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**An emigrant's five years in the free states of America.
By William Hancock**

AN EMIGRANT'S FIVE YEARS IN THE FREE STATES OF AMERICA.

BY WILLIAM HANCOCK.

IN ONE VOLUME.

WITH A MAP.

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F. S. R.

[The Author reserves the right of Translation].

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TO MY MOTHER THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

I do not publish this little work at the solicitation of partial friends; nor, however much I may desire the approbation of the reader, is it my intention to ask his indulgence for such faults and deficiencies as may be found in the following pages, on the ground of ill health, limited leisure, or other difficulties, common—in Prefaces—to Authors. I have no desire to connect an ill-constructed sentence with a disordered digestion, or to advance the appropriation of

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half-a-day's leisure by "engrossing business pursuits" as an excuse for the expression of a half-formed judgment.

I have as little inclination to deprecate the severity of the critic as to solicit the indulgence of the reader; simply because I do not fear it—otherwise than as the surgeon's patient fears the knife and cautery. The operation may be unpleasant, but it may be also necessary, and "out of the nettle, danger" in the present, it may be possible to "pluck the flower safety" in the future.

Though I have done my best to interest the general reader, my chief object has been to inform the intending emigrant. I traversed "the Free States," not as a Tourist, with either leisure or means for the indulgence in the pleasures of transatlantic capitals, or the luxuries and dissipations of Newport and Saratoga, but as an Emigrant; and it is out of the interest in, and sympathy for that class of my fellow-countrymen who—helping to work out, each in his own way, however humble, the glorious mission of the Anglo-Saxon race—would seek a home in the new world, which my own career engendered, that the desire has arisen to set forth, to the best of my ability, the results of my own experience and observation, in the form of such information as may prove of service, and such suggestions as may save from loss of time and means, and consequent vexation and pain.

As one who has no cause to regret his own expatriation, I can only wish the reader who may try his fortune in the New World, as much satisfaction in the future as a retrospect of the past yields to me, and as many pleasant hours and kind friends as I myself enjoyed and met in the land of Brother Jonathan.

W. H.

Southampton, February, 1860.

FIVE YEARS IN THE FREE STATES OF AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

An emigrant ship.—Leaving home.—The first day on board.— Channel experiences.—Out at sea.—The steerage.—Steamers versus sailing vessels.—The second cabin.—Dining under difficulties.—On the Banks.—The pilot-boat and the pilot.— The steam-tug.—New York Bay.—Quarantine.—New York.—A night attack.

It was in one of the London line of sailing packets, and as favourable a specimen, probably, of the class of emigrant vessels—a class bad at the best—as could be found (favourable, at least, at that time, and for that particular VOL. I. B 2 voyage) that I took my passage for New York in the month of June, 1852. Of course there was the usual uncertainty in the day of sailing common to sailing packets. Of course the captain expressed a resolute determination to start on such a day without fail; and of course when the day arrived half the freight had not arrived with it; and of course another day was named, with an assurance of no possibility of further delay; which, however, passed like the former, except that those passengers who had taken possession of their berths a week previous, ignorant of ship-owners tactics, began to grumble, as well they might, at the diminution of certain eatables and drinkables which they had laid in for the voyage, and which many of them were pecuniarily ill-able to replace.

*The day came at last, however; and the good ship C—took her departure from the St. Katherine's Docks in due—or undue—course. The events and incidents of that particular day are indelibly *photographed*, as it were, on my memory; as, it seems to me, the events of such 3 a day must be on the memory of any one who, for the first time, leaves the loved scenes and familiar faces of his native soil, for the unknown and untried scenes of a distant land. The last meal at the family table, where the would-be cheerful smile of the lip struggles vainly for the mastery with the tear-drop in the eye, and the heart aches, oh! so sorely, and the hand trembles, and the food has no taste and yields no enjoyment; the parting, to be felt only, not described, save by him who would lay bare the sacred sorrows of his own experience: the last farewell of all to the one who has come to “see us off,”*

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when the vessel moves slowly from her berth, and the cry of "Strangers, ashore!" is heard; the last pressure of the hand, the quivering of the lip of the strong man in his agony, the last "Good bye, God bless you!" of a husband's, a brother's, a parent's voice; the straining of the eye from the vessel's deck, the last look at the loved face and the waving hand—face and hand too often B 2 4 never to be seen again—alone distinguishable in the crowd on shore; the rest, for each one of whom some heart near us beats like our own, unseen, uncared for; the feeling of being still, in some sort, at home, while land is in sight, and the sense of isolation and separation which falls like a pall upon the mind when the last headland disappears, and nothing is seen but our floating fellow-wanderers on the wide waste of waters; how the memory of all these rises on the mind from the grave of departed years, not growing dim in the distant past, but increasing in intensity and power as time moves on, many of the thousands who yearly leave our shores will bear me witness.

But there is a dark and a bright side to everything, and but few events leave impressions solely of a painful character. There are few occasions which produce sensations of a more novel and pleasing kind than the voyager's first day afloat—always supposing the non-occurrence of certain other sensations, which, if 5 novel enough, could scarcely be imposed on the most inexperienced reader as pleasant or agreeable.

From these last, however, the passenger who takes his departure from the river is exempt; all is plain sailing—or rather no sailing at all—for the first day; the motive power being delegated to the diminutive tug which steams, and puffs, and blows in advance, as if boasting of its ability to drag the giant vessel in its wake. The bustle and excitement of departure; the ludicrous incidents which never fail to occur when place and people become acquainted for the first time; the unusual sights and sounds which greet the eye and ear on the vessel's deck—all serve as so many foils to grief, and exercise a wholesome restraint on its excessive indulgence. I have a recollection of becoming wholly engrossed by the operation of hoisting the cow on board, by means of a pulley, connected with a band passed round the animal's body—sundry speculations as to the feelings of the said cow during the continued pressure upon her abdominal 6 regions, producing, for the time, a

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complete oblivion of the painful circumstances attending my departure; and I observed that the drolleries of the captain's steward, a muscular mulatto, seemed to exercise an equally distracting influence on a party of females whose faces yet bore the signs of recent tears.

The C— lay at anchor off the Nore the first night; and the next morning found us fairly afloat, before a steady breeze, in the English Channel. The wind, however, soon changed, and for several days shifted and veered about in a most provoking manner, capering coquettishly with every point of the compass, and sending us alternately towards the French and English coasts—a proceeding denominated in nautical parlance “tacking”—the natural tendency of which zigzag mode of progression to produce an impatient irritability of temper being further increased by the sight of passing steamers, which held on their course with what to our eyes seemed like a conceited consciousness of being perfectly independent of the frolics of Boreas. 7 Ten days elapsed before we had passed Cape Clear, and were altogether out of sight of land, having accomplished this distance about the same time that the steamer which left the same day as ourselves was entering New York harbour. Most of the passengers had by this time got their sