre aspect of Scottish moorland. The vast array of boulders with which they are strewn in all directions invests them with added character and a certain austere charm. If one may speak of the heart of Cape Ann, it is here—a New England heart of stone, which exerts nevertheless a mysterious attraction. The very austerity of the landscape has some power to hold the attention: all the more that this severe personality reveals upon acquaintance certain little graces which, like the occasional softening of a cold nature, are the more acceptable. And, as with distant and forceful personalities, one feels always that he has not yet sounded their depths nor



“ The hissing foam bubbles up over the granite.”

fully explored them. It is thus I have been a long time sauntering on these pastures and have never yet come to the end of them.

On this moorland, intersected by swamps and skirted in places by woods of white pine, the sombre red cedar standing solitary amidst the boulders is the only tree, while the swamps themselves are thickly grown with red maples, black birch, and an occasional clump of hemlocks. It is these Dogtown pastures which contribute, as much as the sea, to the rugged individuality of Cape Ann. They are the dominant element in its personality, and this is due not only to the austerity of the landscape but quite as much to the boulders and to the red cedar. Indeed the cedar is transmuted granite, a sombre tree as befits a stern environment, pointing a rigid finger to the skies where it stands unbending beside the great boulders, many of which like dolmens or druidical stones also point heavenward, as if both would admonish the saunterer of some inexorable destiny. Rigid tree and unyielding granite, these might well have been the insignia of the Puritan.

The same stern affinity exists between the boulder and the juniper, a shrub which is the spirit of hardihood incarnate in a plant. It

is to New England pastures what the yucca is to the desert. Equally self-reliant, aggressive, uncompromising, it maintains itself in spite of everything. How it flattens itself over the ground, clinging by root and branch to that thin layer of soil, as indeed it must in north-west gales which threaten to blow, not only the juniper, but the soil itself off the ledge and leave the Cape shivering in its bones.

But this austere land has softer moods which find expression in the barberry. In autumn, you shall go to Dogtown for no other purpose than for a particular set of impressions which it accords. Its foliage has brightened, its splendid racemes of brilliant drupes hang luxuriantly. Full of grace and charm, glowing with colour, it is a pasture shrine for pilgrimages. As you stand and gaze, it is as if some subtle emanation proceeded from this beautiful thing and was absorbed into your mental constitution;—the irradiance of a charming personality.

Now there are barberry impressions and bayberry impressions as well, and the two are wholly distinct. The rugged little bayberry allures by no such outward and visible charms. It is a prim homespun sort of a

plant, but as you roll the grey greasy pill-like berries between the finger and thumb there arises an aroma which works magic. 'T is the lotus plant of the northern pastures, for as one inhales that perfume, an exhilarating sense of the wild takes possession of him to the exclusion of all else so that even the memory of the town and the limitations and commonplaces for which it stands suddenly fade. To crush the leaves is to awake the genii of the open who whirl us away on wings of freedom. A wonderful plant is the bay-berry; yet there are those who will be loath to admit it. Ah, well, if it does not affect them, it is because they have not been called by the gods to be walkers and lotus-eaters, and it will be of little use for them to go to Dogtown at all. They will see a few cellars of the ancient inhabitants and plenty of stones, but the Dogtown of the saunterer shall remain for ever invisible.

One may go to the pastures, however, for such uninspired motive as berry-picking and it may be to him as to the cattle—merely a place to browse. But if perchance while watching the flocks of Admetus you browse upon diviner food than blueberries, then, looking upon high bush and low bush

with uncommercial eye, you shall find these humble plants yield more than berries—even certain evanescent and charming impressions.

This austere personality with its heart of stone has thus a mellow hour in its boreal year, a vernal mood and a short summer languor. Spring here is so delicate and ethereal, so unsubstantial that it seems as if a change of the wind and a blast from the icy sea might dissolve her into nothingness, as it scatters the pale petals of the shadbush. The spirit of that fleeting spring is too ethereal indeed ever to be held captive in words. It is a momentary vision as of another world, and any description is a pressed anemone compared with that fragile blossom in the leafless woods. The granite heart softens, the stern features relax, and there steals over the pasture that expression of exquisite gentleness we name houstonia, that mildly beaming aspect we call dandelions.

Many swamps border the interior pastures, bearing away towards the sea, and in these, spring lingers and is more in evidence. In certain open places in the swamps, well away from the woods, I have found poison sumac and mountain holly, both rare hereabouts. Various other little open swamps, fringed with

hardhack, clethra, alder, and meadowsweet, are filled with cotton grass and sedges, and in these you may look for the Venus flytrap and the white-fringed orchis, growing side by side with cranberries. Here the common shrubs are the Cassandra and the winterberry.

As the swamps diverge from the pastures and become deeper and more extensive, they are filled with red maples. In these pleasant shades—and what more alluring to the botanist than a bog—look for the pitcher-plant, for Bryum, Mnium, Hypnum, Sphagnum, and Bartramia among the mosses, and for Osmunda, Onoclea, Dryopteris, and Asplenium among the ferns. Boulders and ledges are thickly covered with polypods, while there are many parmileaceous lichens upon trunks and rocks and various filiform species in the branches. Tree trunks adorned with tree-mosses and lichens are peculiarly rich and effective in these swamps, so intricate are the designs, so subdued and harmonious the tones, placed upon backgrounds of maple and birchbark, beautiful in themselves.

Where a swamp supports a growth of hemlocks, its general appearance corresponds, as if this were an architectural form with which all details must accord. Here in the twilight

of a cathedral is the haunt of clintonia, gold-thread, and bunchberry, while the mitchella, creeping humbly over the rich humus, is discovered none the less by the wandering bumblebee. In little bogs scattered through the hemlocks and filled with sphagnum the rose pogonia conceals itself, a rare and beautiful spirit imprisoned in the mud of the swamp.

Even to a somewhat matter-of-fact mood, such as is habitual with most of us in our uninspired lives, a hemlock wood has a certain remoteness from the busy world. It has an atmosphere of its own; is peopled by a shy and less assertive race who attend to their own affairs and do not intrude upon our privacy. In the tree tops I hear the woodsy speech of blackthroated and green warblers and the little trumpet of the redbreasted nuthatch, eminently self-contained and peaceful voices which have no suggestion of human motives. Here are diminutive beings living their lives quite as if mankind did not exist. They show none of the vexations of the civilised life and their conversation is peculiarly refreshing. It is agreeable to encounter a race who live from so different a standpoint from ours and who appear so contented withal. Other pleasant little beings—

brown creepers and black and white warblers—side down the hemlock columns which lead from the upper world to the nether one, poking and prying into the crevices and intent upon their quest. Occasionally a redstart makes an aërial dive, his orange wing and tail patches showing as he performs some graceful evolutions. Or a pewee darts after a miller flitting in the twilight, capturing it with a plainly audible snap of the bill, and returning to a twig to melt into its environment as it utters a plaintive pewee note. Suddenly the whole wood rings with the penetrating voice of the ovenbird, and becomes as suddenly silent again.

One misses on Cape Ann the bloodroot, hepatica and spring beauty, and among the birds, the house wren, chat, tufted titmouse, martin, yellowthroated vireo, and I may say all of the thrushes. For though the hermit, veery, and olivebacked pass through as migrants I have not found any thrush other than robin and bluebird nesting on the Cape, nor do I remember to have seen a wood thrush. The chewink and the catbird are perhaps as characteristic as any of the summer birds. Of the warblers, the black and white, blackthroated green, yellow, chest-

nut-sided, Canadian, redstart, and ovenbird certainly nest here. The thrasher is an abundant summer resident and the crested flycatcher a conspicuous bird. Of the small mammals the mink is perhaps the most typical.

Saxifrage, columbine, and houstonia are the early flowers one will most associate with Cape Ann; and not in a summer day's journey will one see more wild roses than on some rocky points and headlands. With the sweetfern and the bayberry, the rose clings to the granite ledge at the edge of the sea, the rock so grim, so wintry, the rose so winsome, the sweet spirit of the month of June. In these wild-rose thickets the song sparrow builds by the sea and in the autumn I have seen the angry spray fall hissing upon the very spot where I recalled a nest embowered in roses the preceding June.

In early autumn the dainty purple gerardia spreads itself over the Cape around the cranberry bogs and seems in very truth native to this granite soil. There are mellow hours in October, a softening of that cold heart which so soon is to succumb to the returning ghost of the ice and to become frigid and immobile again; hours when the waters

are opalescent, and passing sails in a roseate light appear to float in mid-air, so vague and dreamlike is the sea; when the shadbush lights, as by a soft glow, the pine woods; when the osmunda flares in the swamps and the Virginia creeper runs aloft a scarlet flag from the pignut and the pitchpine. Then the huckleberry and the dwarf sumac redden the sombre hills of Dogtown, the red maple fills those sinuous swamps with a tide of colour, and the staghorn—the most brilliant of all—paints itself savage vermilion and flaunts its barbaric beauty.

Now you shall feel the lure of the opal sea as never before, dominating and pervading all. It compels you to the shore; it assails the sense from every avenue—the pungent sea smell, the haunting sea song, the undulating sapphire field, unlock the fancy and the unfettered mind escapes for an hour into a larger consciousness, as a drop might return to the sea. This spell is most potent in autumn, which is itself an enchantment. In a double bewitchment, the sea and the air are in league to steal away the sense, like opium. Colour, too, massed as it is in autumn, has a certain intoxicating effect, a little more divine perhaps than that of any wine we know.

How cheap are your emotions? Can they be bought with gin or beer, or must they have a fine wine; will they yield something to cheap music or do they require the involved themes and subtle harmonies of nocturnes; do they respond only to spectacular sunsets or do they withhold themselves for that planetary or cosmic mood we name autumn? If this is their price, then the goldenrod and asters by the glittering sea shall play upon you like music, shall resolve themselves in you into feeling which no human language can ever clothe with words, and the dream song of the crickets shall seem to sing itself in you.

Soon the enchanted hour passes—like an emotion—and once more Cape Ann lies, a skeleton prostrate at the edge of the sea, and the surf beats upon its bleaching bones. Flocks of red polls arrive and feed upon the alders about the ponds. Tree sparrows return and whitewinged and red crossbills inhabit now and again the secluded world of the hemlock wood, while vociferous companies of chickadees and golden-crowned kinglets flit around the edge of Dogtown. Rarely a pine grosbeak is seen, or a flock of snow buntings whirl over the snow-covered pastures in the pale yellow light, to lose themselves in the

violet shadows beyond. The wind whistles and shrieks in bare branches, the sleet stings and lashes the face as you creep over the granite ribs of the shore; while the ominous thunder of the sea overwhelms the petty sounds of Earth,—its laughter and its sobs alike.

CHAPTER III

THE WILDERNESS

SURELY the prevailing spirits of the North Woods are water-loving nymphs, its chief flora, aquatic. A wilderness it is, not alone of trees, but of lakes, ponds, and streams, whose highroads are waterways and whose byroads, swamps and carries. In a sense Adirondack Wilderness is a more fitting appellation than Adirondack Mountains, for the impression upon the mind, of wilderness par excellence, far outweighs any impression of hill country as such. Forest, it is not, for to those who know the Pacific Slope—where flourish, or rather decline, the most splendid forests in the world—the word suggests the idea of amplitude, of majesty, with which there is nothing commensurate in the Eastern States and which only the giant conifers, the vast perspective, the rugged topography of the West can satisfy. The same is true of mountains, for to a Western

mountaineer, the Adirondacks and Catskills, though not insignificant in altitude, are not mountains at all as he knows them, corresponding to his idea of foothills. But a *wilderness*—yes; the Adirondacks are *the wilderness*.

I went into the North Woods in May, the last month of winter, and came out late in October, which again is the beginning of winter. There were flurries of snow until the first of June and the aspect was wintry save for the appearance towards the end of May of the warblers who, arriving somewhat later than at lower levels, found the woods still inhospitable. But how they enlivened that boreal region! Roving bands of chestnut, Blackburnian, Magnolia, black-throated green, black-throated blue, black-and-white, mourning, and bay-breasted warblers darted in and out the budding trees, affording little gleams of colour—of lemon yellow, orange, chestnut, olive, and blue-black against the silver grey and reddish purple setting of hemlock trunks and maple twigs. Their faint tseeps were the first shy utterance of a still uncommunicative earth awakening from its strange lethargy of winter. Now and again a high-pitched trill, woodsy and aloof, gave

faint promise of an approaching spring, and was as instantly lost in the pervading silence of the wilderness as the bird itself in the interlacing twigs of a swamp or the dark foliage of the spruce.

In all the mystery and charm of Nature, nothing else is quite comparable with the advent of the warblers. Out of a grey world they appear as mysteriously as flowers on the red maple and the shadbush. It is a blossoming in feathers in place of petals, and this annual appearance of life and colour ever affects the beholder as one of the most subtle impressions of Nature, as it is one of the most fugitive. For to-day they come and to-morrow, it may be, they are gone, and as with the wind, who can tell whence or whither?

Not that the woods were wholly austere, as before the advent of the warblers there appeared the most beautiful nymph of early spring, the shadbush, standing all alone by solitary ponds in the cold May drizzle, the embodiment—or shall I say the spirit—of all that is exquisite and vernal. The wilderness has other charms, but not again throughout the seasons does it evince such loveliness as when, in the prevailing

sombreness, the pale wraith of the shadbush haunts for an enchanted hour the river's edge.

Meanwhile the hobblebush spreads white patches of bloom under hemlocks and a faint red haze lies over the swamps, a mist of green over alders and birch, subtly blending with the purplish sheen of bare branches. The sky is grey and sombre, the air, heavy and chill. Raquette Lake lies dull and unresponsive amidst dark hills, as if still under the hypnosis of winter. In the length and breadth of the North Woods there is not a dry spot. It is the recession of the floods, the Champlain epoch, which is every year re-enacted in miniature, and man, adapting himself as best he may, in oilskins and boots flounders laboriously in a semi-aquatic environment.

Before the aspens about the camp were in full leaf, they were taken possession of by a band of purple finches in the heyday of love-making. And though it drizzled and the grey skies spat snow, the perfervid finches in fiercest rivalry pursued the somewhat prim looking females, sidling along the branches with fluttering wings and ruffled feathers to pour out their love songs in prolonged ecstasy.

Later appeared a little company of rose-breasted grosbeaks, and while they sang constantly and appeared to be at home around the clearing, when we left Raquette the first week in June and took another camp on Long Lake, we saw no more grosbeaks throughout the season. This was strange, inasmuch as by the side of Long Lake is a considerable clearing, the work of ancient settlers in what is popularly known as the heart of the Adirondacks.

Songbirds, for the most part, like men, do not belong to the wilderness proper, but to the outskirts—the clearings. Perhaps only wild animals ever penetrate to the real heart of it, for wherever civilised man is, there it is the border merely. No matter how far within he may go, he is still without. The Heart of the Wilderness is a mythical region wherein the foot of man has never trod and upon which he has never set eyes. When he thinks he has reached it, like the drumming of the grouse, it is still beyond. In the dim ages of faun and satyr his ancestors lost for him the key, and ever since, that mysterious place has been invisible to the eye of civilisation. When the lumbermen have traversed every foot of ground, and cut down the last tree,

they shall find, not the heart of the ancient wood, but—desolation.

One fascination of the wilderness then, to the lover of the woods, lies in the effort to reach that mystical region of which he receives intimations, but which ever eludes him. If any of the birds are familiar with that interior world it is surely the woodpeckers and the birds of prey, for unlike singing birds they seem seldom aware of man, and their habits are modified little, if any, by his presence. Savage and untamed, they remain part of the wilderness. I had not been long in the woods before discovering the log-cock, but his nest I never found. Perhaps it is within that inner circle which may not be entered and where also the grouse drums.

A few songbirds, however, such as the winter wren, do not seek the settlements of man and they, it may be, are the gentler spirits of the mysterious heart of the woods. When we hear them sing, we are perhaps as near it as we ever shall be. An untamable sprite, secretive, shy, and sylvan, the winter wren is a characteristic bird of the wilderness. How far from the clearings he penetrates, who can say? Perchance he does not go *in* at all

but merely comes *out* to the edge where we see him. The queer gnome-like little creature may in truth *be* a gnome for aught we can say. He lives by concealment, darting about as surreptitiously as a wood-mouse, and this self-obliteration is the very law of the wilderness. So it is that his song is a disembodied voice escaping for a moment into the silence, as wild a woodland ditty as ever fell upon listening ear.

While the song of the hermit is the most beautiful of all, that of the veery is more mysterious. Mr. Burroughs aptly describes its note as *spherical! spherical! spherical!* and surely it is an impersonal and spherical music. He sings not of our world, but it may be of that enchanted sphere, the heart of the wilderness. It is sombre in the depths where these thrushes flit, a region not of sunshine but of twilight and shadows. Nothing in the whole range of bird music—of any music—could better express its peculiar atmosphere, its solemnity, its cathedral character. Unconsciously these birds voice their environment as truly and appropriately as Wagner, with his psychological subtlety and insight, adapted his *motifs* to his characters and their emotions. The song of the hermit



“ In the depths where thrushes flit, a region of twilight and shadows.”

thrush is a true wilderness *motif*—its greatest and most exalted one; others are the lonely and terrible hoot of the horned owl, the mysterious drumming of the ruffed grouse, the wildest of wild cries, that of the loon, and the wildest of songs—those of the winter wren and the water thrush.

To those who have been much in the mountains and the woods—to true naturalists and sportsmen that is—the impression which a certain sensational reporting of Nature aims to give to the ignorant, that the woods are quite populous with wild creatures, ready to be observed, is as false as it is absurd. If there is a Law of the Woods—it is concealment. To be precise, it is a tendency under which all wild animals with the exception of skunks, porcupines, and friendly squirrels act, and as normal to them as the instinct of self-preservation to which it is due. They avoid being seen as naturally as man seeks to be observed. The impression one really receives in the wilderness is, thus, not of its being populated with animals, but rather of its being depopulated or uninhabited. How many eyes are watching him, the novice would never suspect. They see him but he does not see them and, unless there is snow on the

ground, he may stay in the woods for months and find that wild animals contribute but little to his impressions.

The four-footed animals of the woods are crepuscular: creatures of the dawn and the dusk and not of the daylight, as the wilderness itself is a region of twilight, rather than of sunshine. If the skunk and porcupine do not observe the strict etiquette of the woods it is because they are emboldened by their peculiar means of self-protection. Deer are almost as plentiful in some parts of the woods as woodpeckers, and like fairies they come and go while we sleep. In the morning their clean-cut tracks are visible around the pond's edge but the deer have become invisible. Perhaps in that mythical heart of the woods it is perpetual dawn, and there the deer have their true abode, and could we ever find it, would be seen frisking at all times, straying into our world only when it is dawn and dusk with us.

In spite of our inability to reach this heart of the wilderness, which, like the inner life of an alien people, will always remain inaccessible to us, the wilderness—superficially as we are permitted to know it—is a world apart, a region of twilight and of silence in

which we are speedily lost. It shuts out our world as it shuts out sunlight and we vanish in it as in a crypt whose roof is supported by columnar trunks of yellow birch and hemlock. Once entered, it closes around us, absorbs and impresses its mood upon us. We find ourselves without apparent cause walking stealthily. There is good reason for this, however, in the mere power of suggestion exerted by a vast and encompassing silence. Moreover, there exist in civilised man, subconscious memories of the life of his savage ancestors. From his wild progenitors, to whom some wilderness was home, an inheritance has come down to him, both of mind and body. In the wilderness, then, we return to our ancestral home—the earliest home of man—the memory of which was lost long before the beginning of history, but which inheres still in the cryptic depths of the subconscious mind of the race and, like an ancestral ghost, arises and flits before us in the depths of the forest.

Early in June we left our camp on Raquette Lake and pursuing the devious waterways which are the arteries of the North Woods, arrived at Long Lake, where another camp awaited us. Crossing Raquette and thence

over a short carry into Forkéd Lake, we paddled the length of the latter, only to find the mouth of Raquette River so choked with logs that further progress was impossible. Returning therefore to Raquette, we went up Marion River and traversing Ottawana, Eagle, and Blue Mountain Lakes, crossed over a spur of Blue Mountain and descended to Long Lake.

The larches, which had not yet put forth their leaves, gave to the banks of the meandering Marion River an aspect of wintry desolation. But at the water's edge appeared here and there the rose-pink buds of the *Andromeda* and when the eye fell upon these, it was no longer winter but the fulness of the spring-time. In that Stygian region of grey sky and dull purple swamp, the lovely *Andromeda* dwelt like a fair spirit in a nether world. When Charon ferries us over the stream, it will be through no deeper outward gloom than encompassed us on the Marion River that day—unless perchance there be no *Andromeda* to grace the shores of the Styx.

Raquette River and Long Lake constitute one of the wilderness highways for the lumbermen, and the rafts of logs which had barred our entrance to the river at Forkéd Lake

were now pouring out the other end into Long Lake. Being at its height, the stream was torrential, lashing itself into fury as if in an effort to be rid of the logs which, crunching and booming, now submerged and again tossed on end, made their mad voyage to the lake. The lower part of this short river is one continuous rapid, and here the speeding logs were flung upon jutting rocks and jammed in unutterable confusion, while the swift water swirling over and around them foamed and frothed and roared sullenly in apparent fury. It was a satisfaction to note how soon this tremendous din and uproar, which drowned your very thoughts as you stood at the river's edge, grew feeble and impotent, becoming a mere murmur as you turned your steps away from the river, until it was itself drowned in the mighty silence of the wilderness.

Day after day the spruce logs appeared at the quiet mouth of the river as they completed the tumultuous stage of their journey. Restrained by booms they silently formed themselves into a queer tongue-shaped raft which, from a distance, appeared to flow like some viscous purplish substance over the still water, until inflated to a sufficient size, it detached itself and moved slowly down the lake.

There was no tumult now and the silent hosts gathered through the hours of the day and night and one by one the detachments drifted by. But that endless array, like an army on the retreat, spoke of the conquest of the wilderness—the conquest and the death.

Beavers are perhaps exterminated in the North Woods, but the human beavers are at work and nothing will ever exterminate them save the extinction of the woods in which they live. It has been computed that, at the present rate, in twenty-five years they will have gnawed down the last tree. Future generations of Americans will rise up and call us foolish that we allowed our lands to be despoiled and our water supplies to be jeopardised in this way. For our extravagance they will pay with an enforced thrift. But man is by nature destructive and surely the lumberman is by far the most dangerous animal in the wilderness.

As the last of the huge rafts drifts out of sight, the human beavers disappear with it, their destructive work over for the season. With true beaver instinct they have dammed the stream and every spring raise the level of Forkéd Lake some four or five feet in order to facilitate the passage of the rafts. But

now the river, having rid itself of the logs, becomes quiet and the lake slowly sinks to its normal level. Looking across Long Lake from the summit of a ridge, it is astonishing how little impression has been made upon the virgin woods. In spite of a continuous onslaught of an army of woodchoppers, the wilderness seems vast and interminable and you realise that the distant horizon does not bound, but is bounded by it.

White pine, being valuable, has been largely culled out, leaving only here and there some splendid old tree, towering above the hardwoods, which doubtless owes its escape to the fact that it is unsound. Like some invalids, it is left, while the robust are taken in their prime. So have the cherry, the ash, and the black birch been called and have gone to their long home. But the yellow birch, being inferior wood, is left, and in this section of the wilderness grows to an immense size and is one of the most splendid trees, though doubtless the poorest lumber. Its beauty is wholly of the trunk and bark, the top being somewhat straggly and restricted. Usually straight and columnar, sometimes leaning and ponderous, these massive trunks resemble pillars of dull gold lacquer. The larch, which so lately

looked dead and forbidding, is now enveloped in pale green, diaphanous as a veil resting lightly upon the swamps. A water-loving tree, its true home is in this wilderness whose countless swamps are all more or less veiled in its pale verdure.

Scattered throughout the Adirondacks and lost in the trackless waste are innumerable ponds, which lie as if dropped here or there, wholly unsuspected by one who has not studied the topographical map. These are not lacking in this vicinity and serve as objective points for excursions from camp. For in the wilderness it is impossible merely to wander at random with any great satisfaction. It would be much like wandering in one's mind. You do not stroll, as in a bit of woods, or through the pastures. The wilderness is too solemn a country for that. You must go somewhere and return. Trails are few and lead either to these ponds or to some point overlooking the woods, in one case as in the other, a breathing place, without which a long tramp would be like reading a page with no punctuation.

These lonely little ponds give expression to the grave face of the wilderness. How solitary they are, wrapped for ever in the si-

lence of the mountains; and yet how companionable, as you emerge from the sombre shades upon some sandy beach, the clear water gently undulating over the clean sand, the pickerel-weed growing near by, the unruffled surface of the pond reflecting the sky and suffused with sunlight. It is as winsome and responsive as the great wilderness itself is austere and uncommunicative—laughter and light and perennial youth appearing in the midst of primeval savagery.

Strangely enough the object of a walk is thus always to get out of the woods again, that is, upon a summit, or the shore of a pond. Whatever we were originally, and whatever our inheritance, we have become light-loving creatures and in the dusk of the wilderness will evermore find ourselves pushing towards the light. We have come up from darkness; we can no more go back than the partridge chick can re-enter its shell.

CHAPTER IV

STILL-PADDLING

IN the wilderness the highways are the ponds and lakes themselves. Here the canoe is man's best friend. He paddles to market; he paddles to church. To speak precisely, he rows, for the guide boat, which weighs little more than a canoe and can be both rowed or paddled, is used far more than the canoe by the wilderness folk. A guide boat weighs from forty-five to fifty-five pounds and by one man alone is always rowed, except in narrow waterways or where there is occasion to move silently, when the paddle is used. If there are two in the boat, one rows and the other paddles, steering at the same time. In this manner rapid progress can be made, for the craft is so light it skims through the water in a way astonishing to one accustomed to a heavy boat. With a strong head wind, however, the boat is blown backward nearly as fast as it can be

propelled forward. Let the wind be with you and you have only to open an umbrella to travel at a fair speed by this means alone.

By the Adirondack guides, this boat is used altogether and they easily carry it on their shoulders by means of a brace which is part of their outfit—almost part of themselves. Like the guides, the boat is a product of the wilderness, and it came into being because of its peculiar fitness for this sort of country—where every now and again you must pull your craft out of the water, put it on your head, and tramp over a carry with it to the next pond or lake. But it is a cranky boat—this hybrid—and needs to be handled as carefully as a canoe.

As one gradually becomes domiciled in the wilderness, the native tendency to walk gives way to an acquired tendency to row and paddle, until this largely supplants the natural method of locomotion; just as in the South-West one becomes so habituated to riding that he no longer feels at home on foot. Of the three, walking is the slower and more difficult process. It is surprising how the arms become toughened by this constant paddling and the energy flows into them rather than into the legs, so that in course of time, five

miles seem far by land, but no distance at all by water. This is the peculiar influence of the wilderness: one becomes amphibious, whereas in most mountain regions the tendency is quite the reverse and the energy all goes to climbing.

The result of this constant association with water is not alone a modification of habit, but an increased sense of companionship with the lakes. With its inlet and outlet and contiguous swamps, a pond is an unexplored sea upon which to make many a voyage of discovery. There is, perhaps, nothing more companionable in Nature. It is alive and has moods, changing day by day and hour by hour: an eye in the wilderness, expressive when all else is uncommunicative. It is so different from different points of view, at different seasons and times of the day, that you may be years exploring it and then not feel you have come to the end. A pond whose shores are unindented, all parts of which can be seen at any one point, is like a commonplace personality not difficult to read, though even such a one borrows divine moods from the sky. But a lake dotted with islands and with a diversified shore, with bays and straits, smiling beaches and grim cliffs descending to

dark silent pools, is a very complex personality, full of surprises and delights. Perhaps we cannot fully explore such a lake in the course of a lifetime. It has not one, but many shores, remote from each other. More than once I have seen some faint outline in the distance, entirely new and unknown to me, destined for ever to remain a true *terra incognita*; for though I paddled all day, as I advanced it receded, and disappeared at length. These are the lands of Morning, seen only by early light, which gradually fade as the day wanes. We set out for them in the dawn—in the morning of life—but when by afternoon we arrive where they appeared to be, they have vanished.

Chief charm of a mountain lake is this changefulness, this show of feeling. In rounding a cape or rocky headland, the imaginative explorer comes not only upon a new bay, but, it may be, upon a new mood of the lake. Always there is a subjective as well as an objective stimulus to exploration. Mystery dwells in the wilderness and haunts its thousand lakes. If you do not feel its spell you are not made of the stuff of explorers, for no adventurer ever set out to discover new lands upon the Polar seas—or an

Adirondack pond—who was not drawn by a love of mystery. A pond is ocean enough for one summer, and he is indeed an explorer who has found all it has to give. For many there be who drift down the lake and make no discovery at all, but stare the marvellous facts in the face day after day without seeing them.

Long Lake, remote from railroads, is still a highway through the wilderness from Raquette to Saranac, and now and again, lone canoes appear at the river's mouth, having carried around the falls and rapids, to silently slip down the lake, laden to the water's edge with the weight of two men, their packs amidships. But all summer long, never a sail passes; always the graceful canoes, the silent paddles, the guide boats like water bugs. The canoists are in khaki and flannel shirts; hatless and tanned or burned scarlet. As a canoe holds only what is absolutely necessary, the canoists have divested themselves of superfluous things—of most of their belongings in fact. In this little journey they perhaps come nearer to being free than at any other time in the longer journey of life. These slender canoes bear them in sight of that enchanted shore of Liberty

which, alas, none ever reach, that land of Morning—beyond, and ever beyond!

At Saranac they will come to that old world of slavish customs and of unnecessary baggage they left behind them when they embarked on the blue waters of Raquette Lake, and one and all will slip into the ruts again as if they had had no glimpse of freedom. To some, the accustomed slavery will seem more irksome for this temporary escape. Others will find the day's work lightened by the memory of a canoe and the soft swish of a paddle in the silent dawn.

If a canoe will hold no unnecessary baggage, neither will it hold all of one's every-day thoughts. Some mental adjustment must be made in order to balance this slender craft, which is a piece of the wilderness and was not made to convey superfluities or artificialities. An ill-balanced mind is apt to upset it. An overburdened mind may sink it. 'T is the boat of the free and only a free mind and a free arm can paddle it to advantage so that it shall cleave the still water with the swiftness and balance of a fish.

While these voyagers in the wilderness pass and disappear in the mists, I am exploring nearer home. There are delightful

little beaches, some bold glaciated cliffs, a lone isle, the river, and the creeks. No one would have suspected, early in June, the crop of water plants which was germinating in the mud of the lake. Day by day, myriad stems uncurled and pushed themselves upward, until now in July the entire surface of the water in shallow places is covered with water target, floating heart, pond weed, and water lilies,—a thick jungle of leaves and stems in which the canoe is enmeshed and held captive. These patches of floating lilies are the Sargasso Seas of this expanse and the canoe, left to itself, drifts lazily from one to another through acres of blossoms. Trolling has become unprofitable because of submerged eel grass and lily pads, and the pickerel and what few bass there are go their own ways, though the ardent angler may still be repaid for abundant patience. For one has just now hooked from the depths of the channel a ten pound pickerel—a monster—which hangs from a cross-bar between two pines yonder. A pickerel is a long slim fish and a ten-pound pickerel is consequently a very long fish indeed, so that to see him thus strung up in air gives even the old fisherman, reduced to pickerel fishing, a pleasant

thrill at sight of the very magnitude of his victim.

This lake being long and narrow like a pickerel, a mere trough in the hills cut by an ancient glacier, the heavy rainfalls may easily raise the level several feet in a protracted storm. Lilies must keep afloat, and to do this their stems must elongate inch by inch as the lake rises. The water falling quite as rapidly as it rises, the stems must be shortened again, which is done by curling them. When at length the flowers have been fertilised and their mission is performed, the stems then curl for the last time and slowly draw them under the water. Aquatic plants lay down every season upon the floor of the lake a considerable amount of vegetable matter, while at the same time their stems serve to check and to deposit the silt brought down by the current. Shallow places are thus yearly growing shallower and slowly resolving themselves into swamps. As it was in the beginning, the land is emerging from the waters. Of the thousand and one lakes in the wilderness, all the shallow ponds are destined to become mountain meadows, as a thousand have done before them. Let the precipitation decrease and the evapora-

tion increase, which will naturally follow the denuding of the forest, and all the sooner will dry land appear.

Many little meadows and swamps border the lake and these are but the forerunners of the end. During freshets they are submerged, but as the waters subside in the comparatively dry season of July and August, the dank spongy humus is sprinkled with water lobelia, sagittarius, and water parsnip, one of the most graceful of aquatic plants. Some day when the waters have subsided never to rise again, these will give way to corn and potatoes. The denuding of the wilderness—the march of progress, in other words—is thus indirectly bringing this about. At dawn the deer come down upon these little flats to drink and get into the water, disappearing at daylight into the wilderness, leaving the muddy banks thickly besprinkled with their clean-cut tracks. So doubtless have they been at home in many a corn-field.

Time will change more slowly the granite cliffs whose polished slopes rise abruptly from the west shore of the lake. Yet these record more changes than any other feature of the wilderness, though not in the lifetime of man, nor in the lifetime of trees. In such records,

centuries are merely seconds of time, and the whole period of human history would not constitute a geological minute. The massive glacial carving on these ancient monuments of the wilderness, however, required whole days of geological time. Stone carving of this kind was well done here for the ice sheet lingered in the mountains and there was time to complete the work. It was a giant's task to scoop out the bowl of a lake and to cut and polish such great bosses of granite—equal to all the labours of Hercules. While this tremendous work was going on, streams from the melting ice, using boulders for chisels, cut a series of pot-holes at the base of the cliffs as if to finish the massive work with this lighter design.

Exploration of this sort partakes of the nature of archeology and as I paddle softly around the cliffs over black pools at their base, some of them perhaps submerged pot-holes, it is as if one were to examine the noble ruins of a prehistoric race of giants. To paddle day after day in and out the highways and byways is to make excursions in ancient history while exploring the present shore of the lake.

The deer season has opened, but fortunately

there are few amateur sportsmen here to disturb the true woodsmen. Elsewhere and nearer the railroad the crack of their mis-directed rifles may be heard and more than one victim goes to his long home, a sacrifice to Diana. This is the season of danger in the wilderness and the guides must needs be bold men, for none know when their hour will come. When your city hunter, intent on game, sees something moving, he shoots first and investigates afterwards. Science has provided him with a terrible weapon but has given him neither judgment nor common-sense to go with it.

Having been fertilised by bumble-bees, the lilies were at length drawn into the mud, and the seed is now planted as by an automatic device. Gentians have appeared, and with them, the beautiful berries of the withe-rod and mountain holly, which form a fringe for a good part of the lake shore. In these days, to drift lazily, keeping the canoe almost beneath this overhanging fringe of withe-rod by a stroke of the paddle now and again, is the most natural and delightful thing to do. The berries which hang in luxurious clusters, varying from ivory white through delicate shades of pink to a brilliant cherry, turning

blue in maturity, are without doubt one of the finest products of the Adirondacks, and nowhere else can they be seen in such profusion and such beauty. Following the family tradition, the berries of the mountain holly are solitary in the axils of the leaves, but the shrub has a certain thoroughbred aspect, while the cherry red of these berries is unsurpassed in the woods. On the cliffs and at the very border of the pot-holes, closed gentians bloom in profusion; under the hemlocks is the splendid blue of clintonia berries; while in dark and cool places the cardinal-flower stands at the water's edge—a rare and solitary spirit.

Such is the vision—a trailing line of beauty—which regales the eye as you paddle silently along the shore; silently, for if you are a woodsman, the spirit of the wilderness impels to silence, and the canoe is affected by the same spell. To splash with the paddle offends the ear like a false note and alarms the returning warblers, now flitting in the birches whose yellow leaves drift like fleets of diminutive canoes upon the still water.

Autumn, that inexplicable charm which every year steals into the wilderness, is in the air. Outwardly it is colour; inwardly, a

haunting sadness. Perhaps in some dim past we migrated with the birds at the approach of winter and it is that ancestral call which after untold centuries still stirs the blood in autumn. As the canoe drifts among floating leaves, we feel this strange hypnosis impelling us to paddle toward the horizon, ever on and on, to some undiscovered shore.

CHAPTER V

ONTEORA NOTES

WHILE Onteora itself is far better known by its pleasant traditions than by its natural history, it is surely worthy of recognition that a charming society of birds is also to be found there, and many of the best families of plants have long followed the peaceful tenor of their lives in its quiet woods. Not so much has been written of the natural history of the Catskills but another word may be said. Nor do I expect to say anything new: in fact I would greatly prefer to confine myself to the familiar aspects of the woods, the familiar and well-beloved birds and flowers.

Some families of plants and birds do not arrive at the heights of Onteora, while others, not found at lower elevations in this latitude, are at home on Parnassus alone. In ascending the Catskills directly, as in a walk up the Kaaterskill from Palenville, it is thus ap-

parent to the casual view that the oak, as well as the butternut, hickory, and chestnut, are gradually left behind, as if the lower levels were more congenial to "Jove's own tree," which indeed they are. Birch, maple, and beech continue, while spruce and balsam only make their appearance when we are well up in the hills. In this ascent, the northern hare replaces the cottontail, and the box turtle disappears. Among the birds, too, some are left behind with the hickory and chestnut, and one is not long in discovering the absence of the thrasher, the chewink, the chat, and certain vireos, such as the white-eyed, warbling, and yellow-throated. At the same time an inexpressibly wild and fitful burst of melody from an invisible singer among the moss-covered boulders and fallen tree trunks advises us that we have reached the abode of the winter wren, while a serene and exalted voice chanting afar off on the mountain-side is a further sign that we are indeed on Parnassus, on the sacred heights where alone in the solemn twilight of the hemlocks, the hermit-thrush intones the most beautiful bird song to be heard on the American continent.

From the valley of the Hudson, the abrupt mass of the Catskills, hovering like an azure

cloud on the horizon, seems indeed "Mountains of the Sky." They were perhaps better named Hills of the Sky, and yet they are high enough to such as have mountain thoughts; and if one has not, no amount of climbing will bring him any nearer the heavens. The voyager upon the Hudson, looking at that ethereal cloud mass in the distance, may little suspect that upon its summit is virtually another zone with other inhabitants from that through which he sails, and he may even betake himself to that hill country with no great recognition of the fact. Yet to go from the Hudson to the summits of the Catskills is not only to ascend some few thousand feet in the air, but virtually to ascend—by the shortest route—to Canada, which reaches its long faunal tentacles south over the mountain tops, while the Carolinian zone creeps northward along the rivers. The sylvan and aboriginal dwellers upon High Peak and Round Top are of Boreal affinities, adventurous Northmen content only with the roof of our world and scorning all lower levels. Meanwhile, plodding up the Hudson and following the railway around and into the mountains—straight from Castle Garden—come plant immigrants of

Europe, loving the commonplace precincts of Tannersville and of the railroad but finding no lodgment on the cloistered slopes of Parnassus.

On these ranges the woods are as dense, if not so extensive, as in the Adirondacks, but are essentially different from the latter in lacking the innumerable lakes, ponds, waterways, and swamps. It is not an aqueous wilderness, though as in the Adirondacks the mountain summits present swamp conditions and attract swamp plants, a curious fact due entirely to the presence of clouds and the increased precipitation. Thus on the summit of High Peak you may see false hellebore and poison sumac, gold thread and an abundance of sphagnum, while the stunted balsams are further evidence of humid conditions.

The higher regions are clothed with spruce and with some hemlock. Birch is the prevailing genus and beech is common, but the glory of these woods is in the splendid sugar maples scattered over the slopes and looming large in their twilight haunts. Venerable trees, their massive columnar trunks gnarled and shaggy with age, they seem to preside with that dignity inseparable from a great tree over the lesser growth of beech

and birch and the little jungles of mountain maple. Here amidst recumbent slabs of sandstone, massive chunks from the overlying conglomerate, long detached from the ledge, and hemlock logs slowly merging into leaf mould from whence they came, their outlines indistinct, their rich seal-brown panels embossed with haircap and fern-moss and with scarlet-cupped cladonias, the maples plant their feet, their noble heads overlooking all and showing in autumn like beacon fires upon the mountains.

This sandstone, long ago deposited in the Devonian Sea, has given its name to a particular formation—the Catskill. It was once the bottom of the sea, its flora, seaweed, its fauna, mollusks. After long and careful preparation beneath the waves it was at length elevated to its present position, to receive a higher flora and fauna. So perished those ancient seaweeds and that dull silent company of bivalves. The rock still shows ripple marks of that early sea where once the surf beat upon the shore, and the observant saunterer may surely take counsel with himself and ponder the days of man when, resting in the woods upon such a ripple-marked slab of sandstone and listening to the hermit's

hymn, he finds himself upon the very shore of the Devonian Sea—that shore which was old when the Coal Age began.

My camp—to return to the present and to Onteora—is so hidden among the beeches and maples on the slopes of Onteora Mountain that one might ascend the road and little more suspect its presence than that of a squirrel's nest in a tree. Surrounded by a thick copse of beech which touch the hemlock slabs and birch railings of the high veranda, the house is virtually in the tree tops, so that, in looking abroad from the windows, one looks down as from a nest, upon a world of interlacing branches and dancing leaves where magnolia, Blackburnian, chestnut and black-throated blue warblers peep and pry and flit about, uttering their fine lisping notes.

A chestnut warbler has her nest in the underbrush, two feet from the ground and entirely concealed by a thick canopy of leaves. In a hemlock is the nest of a black-throated green and the voice of the male cheers me from the tree tops—one of the most attractive warbler songs, a quaint, woodsy, self-contained little voice, to be associated only with hemlock boughs and tree

tops. Not far from the doorstep a junco has built, and these little birds are constantly hopping about upon the veranda and doorsill so that they have become a part of the family. Members of the household too—but shy and distant ones—are the oven-birds who dwell under beech leaves amidst the shield ferns of the hillside in a little house more cunningly devised and more carefully concealed than any camp in the woods. Here they propose to bring up a family after the excellent traditions, not of Onteora but of oven-birds—ancient traditions not disparaged however by those who lead here a pleasant wood life. Somewhat demure and retiring, the oven-bird overcomes his reticence now and again to fairly explode with—*I say! I say! I SAY! I SAY!* each syllable more fortissimo than the last, and then, as if embarrassed by his own temerity, instantly relapses into silence. To those who have merely a bowing acquaintance with him this is his one utterance, but the shy minstrel has a love-song which he sings on the wing for his mate and for his true friends only. John Burroughs, writing twenty-five years ago, alludes to there being little or no reference to this song of the oven-bird, and it is little known to this day, for it

is seldom heard and then recognised by those only who know the bird well or actually see it in the act of singing. It is a rapturous, jubilant, tumultuous utterance which would seem to emanate from a temperament more like that of the bobolink than the shy and retiring oven-bird. It is, in fact, a song to be associated with a field bird rather than with a bird of the woods. This song is usually delivered on the wing, in the same manner as that of our Maryland yellowthroat and the vermilion flycatcher of the South-West, but I have seen the bird thus singing from a branch high in a tree.

Another bird friend always to be heard about my camp and surely nesting near by is the pewee. A true wood bird, its plaintive, somewhat melancholy voice accords well with the spirit of the woods, where all is subdued and even the flowers reflect their environment and are more shy and retiring—more delicate also—than those of the fields. What a nest this bird builds! No more inviting camp is to be seen anywhere. One of the gems of bird architecture, adorned so exquisitely with lichens, olive and grey and grey-green—rare and beautiful parmeliaceous designs,—it delights the eye like an *objet*

de virtu, as indeed it is. A pair of sapsuckers who live high in a dead birch on the hillside are my savage friends, belonging to an untamable tribe and clinging fondly to its primeval traditions,—loving not man but the wilderness ever. They are often to be heard calling in their rude language and their speech is wild and good to my ear. It is a satisfaction to know there exists aught so untamed in proximity to our cultivation, which is a taming quite as much as it is a refining process. These birds are true aborigines living in the heart of a tree, woodsmen, who know naught of lumber but much of trees, making the tree serve them in the matter of both food and shelter, with feet made to walk upon bark, with tails made for a support, and bills that are axe and saw to them. We, who come into the woods to live for a season, drawn by some longing for freedom and simplicity, come never as near the woods as they and our wood-life is only a pretence, judged by the standards of these primitive tree-men.

The inspired dweller about my camp is the veery and it might seem that he has erected some temple rather than such a nest as other birds construct. It has been observed by

both Mr. Burroughs and Mr. Bicknell that the wood thrush in the mountains is less domesticated than elsewhere, and that while heard, is less often seen. This is very true, and here the veery is the familiar one and takes the place of the wood thrush in this regard. It is the privilege of dwellers upon the slopes of Parnassus to hear the veery singing his chant at their doorsteps, consecrating their dwelling as if some woodland god gave his benediction. The wild cry of the sapsucker emphasises to me my remoteness from a wood-life, but the unworldly voice of the veery brings me nearer and makes me feel I am indeed the participant in some inner and higher life.

One has here an intimate relation with trees, for we do not merely walk under them, we dwell among them; and while we do not actually live in them like wild men, the camps are often built around their trunks, so that they grow familiarly through the verandas and spread their branches over the house. This leafy and sylvan prospect inspires tree-thoughts in those who enjoy the companionship of trees. One does not know how companionable trees are until he has thus lived among them and heard them day after day

sighing in the rain, whispering in the breeze, and singing in the wind; until he accustoms himself to look through their dim aisles and out of their oriel windows. A strong and gentle race, they live and have their being in a world of their own. In the silent watches of the night I hear faint music in the tree tops—maples softly singing among themselves. It is a pleasant thing thus to commune with these rooted primeval men in their sane and musical life—a society which commends itself for many reasons to poets and such as have an inner life, encouraging, not interrupting their cherished thoughts.

So also is the wood-life congenial to certain birds and flowers and these show the impress of solitude and an exclusiveness which would be as uncongenial to other types of birds and flowers as to wholly gregarious people. Certainly it was no more chance the thrush family came to the woods than certain other folk drawn by subtle affinity and fine sympathies. These cloistered shades are as uncongenial to rollicking birds as to rollicking people. Neither do weeds and the sturdier aggressive plants take to the woods, but to the fields and roadsides. In the twilight grow the most delicate and exquisite flowers always.

Medeola blooms about my door, its shy and retiring blossom hid for a time beneath its whirls. Indian pipes erect their fragile stems of alabaster underneath the hemlocks, half buried by old drifts of leaves from neighbouring beeches, never presenting themselves to notice but requiring to be sought for. Here come wandering bumble-bees and do not fail to find them, yet how they should know where to look no one can tell, since they were not here to look the year before, nor will ever be again. But year after year Medeolas will come shyly forth, and Indian pipes, waiting for bumble-bees. Clintonia is, perhaps, the most thoroughly woodsy flower of the North and well named *borealis*. It affects the same haunts as the hermit, a delectable region of moss-covered boulders and logs where stone and wood alike are dissolving into moss and fern. To have it growing by your door is,—better than any tropic flora under glass,—to see a Borean flora under the sky; and when in autumn its berries wear their celestial blue 't is as if the mountain reflected a bit of the heavens.

The elevation of my camp is perhaps twenty-four hundred feet, and of the summit of Onteora Mountain, a little over twenty-eight



“Birds are drawn to these summits because of the longer day which they enjoy.”

hundred, yet spring, like the light, rests longer on the summit than on this lower level. Birds are more abundant on the top than on the slopes, and the summit being swampy, other plants are found there. From its mire springs the purple-fringed orchis, fashioned from the mud, as was man from the dust, but a fairer and lovelier product. The cherry and the painted trillium are still in bloom upon the summit, some little time after they have blossomed at two thousand feet. Onteora Mountain is not high enough to illustrate this condition as does High Peak, for instance. It has been observed that birds are drawn to these summits probably because of the longer day which they enjoy. Again, birds of a distinctly Canadian fauna only nest here above a given elevation. The hermit does not nest or sing immediately about my camp, but is to be heard higher up and upon the top. I think the tanager is nesting very near my level, for the male is often seen and heard in a sugar maple not far away.

Like the birds I find myself drawn to the summit, for a longer day perhaps. In these peregrinations upwards one is impressed with the different aspects of the mountain; it wears, as it were, two faces. Its south and

east face is different from its north and west face. One is boreal, the other, vernal or austral. While this difference is not readily definable, the ground hemlock and the hermit thrush confine themselves largely, if not altogether, to its boreal face. Birds are aware of more subtle distinctions than we, and the summer residents among them will linger in the autumn upon the austral or gracious side of the mountain, while the winter visitors will come first to its boreal face as being more agreeable to their wintry temperaments.

That is a pleasant sanctuary upon the mountain top, where, under spruce and hemlocks, rocks and logs are so thickly carpeted with moss that the foot sinks noiselessly. On the leafy slopes below, protrude chimneys not unknown to the world but whose fame has not yet reached the top of the mountain, and not the faintest harmony or discord penetrates to this peaceful hilltop. Consecrated to winter wren and hermit thrush, he who would enter must for the time be hermit too, and must approach silently to instantly slip into the background and lose himself in the shadows, there to listen, not to speak, to observe, not to be observed. One descends

quickly again, but not so readily does he bring down his mountain thoughts with him.

Moosewood and mountain maple, true northern plants, thrive near the summit, and in a clump there appeared lately a family of rose-breasted grosbeaks just out of the nest. These young birds resembled their mother, vaguely suggesting a nutmeg, in dress, but their call note showed the rich and beautiful quality of the voice of the male. To some one who remarked that there were not many birds in Onteora, I said, "Then you have not birds in your eye." A good observer could name about sixty summer residents among the birds here on the mountain and in the fields and swamps and pastures between here and Tannersville, and by including a few from the top of High Peak and Hunter Mountain, which do not nest at lower elevations, and the kingfisher from the Eastkill, could perhaps make the number seventy species, to say nothing of the many spring migrants and a few winter visitors. Of ferns, there are within reach, either around the mountain or in the swamps and meadows below, some twenty or more species, while several other spleenworts are to be found in the Kaaterskill Clove.

Surely Onteora might be known for the society of its birds. Keeping tuneful homes in dim ancestral halls of spruce and hemlock, or in fields and pastures open to the sky, like other summer residents they descend the mountains in autumn to flit southward, leaving a few permanent residents like the ruffed grouse, and a few winter visitors, the crossbills and snowbirds, in sole possession of the woods until another spring.

CHAPTER VI

THE LONG ISLAND WOODS

PLACES are like people: none are without peculiarities; few without some redeeming trait. Rambling about with an eye for all outdoors, peering incessantly at the face of the country, studying its character, and searching out its secrets, I have come insensibly to endow each locality with a personality of its own and to find that each has something peculiar to itself, some charm as of manner and feature which commends it, distinguishes it from others, and causes it to live in memory for that, and often for that alone. It may appeal by its very grimness and austerity as do the bleak Dogtown pastures of Cape Ann, quite as readily as by that mellow and pastoral charm of the vineyards on the shores of Canandaigua, where through the classic vines with their drooping clusters, one has vistas of the serene blue surface stretching away to the hazy outlines of purple hills.

In every locality there are features that are commonplace and these are usually accentuated by the efforts of man. But what is its native charm; what is it that commends it in spite of this? For it is that which is worth attending to. There are still considerable tracts of woods on Long Island—tracts from which the white oak and chestnut have been culled year after year for the shipyards: destined in the old days for the staunch hulls of whaling vessels, and in these effeminate times to assume the trim forms of steam yachts and other pleasure craft, until almost the last primeval white oak or chestnut has been set adrift on the high seas. But the best of the Long Island woods, that feature which, by the grace of the gods, possesses not a commercial but a poetic value, has remained; and if—by the grace of the gods again—Long Island has not become to you Real Estate merely, but is still part of your divine estate in the open, you may go into these woods in the appointed season and solace yourself with that charm which is theirs in so great measure—your eye with the pure vision of the dogwood, and your ear with that wonderful hymn of the wood thrush. Then shall you know that you have possessed

yourself of the true value of these woods, and better still, that you have drawn only the ample interest on that splendid trust, leaving the principal untouched.

Along the north shore of Long Island extends a low range of hills. While there is underneath these hills of sand the core of an ancient range, what one sees is, in reality, the heaped up sand, gravel, and boulders of the great terminal moraine which extends from the eastern end of Long Island, westward across the continent, and its topography here is distinctly moraine topography,—hillocks and mounds and sudden depressions of all shapes and sizes. These moraine hills, rising abruptly from the Sound, have been eaten away on their outer edge by the tides, so that they show a long line of sand cliffs at whose feet the little waves sing their soft lament, and a sandy and pebbly beach where countless king crabs lay their eggs. The numerous bays and coves which penetrate the great moraine are, in fact, much like miniature fjords and, together with the varied moraine topography, lend to this shore a peculiar charm which is entirely lacking on the south shore of the island.

Over these knolls and hillocks and in the

countless intervening depressions and Lilliputian valleys, winding and twisting in all directions as the glacier fashioned them, the Long Island woods spread themselves, deriving a pleasantly varied and even more sylvan aspect than is the case where woods lie monotonously on a flat plain. Unwittingly the old glacier did much for Long Island, for it took a relatively flat and commonplace shore and fashioned it upon attractive lines. The timber is composed of the common hardwoods, largely second growth, with here and there a primeval tree of some magnitude and dignity standing like a patriarch among the younger generation. Chief among these, though rare enough, are some fine old tulip trees, straight trunked, and distinct in leaf from all other trees.

It is not far to go from the city into these pleasant woods at one point or another—an hour from Wall Street—but it is far in spirit indeed, as far as the East is from the West. You may go in March for no other reason than to hear the meadow larks in the fields and later the redwings in the swamps, more inspiring, because more hopeful and more cheering, than the splendid tragedies of the opera. You may go forth to see the ground-

nut and the Canada violets in the swamp, to find the little white violets, or the beautiful pedata growing by sandy roads, yielding their delicate vernal impressions so foreign to all florist displays, and making those poor by-paths admirable and beautiful above all high-roads; again to see the sand-pinks and the celandine, or to watch the carpenter bees stealing nectar from the pinxter flower by puncturing the corolla tube. Or you may visit certain chosen spots where the laurel displays its myriad blossoms under chestnut oaks, their pale rose-tinted buds like miniature floral urns. And the price you must pay is that on your return from sauntering in your wild garden, the tawdriness and artificiality of the city will be emphasised. It shall affect you like a brilliant personality—not sincere; while the pure and spotless beauty of those blossoms in the woods seem as the charm of a little child to whose mood you have surrendered for an afternoon.

Above all you shall go to see the dogwood which, like the rhododendrons in the South, the shadbush in the North Woods, or the ceanothus in the Coast Range, is the chief charm of these woods, the floral expression of that which is most winning in their person-

ality. While the Japanese character may not have so much that is worthy of emulation, there is one trait which commends itself in this connection—it is the love of their *country*, their estate, that is, their wild garden itself; the love which draws a whole people into the fields to see the plum, the cherry, the iris, the lotus, in blossom. As a people they cherish their ancestral garden, entertaining a national feeling and appreciation for its finer effects, its more spiritual significance as manifested in beauty. Here is an exquisite and refined perception which makes its possessors the masters of their estate in a sense that less highly endowed people can never be, and yields them the most evanescent and charming influences. Consider this—aye, and consider the dogwood!

Around the edges of the clearings and the fields and orchards—fields which belong to the bobolinks, orchards, the estate of the house wren,—there appears at the appointed time, as by some beautiful magic, the lovely vision of the dogwood, a charm, a personality, not like any other. It is a vision to contemplate with such gentle reverence for beauty itself as the wise Japanese show for their cherry blossom; a vision to call one forth into

the fields for the love of beauty—and for love of one's *country*. How can one afford to miss those evanescent impressions which cannot be had again throughout the year; how can one fail to heed this finer call of his country? To leave the sooty and noisome city behind, to escape from this hideous and terrible human pen, and find oneself in green pastures amidst tender signs of spring: dandelions and violets and delicate greens of unfolding leaves, and like some lovely drapery around the edges and trailing through the woods, the pink and white and cupreous splashes of the dogwood, so exquisite, so radiant—this is the revelation of a better world the gods permit each year to break upon our troubled sleep.

And consider the wood thrush! The dogwoods have unfolded their leaves and throughout the length of those moraine hills the wonderful hymn of the wood thrush rises from the cloistered woods. After the winter silence it is as if intoning priests had re-entered a deserted cathedral. Perhaps no music has been written so eminently sacred in its import, so suggestive of religious feeling, so unworldly and beautiful withal as this bird hymn. And this hypethral temple, sacred not less to

Flora than to Apollo, sacred above all to the god of the Open—the beautiful god—is the only temple on earth where there is no cant, no twaddle, no hypocrisy, and no croaking about our sins. Yet it has the fewest worshippers of any.

As the fields belong to the bobolinks and meadow larks and the old orchards to the house wren, so are these woods pre-eminently the private estate of the wood thrush. Around the clearings where the dogwood grows, the white-eyed vireo builds, and the yellow-throated overlays her nest with spider web; and I have known the Carolina wren to nest in the swamps—surely one of the most important facts in the history of Long Island. But it is the wood thrush who dominates the sylvan hollows and little winding valleys and hillocks of the terminal moraine where wake-robin, jack-in-the-pulpit, and geraniums bloom in these peaceful shades, and the home tree is the dogwood. Often you may encounter the mild-eyed bird upon her bulky nest in the fork of some little dogwood just within the twilight of the woods, peering anxiously over the rim, and as she flits silently away, you may peep at the eggs and receive the most charming impression of innocence and of

beauty the woods have to offer. Long Island will never produce anything else comparable with those blue-green eggs, presently to be transmuted into that noble hymn of the woods—that hymn which, falling upon the ear in the stillness and the twilight, has power to change the spirit of our dreams.

CHAPTER VII

CYPRESS SWAMPS

A PASSING interest in sawmills once led me into the swamps of the Roanoke River, and while my mind was ostensibly on logs and their transportation, it was speedily evident that that interminable morass was a region different from any farther north—the lovely hemlock swamps where the rose pogonia grows: a new personality whose note was a profounder gloom than any other aspect of Nature had shown me. Yet it exerted a certain force of attraction, perhaps owing to its very gloominess, or it may be, to its strangeness and solitude. In all events it was strong enough to easily divert the attention, from considerations of commerce, to the contemplation of the vast dismal swamp and of certain aspects of bird life connected with it. These swamps form an integral part of the South-eastern States and are characteristic of them. The impressions they

yield are not those of the Adirondack swamps, and it is precisely for this reason that I have ventured to include a picture of a region which, even to the casual view, offers so decided a contrast to other corners of our estate.

My business kept me in the swamp during February and part of March and, while waiting now and then the arrival of rafts from up the river, there was much leisure to paddle in a lumberman's dugout through the devious and interminable waterways of the swamps or to saunter in the pine woods which cover the high ground back from the river.

At this season, the leafless trees standing like skeletons in the shallow waters and holding their long bony arms aloft, present doubtless a much more desolate picture than they do later in the year. The tall tapering columns of the white ash, the massive bulging trunk of the gum, and the cypress with its queer "knees" protruding from the water, extend along both banks in endless array. On these gaunt trees by the silent yellow river perch the vultures, as they perch on the Towers of Silence on Malabar Hill—waiting. Black, muffled figures, crouching immovable, they seem to say that the world will be theirs in the end—they have only to wait. Yet

over the river and above the cotton fields, others soar on easy wing, ever up and up, climbing the sky like free spirits of the air. Nothing could present a greater contrast than these buzzards circling aloft in the blue, and the same birds huddled below in the dismal swamp. It is as though the bird had a double personality and were now possessed of a soaring spirit—free and pure—and again, dropping to earth, assumed its sordid and gruesome aspect, becoming a dismal caricature of its former self. When at length the free spirit moves it to rise out of the swamp, it soars once more in the realms of light with that beautiful flight, effortless, tireless, all grace and freedom, which sets the observer to soaring also.

For several weeks logging was at a standstill, the river being in flood, and hour by hour the yellow water crept up the banks and submerged the shore—formidable in its silent, sinister display of power. One could see it rise as the flood weltered up over cypress knees and the trunks of gum and ash with softly murmured swish. Far away in the mountains, it roared and fretted and foamed, highstrung, irritable, and impatient—the youthful impetuous river. But here in the

low swamps near its mouth, between level walls of tree trunks, it blustered no more, neither vaunted itself, but swiftly, sullenly, irresistibly rose from its bed in silent exultation.

In my dugout, daily I slipped into the gloom of the swamp, a world more aqueous than terrestrial, where bony arms met overhead and trunks loomed in Tartarean gloom in the rain; following meandering and devious ways in the canes with an eye on certain landmarks, or watermarks, in order to find my way out of the labyrinth.

Thus I would paddle around one bend and another, turning and twisting, never seeing far ahead in that interminable jungle, until far from the yellow river and the signs of human life which the high ground along the stream afforded; far in time, rather than in distance, for there, it was as if man had not yet appeared upon the earth, as if the earth was not yet prepared for his advent. In the remote and densest part of the jungle the silence was unbroken save by the calls of the red-bellied wood peckers who inhabited that solitude and with whom the nesting season had already begun. This handsome woodpecker is a veritable swamp spirit, a

ladder-backed, rosy-fronted fellow, barbarous in manner with the uncouth speech of his race—the untamed aboriginal race of woodpeckers. Occasionally there was heard the sibilant note of the tufted titmouse in the tree tops, and then again the liquid *plunk* of a dead branch or a chunk of bark falling into the water, and no sound better accorded with the swamp than this. Moccasins and water snakes, of which there were several species were awakening from the winter sleep and still in a semi-torpid state, so that with the paddle I picked them off the bank where they lay in the sun and tossed them into the water. Occasionally they hibernate in hollow logs. At the mill they told me that sometimes in winter the saw will rip open a log literally full of dormant moccasins.

Gradually the impression arose that this was the appearance the earth presented before man came upon it—the world, fitted as yet only for the reptile; that I was looking back to that formative period when the land was emerging from the waters; drifting in a primitive saurian age—slimy, reptilian, with no hint of man who was eventually to dominate it. Over a great part of the world man has become too dominant and saddens by

his desolating influence. In that swamp it was forbidding because he was not there—could not be there—because it was adapted alone to the reptilian mind. Of course, the Earth of the Carboniferous Age was in reality far different and would be more nearly represented by conditions in southern Florida. Yet, if a thinking man could have had a glimpse of it then, it would have given him some such impressions as does this now and would have seemed only more alien and inhospitable to his needs and less adapted to anything so highly organised as himself, a place for cold-blooded, small-brained, few-nerved creatures whose life should be a dull sleep. The reptile which inhabits this gloomy region is in fact a survivor of a bygone age. He no more belongs to this period than do we to that primitive past which he has somehow survived. Serpent, alligator, and turtle are aliens to this biological day and the swamps and jungles are the reservations to which they are now confined. It is with them as it is with the American Indian, as it is with all primitive races: they have had their day and slowly but surely are passing from view.

Deciduous, like the tamarack, the cypress was putting out its leaves and was arrayed in

the most delicate garment of green imaginable. No tree could renew itself more completely than this which had looked so old, squatting dismally on the yellow water with its knees drawn up—a gnarled, deformed, aged body.

On the borders of the great swamp, a later and happier day in the evolution of the earth has dawned. Here the land has emerged from the waters and cypress and gum give way to the pines of the high ground, and to minor and less gloomy swamps which edge the clearing and the cotton fields. In these swampy places lives the Carolina wren, a bright and joyous spirit, whose ringing melodious voice would lighten the gloom of the nether world. *Tea Kettle! Tea Kettle! Tea Kettle!* he calls and then his song rings in the swamp like the cry of a valkyrie. Here too is heard the fine spring song of the redwings, and sometimes the saunterer may detect a wierd and mysterious sound gurgling in the air and shall know it for the jacksnipe. Creeks meander among the hummocks and these were at this season literally choked with herring which, with the shad, come up from the sea to spawn.

In this neutral zone, where cotton fields touch the edge of the swamps, where jasmine

blooms on the rail fences, and peach trees by every cabin, the cardinal lifts up that voice of the troubadour, so gay, so debonair. As one emerges from the dismal shades, his song greets the ear from that brighter region where he is at home. It was here that I found the nest of the blue-grey gnatcatcher early in March—one of the most beautiful of all bird-nests, cupshaped and decorated with lichens. And it was here that the hooded warbler first presented himself to view: a memorable encounter, for if the swamp had yielded nothing else, this in itself was payment enough. Never before or since have I seen as many pine warblers as trilled on the pine-covered knolls. They dominated the woods as did the red-bellied woodpecker the swamp. Nowhere else could one go dry shod, for even the country roads were under water and it was necessary to proceed along the little single plank walks elevated on posts which are provided for the wayfarer where the ground is low, or lacking this, to wade. On these high knolls, the American holly becomes a tree two feet and more in diameter.

The silent river was long in flood, and morning and evening I paddled upon its muddy waters, sometimes slipping into the grey

depths of the swamp and as often following the shore of the river, where one could at least see the sky and the passing clouds and hear the hopeful voice of the wren and the red-wing. Floating idly among the great leaves of the American lotus, which here borders the Roanoke, I reflected how little the lotus meant to those who dwelt on the banks of that yellow stream, how deeply it was involved in the thought of dwellers on the banks of other yellow streams. What centuries of tradition, of veneration and mysticism envelop it in Asia, whereas here—how many even know that the lotus grows upon our soil and is as native here as is the Indian lotus there? But it is not indigenous to our American thought—this mystic plant—and will never be domesticated there, no matter how it may thrive by the Roanoke.

Towards evening the buzzards would drop from the sky and fold their wings in the swamp, while on the lotus-fringed banks of the yellow river arose the tremulous chorus of frogs. In the all-pervading stillness this seemed the very voice of the cypress swamp—of the primordial world itself, still sounding its rhythmical chant as though man had not yet appeared to disturb its ancient seclusion.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE LAKE COUNTRY

THE charm of this Lake Country of Western New York is pre-eminently pastoral, and, unlike New England pastoral country, it does not give the impression of having been wrested from Nature, for it has none of that austerity which belongs to the boulders and junipers and is naturally hospitable and adapted for man. It smiles upon him first in the peach blossoms and the pear and in the flowering apple orchards; again in the golden wheat and later in the mellow cornfields where the pumpkins glisten in the sun, and it smiles upon him in the vineyards with their purple and amber clusters.

One is prone here to assume a bucolic and pastoral view of life. It is not the wild, but a hospitable, generous, and admirably tamed Nature to which we are kin. We know the flavour of grapes on the vine; we have an eye for apple trees and rye-fields, and some of our

most cherished impressions are from the bloom on the grape, the tassel on the corn, and the sunshine on the wheat. These impressions, so cultivated and developed in comparison with those yielded by the desert and the wilderness, reach quite as far back in that ancestral mind in us; for some aboriginal men were instinctively sowers and reapers, as others were nomads and hunters, and the two have always existed together—one in spite of the other—like the Pueblo Indians and the nomadic Apaches of the South-West. There is in most men something of the nomad, something of the peaceful husbandman, but here amid these quiet fields and ripening orchards, it is the sower and the reaper who live in us and to whom the pastoral landscape makes its appeal. In the West an Indian, solacing myself with savage and desolate ranges of lava and with the mystery of the desert, liking no road so well as the solitary trail, I find myself here no longer an aboriginal nomad in feeling, but a pueblo man, pleased above all with the ripening corn, the waving barley, and the bloom on my peaches, and asking nothing better of the gods than leisure to watch the yellow warbler build her nest, the leafcutter bee carrying rose leaves for her

cells, or the pastoral ants herding their aphid flocks on the maples upon the lawn; leisure to watch the opening bud, the expanding petal, the maturing fruit, and to gather at last—leisurely enough in morning hours—the apples and pears and grapes and to receive in turn those charming and fleeting impressions, more exquisite even than perfume or bloom, which are the best part of the flower and the fruit.

A lawn with spreading elms and maples, and foxgloves blooming in the shade, a garden patch and orchard—here is a mellow little summer world congenial to the Arcadian man. Every apple tree has its robin's nest and in little pear trees the yellow warbler builds. Orioles never fail to nest in the elms; cat-birds and songsparrows in the hedge; meadow larks, vesper sparrows, and bobolinks in the hayfield. The mining bees have their burrows by the side of the gravelly paths; mason bees appropriate nail holes and chinks; squirrels nest in the tops of the maples, and grackles in the pines—all seem domesticated together, leading not nomadic but pastoral lives. The hum of bees about old-fashioned flowers and the peaceful voice of the red-eye in the tree tops are the natural and fit-

ting accompaniment of these summer idylls. They voice that quiet content, that simple gladness that Nature now inspires by her gracious mood. Rustling corn and domestic apple trees are themselves not less companionable than the bees and birds, and all seem to lend themselves charmingly to our life and to be a part of it. The keynote of that life is a recognition of the beauty of common things, a sympathy for every-day scenes, a being at home in Nature.

In such a country the fields naturally form the major part of our landscape. From the first appearance of the wheat, they are saturated with the life of the earth and the light of the sky. On some misty day, over the sodden ground appears a tinge of green, the prelude—so ethereal as hardly to be recognised by our grosser vision—to that epic we are thenceforth to read as we saunter. Day by day, there is a deepening green, later a deepening yellow, and the beauty of the wheat is one and of the oats another, and so again of the barley and of the rye-fields. As one stands upon some knoll—a drumlin very likely—the rolling fields stretch far away on every hand, broken here and there only by patches of deep green woods or by grey-green

orchards, and far apart in the midst of the waving grain, solitary and majestic, rise the splendid domes and towering vase-like forms of the elms. Over these fields, white cumuli mass themselves in April skies, and the impalpable fleece and diaphanous cyrrhus clouds of the brooding skies of autumn drift and change and vanish.

How many pictures they present, one after another marking the progress of the season, which are dear to our pastoral selves: the reapers, the sheaves of wheat, the hayricks, the grazing sheep and cattle resting in the shade of elms, the shocks of corn and glistening pumpkins. From the harvesting of the wheat to the husking of the corn, these fields yield other harvests than those that are gathered into barns—harvests for the quiet eye and the mind at peace with the world.

Not the least of these is the association with field birds which a wheat growing and farming region affords. As one jogs along the country roads day after day, the insect-like voices of grasshopper sparrows, the song of the vesper and occasionally the horned lark, the long-drawn, high-pitched soprano of the meadow lark, the bubbling irresistible medley

of the bobolink, the raucous clatter of the ring-necked pheasant, and the wonderfully mysterious utterance of the upland plover, are the familiar bird notes. One and all seem the peculiar and fitting expression of the fields, as the Carolina wren is the very voice of a Southern cypress swamp, or a cañon wren of the sombre gorges of Arizona. Above all, the bobolink expresses the gladness and brightness of the fields: a voice inspired by sun and sky and the waving grain. Like the bobolink, the upland plover sings on the wing and his song is perhaps not so much of the fields as of the sky. As you watch him suspended high in air above the wheat, there descends to your ear, as if from a remote distance, a mysterious, gurgling, melodious sound, half sigh, half whistle;—*Way up in the air—!* it seems to say, beginning with a rising and ending with a falling inflection long drawn out. And when the bird drops out of the sky it is to alight with wings held gracefully aloft as butterflies alight on a flower, or Bonaparte gulls on the water.

Western New York is presumably indebted to the continental glacier for its lakes, as Long Island for its hills, and in one case as in the other, the topography was greatly varied

and enriched by that Arctic ice sheet which scooped out lake basins and scattered hills in the form of terminal moraines and drumlins over the land. Here is a charming pastoral country—a lake country as essentially and as poetically as the English Lake Country, and doubtless quite as worthy to be sung. But as yet no genius has cast a glamour over it as did Wordsworth over the English lakes; hence we must see it for ourselves unaided, and, alas, our vision is painfully matter of fact in these days. This country is not so mellow as the English country, nor as cultivated, cultivated though it be. It lacks the hedge and the thatch, but to one who has any poetic spectacles of his own, it is full of charm. There is nothing remarkable surely about Walden. It has no particular or unusual beauty—a little New England pond, nothing more. But we see it through Thoreau's eyes. This habit of seeing places through other minds, while it may easily invest with a new interest, may also deprive us of our own clearer and purer vision. We look at Nature usually in the most commonplace way, and when we wish to see it in a different light we ask the poet to see for us. We looked at Nature so long through the eyes

of the English poets that until lately our heads were full of skylarks, nightingales and primroses. A Western poet has sung of these things—as if the Sierras and the desert, the live-oaks and the flower-covered fields offered nothing better. Surely we have a Lake Country in New York awaiting the bard who shall sing the wheat-fields and the upland plover, who shall sing these vine-covered slopes above the deep cold lakes, these secluded glens where fringed polygala and cypripedium bloom; awaiting the poet in every beholder who saunters in the fields or paddles on these blue waters and delights his eye with the woods and vineyards, the waving grain and the purple hills in the hazy distance.

If we have not the advantage of investing our landscape with that seductive glamour of association which poetry and history give to many places in the Old World, we have the compensation of seeing it for ourselves if only we can throw over it some rich and poetic association of our own minds. Instead of endeavouring to feel what Wordsworth or Shelley or Keats felt, we may aim to have a reaction all our own and to allow the lakes and the hills to stimulate us directly and



“ The lake is the very eye of the landscape.”

give rise to original impressions—the reaction upon American birds, American skies, and American fields and vineyards.

They are blessed who, possessed of seeing eyes—painter's, poet's, naturalist's eyes,—have a charming landscape and a varied topography with which to stimulate their inner vision and refresh themselves. A seeing eye in a commonplace country is in an unhappy plight and must seek to solace itself in the sky. On the other hand a commercial eye ruins the most delightful landscape for the mind that uses it and it would be fitting enough if the commonplace regions of the earth could be reserved for dull and commercial minds. Consider what a range of hills means—how much more the landscape is our friend by reason of that mound of earth to relieve the monotony, to cast shadows, to reflect colour, and to hold the clouds. Rigid as stone, the hills none the less yield to the tender and mysterious lights of dawn, of sunset and moonrise, as the human face is softened by an emotion.

How much more, then, does a lake reflect the moods of Nature, for the lake is the very eye of the landscape, where one may always detect some play of emotion. No matter

how grim and unfeeling the setting, water is ever alive, ever the medium of expression. No matter how dull the day, the lake is responsive and tells us through our eyes that which were otherwise incommunicable. By reason of this responsiveness we are drawn to it for companionship, for that silent interchange of thought. They who dwell among the lakes and hills have this more perfect society in Nature; and if Nature is to us gracious and hospitable in the fields and vineyards, she is even more our friend wherein she appeals to that less easily satisfied part of us which is solaced only with those subtle and fleeting moods communicated by the changeful light on the hills and on the sensitive face of the waters.

They are not high hills which here befriend us on the shores of Canandaigua—not so much imposing as lovable. Gannett's Hill, the highest point, is twenty-two hundred feet above the sea, but fifteen hundred feet gives a bold sweep down to the water. The topography is simple and of few lines: rounded summits and fairly steep slopes lacking all angularity—a shale formation. Nor is the lake so very large, but of that size rather which, more than any vast expanse

of water, conduces to companionship. It is large enough, that is, to afford perspective and to differentiate the tones of purple and blue. Its eighteen miles are broken by a turn and by jutting points. Thus it has that greatest charm in a lake—variety. It is not seen at a glance nor exhausted by a sweep of the eye, for mystery ever lurks in the blue distance. Lake and hills are wedded in the impression they yield: for a lake is only at its best when surrounded by hills, and the hills in turn are vastly more imposing when they surround a lake. So entirely complementary are they, that it would seem mythology should afford some antecedent in a primordial affinity and union.

As the fields have encroached, the flowers have made their last stand in the glens about the lake, and these fortunately have been left undisturbed,—little winding ravines in the midst of the corn and the vineyards. The fields come to the very edge of the shaly banks, which fall away almost perpendicularly in places, while the level floor in the larger glens may be several hundred feet below. In May, I repair to these glens, leaving the pastoral landscape behind and dropping out of the fields into the depths

below, to find myself instantly in a sylvan retreat where a stream meanders over its shaly bed under maples and birch and basswood, with white pines on the steep slopes above; where turns in the ravine yield vistas woodsy and enticing and where the flowers are left to themselves. Here they remain as in a reservation of their own and may it be long before the white settler encroaches. Here coltsfoot and wild ginger, trilliums and erythronium, spring-beauty and hepatica bloom together at the water's edge: a lovable race peopling the ravine—so delicate, so silent, so humble, yet exerting such subtle power to quell the rude and turbulent thoughts of man, which presently slink away, vanquished without a blow. You shall find here the yellow cypripedium and the fringed polygala, and I adjure you by all the gods of the glen that you leave them where you find them, that their days may be long in the land.

Of the Finger Lakes which give to the region its name, none perhaps have more variety and charm than Canandaigua—perhaps, for to the seeing eye all lakes are beautiful, while to the commercial eye the more ethereal graces are never revealed. Throughout the region there are the wheat-fields, the bobo-



"The trellised vineyards on the slopes of Canandaigua,"

links, the elms—some domes, some slender vases; everywhere the same hospitality in Nature, the pumpkins glistening in the autumn sunshine, the red apples under the trees, and here and there upon the shores, the grape—and it is the vine above all cultivated things that is instinct with poetic suggestion. The trellised vineyards on the slopes of Canandaigua, the blue water of the lake—what a picture is there in which to steep the fancy and to yield that intoxication of which the grape itself can offer only a counterfeit. For the tendril, the cluster, and the classic leaf, the flaming maples and the mellow golden elms, the tender blue stretching away to the purple hills, together do work enchantment and cast a spell over the mind of man; and not the wine when it is red can thus elate as does that nectar which the senses sip from the purple and amber clusters upon the hills.

Alas for the pueblo man, who languishes day by day as the fields grow bare and silent, subsiding at last under the drifting leaves for his winter sleep, not to reappear until another year when the pear and the peach are in flower. It is not he who hears the parting warble of the bluebirds and that brief autumn

measure of the ruby kinglet's song falling on the frosty air, that last reverie of the song-sparrow; who sees the silent hermit lurking in the spice-bush and the wahoo and later looks for him in vain; not he—but that nomad, that aboriginal man, who now wakes and renews himself and hears in the winds the irresistible call to depart. He it is who sees in his mind's eye the open spaces, the lava peaks, the sunlit opal desert—ever beckoning; to whom the wild geese far above the lake in the chill grey sky seem to cry—Away! Away! Till one day he finds himself on that old trail where the mountains are red and yellow and the shimmering desert—the great free desert—waits for him.

CHAPTER IX

CHAPARRAL

LEAVING the East in November when it was already winter and snow was falling, while juncos and white-throated sparrows were abundant, I arrived in Santa Barbara to find the Western congeners of these birds already domiciled, while the warm mellow days were autumn-like and the first spring flowers were appearing—a strange mixture of the seasons, characteristic of California. Violet nightshade, laurel, and wild currant as well as the white ceanothus were in bloom. Soon the blue ceanothus appeared and the toothwort, the most delicate of all cruciferæ. These are all spring blossoms, and it may be said, therefore, that spring begins in the Santa Inez Mountains in November, notwithstanding winter birds have just arrived. Rain had fallen, however, in October and it was due to this that spring was thus early. It would perhaps be more ac-

curate to say that the first rain is the beginning of spring, though the season I am describing is midwinter by the calendar.

As with the Adirondacks, one charm of the Santa Inez hill-country certainly lies in its shrubs, and these in California and the West generally are known collectively as chaparral, though the term properly applies, according to Rothrock, to scrub oak only. Apparently the first flower to appear hereabouts is the wild currant, whose clusters of pink blossoms and light green foliage are extremely delicate and vernal. White ceanothus is early in bloom and is followed in December by the blue species known as California lilac. A good part of the chaparral on the lower slopes of the range is composed of this blue ceanothus, growing to a height of fifteen and even twenty feet, and covered as by a garment with its dense-flowered racemes which in places lend a billowy and smoke-like appearance to a mountain spur or shoulder. Two gooseberries are now in bloom, both charming, and one—the fuschia-flowered—surely among the handsomest shrubs in North America. It is evergreen and from its spreading branches, which droop gracefully, depend in long

thickly clustered rows the large scarlet blossoms, somewhat fuschia-like in appearance. The other, the wild gooseberry, so called,—though both are wild and untamed in their sylvan graces and woodland affinities,—is a water-loving species, growing near streams in moist soil, a large and robust plant, completely covered with its myriads of white blossoms with red calices, whose sepals re-curve like the gables of Chinese pagodas. Both are superior to any of the *Ribes* of the Eastern States in size and in beauty.

Surprises in the way of shrubs are the bush figwort and the tree poppy—true figworts and poppies but appearing in a new and strange personality to the astonished Easterner. The former are common and suggest flame-coloured azaleas. Tree poppies confine themselves to higher levels and are of a brilliant canary yellow. Another anomaly is a holly-leaved cherry—a cherry plainly enough but with a borrowed leaf. While these are beginning to bloom the berries of the California holly are in their prime—holly berries in appearance but without a holly leaf. By combining the leaf of the cherry with the berry of the pseudo-holly, one can improvise a very fair holly—and this is actually done.

An evergreen huckleberry flourishes in rocky places at slight elevations, a vigorous shrub, and from thence upward to the summit of the range, ceanothus, greasewood, sages, and manzanita predominate. The black sage and the white first open their flowers in December and bloom through a long spring. These "sages," in reality audibertias, are the bee plants of Southern California and as characteristic of the hills as sagebrush of the desert. "Sagebrush" again is an artemisia; true sages or salvias are much less abundant. Of the audibertias, the humming-bird sage is perhaps the most striking, an herbaceous plant bearing large crimson flowers in whirls, surrounded by bronze-coloured bracts, with sage-green crinkly leaves. One and all—salvias, artemisias, and audibertias—have the odour of sage, so that sometimes the air is redolent.

The most characteristic shrub of the Coast Range—of California indeed—is the manzanita. Rarely attaining the dimensions of a tree, its branches, tortuous, twisted, and grotesque as those of an ancient live-oak, are clothed with a smooth bark of a deep mahogany tone, as richly coloured as any bark you may see. Like all heaths, its berries

are pretty waxen bells, but with the exception of its relative the madroña, more waxy and more bell-like than those of other heaths.

Associated with this chaparral in the cañons and on the slopes of the Santa Inez are two vines. One, a Western species of clematis (*C. lasiantha*), is remarkable for its very large and cream-coloured blossoms; the other, plebeian in name, is yet an aristocrat among vines—distinctive in leaf, in flower, and in fruit. This lowly cucumber vine, embodying the immemorial grace of a graceful ancestry, intrudes itself everywhere under the oaks and through the chaparral, reaching its long and greedy tendrils in all directions and clinging like the tentacles of a green and vegetable octopus to everything with which it comes in contact. Touch these tendrils and presently they become sinuous and curve at their tips. As if actuated by some motive, once one has seized a twig it coils about it neatly and compactly while the unwound portion of the tendril assumes a corkscrew form, thus exerting a tension by which it pulls the vine. In this manner myriad tendrils, like diminutive arms, constantly work, ever lifting the plant onward and upward. Straying hither and yon, it everywhere unfolds its

racemes of delicate white star-like blossoms which in an incredibly short time are replaced by spiny green fruit expanding before one's very eyes until, the size of an orange, they hang over the trail.

In open spots in the chaparral and along the roads, the wild peony flourishes in early winter, a vigorous and rather attractive plant with coarse red flowers, and the California four-o'clock opens its magenta blossoms in the late afternoon, while, bordering hillside pastures, the tall lupine lifts its purple racemes above a foliage distinguished for its beauty. It is said that there are no rare flowers in Southern California. Certainly, flowers for the most part grow in greater profusion than in the East, or as only our fall composites do. They appear in masses, colouring the fields and hillsides with their bloom. Lupines, poppies, and brodiaeas thrive with the abundance of daisies, goldenrod, and asters with us. In January certain little hilltops and sunny slopes are blue with the brodiaea, a delicate lily, while everywhere in the shade are dense patches of hedge nettle, a mint with rose-purple flowers. Both are exquisite blossoms though as common as the black mustard and wild radish in the

fields. Here and there are little colonies of zygadene, a graceful white lily remotely suggesting a jonquil. Brilliant scarlet paint-brushes gleam amid the sages, while whole fields are reddened by the countless blossoms of the pink paint-brush, called "escobita" by the Mexicans, which, being translated, means a little whisk-broom.

The Santa Inez—an offshoot of the Coast Range—attains an altitude of about four thousand feet and presents from the Montecito valley the appearance of a wall or rampart, far more imposing than the altitude would indicate. They are big little mountains, bold and individual, and their topography is peculiar by reason of the innumerable cañons and lesser barrancas at right angles to the axis of the range, which are not passes but merely lead into other cañons, parallel to the axis and presenting an appearance of immense cirques. The barrancas in every case end in a blank wall. Fairly good-sized streams flow through these blind cañons, having their origin in the interior parallel cañons where they are fed by springs; that is, they all rise in the range itself on its outer slope.

After a cold rainstorm early in February,

I crossed the range for the first time. Up from the fields of the Montecito valley came the melodious and mysteriously beautiful song of Western meadow larks. Seemingly distant because of some ventriloquial quality, the birds were in reality singing nearby in the tops of lemon trees. There is a certain serious import in this song, a something mystical and cosmic yet lyrical, as if they chanted some epithalamium. They who aver the birds of California do not sing, cannot know the Western meadow lark. Entering the cañon I began to hear the call of the spurred towhee and the dramatic song of the California thrasher and these continued to near the summit.

Growing in rocky places, was the prickly phlox, one of the beautiful Western gilies. A shrubby, sage-green, prickly leaved plant—unpromising in itself—it is surmounted in spring with rose-purple stars which glorify the stony hillsides. It is a noteworthy fact in plant lore that some of the most ethereal and lovely flowers blossom in barren and unsightly places. Higher up grew yellow lupine and patches of delicate mountain forget-me-not bloomed among the spiny yuccas. The trail, badly washed out in

places, wound around the precipitous mountainside, appearing at times to be directly over the stream whose course was indicated far below by alders and sycamores now putting out their leaves. If a part of the trail was missing, as sometimes happened, my cow pony scrambled over the shaly bank above and slid into the path again as a matter of course.

This upper region is a jungle of greasewood, punctuated here and there by the paler dome-shaped masses of the large-berried manzanita. Between the base and summit of the mountains there is not so marked a difference in the flora as in the East—in the Catskills and Adirondacks for instance; or perhaps it were more exact to say that the difference is not so perceptible at a given altitude. Four thousand feet involves far less change than on the Atlantic coast.

The summit reached, there opened at my feet a panorama of innumerable ranges and cañons—the Santa Inez, Mono, and Blue Cañons and countless barrancas—the low spurs blending in the distance like strata and culminating in the San Rafael range, snow-covered from end to end. Impressions afforded by a mountain chain, thus seen for the first

time and suddenly breaking upon the vision, are inspiring beyond anything else in Nature; but they are all too evanescent and though you should gaze for ever, never again will you receive them as in that first moment. I had long wondered what lay on the other side of that solid wall of the Santa Inez, which affording nowhere a vista or loophole seemed to suggest some mystery, and like all mountains, exerted its spell upon the beholder till he should ascend and look over for himself. It gives no sign that the interior world it conceals is of such magnitude and grandeur. The desire at once seized me to cross the intervening cañons and barrancas to the distant San Rafael and see what lay on the other side of that. In the mountains one never comes to the end.

Like a garment the chaparral covered the treeless spurs and peaks of the Santa Inez—a jungle inhabited by road-runners and coyotes and only interrupted by outcropping ledges and stray boulders. Watered by the winter rains and dews and the summer fogs, it is tall and luxuriant and almost impenetrable in places without a machete or axe. Afoot you are lost in it; on horseback you cannot possibly get through without a trail. The chaparral



“ Like a garment the chaparral covered the treeless spurs.”

embodies the personality of this land and as much as any feature differentiates it from other Western country. It might seem, to one unfamiliar with it, that this could only be monotonous, but such is not the case. It is true, perhaps, that to one accustomed to the woods only—a tenderfoot, that is—the love of the desert and the chaparral country is an acquired taste. It is equally true that having once acquired that taste there is ever afterwards a certain insipidness about such densely timbered hills as the Adirondacks. We miss the gaunt structure of the mountains. Chaparral is not sufficient in itself to conceal their outlines and in the distance is no more than a green mantle without thickness through which protrude the rocky ribs. That mantle is made up of many different shrubs and here and there in the interstices and along roads and trails are many delightful plants.

Surely this mysterious barrier of the Santa Inez does conceal another and different country, for on the spurs and ranges beyond was no such thick covering of chaparral, but the sparse, stunted, and interrupted growth of the arid region. The immediate slope of course was like the summit, but lower down

and everywhere in the distance the difference was apparent. It seemed indeed as if one had left California behind and was looking down upon a bit of New Mexico. Like a miniature Andes, the Santa Inez cuts off the moisture-bearing wind and literally divides two worlds.

Behind me to the south, the infinite corrugations of the range resembled the folds of some dark green cloth—not velvet for it was dull and rough. To the north, the San Rafael with its innumerable spurs was clothed in umber and sepia with suggestions of purple—desert colours more refreshing than any verdure. True, there was a mottling of green, fading in the distance, however, into the royal colours of the desert and indicating a radically different climate. The air, too, was more brilliant; no sea-mist, no smoke of towns, no dust—for nowhere was there any sign of man. Not only, then, does the Santa Inez defend a little desert world from the sea, but from the towns and villages with their noise and smoke, a world of silence and solitude.

Still less like California did it seem, when, two hours later, I arrived far below at the Santa Inez River and found a broad shallow stream flowing over a shaly bottom through a flat, covered with large cottonwoods and hav-

ing little underbrush. On the hillsides were isolated clumps of the large-berried manzanita and scattered yuccas, and opposite, a bold cliff of deep red puddingstone. It was a transition as radical as one could find in so short a distance, from one zone to another, and illustrated, more than volumes of meteorology, the effect of the sea and of mountain ranges upon climate.

In its steep descent, the trail wound through thickets of California holly resplendent with great masses of scarlet berries. Following the course of a little stream, it passed through delightful groves of laurel, all in bloom, where the air was scented with the perfume of these California bay trees. But more beautiful than either was a grove of madroña presently encountered, which I had not seen growing anywhere on the other side. The most charming member of the heath family, in the length and breadth of the land there is not a more patrician shrub or tree. Its bark, a pure Malay colour and as smooth as a Malay skin, fairly shines under its large and glossy leaves and the impression one receives in a clump of these trees is quite indescribable, suggesting an exquisite and highly-bred feminine personality.

When, towards sunset the summit was again reached, heavy clouds drifting up from the Pacific lay over the south slope of the range, like a blanket of fog, giving the illusion of mystery to the trail and making the cañons abysmal. Along the edge, I slid and scrambled, dropping through the clouds, until presently upon a spur I came into the clear sunlight again and gazed into the greater abyss of the sea.

CHAPTER X

LIVE OAKS

AS there are agreeable distinctions that are New England or Southern or Western, so there is a charm local, and almost personal, in the topography, the geology, and the flora of these sections. Especially is this true of trees, which so materially lend individuality to the landscape and are so intimately identified with it. The cypress of Southern swamps, the spruce of the North Woods, the ahuehuets of Mexico, and the cottonwoods of the Plains are as fundamental to Nature as are any peculiarities of idiom or of custom to the people. It may please the fancy of the naturalist, if he have no better ground for the assumption, to detect at least a superficial relation between these natural characteristics and the peculiarities of the inhabitants. Such an assumption is, it must be admitted, more consonant with an earlier and mythologic period, when man's relation

to Nature was less practical and more poetic, than with the present age when it is so completely utilitarian.

We have lost the ancient and poetic relation to trees, as we have lost some of the gods. The Period of the Gods was also the Age of Trees, and it is as if the spirits which once inhabited trees had departed, unable, like the gods themselves, to withstand such change and progress in the world, and leaving us only so much lumber. But if perchance you have a mythologic vein in you, a certain feeling for Nature, as of something personal—an inheritance from the gods it may be—you may still feel that reverence for trees, for the plane, the tulip, and the walnut, which so distinguished the ancients, and because of this ancestral superstition, derive more from communion with your tree friends than can one less poetically endowed or more completely hypnotised by the modern spirit.

Now the personality of California—of the coast country in particular—is expressed as much in the live oak as in any natural feature. The Western live oak is a charm as essentially Californian as the soft voice is Southern. More native to the soil than the inhabitants, it is a tangible expression of this

land. Pepper, olive, and eucalyptus are aliens—acquired graces—but the live oak is the inheritor of the soil. Beneath it rested the wandering Padres of Old New Spain; in its shade dwelt those Indian peoples who were before New Spain; and in its woodland sanctity dwell still those gentle floral races who were before either, and which are as indigenous as the sheltering tree—blue-eyes, hedge nettle, brodiaea and toothwort—exquisite blossoms of the early season, possessing all the delicacy and innocence of woodland flowers.

Flourishing in the cañons and the rich alluvial valleys, the live oak forms delightful groves whose significance and charm is not that of the forest, nor yet of the woods as we know them in the East, but is more completely sylvan and woodland, and whose affinity, all the more because of a mild and delectable climate, is with the classic and antique world rather than with the present. While essentially a gregarious tree, it is as original and whimsical in its development as the spruce is conventional and the result of this arboreal whimsicality is delightful. Branches wander hither and yon, sometimes starting bravely upward but eventually turn-

ing earthward again in sinuous irregularity; others, tempted earthward in their youth, later take a turn to the south, while age finds them westward bent. Plainly it is not a soaring but an earth-loving tree, drooping its branches ever nearer and nearer the ground as age creeps on apace; and thus a grove festooned with lichen and mistletoe wears the venerable and softened look so agreeable to the artist eye.

If perchance a road meanders through a live-oak wood, branches meet overhead and long arboreal arms reach across, holding in their drooping extremities shadowy masses of grey lichen, itself pendulous and beautiful, while turns in the road admit one to new vistas and new sympathy with this sylvan world. Well might such a spot be sacred to something better than druidical rites and congenial to musing philosophers.

One easily understands here the profound impression a grove made upon the mind of Antiquity, unsophisticated by Realism and by Science. About it there is a singular suggestion of an abode. The great branches reaching far out and often parallel with the ground are massive rafters, the thick canopy of leaves, a roof, the sturdy trunks, sustain-

ing pillars: but who abides therein? Naturally to the ancestral mind—credulous and poetic—nymphs, fauns, and satyrs, since there was no visible presence; if not tangible beings, then woodland divinities and free spirits of the air, for how should such an abode be untenanted?

Though the dryads have long since vanished, the groves are by no means forsaken but are inhabited by lively and musical companies of birds, who in the dense foliage easily become as invisible as any spirits of the elder woods. Chief among the present-day nymphs are the bush-tits, diminutive sprites with the manners and customs of chickadees but differently attired. The live oak is their home tree. It is here they seek their food and here they build their pendulous nests of grey lichens. Then there is the wren-tit, a bird of unmistakable wren affinities—a wren manner and a wren tail—and yet not altogether a wren. He confines himself to the shrubbery—lilacs and greasewood,—while the bush-tits flit in the branches above, ever and anon giving voice to his feelings in a sweet but peculiarly metallic trill whose quality of tone is not exactly like that of any other bird. Visiting spirits of the grove are the titmouse, less grey and more

sooty than the Eastern congener, and the spurred towhee, resembling our chewink and of equally cheerful disposition. There are also a Western gnatcatcher, a Western ruby-crowned kinglet, a Western blackcap—the pileolated,—and Audubon's warbler, which is merely a westernised myrtle bird. These four migrate down the Pacific Slope to Mexico and are as abundant in the tulipans and guavas of the State of Morelos as in the live oaks here. From Alaska comes the golden-crowned sparrow—like all of his race a sad-voiced bird—to winter round about Eden, while the redshafted flicker, the Western counterpart of the highhole, is as native to the live-oak belt as to the aspen-covered slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Some birds are cosmopolites; others, familiar spirits of the grove. Among the latter are the California towhee, California jay, California woodpecker, and California thrasher. This towhee is a demure and domestic-looking bird, attired more like the green-tailed towhee than like the tribe of chewinks, but possessing none of the green-tail's power of song. The jay is an uncrested bird, less pert than our bluejay, but every whit a jay, none the less. His voice is

less vociferous but quite as unmusical. Demure in plumage and with an astonishing bill, which serves him as a pickaxe, the California thrasher is one of the lords of song. His voice is stronger, and his powers of mimicry more varied than with either the Eastern thrasher or the mockingbird. As with them, his delivery is stagey and his song dramatic rather than lyrical—a trait shared by the entire family. In January they sing from the oaks by the hour, pouring out a volume of trills and roulades, interspersed with mimicking cries and imitations of barnyard fowls. No other bird sings as much at this season unless it be the house finches—more given to song than their Eastern relative, the purple finch. They, however, avoiding the oaks, seem to prefer deciduous trees, such as the sycamore, keeping up a continuous musical chatter from its bare twigs.

Perhaps the most typically Western bird found in and around the groves is the road-runner, a long-tailed, short-winged, black-crested, grotesque bird, fleet-footed and of preposterous habits. In the cañon above the ranch in the particular grove which serves me as a type, not only because it contains some fine oaks but because it is conveniently near,

a pair of road-runners are either nesting or seriously considering it, and the male disports himself upon a large boulder. Strutting to and fro upon his rock platform, he stops ever and anon and, bowing ceremoniously as to an audience below, proceeds to pump forth, his crested head on a level with his claws, a series of melancholy whining notes, which suggest the whine of a dog more than the hoot of an owl and might, at a distance, be mistaken for either. Day after day he appears in the same place, sometimes silent and as often orating, intoning, or chanting, whichever it may be, his audience a solitary female runner skulking somewhere in the chaparral and shyly taking note of these powers, to whom this particular bird-personality and these astonishing bird-manners represent the norm of conduct and appearance. Sometimes he interrupts himself to descend the almost perpendicular side of the boulder with the agility of a lizard, presently reappearing to resume his antics. His diet is largely reptilian and he is popularly supposed to attack and kill the rattlesnake.

Another bird of unconventional ways is the California woodpecker, who frequents the grove for acorns which he deposits one by one

in separate holes he has prepared in the bark of trees. You may see tree trunks completely peppered by his industry. This thrift—if such it be—he shares with no other member of his family.

From all this it will be seen that the groves are far from being unpeopled; so that one has not to rely upon the imagination for society, though it is certainly a useful adjunct. Unimaginative persons derive so little from what they see; over-imaginative ones make much of what they do not see. Nature, far from being fixed, is plastic, conforming to every mould of temperament. How some would sentimentalise here—gushy people whose springs are all on the surface and quickly run off; while others compute, with cold and calculating eye, the cords of wood, the cost of cutting, and the profit. Interest more than anything else, sharpens the eye; temperament is a glass, rose-coloured or blue as the case may be. What do children see here and what do old people see?—not the same grove surely. A psychologist would give much to know what the Indian perceives—so slender is the savage's stock of associations, so relatively insignificant the inherent mass of ideas upon which his impressions fall.

Imagination is a soft light suffusing Nature, which while it renders outlines less distinct, clothes them with a fringe of association and mystery. Some charm is due to this and is never revealed to unimaginate and prosaic eyes. Thus the grove is fairest to those who have more inheritance from the gods, to faun-like natures endowed with bird consciousness and arboreal moods. *They* hear pipes and timbrels and woodland ditties still; as long ago it was they who heard them in classic groves. To them, these over-arching branches, these columnar trunks, are gateways of dreams to some divine country to which lead these winding wood-paths through the greensward. Here they listen, not only to the wren-tit's trill and the golden-crowned's plaintive note, but to incommunicable music heard out of doors alone.

Perhaps these woodpaths lead to no more mysterious world than solitude itself, certainly to none of more illusive charm:—the society of one's best thoughts, of sylvan fancies and shy wood creatures in place of one's kind. While nymphs have fled and fauns no longer dance upon the green, the familiar spirit of all groves is still the same: that spirit is the angel of Solitude. Observe

now your true lover of the woods, how he abstracts himself from the company of his fellows, ostensibly to go a-botanising or to look for birds, but in reality to walk in dim groves with the good angel who awaits him there. Does he seem solitary and unsocial? Mark you, he but seeks diviner company than the town affords.

There are minds so wholly subjective that they are disqualified as good observers of Nature; others so nearly objective that though their vision be keen and reliable they see nothing to advantage, their facts are all unrelated. The good naturalist is a blend of these. He sees as a scientist, he associates his facts as a philosopher. It is ridiculous to assume that any one ever sees Nature as it is; we see it with what mind we have—and the richer the mind, the richer the Nature we know. There are days when the grove is full of life—objective days; others when it is at a standstill, when little or nothing attracts the attention—and these are subjective days, when we must see with an inner eye.

In California, such periods are fewer than in the East, for there is never a time when some birds and flowers are not in evidence.

All about the grove, ceanothus, wild currant, gooseberry, and purple nightshade are blooming as early as the middle of November—not fall flowers but the first spring blossoms—while California fuchias and some golden-rods are left over from the summer. Winter, in the Coast Range and the valleys of California, is the growing time, for it is the rainy season.

While in New England, red and scarlet oaks are bared to the wintry blasts and white oaks are clothed in the few shrivelled leaves which cling dishevelled and forlorn like the tatters of a garment, the gentle goddess is tripping through the live oaks and the ancient groves have begun to renew themselves. But this renewal is inconspicuous. There is no marvellous transformation as with the deciduous oaks—a bursting of grey winter buds and a simultaneous unfolding of myriads of green and red and pink flags—but one by one an old leaf falls, a new leaf appears, and the visible change is slight. Beneath the oaks, however, blue-eyes, toothworts, and white forget-me-nots have the ethereal charm peculiar to the most delicate and exquisite spring blossoms and wherever they appear, their presence makes it spring.

A brook from the cañon flows sinuously through this grove, bordered with alders, which in California are large trees, and with sycamores everywhere bending gracefully over the water, their trunks a mottled grey and white and their branches as tortuous and as drooping as those of the live oak itself. Ascending one of these sycamores, an army of red ants crosses the stream by interlacing twigs and descends a tree on the opposite bank. All through the winter I find them using this natural bridge. The oaks, unlike the sycamores, avoid the water's edge. Scattered beneath them are boulders, large and small and of all conceivable shapes, which have seen many oaks—many groves—come and go; veritable antiques, mottled with lichens, and slowly sinking beneath the surface of the soil. Time and the elements have perforated the boulders and hollowed grotesque miniature caverns within their rotund and massive bodies, revealing their yellow hearts.

When it rains, and there are protracted rains and many cloudy days, the oaks droop nearer and nearer the earth and the groves become cavernous as grottoes of the sea. Birds hide and the army of ants no longer crosses to and fro upon the slender bridge.

Water oozes from the ground and drips from the leaves. Petals of the toothwort droop and fall and not even a flicker is to be heard. The south-west wind, rolling up its dense moisture-filled clouds, puts a quietus upon all but the stream, which, swollen and turbid, changes its key and sings in a higher, more vociferous tone.

When of a sudden the wind veers to the north, the masses of cloud are blown far out to sea and sunshine prevails again. Soon the ants are traversing the stream as before, flocks of bush-tits flit merrily through the leaves, and the thrasher resumes his song. From the chaparral comes the faint flute-like trill of the wren-tit, and from the oaks the familiar and cheery call of the flicker; while far above the grove the Western redbill circles in stately and rhythmical flight, appearing through the skylights in the oaks as a diminutive speck in the blue.

CHAPTER XI

ELYSIAN FIELDS

WHEN, early in April, I came to take a more extended jaunt into the region beyond the mountain ramparts, the entire range was covered with the bloom of the white ceanothus which near at hand suggested a light fall of snow. Everything that earlier in the season had been rare was now abundant. There were no longer solitary flowers of any kind but legions of blossoms; no longer individuals but masses, fields of bloom—Elysian fields surely.

The first night was spent at Snyder's on the range and here cyclamen was encountered in abundance. All around the orchard and field, all through the straggling grain, were these lovely shooting stars,—

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Waving their heads in sprightly dance,—

some tall, some short, some rose purple,
others pale lilac or of a crimson hue. No

cultivated crop on the mountains thrived like this which cost no labour at all.

Early next day in the fresh morning air, I descended the trail to the San Marcos road, seeing the brilliant flowers of the crimson warrior, a handsome cousin of our plain wood betony, growing in rocky places under the chaparral. A vast fog lay over the sea obscuring it as if by an immense ice floe, for from that height the fog below, extending from the base of the mountain to the horizon line, resembled a frozen sea. But in the direction of my journey, not the smallest cloud could be seen and the sunlight was the clear sunlight of the desert.

In shady spots, banks above the road were fringed with saxifrage and the delicate white blossoms of the *Romanzoffia*. Here too were the shade-loving phacelias, not tens, but thousands—tangles and thickets of them. Little excursions of this sort through the country make one sensible of the peculiarities of plants, their whims and preferences. They are as particular and as peculiar as human beings in their way and, as with us, there is sometimes less affinity between members of the same family than between those of wholly different families. Thus the large purple

phacelias and the tall sturdy white species seek dry and rocky places, and in such localities were encountered in serried ranks: but this smaller blue phacelia would have soon perished in such a spot. Some flowers have a preference for roadsides, others for trails; some for cliffs and others, again, for meadows or swamps. There are preferences for north or south slopes, for different soils, for the proximity of hardwoods or for coniferous trees, for damp or for dry atmospheres. Illustrations of this whimsicality in plants presented themselves now and again on the steep descent of the San Marcos, until finally I came to one of the delightful little oak flats which distinguish the topography of the Santa Inez country.

These oak flats constitute the chief charm of the Santa Inez Valley, contrasting as they do with the semi-arid ranges among which they are hidden. The best of them lie to the east of the San Marcos, scattered along Blue cañon, Mono, and the Santa Inez itself, where never a road has been known and the trail, zigzagging up some rough chaparral-covered ridge, reveals from the summit a wondrous little park lying below on the other side, untouched by the hand of man—a gem set in

the lonely hills. These parks are, in most instances, as level and smooth as a floor, always surrounded by spreading live oaks and in spring carpeted with flowers. There are many of these, scattered over a large area and hidden in unexpected places, but never so concealed as to elude the flowers which by some prescience of their own have found them out; as if indeed, they travel through the land like pioneers looking for a good camping ground, and wherever they come upon a likely place establish themselves forthwith. The good lands are thus thickly settled with these floral colonies and wherever they are, there come the bees, quite as the ministers and the doctors find their way to the frontier posts of civilisation, rendering their service to the community and extracting their living from it.

How old these settlements are, who can say. What countless generations of flowers have come and gone. Yet there was a time when the pioneer seeds drifted or were carried over the ranges, or floated down the creeks, and by some means lodged themselves. Without the winds and the birds to carry the seed and the bees to fertilise the flowers, they could never have accomplished it. This migratory

instinct in plants is one of the most astonishing things in Nature: that being quite insufficient in themselves they should thus manage to get things done for them and to travel about the country, crossing rivers and mountain chains. Some are mountaineers and some plainsmen; others, river people or desert tribes, but all follow their fancies and settle according to their liking.

This oak flat at the foot of the San Marcos was settled by a flourishing colony of cream-cups, which in place of having come over the pass, were perhaps bent in that direction. Myriads of them nodded together on the green, a dainty host indeed with whom even one who abhorred crowds might find it a rare pleasure to mingle. The road here runs through pleasant woods and presently leads into the enchanted country. Here is the land of the yellow pansy. Not in thousands, but in millions and in trillions they spread over the fields and along the road. Splendid flowers they are—the rich yellow petals spotted with purple and brown—peopling the grass with upturned faces. Delicate blue larkspurs, phacelias, and pale gillias bordered the road, and with such select and beautiful company by the way, I came at length to the pleasant valley upon

whose outer edge flows the shallow Santa Inez—nominally a succession of cattle ranches but in reality Elysian Fields.

White oaks here intermingled with the live oaks—stately trees of majestic proportions and standing at a distance apart which enhanced their dignity. California woodpeckers were chattering and flying from trunk to trunk, describing beautiful parabolas in the air. The trunks of some trees were peppered with acorns placed there by these birds. Magpies were also abundant and from time to time was heard the sweet note of the plain titmouse, resembling the ringing call of the Carolina wren of Southern swamps. Above the river rose cliffs of red and yellow sandstone, and beyond them, arid hills dotted with sagebrush and yucca, fading in the distance into the colours of the desert—pale opaline tints melting into the horizon.

Such is the fair setting of this noble park whose smooth floor was dotted with oaks and was literally carpeted with yellow tidytips and golden baeria, while the roadside was often a bank of lavender collinsias, blue lark spurs, and white forget-me-nots. With the exception of daisy fields and possibly the Devil's paint-brush in limited areas in the

Catskills, we do not have in the East such masses of bloom as are common in California. This abundance, this riot of blossoms, is as characteristic of the flora here as is a certain rarity, shyness, and individuality of many of our Eastern flowers. Perhaps nowhere else in the world may wild flowers be found in such superabundance as in California. Fields thus appear blue, yellow, purple, or white—the landscape is virtually painted by the myriads of blossoms. One may see hillsides blue with the lupine or yellow with the eschscholtzia; pastures reddened with the little pink paintbrush, and whole ranges blue or white with the ceanothus. Yet according to John Muir this is rapidly passing and is no longer comparable with what it was.

Throughout two days, ever and anon resting under an oak while the horse browsed, I leisurely followed a winding road, with no thought of the cattle ranch this land was to its owner and much thought of the Elysium it was in fact. It seemed as if it might be ever morning in these flowery fields; that they were made for happiness only. Houses there were none, and with the exception of the road, few if any signs of civilisation. The world, wherever it might be, was far away; the land

seemed to belong to the woodpeckers, the magpies, and the flowers. Occasionally a brook tempted me to loiter, sitting upon my horse in its midst, hypnotised by its murmurous song no doubt, while the horse plunged his sensitive nostrils in the cool water or cropped the grass on the bank. Doves cooing in the distance, the calling of valley quail, the didactic voices of vireos, and the impetuous little song of Parkman's wren were the only sounds to break the silence. While the sun was warm, the California air readily surrenders its heat, so that to step into the shade of an oak is to find a refreshing coolness. In that enchanted country appeared no element of discord. Tidy tips nodded to the passing breeze; the golden baeria glistened in the sun. Over the land rested the spirit of peace as over few places in this distracted world—the spirit of the gentle race of flowers.

On the fourth day I rode back across the painted fields, through the lupines and the larkspurs, through the golden splendour of the baeria,—up and out of Elysium.

It was late in the season, perhaps too late for flowers, when I crossed the range over the Cashitas Pass into the Ojai Valley—once an Elysium also, it is averred, but now, alas,

sadly cultivated and no more than grain fields. Along the base of the hills were azure and purple pentstemons, and far up the Matilija Cañon extended patches of red buglers, but the great Matilija poppy was not to be seen. It has retreated into the wilderness before the advance of the botanising tourist.

One intimation of a past glory there was, for the black mustard was in its prime. Over Rincon Mountain and the low hills of the Cashitas, it lay like rifts of sunlight. A fine mist filled the air, yet one would constantly look across to some slope or hillock and fancy that the sun was shining there—so complete was the illusion—until a second glance revealed merely vast fields of mustard. Where the road lies through such a field the air is heavily perfumed, while one is surrounded by a veritable golden glory. The infinite hosts of blossoms seem fairly to twinkle and almost to be self-effulgent. Whether the mustard is the least of all seeds or not, it certainly becomes almost a tree here and the fowls of the air—the blackbirds—alight in its branches.

As one rides along, the black mustard is as high as the horse's head and often much higher. Its tall single stem puts out many

branches, all illumined by the cheerful radiance of countless blossoms, so that in the encompassing fog, the mustard is still sunshine.

CHAPTER XII

DUTCH FLAT—A RETROSPECT

ON my way East from San Francisco late in this pleasant month of June, my route takes me for the first time in many years over what was once the "Central Pacific." It has suggested itself that for the sake of old times a stop should be made at one station or another in the Sierra. Having once counted the ties on this very road, fished many a stream, and tramped over many a trail, I am prepared to defend a proprietary interest in these mountains against any tenderfoot who has a passing acquaintance with the Sierra camps only in their senile decrepitude—I who as a small lad already desirous of escaping from the trammels of civilisation and the rigour of the schoolroom, was duly presented to the mountains by my elders about the year 1874.

In an annual escape thenceforth into the Sierra, that delectable region came to mean,

not only a place where school did not keep, but *where there were no fences*,—a region ample and wild and satisfying where the eye was not offended by petty bounds. It is not so easy to-day to find a place where there are no fences, but it still seems a good and pleasant thing.

So, because of this lure of the Sierra, I find myself in the neighbourhood of Dutch Flat, proprietor for a brief season of a wickiup,—a cot-bed under the stars, surrounded by a circle of brush to keep off small animals—and free to roam and to reminisce under the pines. The days are warm and dry—dry as only they can be in the Sierra in summer—and the air smells of pine needles. The roads, or rather the road, is a foot deep in dust—the red Sierra dust. Some little distance away runs a flume and there are trout in the wide swift-flowing ditch above. The pines are very black at night, the night air fresh and cool, and it is good to light the fire in front of the wickiup.

As I sit on a log watching the blaze and the firelight on nearby trunks and on the drooping branches which fringe the intense blackness above, the roar of the flume comes to my ears and arouses the memory of other days, associated with roaring flumes and gold

diggings and with the silent forests of the Sierra.

This morning, a tramp into Dutch Flat through the deep red dust inspired feelings that no tenderfoot can ever share; for that cloudless sky, that limpid air, even that red dust aroused a certain dormant spirit of nomadism, a tramp instinct, which was wont long ago to lead like a will-o'-the-wisp over the mountains. A few small dwellings at the edge of the village, though apparently inhabited, gave no sign of their occupants. No dog barked, no horse neighed. Some low brick houses whose windows had once possessed heavy iron shutters were deserted, the shutters prone upon the ground. Turning a corner, the village street appeared, and surely no enchanted castle was ever plunged in profounder lethargy. Here and there a chair of the kind to be met with in Western bar-rooms—worn and shiny with age—stood at the edge of the sidewalk and in two of these, doubtless in the same spot and tilted at the same angle as a quarter of a century ago, sat two old men, the only sign of life in the apparently deserted village. Their legs were encased in blue overalls tucked into cowhide boots, their flannel shirts open at the throat,

their ancient felt hats were tipped over those grizzled faces, hawk-like beaks, and keen eyes which seem to characterise all old prospectors and miners. In silence they sat and spat gloomily into the dust, reminiscing perhaps, like myself, on a day that was gone.

A peep into the barroom revealed the venerable stove with its accommodating iron railing for the feet of those who took their ease in the barroom chairs; the box of sand so essential to the indulgence of their favourite pastime. Instinctively I glanced behind the bar. Yes, clustered about the tops of the vials of bitters were the red ants as of yore. Who would suppose that a dusty road under a brilliant summer sky, and the sight of red ants on a bottle in a barroom would have any particular association? But if in such a barroom, in one camp or another, in your adventurous youth when the spirit was high and you were more easily amused than now, you had shaken those large yellow dice out of that old leathern box for hours at a time with gentlemen whose very appearance would have caused your elders a painful shock of surprise; if at such a table in such an interior, you had shown enthusiasm, aye, even excitement, over blue and white chips, uttering their dry

cynical note as they were stacked by big bony hands; if, I say, in such a barroom in the heyday of your youth, you had once fought some ten rounds, Marquis of Queensbury rules, and a gentleman in overalls, a flannel shirt, and spurs had acted as your second, because it suited your peculiar fancy and your youthful spirit so to do; and if in such a street where the murmurous din of a card game could be heard, you had once stood and emptied your revolver in the air, out of pure delight and joy in life—why then you would understand how the red dust and the red ants on the barroom bottles should have some association to middle age, spectacled, sedate, regenerate, and no longer easily amused.

As I sit by the camp-fire in the little sphere of cheerful light it creates in the midst of darkness, the hoarse murmur of the flume is the only sound to break the stillness of the night. With the velocity of a millrace the water rushes down the mountain, confined in its wooden sluice-box, and enters the ditch below to do service in orchards and fields which have taken the place of the old diggings. Once it led to a pipe and that to a nozzle which was a very engine of destruction. It is many years since hydraulic mining was

done away with, but the sound of the flume brings up the picture as last I saw it.

Out of a nozzle called a "giant"—and a giant it was, compared with which the fireman's nozzle is but a toy—rushed a stream of water which ate into the hearts of the hills and carried them off as in a flood, while the receding waters were diverted into sluice-boxes where they deposited the gold washed from the soil. Round about this region you may see the ruined foundations of those ancient hills which the "giants" of old laid low. The camps had not entered upon their sleep then; flumes roared and nozzles played by day, faro and poker were played by night, and the valiant spirits of that time were induced not only by the freedom of the life, but by the most execrable whiskey that has ever helped to destroy the morals and the stomach of man.

One summer, long ago, the droning bees without did sadly distract my thoughts from the droning Latin within, and day by day the desire to be away from both books and fences grew apace until at length I escaped—with scant courtesy to Learning—and set out to see the world. At Auburn, a village on the western edge of the Sierra, began my

tramp over the mountains. This very day the red dust underfoot and the dazzling blue overhead have evoked a faint memory of that exaggerated sense of unresponsibility with which I started upon my travels, my sole tangible possessions a knapsack, a little money, and a large cheap pistol of the "Bulldog" type which occasioned thrills of satisfaction as it was surreptitiously fingered from time to time; but possessed of, or by, a state of mind that made one monarch of all one surveyed and as free as the wind in the pines of the Sierra. It seems now that the mountains are not so high as then, nor the world so large, nor anywhere in it one so free. Yet perhaps there are adventurous striplings setting forth to see the world, with "Bulldog" pistols in their hip pockets, to whom the mountains are as wonderful and life as free as it was to me in that day.

Then followed days in the open, wandering at will throughout the summer, ever the dazzling blue overhead, ever the red dust or the ties underfoot; a mind possessed by restless gypsy thoughts and life an intoxication, the road beckoning onward through the silent forest and the everlasting hills. For it is not the part of Youth to reveal to us that at the

end of every road we shall find only ourselves, from whom there is no escape. Auburn, Colfax, Cape Horn—then vast and abysmal, now dwindled astonishingly,—Dutch Flat, Gold Run, Alta, Blue Cañon and the mysterious snowsheds, Emigrant's Gap, Summit, Truckee, Tahoe, Reno, Carson, Virginia City at last,—roaring flumes, lean-to's, "guns," street fights, poker games, miners, gamblers, cowpunchers, red ants on the barroom bottles,—it all comes back like the memory of some curious dream and only the present roar of the flume and the sombre pines in the fire-light lend it reality.

In the early morning as I cast a fly on the swift stream above the flume and feel now and again the pleasurable nibble of a trout or the sudden pull which, communicated by means of the rod, translates itself into an agreeable emotion, I am reminded of very different scenes. Once upon a time there was fishing to be had in the headwaters of the Sacramento and in the McCloud and thither we were wont to go with high hopes and a good supply of hooks. In those days Redding was the terminus of the railroad. Arriving in the evening the passengers, in long linen dusters, immediately climbed aboard the Concord

stage and started for Soda Springs or Sissons at the base of Shasta—round about Eden, that is—a journey of seventy or eighty miles. Now the great difference between fishing as it was then in California and as it is now in the East, is that in the East there is much fishing, and few fish, while in California there were few anglers, but ah, what an abundance, what a plethora of trout. What fisherman would not cherish the memory of that sport to his dying day and keep it so green that the very fish would grow in size and their number increase in his fancy, as the actual trout diminish and their numbers dwindle? He shall recall too, the peculiar creak and rumble—the voice as it were—of the Concord stage, and the soft swish of water gurgling about the flatboat as the stage was ferried over the river in the night, sounds ever after associated in his mind with fishing—real fishing. Nor will he ever forget those eating stations on the road where, as fresh horses were being put in, the passengers descended stiffly from the stage, stamped upon the ground to recover the use of their legs, while they slapped the red dust from their hats, and single file marched up to the bench in front of the shanty, upon

which stood a tin wash-basin and a bucket of water.

A Digger Indian with whom I used to go a-fishing always began his day's work by putting some worms into his mouth, whereupon he bit them in pieces and spat them upon the waters, crying,—“Come fish! come fish!” and the fish surely came. Early in the season the trout fly appeared in great abundance on the banks of the Sacramento and at these the fish bit voraciously. Again salmon eggs—the pools were black with salmon—were excellent bait. Rattlesnakes were almost as abundant as fish and one had to keep a wary lookout by the rapids which drowned the sound of the rattle. It was no rare occurrence for the fisherman as he crept around a difficult ledge, rod in hand, to find the only safe and level space already occupied by a snake.

Tiger lilies are blooming in the clearing and the swallowtail butterflies hovering about them have bright red spots on the wings. Indian pinks, pussies'-paws, and mariposa lilies revive memories of the splendid Sierra flora. Where is there a more delectable blossom than the mariposa, associated with rocky open places among the manzanitas; or the beautiful lavender mountain daisy, grow-

ing in glacial meadows; the castilleia, too, that flower of the West, that bit of barbaric colour gleaming in the chaparral? Certain flowers, like certain people, one never forgets. Something about the plant, a personal trait as it were, makes a lasting impression. Of those recalled, I associate above all, the mariposa, the lavender daisy, pussies'-paws, and the Indian pink, with the Sierra—above all, save one, the snow plant which is to the Sierra what the edelweiss is to the Alps. Here is a plant as distinctive, as completely individual, as any in the mountains, a splendid creature glowing scarlet on the edge of snowdrifts at the foot of granite domes or among the silver firs, and that plant will ever be linked in my mind with the beautiful region where there are no fences.

Red-backed juncos are nesting here and lazuli finches, but birds do not seem abundant. Towards sundown, the doves call and the mountains re-echo with their melancholy notes. Throughout the Sierras and down the whole length of the Sierra Madre in Mexico, the sad-voiced doves are cooing, the insistent minor note of the Western mountains, as of some primeval sorrow to which this gentle race for ever gives expression. A Western

hermit is singing in the pines, rapt and unworldly as are all his race. What has he to do with the sorrows of Earth, who sings ever of some more heavenly world? While riding along the mountainside, a mountain partridge suddenly appeared with her brood of a dozen chicks. One glimpse was all I had of the chicks for almost instantly they seemed to become invisible, while the mother exerted herself in the usual way to attract and hold the attention, not knowing, poor thing, how friendly indeed was my feeling for her, my admiration, not only for the beauty of her feathers, but for her Christian character as well.

Another week finds me at Tahoe, still on familiar ground. Twenty-three years ago, tramping over the trail from Soda Springs to Truckee, I descended one evening out of the silent mountains into that crude and flaring frontier town, which, on the edge of the Sierra, sat like a blemish on a beautiful face. From there a stage road led through the forest beside the Truckee River to the lake. Truckee does not appear to have changed much for the better, but the Truckee River, is still beautiful. It is an ideal trout stream in which to cast a fly and the sight of it has stirred the

fisherman's blood in me. In imagination one could see the trout lurking in those glassy green pools and eddies. In that day, the fish here were peculiarly coy and difficult to take and such, it is said, is still the case.

Stretching along the shore of the lake is a remnant of what was the most majestic forest on earth. It was to any other what the gorge of the Colorado is to cañons. The cañon remains, but the forest dwindles. Well, it is something to have known such a forest, to have spent some small part of your life in such vast halls of the world. Yet there were those living there, perhaps, upon whom it made as little impression as upon the ants, who cannot see the trees for their very size.

No longer are the mountains so high, but the trees appear as tall and as stately as of old. A splendid fringe of cedar, fir and pine skirts the lake, and here I pass, as in some garden of the gods, the brief time at my disposal. The lake is very lovely—one of the beautiful lakes of America,—the water is marvellously clear, the mountains rugged and snow-covered. Through the great columnar trunks one has charming vistas, all the more ethereal because of the altitude. The poetaster might rhapsodise and call it the lake of the sky; for one

is a little nearer the heavens here—an inch or so. But the trees, the beautiful trees! They do not accord one the same set of impressions as do Eastern conifers. Vast and unapproachable, they are no more companionable than are Egyptian temples or Gothic spires. It is difficult to speak simply enough of them. If you know them, you find superlatives offensive. If you know them, you can think of them in visual images and thus escape the inadequateness of the adjective. This is the most satisfactory way of thinking of the mountains, the forest and the sea. Let them speak for themselves. The towering gaunt sugar pine with its drooping crown—so remote and yet so benign—there aloft in the dazzling blue; the massive cedar with its buttressed trunk, its aspect of immense solidity; the tapering, graceful, feminine fir, so imposing in its height, so light and airy, as if it were more of the sky than of the earth; these and many more, standing singly and in little groups, never crowded, the embodiment of dignity and grandeur, as if these qualities had assumed the forms of trees—what adjectives would they use if they were to describe themselves?

They are for visual, not for verbal images.

As I stroll amidst these mighty columns by the lake with their rich red brown and saffron red bark, cracked and fluted and rugged, little pictures frame themselves there in the sunshine and the silence. The forest yields me tree thoughts and forest moods which may be imperfectly translated by the words strength, amplitude, calm, and by self-reliance and freedom. How serene they are—the great pines! What grand old age is this! Not ruin at last, but strength and dominion written in vast rude characters. If it were possible to write adequately of the forest, it would be in characters equally rude and large.

One who has known the spell of the forest will carry the memory of it to the grave. He shall come upon it now and again in life, stretching away from the confines of his every-day thoughts into some mysterious background of his mind and shall escape for a moment from the din and tumult into its silence. More than twenty years have elapsed since I last saw it, while on an all-summer's tramp south of here through Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties and into the Yosemite, sauntering day after day through the pines, tramping along dusty stage roads, or dreaming

dreams under the sequoias. That was a free and heroic world in which to wander with the gift of youth. How open it was; how resinous; how wild and fenceless and untrammelled! Western pines have more sap in them than the Eastern; they exude pitch and scent the air. They are more vigorous and rude and savage, as the landscape itself is more virile. Morning in the forest was fair and shining and wonderful—and life was like the morning. Great sugar pines beckoned with their long arms outstretched in the blue, and Youth could not but follow. Day by day new giants loomed ahead and beckoned—into the sunshine and the shadow, into the silence of the forest.

Not only the pines allured, but every stream cried "Follow me"; the wild doves calling in the twilight said, "Over here"; and every purple ridge whispered, "Come up! Come up!" Ah, well! they were illusive voices, but Youth feeds on illusion and is happy for an hour; and doubtless I shall never find any other will-o'-the-wisp it pays so well to follow.

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE GIANT CACTUS BELT

TURNING southward from the Santa Fé trail at Ash Fork, which lies just beyond Bill William's old camp, there is a descent of 4500 feet before one reaches the little desert station, the point of departure by stage or bronco, or even by automobile if one has no sense of the fitness of things, for the Wickenburg region of Central Arizona, a region commending itself because of a peculiarly forceful personality and as good a winter climate as any north of southern Mexico. The Wickenburg is a sort of adjunct to the loftier Bradshaw range—a great wedge of granite—from which it stretches away like a turbulent sea turned to stone. Largely of lava, its topography is sculptured in all the fantastic and delightful forms which andesite cliffs and peaks and basalt mesas afford, offset by beautiful ranges of schist, like folded velvet.

That descent from 6500 feet to 2000, together with the slight approach to the equator of an eight hours' railway journey, produces a decided change in the climate and consequently in the flora, which may be casually noted from the car window; that is to say, such obvious differences as the change from pine timber and areas of low juniper, to mesquite and chaparral. It is while you are leisurely observing this that there suddenly dawns upon the vision a columnar vegetable, erect upon the hillside like a monolith of pale green jade, and you discover with a certain thrill of satisfaction that you have entered the Giant Cactus Belt.

Native to Arizona and Sonora, as the sequoia is native to California, the giant cactus or saguaro is the largest of its race and no other vegetable has a more decided and unique personality. In its simplest form it is a monolith, but it has many forms. Indeed it is protean, putting out arms from its columnar trunk, sometimes one, sometimes ten, some erect, some shaped like the tusks of the mammoth. It reaches a height of fifty or sixty feet and a diameter of two and even two and a half feet, its maximum girth being not at the base but some distance from the ground.



" A columnar vegetable erect upon the hillside."

These pale green columns are fluted and the long transverse ridges are studded with spines arranged in clusters.

Growing side by side with the saguaro, though having a vastly more extensive range, is the ocotilla (*Fouquieria splendens*), a plant almost as individual and as characteristic of the desert area of the South-West as the cactus. Now, in November, it is leafless and its long whiplike branches, rising from a common base as do the arms from the head of an octopus, and covered with spines, are Medusa-like and uncanny. In spring we shall see it in leaf and bearing brilliant red blossoms at the ends of the branches, transformed—transformed one might almost say—into one of the most graceful and beautiful plants of the desert.

The descent from the high plateau of northern Arizona brings one to a desert valley, an arm as it were of the Salt River valley. Of these "valleys" a government report has this to say: "The so-called valleys of Salt and Gila rivers are but parts of a broad plain occupying a large portion of south-western Arizona. The valleys are in part surrounded by mountainous areas, and they themselves in turn surround isolated peaks and groups of moun-

tains which rise abruptly from their surface." In other words the desert of Arizona is broken up by numerous short ranges of mountains—their name is legion—and these for the most part rise from the desert plain like rocky islands. Doubtless they once were islands in the sea—that ancient sea of which the desert is the present reminder.

It may convey some idea of their number that from the elevated point which is my outdoor study, one may see, for instance, the Wickenburg, the Bradshaws beyond, and the New River Mountains a little farther away; while in the west are the Weaver, Date Creek, Vulture, Rawhide, the Harcuvar, and Harqua Hala; and to the south, south-west, and south-east, the Phoenix Mountains, the Gila Bend, Estrella, Sacaton, and the MacDowell peaks and other ranges, ghostly in the distance, which may possibly include the Superstition Mountains and the Mazatal. All this at one *coup d'œil* as it were; while beyond the Bradshaws are the Verde and other ranges, and these are but a fraction of the whole. Verily there are a thousand and one of these island-like mountains scattered over the great desert plain of Arizona, and down through Mexico are ten thousand more.

Narrow desert areas lying between these isolated ranges, which are merely parts of the larger plain surrounding the mountains, are the valleys of Arizona, their level floors composed of the detritus or "wash" of those mountains themselves, swept down the arroyos after heavy rains and gradually distributed more or less evenly over the surface. The numerous creeks are "dry creeks"—arroyos, that is—through which water rushes after a heavy shower, only to sink into the sands and to be speedily lost to view. On the map of the Bradshaw quadrangle, an area of only about twenty-five by thirty miles, are given some seventy or more creeks and streams, yet of this number only one, the Agua Fria—such is the report of the Geological Survey,—contains water all the year. They are dry creeks—and the arroyo, like the isolated mountains rising abruptly from the plain, is one of the very distinctive features of this country. Equally characteristic are the names on this map. Here are, for instance: Humbug Creek, Dead Cow Gulch, Chaparral Gulch, Blind Indian Creek, Horsethief Cañon, Little Squaw Creek, Crazy Basin, Bigbug Mesa, and Battle Flat,—names which bespeak rudely and vividly the life of the pioneer and the

reaction of his mind upon this savage region.

Castle Creek, lying in the cañon below my open-air study, is typical of these dry creeks, which are much alike. In places it is a narrow chasm between imposing cliffs of andesite and volcanic agglomerate on whose walls the bees nest as they do in Syria; in others a broad sandy reach between cactus-dotted hills. Its dry bed is composed of sand and loose boulders but slightly waterworn in comparison with those of an Eastern brook. Along its banks grow the groundsel and here and there willows, cottonwoods, ironwood, mesquite, palo verde and the desert willow—allied to the catalpa. As you ride down this creek bed, your horse now galloping heavily through the sands, now picking his way laboriously over the piles of stones, you are on one of the highways of this region: for the dry creek beds are utilised wherever possible, not only as trails but as roads.

Now and again you will encounter water, suddenly appearing from somewhere and flowing a few hundred yards, to as suddenly disappear. There is abundant evidence of torrential flows but as one rides day after day over this dry bed it is hard to accept the evi-

dence, unless he has himself witnessed the phenomenon. Thus recently there was a continuous downpour for forty-eight hours. At this time there fell upon the ear, accustomed to the silence of the cañons and the mesas, a sound which here seemed strange and portentous—a deep sullen roar. Hurrying to the creek bed I saw a rapid torrent of dark red fluid, some twenty-five yards in width and a foot or so in depth, where had been only dry sands, while the grim cañon beyond resounded with the tumult of the waters. Yet in forty-eight hours more it had dwindled to a small stream and soon had sunk into the sands, leaving the cañon silent as before. The thirsty sands forever drink up the streams. But not from any array of facts do you get the true impression of this, or of any desert country, for the desert yields itself only to the mystic imagination. It must be born in mind, however, that a large part of southern Arizona is mountainous, a series of desert plains, and that these plains are arboreal and very unlike the saffron deserts of Africa and of Western Asia.

Imagine now the scene before me in my mountain workshop, open to the heavens and well ventilated, rest assured. It is twenty-

five miles to the railroad and as the eye makes the sweep of the horizon there is not one sign of man or his works—not a fence to be seen. Hence there is air to breathe—not what passes for air in the cities, with millions of particles of dirt to the cubic inch, but air with only a thousand or two to the inch, unpolluted by smoke or gases and with little moisture. One who has never breathed such air does not know what air is—nor what breathing is. It is as unlike the atmosphere of Fifth Avenue as a pineapple picked and eaten in Vera Cruz or in Ceylon is unlike the little rubber ring that comes out of a cheap and nasty can.

Spread before me are ten thousand square miles as wild to all appearances as in the beginning. That in itself is a solace to the heart of the ungregarious: room enough under the sun; air for the robust lungs and colour for the seeing eye. Yonder are red purple combs of andesite and beyond, a cream-coloured butte, while below me are massive cliffs of dull ochre; in the east a wide basalt mesa, rectangular in outline with a great parallel stripe along the face of the escarpment which in certain lights appears yellow, in others salmon-pink, like the lateral stripe on a rainbow trout. Buff-tinted buttes appear like



“ My winter study under the sky.”

Egyptian temples and beyond the mesa are the New River Mountains, softer in outline and washed with rose-madder. There is more light—more sky—than we know in the East and one sees much farther. At the same time it is greener here than one would expect and all this is but a suggestion of the vivid and marvellous colouring of the Grand Cañon, which indeed has no equal in the world.

Beyond the desert, to the west and southwest, the ranges are purple and ethereal blue and in the remote distance pale phantoms against the sky. Some fifty miles from here as the crow flies, rises a short range higher than the rest, consisting of four rugged saw-toothed peaks of about the same height, sprinkled with snow and with something of the look of the Dolomites of the southern Tyrol. These are the MacDowell Peaks, or the Four Peaks as they are usually called, and thereby hangs a tale:

When I climbed up here and established my winter study under the sky, I looked across at MacDowell for the first time in forty years. For it happened that in September of the year 1869—an early day in the history of Arizona—a troop of the Eighth Cavalry, my father in command, arrived at old Camp

MacDowell which lay at the foot of the Four Peaks. With the travel-worn troops was an army waggon drawn by four mustangs—at the beginning of their journey across the desert, unbroken, though doubtless by this time sufficiently subdued—which had come from San Pedro, six weeks over the desert in August and September, while the Apaches were on the warpath. On the floor of that rough army waggon which lumbered over the broken lava as the troopers lashed the horses up MacDowell cañon, sat a slender girlish woman of nineteen with a small boy. That girl was my mother—and that was my introduction to Arizona and to the desert.

In a brief record of that journey, as the girl of nineteen saw it from her jolting waggon under the brazen skies of summer she says:

The sun came up, fierce and unclouded, into the dazzling sky and burned over our heads and grew hotter and hotter and the alkali sand scorched our eyes and choked us until we gasped for breath while the heat from the ground seemed greater even than the heat from the sun. Thirst! Ah, one does not know what thirst means until one has toiled on under such a sun and without water for hours together. There were very few springs or creeks from one station to another, generally none where the water was drinkable; and you can fancy what it is to come on a

stream beautifully clear in appearance and find it so bitter that even the horses turned from it in disgust.

How the soldiers suffered, poor men. They would start from the station, each with his canteen full and rolled up in a wet blanket to keep it cool as long as possible, but often long before we reached another supply every drop would be gone and they had to toil on as they could. Then the heat grew too great to move by day at all and we only marched by night. Those delicious nights! As the sun went down and the longed for coolness of evening came, to refresh us, I would sometimes have the waggon cover removed, and then lying on the mattress, slowly travelling on, I watched the stars rise and pass across the sky until they went out in the morning light.

Speaking of the Apaches, she says:

We had an alarm every now and then, but the body of troops was so large there was no great danger so long as ordinary precautions were taken. We had scouts and sentinels and no straggling was allowed. It would not have been safe even for a small party. We knew the Indians were watching us and we never knew when they might attack. After passing Fort Yuma we were in the Indian country and had left civilisation behind. Though we had no stragglers, our line was very long and the heavy baggage waggons would fall into the rear, so that it not infrequently happened that we arrived at the station where we were to halt while they were far behind and we had to wait hours before we could get food or anything we needed. That was weary work.

Then the most tantalising thing of all was the mirage. I used to see it constantly before us, the most exquisite landscapes, lakes and green islands and scenes of beauty perfectly heavenly in the distance, flying before us. I could not believe them false at first. One reads of the mirage, but it is quite another thing to see those heavenly scenes and be tantalised by such delusions. They made the heat hotter and the desert drier and the sand more choking.

At length, one day, my husband told me our journey was drawing to a close and that next morning would bring us to camp. That night I could not sleep from excitement and picturing to myself what my future home would be.

That home for the next year proved to be—

“A two roomed adobe hut with mud floor, open to the thatch of brush and without an article of furniture. This was our refuge.”

Furniture was evidently acquired, for—

“Packing cases made everything—seats, bookcase, sofa, wardrobe,” and again: “Chintz and muslin” from the sutler’s store “did wonders.”

Of the Indians she says again:

Now and then I did ride out with my husband, but it was risky, even with a large escort and hardly any pleasure. Oh, those dreadful Indians. They were always lying in wait and our party might be cut off and have to fight and their arrows are poisoned, so

if they do not kill, they wound mortally in most cases. They used to come into camp sometimes to have a "pow-pow"—great parties of them, and we had always to be on our guard lest they should break out and attack us suddenly. Horrible great men, all but naked and painted to look uglier than Nature made them, with their dreadful sheaves of arrows and their cruel faces. One could never trust them and I used to be in agonies of terror when there were many about. We never were attacked though we had more than one alarm: we were too cautious for them.

But the worst was when my husband had to go out scouting. Then I confess I was in terror. It seemed to me I never should see him come back, and each time it grew worse—at least my fear did—for every now and then they would bring back wounded men, sometimes they brought dead ones—they never left any to be scalped. But oh, it was sad to see the poor fellows coming back to die slowly and painfully so far away from home. I knew most of my husband's men and would visit and try to comfort them, but there was little to be done except by kind words. We had no comforts for the sick, no fresh meat, no milk or eggs, only canned provisions on which chiefly we lived. I have hated canned food ever since. It was very sad, and sadder still to make them ready for their graves when they died. The poisoned arrows were almost always fatal and caused great suffering.

They knew, however, they would have a soldier's funeral, even in that distant desert, and although I had not a flower to lay on their coffin, they knew I would do what I could and it pleased them. Yet I

could only make them shabby little crosses of the sombre manzanita [probably creosote bush]. Still, the living felt the dead were cared for and the dying knew it would be so. But oh, the sadness of a soldier's funeral in that dreary desert as they sounded the three taps over the grave, and it seemed to say they were called home for the last time, so far away from their native land.

They gave those three taps softly, so softly, as a farewell and left him there under the broad blue sky.

Such was travelling in Arizona in the summer of 1869 and such the life of an army woman in those days. Old Camp MacDowell has long been abandoned and the Apache—the human scorpion of the desert—has lost his sting. Now the deserts are called valleys and not far from old MacDowell—once so far from everywhere—is the site of Roosevelt Dam which is to make the orange and the alfalfa thrive where grew only the cholla and the creosote bush. The men who made this possible—the true pioneers of this region—were the old cavalry troops who scouted the mountains from Whipple down to the border and across the desert from Yuma to the Mogollons.

We are free to dream and botanise, or play at roughing it with our aluminum coffee-pot and fry-pan as we cook our bacon on the

hills, with no concern for the poisoned arrow which once might have whistled from behind some red purple comb of andesite to take the white man unaware, like the sting of the scorpion. But looking abroad over the lava peaks, the wildness and savagery of the country is still unredeemed. Long may it be so. Long may we be left some wild spot in which to solace and recreate ourselves in the silence of the desert under the broad blue sky.

There is much pleasant company in my study on the mountains with its columnar saguaros—like monoliths of jade,—its queer garden of cacti and other thorny plants, its splendid blue dome, and its ten thousand square miles of lava peaks and desert fading into a phantom distance. The Arizona cottontail scurries away from the trail and the jackrabbit comes leaping upon the mountains with those marvellous jumps which no other animal save the kangaroo can equal. Now and again a coyote slinks out of sight on a ridge, moving like some noiseless mechanism. Panthers and wildcats live among these mountains but the former are practically invisible. Nearly always the Western redbill is to be seen overhead and lately I encountered one rising with a packrat in his

talons. Desert sparrow-hawks are abundant and rarely a golden eagle crosses the blue dome with superb flight and disappears, leaving one with the sense of having witnessed something admirable and perfect in its way—a flight symbolic of freedom and power. Sometimes the little diurnal owl is seen peering from its hole in a saguaro, and once it flung itself upon the trail in front of me, barely missing a scurrying mouse. Of reptiles there are none in winter: their time is not yet, and both the Gila monster and the rattlesnake are safely underground.

It is the birds which are the friends of my leisure and my solitude, here as elsewhere. The sociable and garrulous Gila woodpeckers call from the Doric columns of the saguaro in which they nest early in February. One large cactus contains twenty-one woodpecker holes, though apparently but one pair are nesting in it, so that these holes show it to be an ancestral tree in which many generations have dwelt. Both the red-shafted and gilded flickers occur here and their call is to the mesas what the Eastern flicker's is to the pasture—a contented, self-reliant, cheery note that is good to hear.

Gambel's partridge appears to be the only

quail—a handsome bird with black crest, chestnut crown, and buff and black underparts. As I sit here writing, their solicitous call may be heard—a harsher note than that of the valley quail—and a covey steals up a bank under the encelia and creosote bushes and across an open bit of lava, on which stands a solitary barrel cactus rooted in solid rock. The meat of this bird is peculiarly dry—as one might expect of a desert bird—and not very good eating.

Western gnatcatchers scold and sputter among the palo verdes and mesquites, and now and again I hear the sweet warbler-like note of the verdin. In the cañon below, the black phoebe, one of my old Mexican friends, is always to be found gleaning its food and exhibiting all the mannerisms and traits of that family of which it is one of the most delightful members. Say's phoebe, which is also a peculiarly agreeable little bird—gentle, soft-voiced, and unafraid,—prefers the more open spaces along the creek, and these are the only flycatchers to winter here.

In almost any locality of the South-West, the common birds are the wrens, thrashers, and towhees. Here the cactus wren is the most abundant; of the thrashers, Palmer's and the

Crissal take the place of the California; while the cañon towhee supplants the California and the spurred towhee, so common in Southern California. The cactus wren is a noisy rollicking fellow without vocal power and little like a wren in appearance. A smaller bird, the rock wren, keeps more to the ground and his metallic call-note greets one from the rockiest places, but not as a rule from the sheer cliffs, which appear to belong by all traditions of the race to the cañon wren—whose liquid melting notes fall on my ear as I descend from my mountain garret to the creek bed. Of sparrows, there are those boreal sojourners the golden-crowned and the white-crowned, and with them is to be seen that austral species, the black-chinned desert sparrow, so that birds of the glacial peaks and the deserts thus hobnob together during the winter months. Strangely enough the desert sparrow has a glacial voice—a faint glassy tinkle that suggests icicles dropping upon ice in a thaw.

Perhaps the most beautiful birds are the Arizona cardinal and the phainopepla; the former resembling the Eastern cardinal, the latter, a jet black, crested bird with a grey lining to his wings, of extremely graceful

appearance and bearing—a thoroughbred among birds. Cardinals are abundant, and a brilliant red bird on a fresh green branch of the ocotilla, with the deep blue sky for background, is a memorable sight indeed.

It may appear from this that a region where the saguaros stand erect upon the red-brown slopes of the lava peaks; where the ranges rise from the opal desert like enchanted islands from the sea—has a distinguished and beautiful personality: and there is room—ten thousand miles stretching around you, under the broad blue sky.

CHAPTER XIV

IMPRESSIONS OF THE DESERT

DAY after day from my workshop on the lava peaks with its Doric columns and its blue dome, I have looked out over the desert fading into the distance. Isolated ranges, rising abruptly, divide the plain as by so many great stone walls, which are however nowhere continuous, affording countless vistas through rocky gateways from one desert plain or valley into the next and to a remote and enchanting horizon beyond. These vistas change with the condition of the atmosphere so that sometimes a new and beautiful island may seem suddenly to have emerged on the confines of the opal desert, and again, some familiar landmark as suddenly disappears.

Distances are far greater than those we are accustomed to in the East; the perspective is marvellous and alluring. Light is more brilliant, more charged with colour, more abundant than with us. Except on two absolutely

clear and windless days at the same season, the desert never appears twice alike, for it is exceedingly sensitive to the gradations of light due to subtle changes in the atmosphere—its humidity, temperature, and proportion of dust particles, as well as to the effect of clouds; so that at times certain ranges, buttes, mesas, or desert plains are emphasised and at times almost obliterated from the picture by the play of light. A range that yesterday appeared washed in rose-madder may to-day appear a deep purple because of a grey sky. So also is the difference very great as one looks towards the sun or away from it. It thus happens that a gateway in the ragged mountains at times appears unusually prominent, while beyond it lies a wonderful desert shimmering in the sunlight, which before had not attracted the attention. It may happen, too, when you look again for that gate of pearl and that region of light, they have vanished.

Day after day, looking between the green columns of the saguaro, afar off towards the MacDowell Peaks, I have felt the spell of the desert. It has seemed to draw me like some entrancing mirage—a beautiful region, ethereal and opalescent and changeful. There is a sense of the desert as there is a sense of the

sea: a spell, a witchery, which is like music, like poetry, is perhaps itself music and poetry in another form. But this is not the saffron desert of Africa and Asia; these desert plains are rocky or gravelly and covered with verdure, so that not saffron, orange, or yellow, but green, purple, and lilac predominate. From the plain, these mountains, rising like rocky islands from the sea, have at twenty miles one tone, at forty miles another, and at seventy-five and a hundred miles, still others. They grow more and more ethereal in the distance until they become mere wraiths on the horizon, appearing only in certain lights; and these pale phantoms seem to beckon you to come out over the desert into the unknown. Should you go, others would rise day by day, ever beckoning, ever promising, like the mirage, that which they can never fulfil. This is the spell of the desert. The secret of that spell is not in any realisation but in a continual anticipation of something which lies beyond, and in this it is much like life itself.

At length, one morning before daybreak, I set out to ride over the desert. That particular morning is impressed on my mind, for no subsequent impressions are ever quite so sharply outlined as are the first, when the

mind is more sensitive, and like fresh wax, takes a clearer imprint. My route lay down Castle Creek and thence along the Agua Fria River, a considerable stream, which had to be forded at some half-dozen points. By that early morning light, half starlight, half daylight, earth appears less earthy and is invested with a transcendent quality, while we see it again for a fleeting moment with the eyes of youth—the undimmed, unwearied, untrammelled eyes of youth. The mind is rejuvenated, refreshed, renewed, only to grow old again, it may be, before the day is done. But life is good in those early hours and yields to the solitary horseman in the mountains a sense of freedom not readily experienced in this world.

It was some time before the light of the stars was replaced by daylight. The first bird-note was the call of Gambel's partridge. On the edge of a cliff a Western horned owl sat facing the east and saluted the advent of day with weird savage notes. Presently the thrasher and the cardinal began to sing and it was some time before the rising sun gilded the tops of the lava peaks. How soft is that early light which conveys no impression of heat whatever, as if those first sunbeams were

destitute of heat rays. Looking southward, how unutterably cold was the landscape; while to the north and west it was gently warm in tone, a beautiful mauve tinged with green. One was a pale image of death, the other an auroral glow symbolic of life. In the east the earth was neutral, a series of outlines in grey, and one was conscious, not of the desert, but of the light which illumined the desert, producing an eminently impressionistic picture—a vision rather than an actual landscape.

By ten o'clock I had ridden twenty miles or more and was far out on the plain. But what a disenchantment! Where now was the opal desert which had so lured with its ethereal colour, its subtle charm? Creosote and artemisia bushes, all of about the same size and appearance, were scattered more or less regularly over the hard gravelly plain. Among these were stunted palo verdes and occasional saguaros, while barrel cacti, tree chollas, and other opuntias formed a large part of the flora. The immediate environment was harsh and the endless little bushes monotonous. These were the factors then which produced such beauty in the distance. This near view was much as if one should look at a painting with a magnifying-glass: it resolves itself into

rough blotches of pigment. To get the harmony of colour and the play of light one must have distance. To that, the desert owes its spell; it is distance, perhaps, and not the desert itself, which is enchanting. Like the surface of the moon it is beautiful to those alone who are far off.

For several hours I wandered about in the fierce sunshine, pausing in the meagre shade of a palo verde to eat my lunch and empty my canteen, intent upon hearing what the desert had to say for itself. After a time the result was a baffled and purposeless feeling: there was no goal in view, nothing to ride to. It affected one in this respect like mid-ocean, and the tendency would be to move in a circle. That was one thing the desert told me. More and more it was evident how much it owes to perspective. If one could have climbed a mountain and seen another desert afar off shimmering in the sun, that would have lured as this had done before. All beauty was in the distance: and that was another thing the desert had to say—that which it emphasised above all.

It was now the mountains I had left that lured me; *they* that were soft and entrancing. From the plain the solitary ranges seemed

more than ever like islands. Unutterably beautiful, they redeemed the commonplace, the terrible sameness of my surroundings. The Bradshaws appeared against the horizon like some vast wave arrested in its course and instantly and for ever fixed. It is above all the sublime repose of these arid mountains which appeals. In the whole world there is nothing else so suggestive of infinite repose: as if a vast symbol were carved there in the sky that all men should see and take heed. There in the burning sun, in the ineffable silence, one is hushed as by the face of the dead. On that open cactus plain one feels detached and cut off and I found myself looking to the distant mountains for solace, realising as never before what good company they are, how much they yield us the essence of companionship.

In every way the desert proves deceptive and to ride over it is a good study in appearances. A range in the distance may seem to run north and south, but after a half-day's ride toward it, is found to be a number of spurs, before unnoticed, whose axis lies east and west. Then again what appears to be a butte or a mesa is often, in reality, two, widely separated perhaps, but the eye, entirely

deceived, superimposes one upon the other as if it were but a stratum, and makes them appear to be the same. So astonishing is the difference in the appearance of desert ranges from various points of view that it cannot fail to suggest a certain train of thought to the reflective mind and cause one to wonder if it is not precisely the same in regard to the facts of life. Two persons approach a mountain from different directions and to them it is not the same mountain but two very different ones, so absolutely unlike does it appear from opposite sides, and from a hundred points of view, and from one and another elevation. In riding all day around these isolated mountains, this fact, which seems so trite, is brought home in so vital a sense that, for the first time, perhaps, it ceases to be a truism and becomes a truth. It is one of the most striking object-lessons of the desert.

This changing aspect of things in a day's ride affects one as a sort of enchantment. Not only do the mountains appear to change, but it may happen that a range will disappear entirely from view as if by some magic it had become invisible. From my mountain workshop I had closely observed the topography of the desert, and in particular several peculiarly

shaped and isolated hills which might serve as an objective point for a day's ride. But when subsequently I came where apparently they should have been, not only were they not there, but they were nowhere in view, nor were they again seen until I returned to my starting point and climbed the hills. To begin with, they were much farther away than they appeared to be, and then again the plain is not as flat as it looks from a distance, but has sufficient curvature to shut out certain hills at close range.

On the other hand, far off to the east, appeared at noon a rather high range which I did not remember having seen before, and have not been able to find since. On returning to the same spot—there it is; but from my workshop there appears to be no such range, though there are others which could not be seen from the plain. There is thus no telling when a range may appear or another disappear, as if they rose from the desert or subsided into it like some volcanic isles in the sea. It is all enchantment and on the map the ranges should be marked as indefinite or uncertain. They may be there or they may not, according to the point of view and the direction of approach—or the whim of the mountains them-

selves. In all probability no one knows where they are and they are merely located on the map where they are supposed to be or where they were last seen.

One is surprised here at the greenness of the desert, which has been well named arboreal, in distinction from the sandy desert of the Colorado which conforms to the conventional idea. As a fact, however, the larger part of the desert country of Arizona is of this arboreal character—it is a plateau or a desert plain, its floor constructed of the detritus washed down from the mountains which rise from its surface. These arboreal deserts necessarily produce a very different impression than such a desert as the Sahara, and as a day's ride will convince one, their charm is due largely to the mountains. That peculiar fascination which the great Sahara waste exerts by the play of light on the burning sands is not known on these verdant plains where millions of green bushes are distributed in unending monotony. In the distance this plain is lilac and blue, while out of it rise islands, purple in some directions, mauve and yellow and red in others, according to the hour—and it is ever the distance which is beautiful.

While resting in the quasi shade of a small

palo verde at mid-day, looking over the varnished green tops of the creosote bushes towards the distant Bradshaws, which seemed somehow to have turned themselves around, I heard behind me what appeared to be the barking of a puppy and peering cautiously around a rock was surprised to find it was not a quadruped at all but a road-runner. As the strange uncouth bird hunted for his favourite diet of scorpions and snakes, he paused now and again and gave vent to his feelings in this fashion. Presently something whizzed over my head in the hot sunshine with a ting like a rifle bullet. This was repeated at intervals and if I had not already learned that it was an antic of the black-chinned humming-bird, who thus disports himself before the female, it might have caused me as much surprise as the barking of the road-runner. So rapid is the flight in these manoeuvres that the bird is virtually invisible and one is aware of him merely by the sound he makes, as of a passing bullet. My only other encounter was with a horned toad, a patient, inoffensive little lizard of a mauve hue, like the desert ranges, and with a crown of tubercles upon his head which in outline suggest the lava peaks of these same mountains. He looks like the country he

inhabits and is as appropriately designed for his environment as a rainbow trout for a brook.

After a solitary vigil from starlight to starlight, I returned that night, impressed above all with the deceptiveness of the desert: I had discovered what a delusion it is. Yet, looking at it next day from my lava peak—lying so soft and opalescent in the distance—it beckoned as before, as beautiful and alluring and as full of enchantment as ever; and though arguing to myself that it was only distance lent it beauty, I felt its spell was not broken—would never be broken. Day after day it lures with its beautiful wiles, wrapped in mystery as profound as ever, in spite of my erstwhile disillusionment and a critical analysis of the facts. The desert ever refuses to be weighed in the balance of fact and of logic. While you reason and ponder, it weaves its spell around and around you, weaves it into the very fibre of your thought, until the sense is enmeshed and your little logic is forgotten—lost in that feeling for mystery and for beauty which the wonderful desert inspires.

CHAPTER XV

TRAILS

I N the dense chaparral of the humid Transition zone of California or in the rough lava formation of the arid mountains of Arizona, one is as dependent upon trails as a ship is dependent on a channel in a shallow river. These slender paths admit one to wild and solitary recesses otherwise almost inaccessible. The trail is a thread by which to find the way. Rough, tortuous, steep, often hazardous, it comes closer to the mountains than could any road, brings one in closer contact with the wild and gives a more intimate view and understanding. Leading across mesas and cañons, around buttes and cliffs, and over saddles, spurs, and ranges, it may afford the key to a mountain formation, to topographical features, to structural and dynamic geology. Metamorphism, mechanical strain, volcanic action, subsequent erosion or glacial action are all revealed. Your

mountain trail is now over sedimentary rock, now over lavas, again through crumbling shale or over a glacial moraine, and borrows character from each in turn, according a practical view of these things.

The effect of much following of trails is to imbue one with a sense of topography. An old prospector can judge what kind of traveling it will be on a distant range from its topography, which also reveals some features of its geology. In this Giant Cactus country, the mountains are largely granite, schist, or andesite, while the mesas are basalt, and each has its characteristic outlines, so that far in the distance it is possible to make a good guess as to what a mountain is made of. An eye that has had long training scans a range or bit of rough country, much as a general looks over a battle-field, and decides where are the best approaches and the point of attack. When the trail is lost, or vanishes now and then, as it does hereabouts, to reappear farther on, the practised eye knows where it ought to be and so one manages to pick it up again like a broken thread. Now the possessor of such an eye bears in mind whenever he follows a new trail that he will very likely wish to return and that landmarks are of the greatest

service to that end in a difficult country. He does not fail to observe the watercourses and striking features of the landscape, such as buttes, mesas, or cliffs, and their direction from his starting point. This is done, however, almost unconsciously and as a matter of habit. He makes a mental note also of the forks in the trail and of any features that serve to identify the trail itself such as peculiar outcrops of rock. A good trail horse may be trusted to some extent to return over a trail: for he has a personal interest in going home, but none whatever in going away. It is easy to lose oneself in the wilderness and it is easy to lose one's bearings in the arid mountain regions where the broken ridges are as the waves of a choppy sea. Here landmarks must serve in place of blazed trees.

What the canoe is to the Adirondack wilderness, the trail horse is to the Western mountains. Your horse becomes an indispensable part of yourself, as the boat is in the North Woods, and like the guide boat, he is peculiarly fitted for his environment and for no other. The usual old trail horse is at home on the trail only and often confused when, at rare intervals, he finds himself on a road. Steady, patient, and reliable on the trail, he will come

down out of the mountain into a stage road or village street and appear as distracted as a country bumpkin on his first visit to the city. The narrow path seems to concentrate his attention and put him at ease, but a road is too wide a world for him and disturbs his balance.

There are three points to look for in a trail horse: he should be surefooted, sensitive-mouthed, and a fast walker. Most Western ponies are surefooted, unless their knees are sprung, and tender-mouthed. They guide by the neck and stop abruptly—excellent qualities, though the latter is somewhat disconcerting to the tenderfoot. A tender-mouthed animal is like a boat that obeys her helm well. You can manage both readily and with small leeway. When at the same time you have a horse that is a fast walker, you have a prize indeed. A good trail horse, furthermore, should not be tall but should be well-knit and fairly heavy, for the stocky horse has the better chance of keeping his foothold on difficult ground with the weight of his rider; he has a broader beam so to speak.

Mules are credited with being surer footed and with having more sense than horses. I have ridden plenty of horses, however, that

were as surefooted as any mule could possibly be, but I have observed that it is not always safe to trust their judgment in a dangerous bit of trail through loose gravel or shale which is likely to give way, and I have known experienced horses when ridden by inexperienced riders to step on such places and go over the bank. It is said that a mule will not do this. If the ground looks firm, the horse certainly does not reason as to whether appearances may be deceptive. A horse may be extremely cautious about entering a muddy stream because of uncertainty as to the depth and the nature of the bottom, yet I have had a horse go unsuspectingly into dangerous quicksand with me which appeared safe enough, but from which he was with the greatest difficulty extricated. The tendency of all trail horses, especially if they have ever been pack animals, is to keep to the outer edge of the trail, doubtless for fear of being pushed over by striking some projection from the bank, and also to be in position to throw themselves in if they find they are going over. In crossing landslides on narrow trails it is expedient to keep a horse in; otherwise he may generally be left to pick his way for himself.

In the South-West, the most difficult traveling is over "malpais" country in Arizona and the "pedragal" in Mexico. "Malpais" is land covered with small basalt boulders or with rough fragments of andesite. It is possible to cross such country only with extreme slowness and the trail is in reality only a direction and not a path. "Pedragal" is a lava flow just as it cooled and presenting a cracked ragged surface as broken and rough as a vast mass of scrap iron. Of well-known trails there are none steeper than those of the Grand Cañon. The old Colima trail from Tuxpan to Colima has some grades perhaps as considerable for a short distance, and up these hundreds of mules and burros daily plod with salt and cocoanuts and barrels of spirits. Of course there are innumerable little local trails in the mountains, badly constructed and out of repair, on which you will find a place now and then where the angle is perhaps fifty degrees and it is barely possible for a horse to get up with you, and where, if you were to come down on an English saddle, you would find yourself astride of the animal's neck and holding on by his ears. The stock saddle certainly gives a better seat for trail riding than any other, and I believe a more

comfortable seat for all-day jaunts than even the cavalry saddle. An English saddle is altogether unadapted to the mountains, and while some of the best horsemanship is shown in cross-country riding on English saddles, it is a totally different sort of riding from the cowboy's and the two can hardly be compared.

Undoubtedly the worst trails are in Mexico, for there they have been made, not by pick and shovel, but by the unshod hoofs of burros and the bare and sandalled feet of peons, carrying their wares to market, or travelling over the mountains on pilgrimages and to village fiestas. In four years' riding in that country I did not encounter a single instance of anyone repairing a trail. The ascent of the steep slopes of a barranca is thus often like going up a pair of stairs with very high and narrow steps. It is quite an acrobatic feat to get up and down these barrancas and it sometimes has to be done many times in a day. But such trails are in reality not as dangerous as some in a gravel formation: neglected paths where the gravel has fallen down from the inside and dropped away from the outside until only a few inches of trail remains, while beneath is an almost perpendicular drop of five hundred or a thousand feet to the bottom of the cañon.

They may be encountered in Colorado and there are some in the Santa Inez in California. When following them in the dark I have always felt I relied as much upon faith as upon anything substantial underfoot.

One is far from being wholly absorbed with these practical considerations in following the trail. There is something mysterious about all trails. They seem matter of fact enough as the pony plods laboriously upward, panting and straining from the shoulders or floundering over the loose stones, but as you start briskly at a fox trot over the mesa or along the ridge in the fresh morning air, the world at your feet, you may feel you have somehow left yourself behind and acquired, for the time being, a new self. Somewhere on every trail another and freer self waits for us, and as we come up, silently and mysteriously steps into the body and inhabits it while we are on his domain. When we come to go down again, he steps out at the edge of his province and the old self slips into his accustomed place and jogs along quite as if it were he who had been in the saddle all the time. Ever since I discovered this I take to the trail with a peculiarly pleasant anticipation of somewhere in the wild country being met

by this large and free self of me, whose views of life are broad and serene and genial; who knows nothing of either money or time but who looks abroad over the landscape as if indeed he were the owner of this great South-West, and the silent mountains and the shimmering deserts were his private estate.

Every mountain trail ascends to a region as remote from the gossipy world of the hotel or the "resort" as are the Pleiades or the Pole Star. With every foot of ascent that little world grows smaller, until finally it dwindles to nothing and vanishes as we cross some saddle or shoulder and continue the ascent on another slope of the mountain. There below they have mountain air but up here we have mountain thoughts as well: another point of view, that can never be enjoyed from a hotel veranda. For the ideas that go with rocking chairs and afternoon tea are not the ideas that go with the saddle and the spur. Here we abide by the traditions of the trail. I do not know whether we have become more spiritual or more healthily animal; whichever it is, it is far removed from that with which they are concerned in the hotel and which now plays no more part with us than it does with the horse.

A little ascent, a change in relative position, makes an astonishing difference in the appearance of a range. A mountain landscape, in fact, is not one but myriad. It is a hundred landscapes from a hundred points of view. Hence the delights and surprises of the trail. I own all I see, riding over the mountains; but every now and again it appears in a different light or from a new point of view. By early morning light the range has one aspect; by the glare of noon another; at sunset a different world again. In a day's ride the trail leads insensibly from one to the next and the sensitive eye receives from each its peculiar set of impressions.

To ascend is to be continually enlarging the world. Each hundred or thousand feet permits you to see over some ridge that interrupted the vision below. The horizon continues to recede. It is bounded first by a range in yellow and red, hard in outline, savage in colour, and perhaps ten miles away; presently by one softer and more radiant, which reflects rather than absorbs light—a twenty-mile limit; again by the fine deep blue and purple of more distant ranges; then by the ethereal azure hills of the fifty- to seventy-mile circle; lastly by those pallid

ghosts of mountain ranges, one to two hundred miles away, which appear to float in the ambient atmosphere and are no more substantial than visions.

To receive all that the trail has to give, the full import of its message, so to speak, one must go on day after day—for a week, at least, which will answer perhaps as well as a month. It only yields itself fully to this persistent association and this complete detachment from the starting point, which is very likely to be a hotel, itself one of the uninspiring influences of life. You may make your own camp, or to avoid the encumbrance of pack animal, blankets, food, and guide, you may arrange to reach some village or camp each night. The charm is in the *going*—moving on into the unknown, the world before you, like a true nomad. And such a world! A sphere of light and colour and distance. In the East we do not know that enchantment which lies in distance. In the clear atmosphere of the South-West you come to love that wonderful horizon with its ethereal mountains, which ever lures and ever recedes as you advance. This is to be in the open. This is to know the flavour of life. Surrounded by ranges and peaks fading into



“ That wonderful horizon with its ethereal mountains.”

the distant blue, and beyond the desert, other ranges, fainter and fainter, mere serrated outlines; surrounded by this limitless beauty—room enough, silence enough, time enough; up there following trails to the stars, one might forget time and live in eternity, one might forget to ever come down again. Up there in the silence and the light, your free and immortal self shall surely meet you somewhere on the trail.

CHAPTER XVI

ARIZONA GARDENS

IT is difficult to imagine, in looking at this rough mountain country in December, what a garden it will become in March and April, for many flowers exhale their sweetness on the desert air for the bee and the moth. Early in January the cottonwoods bloom and the first leaves appear on the ocotilla. By February the white spirea is in flower while perhaps a castilleia glows here and there like a coal on the rock. Thenceforth the lava peaks and the basalt mesas daily soften their mood and yield themselves more and more to the gentle influence of the flowers. In a land so rude and savage, where the mountains were vomited from the fiery throats of volcanoes, the contrast of the flowers with their stern setting enhances their delicacy a hundred fold.

In February the sensitive brier puts out its feathery old-rose coloured blossoms and little

patches cover the lava as with a bit of rich brocade. Soon brodiaëas appear and the small red pentstemon with its pale green leaves, a plant so exquisite, so chaste, that when you come upon it for the first time it is as if you had discovered a rare old jewel lying upon the rock. Larger red pentstemons bloom later in the season which, though handsome, are coarse compared with this. Now comes a salmon-pink mallow drooping gracefully over andesite cliffs, and by the end of the month the first eschscholtzias, blue phacelias, salvias, yellow mentzelias, and pink gilies have appeared.

March brings lupines, white phlox, anemones, and castilleias in profusion, saxifrage, verbena—one of the most delightful wild flowers of Arizona,—yellow baeria, white lessingia, and magenta escobitas, dainty cream-cups, white daisies, lavender flea-bane, purple asters, evening primroses large and small, purple phacelias, blue gilies, portulaca, and whispering bells, while the encelia blossoms here and there on the slopes and the ground is starred with the low growing white and lavender townsendia. Not until April is there a profusion of flowers, for here as in California, all appear rare at first and nearly

all are common in the end. Then the various composite shrubs, of which the encelia is the handsomest, are covered with their yellow flowers, so that the hills in places are coloured by them as by the black mustard in California and the ground is thickly sprinkled with the golden baeria, the little townsendia, and the escobita. Eschscholtzias and gilies are abundant in the river bottom, and red and yellow monkey flowers in the rocky gorges. The mariposas bloom on the mesas and the larkspurs on the hillsides: among them the pale sky-blue larkspur (*D. azureum*), one of the most exquisite flowers in the West, and the brilliant orange-red mariposa—one pale and ethereal, the other, a hot flame. By the time the cacti have begun to bloom, members of the composite family have become very numerous, and being exceedingly difficult of identification are apt to be designated, by any but very painstaking botanists, merely as yellow or white composites, especially as no systematic botany of Arizona has ever been published. After all why should they have individual names? Like the units of an army, it is enough perhaps to know that they belong to such a regiment and such a company.

It is the shrubs and trees, and particularly

the cacti, which give to an Arizona garden its peculiar character and distinguish it from all other wild gardens. Foremost among these is, of course, the saguaro, which would in itself sufficiently distinguish any region. It ascends the slopes, it stands on the ridge, it guards the cliffs—erect and rigid as stone; sometimes forming a cross against the sky, sometimes presenting queer shapes suggesting the trunks of elephants or the tusks of mammoths. The ocotilla is quite as pronounced and individual, and now in April is very striking with its whiplike branches, arrayed in leaves growing close to the stem, and bearing terminal racemes of scarlet blossoms. Barrel cacti are disposed here and there: large squat vegetables, several feet in height and half as much in diameter, resembling a young saguaro but armed with an entirely different sort of spines of a reddish hue. The pulp contains considerable moisture which may be obtained by cutting a hole in the top and pounding the pulp until the water is squeezed out.

Of chollas there are several common species: a spiny irascible race of the genus *Opuntia*. One species is commonly known as "buckhorn cactus" and this you may approach with

reasonable care. But Bigelow's cholla can only be circumvented with the utmost precaution. One of the most accursed of plants, its barbed spine is against man and beast. Most cacti appear to be defensive merely but this cholla gives the impression of being actually offensive. You have but to touch the plant and it has fastened itself upon you; it seems literally to attack. Its barbed spines penetrate leather as easily as paper and there is no pulling them out. In the bright sunlight the plant looks as if it were made of grey-green glass and it is quite as brittle as if such were the case, for the joints are thrown to the ground by a slight jar, attaching themselves by their spines to whatever may touch them. This would certainly appear to be a provision of Nature for the perpetuation and distribution of the species, which propagates to some extent—I am inclined to believe, very largely—by means of these joints, which, when detached from the plant, eventually put forth a root from a point near the fracture.

This cholla is the favourite nesting-place of the cactus wren, who apparently avails himself of its protection, but how he himself escapes being impaled it is difficult to see. The wren has an understanding of the cholla and a

sympathy for it, or it for him, which thus permits them to live in accord. And he is about the only friend the plant has. One sometimes sees the nest of the thrasher in this species, but with this exception, the cactus wren appears to be the only bird to seek so dangerous a nesting-place; and though this bird builds in the saguaro, the prickly pear, the canotia, and the palo verde, the majority of nests in this region are placed in Bigelow's cholla, the most irritable and unapproachable plant in North America.

No concealment is possible. The nest is as plainly in view as the plant itself and the bird would seem to be aware of the nature of the protection the cactus offers and to rely upon that, instead of upon concealment as do most birds; though the fact that the nest is also placed in the parkinsonia, where it is almost as much exposed and where it receives practically no protection, does not support this view. The defence that this cactus affords the nest is admirably illustrated by a cholla in plain view as I write. An old nest lies in the thorny embrace of the cactus joints, a bulky flask-shaped affair, a foot and a half in length, with a small opening which leads as it were by the neck of the flask to the nest proper. Within

a foot of this opening is the head of a serpent, the fixed eyes staring in death at the nest it was destined never to reach, while the slender brown-ringed body rests in sinuous curves among the terrible cholla joints which hold it as rigidly as steel. Hundreds of barbed points entered deeper and deeper with every writhe of the serpent, until it was transfixed and left to perish miserably, while the little wrens were hatched from the coveted eggs and on the first venture from the nest received an object-lesson in the value of the cholla to the race of cactus wrens.

The plant does not serve the thrasher so well, for in a recently completed nest I found a cholla joint which had fallen in and driven the bird out. She had built a new one, however, just above the first, in which were four eggs. The peculiar flask-shaped nest of the wren is far better adapted to this nesting-site than is the large open structure of the thrasher.

In addition to the various cacti of the genera *Cereus*, *Opuntia*, and *Echinocactus*, some of which are now in flower, their brilliant scarlet or magenta blossoms as large as teacups and supplying the most vivid note in the desert landscape, there is the fishhook cactus of the genus *Mamillaria*, one of the prettiest of

all, a grey little plant whose black spines resemble trout hooks and whose edible berries are brilliant scarlet. A glance over this garden reveals the fact that the cactus family, formidable by reason of its armour, is everywhere the protecting genius not only of birds, but much more of plants. This seems to apply less to Bigelow's cholla than to other species of *Opuntia* among whose spiny lobes one will usually see a host of blossoms: now a beautiful white phlox, again a blue phacelia and white daisies, or the yellow blossom of the hosackia. It appears exactly as if the plants had crowded within the protecting arms of the cacti with as good a show of reason as in the case of the cactus wren. The simple fact is that cattle and sheep devour them elsewhere, but within the precincts of the cactus plants their noses are pricked by the needle-like spines and the flowers within are perforce unmolested.

In this garden the creosote bush is one of the few shrubs which is not armed, and its varnished evergreen leaves are far more in evidence than the artemisias. *Yucca* is a rare genus hereabouts, while the agave grows sparingly on the lava cliffs. The dalea is a shrub quite as prickly as the ocotilla—a true

desert plant bristling at all points. Perhaps the typical tree is the palo verde or green-barked acacia (*Cercidium torreyanum*) with its minute leaves and its conspicuous pale green bark. *Parkinsonia microphylla* resembles it and is also called palo verde but its bark is of a yellower green and its leaves even more minute. Both trees appear leafless at a little distance. Unlike the palo verde the parkinsonia has no thorns, but as if to atone for this, its twigs end in spines.

As the leaves diminish, the spines or thorns appear to increase, and the canotia is absolutely leafless while its twigs are merely very long spines. It is this species (*Canotia holacantha*) which is called the "Thorn of Palestine." Probably the name was given it by the early Spanish settlers and the tradition of its identity with the Syrian tree was perpetuated by the unbotanical; for Sargent gives the tree a purely American habitat. Such a tradition might very naturally have arisen among the Spaniards and readily have been handed down. Of the genus *Acacia* there is the cat's-claw, a scraggly shrub, whose thorns cause one more trouble than the barbs of the cholla, for the simple reason that the cholla is habitually avoided as if by instinct, whereas

the slender twigs of the cat's-claw are overlooked until the small sharp recurved thorns scratch one like the claws of an enraged cat. Mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora velutina*) and ironwood (*Olneya tesota*) are the common trees of the river bottoms—scraggly, thorny trees growing in the thickets of sarcobatus. In April, however, the mesquite is a very fresh and delightful shade of green and, with its yellow blossoms, gives one impressions of spring worthy of our Eastern hardwoods. It is, moreover, the home tree of the phainopepla and in a day's ride down a creek bed you may come upon several of their beautiful saucer-shaped nests saddled in the forks of the mesquite. These trees are all adapted by their small leaves to more sun and less water than are Eastern trees, and by their thorns, to repel the depredations of animals. The mesquite, however, often succumbs to the mistletoe by which it is grievously infested.

Aside from the owls, the first bird to nest in the garden is the Gila woodpecker who may be seen flying to her hole in the saguaro late in January, where she dwells at the top of a column, if not actually upon it like Simeon-Stylites. Her nesting-site affords an excellent lookout from which to survey the country

round about. The saguaro is also used by the gilded flickers, by some small owls, and by the desert sparrow-hawk, it is said, all of whom have chosen to live in Doric columns. The cactus wren may be found nesting by the middle of February and the cañon wren soon after; Say's phoebe, the black phoebe, thrasher, and cañon towhee, the last of March or first part of April.

For arrivals I have the red flycatcher down for February 24th, hooded oriole and painted redstart March 25th, ash-throated flycatcher April 6th, Arkansas kingbird, April 9th, Scott's oriole April 12th, the mockingbird April 13th, and the lazuli bunting April 18th. But these dates are variable, the present being generally regarded as a late season. I found two nests of the phainopepla on April 13th with three eggs in each and on the same day the nests of the housefinch and the Arkansas goldfinch, each with four eggs; while one bird was hatched in a thrasher's nest containing four eggs. One takes no count of the nests of the cactus wren, as a dozen may be encountered during a ride of a few hours.

Young coyotes and jackrabbits are abroad the latter part of March, guileless children shifting for themselves in a hard and cruel

world. I encounter them now and again in one part or another of the garden and it may happen that in their innocence, instead of fleeing as would their skeptical progenitors, they tarry and afford me no little amusement by their antics. I came one day upon a young coyote—and the young coyote is a very pretty animal—who had a chipmunk in a thorny bush, and for some time the two tore round and round the bush, first one way, then the other, as two children might play, though of course the chipmunk was running for his life and the coyote for his dinner. Meanwhile I approached on tiptoe until within a few yards and stood motionless watching the game. So intent was the little coyote that he apparently did not see me until the chipmunk finally escaped, whereupon he dropped the game as does a child on losing interest, and, discovering my presence, examined me critically for a few moments, moving his head from side to side with a curious sinuous motion. Deciding in my favour, he deliberately sat down on his haunches and yawned in my face. A thrasher came and perched in a palo verde, scolding vociferously, and the coyote, still sitting in front of me, threw back his head and looked longingly at him. His motions

were so like those of a playful puppy that he hardly seemed a wild creature. Finally he arose and went his way while I went mine.

Again as I was resting on a level grassy stretch by the creek bed while my horse cropped the grass, a lank little jackrabbit appeared, ambling along and intent upon his thoughts, for he did not stop until he had come very near. Paying no attention to me whatever, he began to hop leisurely around in a circle with that peculiarly loose-jointed motion, head down and feet kicked out behind, which characterises certain Indian dances. He had not been at this long before a second lank little jackrabbit approached, and following behind the first, the two performed a veritable dance as if for my benefit. Occasionally they would pause to nibble a leaf and then resume their hop-step. These two quaint figures, all legs and ears, solemnly capering on the green at the foot of a great yellow cliff, made a picture ever to be associated with an Arizona garden.

Strange as it may appear, no other animal is feared in Arizona as the skunk, one or more species of which have the habit of approaching and biting the ranchman or prospector asleep upon the ground. As the animal is

sometimes afflicted with rabies, the belief has arisen in a "hydrophobia skunk." Of course no such peculiar species exists. As the habits of the Eastern skunk afford no analogy, I was naturally skeptical that the animal had any such remarkable trait in Arizona, but Dr. Hornaday writes in this connection:

The fact is now established beyond question that at least one species of skunk in Arizona (just which one I am unable to say) does bite human beings, quite without provocation. . . . Of course there can be no such thing as a "hydrophobia skunk"—that is to say, a particular species to which the disease is confined. It is also equally certain that very many skunks are not afflicted with hydrophobia, and that the occurrences are due to accidental circumstances, which necessarily are quite beyond human knowledge.

Rattlesnakes are not wanting but while one may be heard of in March, very little is seen of them until the middle of April, and you may ride for days without encountering a snake until the heat of summer brings them out. The "corral" snake is a large and formidable-looking serpent, conspicuously marked, but though he has the reputation of killing the rattlesnake, he has no poison glands and his bite is harmless. A most bizarre-looking personage is the Gila monster, who crawls into

the sunshine in April on the lava over whose burning surface he creeps with the awkward motions of a seal, using his forelegs somewhat as if they were fins. His bright pinkish yellow or flesh-coloured skin, mottled or marbled with brown, renders his thick clumsy body very conspicuous, and on seeing this grotesque figure, one is inclined to reflect—as did a certain lama on meeting a cobra—upon how great must have been his sins who is now imprisoned in such a body. There is no agreement of opinion among the unscientific as to the nature of this reptile, but Van Denburgh states positively in his *Reptiles of the Pacific Coast and Great Basin* that the Gila monster has poison glands in the lower jaw and that the poison is about as deadly as that of the rattlesnake. He says furthermore that the creature is slow to attack but when sufficiently angered strikes very quickly and holds on with the tenacity of a bulldog.

The rains are over, the sun burns in the broad blue sky, and the garden is brilliant with its millions of acres of encelia—burning bushes everywhere—its yellow-flowered creosote and mesquite and the vivid magenta blossoms of the cacti. I recall how at this season the spurs of the Santa Inez are blue

with the ceanothus, but here the colour scheme is warmer and yellow is the dominant note. It is very different from that California garden by the Pacific with its chaparral and its live-oaks—wilder, more savage and untamed, and yet strangely beautiful and infinitely alluring; for it is the desert that speaks to one here—the mysterious desert from which the isolated flower-covered mountains rise like islands from the sea.

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In northern Arizona is a gash in the earth, some miles in width, many miles in length, and some thousands of feet in depth. This abyss, flooded with colour—with lilac and purple and rose and Indian red,—was cut through various rock formations, from the limestone at the top to the black granite at the bottom, during some thousands of years by the Colorado River, acting in the usual way and by a perfectly natural process. Its dimensions exceed those of all other cañons and yet are not of great consequence, for few are able to see it—large as it is—only an artist or poet or geologist now and again.

Its beauty is immense; it passeth words and is not to be described but allowed to impress

itself directly without the intermediation of words, which are but a veil. In a transcendent degree and with overpowering persuasion it appeals to the eye with colour and with form—cyclopean form painted in ethereal colour.

Here have come many, notebook in hand, and as if so many reporters had essayed to interview the Sphinx, one and all have been baffled and in that mighty silence have sought to cover their defeat in superlatives. A glowing description of that gorge of the Colorado is like a handful of firecrackers thrown into the abyss. Let it suffice, then, that here is colour such as is not found elsewhere on this little earth; and here, if you please, you may match yourself against the titan forms of the Cañon, primordial and august, wrapped in infinite repose, in eternal silence. And if you would paint it, you must have a "ten-league canvas" and "brushes of comet's hair."

Along the southern rim of this pit of colour, on the elevated plateau, is the Coconino forest, where the juniper and piñon belt which skirts the desert, mingles with the yellow pine of a higher latitude. But so great is the spell of the pit—all lilac and purple¹ and rose—that none stop to see the pines. Yet here come a

few birds and here are some flowers withal, and here one may saunter awhile and compare this garden in the yellow pine belt at seven thousand feet with the cactus garden of the desert.

On the first of May the palo verde was blooming on the desert and the thistle poppy in the dry bed of Castle Creek, but with the exception of the saguaros and the chollas, most of the flowers had come and gone and the ground looked parched, singed one might say. A week later in the Coconino forest the snow is but melted from the ground and there is still snow in the air. All the way from the little desert station it has been a gradual change from a Lower Sonoran to an Upper Sonoran and Transition Zone, and it is no surprise therefore to find the few flowers in bloom on the rim of the cañon of a distinctly mountain type with all the charm of low-growing alpine plants.

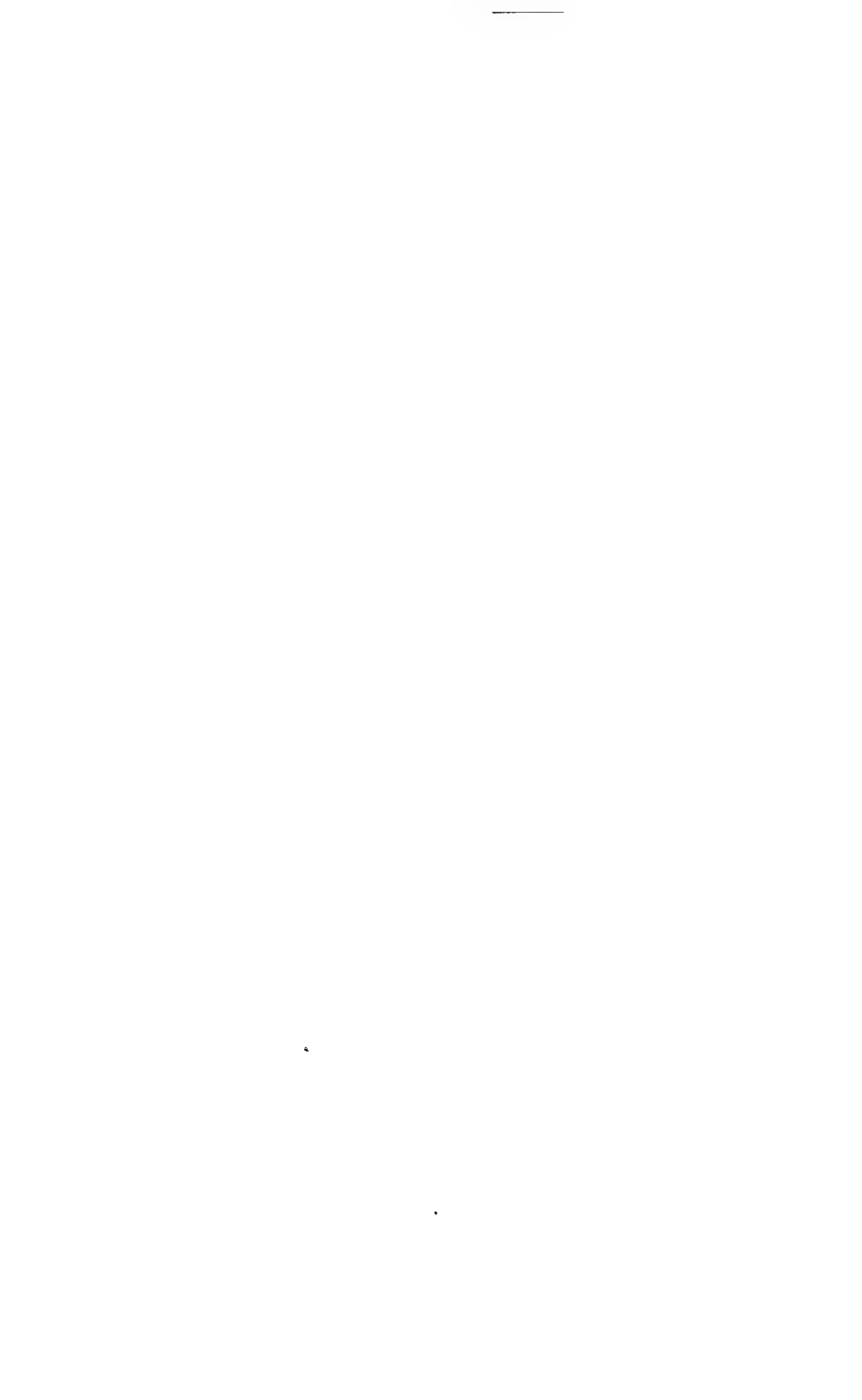
Thick mats of alpine phlox, prone upon the ground, suggest patches of snow. There is a white cress no higher than a chickadee, a tufted pink that hugs the earth, and a yellow and purple pedicularis of similar habit, a dwarf forget-me-not, a small castilleia, and the modest woodland star. Near the rim of the

Cañon blooms the pretty Western wallflower and a dwarf larkspur, while below the rim in the talus of the limestone under the Douglas spruce, the yellow dicentra is in blossom. As one descends, the alpine phlox continues for some distance but is noticeably larger than on the plateau. Flea-banes, larkspurs, and two species of red pentstemons appear as the trail drops into the red sandstone, and on the plateau below is the mariposa. Continuing to the river the trail takes one to the Lower Sonoran Zone in a descent of five thousand feet. It is northern and southern Arizona compassed in a few miles.

While free agents compared with plants, birds correspond to their environment very closely, and a glance at the common birds on the Coconino plateau would give some idea of the elevation had one no aneroid in his pocket. Red-backed juncos, mountain chickadees, and slender-billed nuthatches are soon discovered and these three in themselves are a key to the position. Then there are the long-crested and piñon jays, Western evening grosbeaks and cabanis woodpeckers, while violet-green swallows and white-throated swifts skim over the rim of the Cañon. For some reason these birds do not remain in the



" In this Coconino forest is the breath of the North."



abyss itself, but as far as I have observed, content themselves with darting over the edge and returning, very much as a man dives into a lake and swims to shore again. Blue-birds flit among the pines and though they make that mystical appeal inseparable from their race, the ear accustomed to the note of the Eastern bird detects instantly a slightly harsher quality in the voice of the Western species. On the very rim of the vast abyss of colour, the Western robin sings his evening song. While his notes are like those of our own robin the habits of the bird suggest our shyer thrushes. Here he is a bird, not of the garden but of the forest, and it is not without surprise that one first observes this curious difference of temperament and finds our most familiar bird apparently assuming the guise of a shy wild creature. Of warblers, Audubon's, Grace's, and the black-throated grey appear to be the common species of the plateau.

In this Coconino forest is the breath of the North—the magic of the North. The air is fragrant with the resinous odour of yellow pine and piñon. In the tree tops the wind sighs its world-old song. Yet from under the pines at Grand View one looks across the Cañon to the Painted Desert beyond—the

wonderful desert—and the thoughts fly away to the South, where the arid mountains rise abruptly like islands from the sea and the saguaros stand erect and unbending upon the lava cliffs.

It is strange to feel the force of two attractions, so unlike, yet each so individual, so compelling. In the distance, the mysterious desert—itsself as alluring as the mirage, a wraith, a phantom beauty on the horizon—beckons as of old; while round about, the yellow pine forest, so different, so remotely different, soothes and beguiles the sense with resinous odours and softly whispered songs, the enchantment, the very spirit of the North. In the presence of two such magicians practising their wiles, that which is but mortal and susceptible to divine beauty must fain surrender.

CHAPTER XVII

GOOD FAMILIES

HAVING now, with all the airs of the literary showman, thrown upon the screen these little pictures of our American estate, I may perhaps be allowed to dwell upon the qualities of a few at least of the good families of plants whose ancestral manor it is, and who have so long lent it the charm of their presence. There are many of these excellent families, with unbroken line of descent, and not a blot upon the escutcheon nor anywhere a symptom of degeneracy.

With many branches and numerous descendants they are tribal and clannish in the way they reveal family traits and adhere to family traditions. Between one clan and another there are all shades of difference, but they have this in common, that they are good neighbours, they wear well, and they seem in their rooted silent existence to lend themselves with a gentle sympathy to the com-

plex emotions of our own restless life and to exert a wonderful influence upon it. As with the birds, the recognition of these family traits and resemblances greatly contributes to the pleasure we have in their society.

What an excellent family the Heath, for instance, and how it endears one to them as to life-long friends to have pleasant associations of years, not only with the blueberries and huckleberries of New England pastures, but with the manzanita of the Sierras and the madroñas of the Coast Range and the Sierra Madre. It puts you on intimate terms with the family and you will many times gossip with the blueberry about the lovely madroña of the Western ranges, and when again you are riding through the chaparral, the blossom of the manzanita shall call up some well-beloved blueberry pasture by the sea. Again, the barberry of Cape Ann on the lonely Dogtown pastures reminds you of the Arizona barberry on the desert mountains; the fragile anemones in the early woods, of the pasque-flower on the velvet mesas; and any lily may suggest its connection with that superb lily of the South-West, the yucca, and with the lovely mariposa.

While plants are characteristic of their en-

vironment, that, in turn, owes to them much of its individuality. This fact again serves to enrich the association they have in our minds. A flower is part of its setting and can never appear the same when taken from it. Bare mention of the clintonia brings to my mind the spruce woods, the ground hemlock and hobblebush, and the mysterious song of the veery on the mountainside. Pentstemons have as strong an association: the blue with the misty ranges of the Rockies where the green towhee is singing; the red with the lava gorges of Arizona and the metallic call of the rock wren.

In the instant that a wild flower is plucked, something goes from it—the spirit as it were—and though what is left is beautiful it is but a tithe of the whole. It is impossible to take a wild flower from its setting: we carry away only that obvious part which we can gather in the hand. Yet how many stop to look at a blossom—to really see it as it is—before they pick it? Pouncing upon the flower, they see only that fraction they are able to carry off. A truer appreciation would have spared us many plants of our wild garden that are becoming extinct.

Even so, we owe much to that environ-

ment for which the flora of any region is partly responsible, that particular effect due to the personality of plants, which accords us our impressions of Nature. Take the family of Conifers—what a pronounced personality they have. How distinctly boreal they are. A pine cone might well be the rugged symbol of the hardy North—of the land of Winter. It speaks of the silent snow-covered woods, as the palm leaf speaks of the tropics. It arouses associations peculiarly its own—coniferous associations. The Adirondack wilderness owes its individuality largely to the spruce, and to the tamarack in the swamps—they are the dominant personalities. In New England woods it is the white pine; in Southern swamps the bald cypress; and in the forests of the Sierra, the sugar pine and the silver fir, save in those small groves where the sequoia dominates all. In the South-West we are ordinarily removed by many miles from all that association which the Conifers have for us, but by going up in the air—which is equivalent to going north—we come again under their spell.

Among Eastern Conifers, the tamarack of the Adirondack swamps and the red cedars of New England pastures are as strongly in-

dividual as any trees, while the white pine has the most distinguished personality. An old white pine, like a venerable oak or sugar maple, is something in the landscape. The rough bark coated with blue-green parmelias, the peculiarities of needle and cone, play the same part as the features and lines of a face. Impressions derived from hemlock and from spruce are from masses rather than from individuals—twilight impressions of dim interiors in temples not made with hands. How fair and charming is the tamarack, arrayed in the pale green verdure of early spring, as it stands in the mist at the edge of the ponds. How exquisitely vernal it is, and how marvellously it accords with its setting, as if designed by an artist for that very end. Equally well the sombre red cedar accords with *its* environment—with the bare ledges, the massive and antique boulders blotched with lichens, the juniper and the blueberry bushes, and the clumps of bayberry,—an integral part of the whole.

Of the Western members of the family the sugar pine of the Sierras has the most pronounced personality—expressive of amplitude and majesty: not symmetrical, not conventional like the firs, but a rugged individualist,

a veteran nonconformist to the traditions of its race, standing alone, extending its gaunt arms in the blue, a picture of rude and primeval strength, of lonely and desolate grandeur. Sequoias owe much of the impression they create to the immense bulk of the trunk and to the distance to the lowest limbs. It is an impression of columns—vast, Egyptian, massive. This columnar beauty which overcomes by the sense of mass, they share with no other tree, unless it be the smaller *cryptomeria* of Japan. For that peculiarly lofty and splendid environment, that magnificent arboreal person of the sequoia, you must go to California, for nowhere else is it known.

How different are the impressions accorded by hardwoods and what a beautiful thing is the tree—that to so many means only lumber and firewood. Maples and birch and elm reflect the spirit of the North and of the seasons. They contain in themselves spring and autumn and seem to express subtle moods that never come to the Conifers. That matchless colour which transfigures the scarlet oak and the sugar maple is unknown to Western trees. The live oak slips from one season to another with but little apparent change. It puts out its leaves as do the pines with no

show of spring or autumn moods. What winter trees are hickory and beech; what have they to do with mild climates and balmy air! They are children of cold, waving their bony arms in the winter gales in exultation, while the shriek of the wind in their bare branches is like the cry of the Valkyrie. The range of the white birch extends far into the bleak North and it grows in the poorest, rockiest soil, maintaining itself where others would perish. Yet it gives little evidence of this hardihood and is more feminine and winsome than any other tree. It is nurtured in cold and sterility, as some gentle characters are evolved amid harsh surroundings.

In the arid regions of the South-West the Pea family is dominant among trees and this very fact of the supremacy of certain families in different regions is itself of peculiar interest. A slight analogy is presented between the history of plant and of human races. It would seem that the Conifers and the Cacti are as well adapted, and as essentially indigenous, to their respective areas as were the Goths to Northern Europe and the Bedouin to the desert. We might ask where did the Composites originate and when did they, like Rome, overrun the world? What birch

and maple are to the East, the mesquite, acacia, palo verde, and ironwood are to the desert plateaus of Arizona—leguminous trees with small leaves, as befits an arid region where evaporation from leaf surface must be restricted to a minimum. These trees are not without some charm but it is small compared with our Eastern hardwoods or Northern Conifers. They are a lean and scraggly race, fitted to cope with hot sun and little water, and armed with thorns that they may defend themselves against animals. This armed defence is the keynote to the character of all typical desert vegetation. It withstands the elements by no such gentle persuasion as do the lithe and feminine birches in the far North. Instead it bristles with weapons and one cannot pass the ironwood or the cat's-claw acacia but they make known their pugnacious and uncompromising attitude. The mesquite is a little more suave, a little less openly hostile, simply because its thorns are not recurved as are those of the cat's-claw.

These small trees of the desert plains do not affect us in the manner of our beautiful oaks, maples, and elms: they are deficient in personality. In the arid region there is but

one tree under which you can sit at noonday as under a spreading oak and find it companionable and that is the cottonwood, which in the dry creek beds of Arizona becomes an ample and dignified, a really beautiful tree. Surely our Northern trees *are* companionable, not only because of a certain personal quality, masculine in some, feminine in others, but of that staunchness and sincerity which are the traits a tree would seem to typify, and moreover, because of the apparent communicativeness which whispering leaves imply. They have their winter songs and their spring songs; they sigh and whisper in the summer breeze; they moan and shriek in the winter gale. How characteristic the voice of the pines—a murmurous, mysterious woodsy speech! What a marked family mannerism in the leafy whisper of the aspens! These voices have their message for the sensitive ear: tranquil communications from the woods and gossip of the sylvan world.

That which we may name personality in plants is something that may appeal to all of the senses or to one only. Sweet-fern is a fragrance—nothing more; sassafras and wintergreen, flavours; orange milkweed a classic form and a splash of flaming colour; bayberry,

a robust suggestion of the open, a perfume that invigorates; balsam, a boreal impression, a whiff of the North. The fragrance of berries and the bloom on the fruit, the marvellous gradations of colour, serve as so many handles by which we may grasp with our senses this fleeting beauty of Nature, ephemeral but forever renewing itself. I drink the blue of gentians and the red of cardinal lobelias and scarlet buglers; I plunge into the golden fields of baeria and bathe in the yellow flood of poppies. The flavour of sassafras takes me far afield and the odour of balsam stirs the old Norse blood in me; whispering pines tell me many things and invoke those ghostly selves which once had sylvan form and dwelt amidst these forests. A garden—a continental garden—means much, is a part of oneself, so intimately is it related through eyes and ears and nose to that interior world where thought arises and moods and feelings come and go like clouds across the sky.

In this wild garden it is interesting to observe how plants correspond to their particular nook or corner and seem to fit into it, as if they had been set out in those places peculiarly adapted to their needs. Take, for example, the shrubs: how congenial are

the staghorns and the dwarf sumachs to New England pastures, the witherod and the hobblebush to the Adirondack wilderness, Andromeda and Cassandra to the swamps. In the West we find audibertia, manzanita, ceanothus with an equally good setting in the California mountains; encelia, creosote bush, and ocotilla in the arid ranges of Arizona; sagebrush on the alkali plains. Not only are the cacti adapted above all other plants to their part of the garden, but how admirably they preserve the unity of that garden. Nothing could have been better designed for that peculiar region. They are the typical family of the desert, as the palms of the tropics, the pines of the North. Yucca and ocotilla are plants as well selected for the desert plains with backgrounds of arid mountains, as are cratægus, viburnum, and azalea for green and pastoral country delightful to the subdued and cultivated eye. How lovely are the blossoms of the viburnums and the shadbush in the early woods; what Northern charm they have, typifying that irresistible unbending of a cold and austere nature. Again, where is there a more stately garden in May than that section of the San Bernardino Valley where the incomparable racemes of the yucca,

marshalled upon the plain in thousands like an encamping host, stretch away in the distance as far as the eye can see?

While a few families may be emphatically of one side or the other of the continent, the majority are transcontinental but are represented by different branches—different species, that is, and often by different genera,—in one or another part of the country. None are more cosmopolitan than the mints, known to us in the East largely by the spearmints, peppermints, self-heal, and other common plants but in California far more dominant, for the shrubby audibertias, called sages, cover the hills,—the black sage, the handsome lilac-flowered sages, and the white sage which is the favourite bee plant of the Coast Range. The genus *Salvia* is conspicuous in Southern California and Arizona and the chia with its blue flowers and wine-coloured bracts is as common there as is self-heal with us. These sages are not to be confused with the sagebrush, which is an *artemisia*; and while the white sage is sometimes called “greasewood,” that term is more generally applied to a member of the rose family and really belongs to the *sarcobatus* of the river bottoms.

Figwort, too, is a cosmopolitan family, but

our common toad-flax and our pretty purple gerardia give little idea of those splendid personages the pentstemons, so famous a genus in the West. In Arizona the red pentstemons are among the handsomest flowers, while no one who has ever been a-botanising in the valleys of Southern California will forget the azure species. The genus appears still more abundant in the Rocky Mountains. Collinsia is a charming Figwort and mimulus another. With us the monkey-flower is blue while in Arizona and California there is a brilliant red species and several yellow ones, and in the Sierras a species that is pink; but all speedily declare themselves monkey-flowers by their common resemblance. Perhaps the castilleia is the most brilliant member of the family with the most extended range. Through all the Western mountains and in Mexico it may be seen, glowing like a live coal on granite domes or lava peaks—many species, but one form.

Crowfoot again is a good American family, with its buttercups, anemones, and columbines reaching from Atlantic to Pacific; Violet, one of the most dainty and charming of all, and everywhere clannish; Lily, a family of beautiful species all about the garden and of

marked resemblances; Pink as much at home where the bouncing-bet grows by the roadside as where the Indian pink blooms in the cañons of the Sierra; Rose, Saxifrage, Milkweed, and Lobelia, strong clans every one and no more Eastern than Western; Mustard, carrying the sign of the cross over the continent like the Padres of New Spain; Parsley and Composites, immense orders numbering thousands of species, to which belong the "masses" among the flowers.

While cosmopolitan, the Pea family is far better represented in the West, which has even been called the Lupine region. Not only the lupines, but the mesquites, acacias, and locoweeds, which belong to suborders, are dominant in the South-West, and in Mexico the number and variety of leguminous trees is far more noticeable. Of the Waterleaf we know very little in the East while in California and Arizona its phacelias and nemophilas are among the most abundant flowers. The same is true of the Phlox family, and the gilies which are its important genus might be called typical Western flowers. Mallow, Buckthorn, Poppy, and Borage one comes to associate with the West; the Evening Primrose has many more representatives there;

while the Cactus is almost exclusively Western and American and may be said to be native in a stricter sense than even the American Indian. Orchids are better represented in the East and far better still on the Gulf Coast of Mexico.

There are many more of these good families, for this estate has many floral tenants and among the various species there is a surprising difference in what I have called personality. Some are distinguished in appearance with the bearing of aristocrats; others are the lowliest of the lowly. Some are modest and retiring, others bold in their flaming beauty; and then there is the great hoi polloi of weeds to which some families contribute nothing while others belong to it altogether—commonplace by nature and tradition. Neither are there wanting parasites in this floral society.

Certain plants more than others have endeared themselves to me, doubtless because of association not less than personal charm. Of the early flowers, bloodroot and hepatica have seemed to embody the spirit of spring more fully or more delicately than others. Among violets—a family so admirable in all its members—the pedata and the white

violet commend themselves above the rest. Purple and white fringed orchids have seemed perhaps the loveliest creations of the floral world; while the yellow cypripedium has more of the enchantment of the woods than any other flower, not excepting wild ginger—a woody plant—and clintonia, fraught with sylvan associations. Fringed gentians and cardinal lobelias are two Eastern flowers one can no more describe than one can carry them away from their native haunts. There is a loss in describing as there is a loss in picking them. Each has an atmosphere—an aura—of its own; each exerts its own peculiar influence upon the sensitive eye. Goldenrod and asters are flowers whose effect depends more upon mass, yet when associated with the seashore, as upon the weathered granite of Cape Ann, they are among the most potent influences in the floral world.

Near the Pacific my association is with plants quite different, yet so subtle is the difference and so subtle the reasons for it, that I can by no means explain it. They yield different impressions, in short, as do our various acquaintances and friends, and it is not always easy to say why. Among the first is the mariposa, of which there are

many species, but how much my feeling for this lily is due to the beauty of the mariposa itself, and how much to an association with the flower begun in childhood, it would be difficult to say. Of the genus *Calochortus* none are more beautiful than the yellow globe tulip and the orange-red mariposa. The cyclamen is a flower with which I have less association and which therefore may stand more on its own merits with me, and truly it is a plant of great individual charm. *Eschscholtzias*, wonderful in mass, are no less beautiful in the individual, for this poppy is a distinctive plant and few flowers are of richer, more glowing hue. To me the *castilleia* is more than a splash of splendid colour—it is the spirit of the West, of the mesas and the arid ranges, rising from the desert like phantom islands in an opal sea, of the uninhabited miles, of the Wild. In California and Arizona grows a little plant of the poppy family called cream-cups which is one of the daintiest of American wild flowers. Its buds droop in graceful curves while the expanded blossom raises its cream-coloured petals to the sky, but it would be impossible to say why the plant is more attractive than a hundred others; it is simply that it has a

certain air about it, as have some women, which distinguishes it from the rest. This air of distinction, one of the pentstemons of Arizona has in an eminent degree and every part of the plant contributes—the form of stem and leaf and their pale and rare shade of green, quite as much as the flower itself. Something in the whole make-up of the plant sets it apart and distinguishes it, as a thoroughbred animal proclaims itself different from the common stock. You may find it, a single stalk with its drooping raceme of scarlet trumpets, standing alone upon a rough face of lava, and so striking is the contrast of the fragile and exquisite plant with the grim rock, that you will pause and pronounce it one of the most beautiful things in the garden. In Arizona, no plant has impressed me as having a more rare and lovely personality than that pale sky-blue larkspur (*D. azureum*), which is to the handsome but more common dark-blue delphiniums as a queen to her subjects.

It is a gentle company the great garden affords, with none of the vexations of human society. We may sit us down in a clump of violets or in a field of golden baeria and find we have a host of little friends, all so

beautiful, all so silent yet so strangely sympathetic with our mood. We may rest beside a spring where the yellow mimulus grows and that exquisitely delicate perfume shall convey some corresponding impressions by an ethereal medium. They are good families who dwell in this garden; such charms of colour and perfume; so lovable in their unpretentiousness, their serenity, their gentleness. What a solace is their society to him who flees for an hour the mean little world men make for themselves and finds here at his feet one so tranquil, so full of harmony, so wholly beautiful, where he may rest and recreate himself. It is strange to speak of ownership in connection with such a garden, for they who most fully possess it do so by such intangible means. They possess it much as we possess our friends—in this sense only. It is the heritage of the American people, but by an unwritten law—a law of the gods—it descends from generation to generation to those alone who are able to enjoy their inheritance; as a book belongs not to him who owns, nor to him who reads it merely, but rather to him who understands and who loves it.

CHAPTER XVIII

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW

I N these glimpses of one corner and another of our wild garden, it appears that not the least part of our inheritance is in the birds, and the enjoyment of birds, like the enjoyment of people, is a matter of cultivation, of sympathy and understanding. The study of the bird in the open is comparable to congenial society; in the museum or the laboratory, to the dissecting-room. But we are speaking of friends, and the word "study" is an ill-advised, even abhorrent term in this connection. It will answer well enough for rocks or for the lower orders, but if you are "studying" birds, it is to be inferred that you have no friends among them. They are still aborigines, or aliens or curiosities to you.

Birds become our friends by a process depending almost wholly upon ourselves and little if at all upon the bird, beyond the part its personality—its family personality—

plays once for all in attracting us. We are drawn to certain birds as to some people by peculiarities of voice, manner, and appearance, which appeal to us and which in the bird are, of course, racial rather than individual. No doubt our regard for our human friends is less personal than we assume it to be. We are largely attracted to men because they are representatives of some spiritual, intellectual, and physical type—a certain *species* of mankind—which appeals to us as more admirable than others. However that may be, in our relation to the birds there is an enormous advantage, considering the instability of all things, in this impersonal, this racial attraction. Every spring we greet the warblers with that same thrill of pleasure and of sympathetic interest, and we do not once stop to consider that they may not be the same individuals of a year ago. For it is the species to whom we have given our friendship: not certain individuals, but magnolias, parulas, black-throated green, and blackburnians in general. Once I have acquired a liking for the species, every individual of that species is my friend thenceforth, whether encountered in the Adirondacks or in the cypress swamps of the South. The entire race of

magnolias, in short, is to me one magnolia, and it is this one I meet wherever I may be; this one I look for year after year and greet with the same affection felt for his ancestor twenty years ago.

Human friendships, alas, are fraught with vicissitude and with change—one of the saddest things of this life, which finds its justification only in the stern necessities of our spiritual evolution. We outgrow our friends or they outgrow us. Those misunderstandings and disappointments which make some cynical, some insincere, and fill others with despair, do not disturb our sylvan friendships. For the best part of my life—assuredly the best—I have loved the song-sparrow in his numerous embodiments, his various reincarnations. He has been to me the same song sparrow through all these years, though my sympathy and understanding have enlarged. So have I loved the bluebird and the robin, the oriole and the catbird. They have not changed but I have. Just here, perhaps, is the greatest charm of our companionship with birds; they hold us by some subtle power to impressions and feelings which they first aroused. *They* never grow old; though all else slips into the sere and

yellow, *they* are ever young and sing the same songs. Thus they keep alight the fire of youth in us and bring back our poetic moods, our early visions. When I come under the spell of the bird's song I am again that self that listened last year—twenty years ago—that self which has associated some vision of spring with the bluebird's warble descending from the bleak sky, and felt the answering thrill of a perennial quality in myself; which has responded to the simple charm of the song sparrow's trill from the bare hedgerows, by an exquisite consciousness of purity and simplicity of its own; and has felt itself to be a wandering minstrel with the oriole and with the rose-breasted grosbeak, when each year their song was heard again, recognising that fugitive spirit of poesy and of song which they embodied, to be its very own.

The personality of birds has always impressed me: the fact that they have such powers of expression and that there is so remarkable a difference in their songs, in the quality of tone, the manner of delivery, and the significance of their voices. Some have so much to express, so much temperament in comparison with others. Some like the thrushes are spiritual; others like the orioles and gros-

beaks, lyrical; others again, the thrashers and mockingbirds, dramatic. What a vibrant quality in some wren voices and in the song of the cardinal. What wonderful quality in the voices of certain warblers—poor little songs—yet having the power to convey one instantly out of the world of man, as upon a magic carpet, into that sylvan and enchanted world so different—thanks to Pan. What sadness in the autumn note of the bluebird; what sanity in the cheery call of the chickadee in the winter woods; what untamed beauty in the song of the ouzel! All have the gift of expression; and expression implies something to express—feeling that is. As to how much they are conscious, if at all, we shall never know. Some people will argue one way and some another, to the end of time. The fact remains that these birds are capable of arousing feeling in us by this show of feeling in themselves, and this makes them companionable.

That birds reveal family traits and are full of little mannerisms, racial or tribal, increases greatly the interest one feels in their society. I look for evidences of bird nature in them, as I look for that which betokens human nature in men. As an indication of what I call per-

sonality in birds, see how the manner of the wood thrush or the hermit accords with the character of their songs, and how plainly the voice of the kingbird agrees with *his* character. Catbirds and chickadees express themselves to me—their bird personality that is—quite as plainly as some people do. They sing—or say—just what I would expect them to. But what they say is what all catbirds and all chickadees sing, or say; it is a family look, a family manner, a family speech.

When I go West and find the spurred towhee scratching like his cousin the chewink, the recognition of this family trait puts me on easy footing with him at once. So the mountain chickadee, the plumbeous gnat-catcher, and the red-backed junco remind me by their family peculiarities that I have seen their Eastern cousins act or look the same way a thousand times; and Palmer's or the crissal thrasher cause me to reflect when I observe their mannerisms in singing and their apparent affectations, what true thrasher characteristics these are. Western goldfinches and grosbeaks have not only the family bill but the family idiosyncracies as well, and how quickly the flycatchers, wherever you meet them, announce by their

table manners their family connection. Again, how distinct from all others are the wren personality and wren manners.

To go up and down the continent recognising, comparing and enjoying birds in this way is a resource which belongs, not to those who merely study birds, but rather to those who have the companionship of birds, and this pleasant intercourse comes not from reading human nature into their ways but—bird nature: acquiring a sympathy for bird traits and bird manners, a somewhat bird-like nature perhaps. You must feel yourself on the wing with the wild geese, or teetering on the shore with the sandpiper; diving with the grebe, or skulking through the marsh grass with the rail. You must peer among the leaves with the vireos, dart with the agile redstart, and with the finches know the peculiar satisfaction of scraping the bill on a twig.

In going from the eastern to the western border of our estate we meet birds whose family connections we may not readily recognise, interesting personalities that impress us at first as foreigners: the solitaires, ouzels, phainopeplas, road-runners, bush-tits, and wren-tits. A Western ornithologist, on the other hand, going East for the first time would

hardly find any species which seemed alien to him. This encounter with birds less known to us in their connections is a cosmopolitan element in our bird society, and one which is greatly increased of course if we go into Mexico, where we soon meet the parrots, motmots, clarins, the anis, the xantus becards, and a number of other strange birds.

It is certainly delightful to the outdoor man of social mood to have friends both in the East and in the West. Perhaps the old friends are the best—indeed I think none wholly supplant them in our affections, but there is much to be said for new friends as well, and we cannot take the old with us. The possibility, too, of a new friend appearing on the horizon is one of the jewels of this life. When I return to the East in the spring, it is with the assurance that I shall find the hermit and the veery still my friends—my very spiritual friends; the redeye and the warbling vireos still the faithful companions of the summer days; the oriole and the rose-breasted grosbeak the minstrels who will not let music and poetry die in me; the boblink my merry comrade of the fields. Again, when the bluebirds have sung their parting warble, when the wild geese have sounded

their irresistible clarion, I go West to find the thrashers singing on the mountains and to hear in the ravines and from the temple-like buttes that melting voice of the cañon wren—to find myself among friends again.

Some birds like some people are destined to be our friends, others, acquaintances merely, lacking those qualities that fit them to be companionable to us. What shy friendship this is; how charmingly sylvan these clandestine meetings with little birds. Much of the charm of this society, of course, lies in the fact that it *is* so shy and sylvan, but much is due to the birds' gift of expression. They are a lovable race. Dwellers in an Eden which has never been closed to them, in their company we are permitted to enjoy some of its pristine charm, if we can keep ourselves and our self-assertiveness in the background and become for the time merged in the atmosphere of the bird world.

Fairies, you will remember, were fond of children—perhaps because they were accepted by them on their own terms. It is one of the chief qualifications in virtue of which we receive the entrée to the society of the woods that we should be little if at all aggressive, assertive, important: that we should be very

well-bred according to bird standards. Any show of pomposity shuts the gate of Eden in our faces—that magic door, imponderable, yet stronger than adamant. We must learn to slip into the bird world noiselessly as an owl, leaving behind us all that is conspicuous and man-like, assuming all that is shy and bird-like. Then, and then only, are the lisping notes of the warblers flitting in the leafless woods not an alien speech. In place of stupid tourists we become like wise and accomplished travellers, speaking the idiom of the country—even the dialect of the province. They reveal themselves to us now in the light of our understanding of bird nature, and let it not be forgotten that this bird world is a musical world, a fact which must ever elevate it above any other sphere of Nature that appeals to our interest and sympathy.

Another element of bird life which lends it a peculiar fascination is the migration, for this dependence of the birds upon the seasons serves to further link their lives with our own and to intimately relate them with those states of mind and outward changes we know as spring and summer and autumn. To me, it would not be spring without the

appearance of the warblers—an event always attended with some mystic significance as if it were the expression of a feeling in Nature. When suddenly the brooding silence is broken by the trill of a pine warbler or by that quaint woodsy speech of the black-throated green, it is as if the oracle had spoken. The oracle *has* spoken to some of us. That long-drawn note of the meadowlark—if the fields could speak at that season, what else would they say? or how better could the swamp express itself than in the *on-ke-lee* of the redwing? Nor would it be autumn without that flitting of soberly dressed birds, those furtive snatches of song in which the ruby kinglet, the solitary vireo, the parula warbler indulge, which if they do not express any sadness in the bird, seem at least to voice, as if by intent, a vague sadness in us. The gathering of the blackbird clans, the warble of fugitive bluebirds, the rustling of leaves, all speak of one event; and the arrival of crossbills and siskins, of redpolls and snow-buntings is as much an expression of winter as were the former of autumn—a robust, wintry, self-contained mood with no lament, no sadness, no suggestion of parting.

In the West this migration is vertical as

well as continental and, strangely enough, mankind in the South-West, particularly in Mexico, has acquired the same habit and migrates up and down the mountain slopes, changing the climate with the altitude in a few hours' travel. The birds discovered this long before it was known to man, even before man himself was known. Flocks of birds come down out of the mountains as the cold weather appears and find a winter home in the valleys, while spring takes them up into the hills again to breed and to rear their young.

It is only natural that we should have our particular friends among the birds; a matter of the personal equation—of the bird's and our own. It is unnatural, though quite usual, to have *no* friends among them. This friendless state of some forlorn folk is one which arouses in us a certain commiseration that they should remain strangers in the land and depart from it having missed so much that was admirable. One who has enjoyed the society of the best birds must feel some delicacy in speaking of his friends, for the friendless or unsocial, or those who have been denied the entrée to bird society, might take umbrage at this seeming boastfulness, this vaunting of social advantage, and when he speaks of his

dear friends, the Thrushes, the Wrens, the Orioles, the Grosbeaks, the Warblers, the Sparrows, and the rest, look askance and be inclined to wonder whether he really does know all these fine birds or not. One newly arrived in society may have misgivings—or may not—when he refers to his friends among the “best families”; but one who has long moved in this atmosphere—who was born in it—can hardly mistrust his right to speak without restraint of his charming friends and their life. If the birds—exclusive and reserved as they are—admit one into their shy society with all its traditions, it is not for others to cavil.

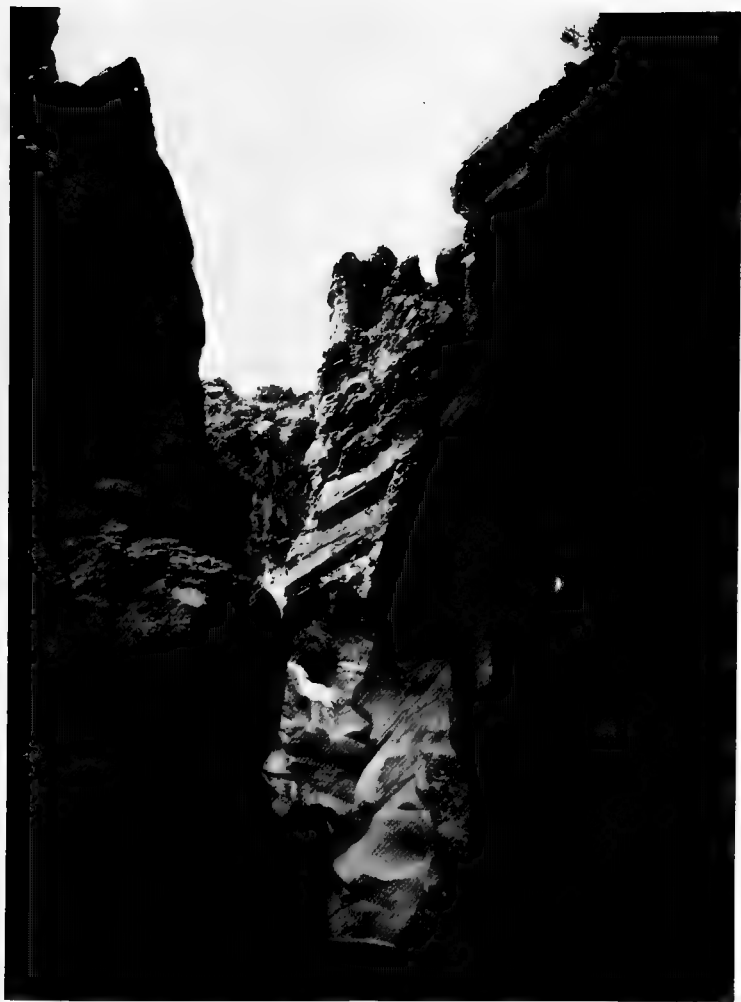
My warbler friends are largely Eastern. In the West, I have as yet only acquaintances among the family, with the exception of Audubon's, the pileolated, and the painted redstart which became my friends in Mexico. In fact if I except the Western robin, the spurred towhee, the golden-crowned sparrow, the California jay, and the valley quail—birds associated in my mind with a child's world—my old friends are all Eastern birds. My Western friends have taken their place beside the Eastern and many have become indeed like old friends. Some, like the solitaire,

have sufficiently gained my admiration and piqued my interest to inspire a hope that they may become friends in time, while other distinguished personages I have yet to meet; and this anticipation will greatly increase the pleasure when they are encountered. In the first enthusiasm for birds when all are new, the relish of unexpected encounters is often enjoyed, but as the years go on it becomes all too rare. Yet when the ornithologist at last hears a bird song for which he has waited for years, he feels young again and knows it for one of the delectable moments of life.

Among the birds nearest to me I count the cañon wren, the Western meadowlark, the Arizona cardinal, and those companionable little birds the black phoebe and the vermilion flycatcher. In the cañons of the Santa Inez, in the rocky gorges and dry gulches of Arizona, and the barrancas of western Mexico down to the Isthmus, the cañon wren and the black phoebe have been my constant companions. True they change their subspecific name in the books, but they are the same birds to me as I know them out of doors—and that is the only way one ever does *know* them. This phoebe is a quiet-

voiced, friendly, approachable little bird with charming ways and an attractive personality, and though found in the wildest places, seems not to reflect its environment but to be a domestic creature. Often I have sat under the great ahuehuets in some lonely barranca of southern Mexico, or in the sombre lava gorges of Arizona, and this pretty bird has played about me by the hour, pirouetting in the air, if one may use the expression, alighting on boulders, and uttering its gentle note. Under the ahuehuets I have found its nest attached to the rock in phoebe fashion. The cañon wren is a gnome—full of wren conceits and whimsicalities—but with the manners and the instincts of a gnome. His tail is of burnished copper, his throat is white, and as he bobs about on the edge of a cliff you have a gleam of copper-red, a gleam of white, and then he throws back his head, opens his bill, and there falls as it were a little cascade of exquisite pearls—each one perfect—ricochetting from ledge to ledge, down, down, down. The falling pearls—the voice that would melt a heart of stone—that is the cañon wren.

In the deep blue sky of the desert the red flycatcher gleams like a marvellous ruby.



“ In the sombre lava gorges of Arizona.”

Dressed much like our scarlet tanager, the bird is even more conspicuous because of his flycatcher habits—his aerial sorties and manoeuvres. The male has a charming way also of remaining poised on fluttering wings like the Maryland yellowthroat and the upland plover, mounting higher and higher and delivering his silvery bubbling phrase again and again above the cornfields or the desert. This song is a sweet jingling performance unusual for a flycatcher, which commends itself largely by reason of the free and spontaneous manner in which it is sung. There is something peculiarly appealing about a bird singing on the wing, appearing as it does an embodiment of freedom and of melody, a lovely symbol in the air, that inspires and lifts up the heavy heart chained to earth and to dull care.

Resembling his Eastern congener, the Arizona cardinal is a splendid personality, with a ringing melodious voice. Cardinal and phainopepla have both a distinguished appearance and bearing, like exceedingly well-born and well-bred people. In central Arizona the cardinal is a familiar bird, singing about the cottonwoods and the palo verdes and always impressing one with his

thoroughbred look and the beauty of his person. My friend the Western meadowlark is a bird apart—a voice—mysterious and beautiful, rising from the ground but speaking ever of the sky: not a song so much as a voice—one not to be described, but once heard, never to be forgotten.

It is good to have friends among the birds. They redeem the dreariest waste. Wherever they are, there are we at home. When I stroll in Central Park and encounter a cardinal, I see again the cotton fields and cypress swamp. The junco hopping under the bushes on the lawn transports me to the clearings in the dim spruce woods where I have often looked for its nest; and when the little winter wren comes creeping mouselike, the spirit of the wild descends upon me then and there as if I had had a whiff of balsam, and I am whisked away on the wings of fancy into the mountain solitudes where we have so long been kindred spirits.

The society of American birds, as I have said, is a part of our inheritance; how large a part, depends upon our own companionable qualities, our capacity for making sylvan friends. Every pond shore, meadow, and pasture in our continental garden holds de-

lightful possibilities. We need not walk in dull company unless we so elect. It gives one a comfortable homelike feeling, a kinship with the open, to go west to the Rocky Mountains and find the trees and flowers familiar and friendly and the birds old cronies, and to move on to Arizona or California and still be in an outdoor company among whom we may count some friends. To know these good American families of plants, too, gives one a pervading sense of satisfaction as of a certain social well-being. Overhead and underfoot are those whose history, whose connections, and whose charms are known to us. We ourselves become of more account in virtue of the number and distinction of our friends—our wild friends.

“A garden is a lovesome thing—God wot,”—and what a garden is this that has descended to us. How many nooks and corners it has; what streams to go a-fishing in; what deserts to go a-dreaming in; and what dim silent forests in which to walk with the Owner of the garden.

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Beyond its excellence as the characterization of a traveller of picturesque spots, is the insight of the book into social, political, religious, and human problems.—*Boston Transcript*.

Mr. Kirkham is gifted with descriptive powers of a high order, and it is not bestowing too high praise when we say that at times he reminds us of Theophile Gautier. Here are some vivid bits of word-painting not unworthy of the great French master of prismatic prose. . . . The author of *Mexican Trails* travelled far and wide, away from main travelled roads, and saw much that is hidden from the ordinary traveller. A keen observer with an eye for the picturesque, the skill to record his impressions in a striking and realistic way, his book is a welcome addition to the literature dealing with a fascinating land.—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

He did not view the country from the car window, but as a wanderer over its mountains and plateaus, from the Texan border to the Isthmus, and from one ocean to the other.—*New York Times*.

He has seen with his own eyes; he has felt the witchery of the place through his own senses: he here reports what he has seen and heard and felt.—*New York Herald*.

There are passages in *Mexican Trails* so irresistibly funny that only the hopeless misanthrope will be able to refrain from a hearty laugh; and there are other passages in which the author has described scenes characteristic or charming with a deftness of word-painting and a grace of diction worthy of enthusiastic praise.—*Providence Journal*.

The author is not only an excellent observer, but is also a poet in his descriptions. The book is quite as entertaining

as literature as for the great fund of information it contains.—*St. Louis Post Despatch*.

He writes pleasantly and with a distinct gift for rendering vivid pictorial effects with a genuine touch of poetic feeling and sentiment. . . . In brief Mr. Kirkham's book may be read with much pleasure and profit.—*Boston Herald*.

If one may not go to Mexico himself, the next best thing is to sit down with Mr. Kirkham's book and give orders for no disturbance till one has strolled to heart's content among picturesque places whither the author can so delightfully lead.—*Louisville Courier Journal*.

A pleasant departure from the ordinary book of travels; *Mexican Trails* carries the reader into all sorts of by-paths and out-of-the-way places.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

The pictures drawn are not snapshots from a car window. They show the sympathetic touch of an artist. There is much of the dreamy style of Lafcadio Hearn.—*Chicago Evening Post*.

No traveller in Mexico can consider the preparations for the trip quite complete unless they include a reading of *Mexican Trails*.—*Evening News, Newark*.

He is a charming companion. He sees all that is beautiful, and that he is invited to look at, with an artist's appreciation.—*Hartford Courant*.

Mr. Kirkham, already an author of experience in other fields, now gives a charming picture of Mexico. He does not attempt to instruct; the book is an impressionistic painting, full of the atmosphere and color of the real Mexico—the Mexico of the Indian trails. . . . Mr. Kirkham has traversed many miles of territory still untouched by modern civilization, and his pictures of Indian life are full of feeling and pathos, relieved by touches of humor. . . . The narrative is refreshingly free from statistics and chapters on the financial resources of the country and the political situation. As an artist is said to catch the expression of his model, so Mr. Kirkham has succeeded in portraying the individuality, the elusive spirit of Mexico.—*New York Evening Post*,

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An Application of *Practical Psychology* to Daily Life

Unlike some books on Psychology, this keeps to the line of thought marked out for it in the introduction. The author quite surprises you by revealing yourself to yourself so clearly. . . . Before you have finished the book you have lost sight of all except yourself and your kinship with your author. . . . And the charm and fascination does not die with the last chapter. For again and again you turn back to this chapter or that and read it once more.—*Boston Transcript*.

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Mr. Kirkham has succeeded admirably in incorporating in his book the theories of the best psychologists and the latest discoveries of the powers of the mind, arranging his facts logically and clearly so that they appear with a new force.—*Columbus Journal*.

The book occupies the middle ground between the faddists, who go to all extremes in their advocacy of mental culture to secure physical health, and those who care nothing for these things. The doctrine that he teaches is mainly that of self-reliance, and that is the most important doctrine that can be taught to the weaklings and faddists of our time.—*The Christian Register*.

Mr. Kirkham has applied philosophy to life in a helpful and delightful way. He has a good philosophy and a good view of life, and they come together most satisfactorily in this book, which any one can read and enjoy.—*Journal of Education, Boston*.

A work of its soundness and simplicity is certain to find its audience everywhere —*Chicago Tribune*.

His discussion has the merit of presenting practical truth in a fashion that interests the reader while it appeals to the common-sense. The book is an unusually clear and convincing study of an interesting subject.—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

Stanton Davis Kirkham, hitherto known only as an apostle of the beautiful, has written a book which should place him high among the world's best philosophers.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

His doctrine may be too Spartan for the weakling and the milksop, but it is the kind that makes the man. It is a doctrine of self-reliance as opposed to the theological dogma of relying upon another to save us from the effects of sin, and the medical dogma of relying upon a prescription to free us from the effects of self-indulgence, wrong-thinking, or defects of character. There is much common sense in Mr. Kirkham's theories and he has written a healthy and helpful book.—*Edinburgh Scotsman*.

Scientific, though free from technicalities.—*Springfield Republican*.

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The author says many true and inspiring things and says them with a brilliancy that reminds one strongly of Emerson.—*Chicago Record-Herald*.

Some people are going to get a deal of enjoyment out of this book: others there be who will look and wonder why it was ever written. Those who dip into it and get the habit will find it possessing the power to hold.—*Denver Republican*.

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It is a book that you can carelessly place on your parlor table with the comforting conviction that any one turning its pages will find it serviceable, and sure to teach good to our kind.—*Portland Oregonian*.

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He knows bird ways and bee ways, the democratic code of the ant, poetry of weeds, the philosophy of stones and the song of laughing waters. All seasons are known to him and all latitudes, as well as a style Emersonian in its elusive cadences. *In The Open* is a rare book.—*Pittsburg Gazette-Times*.

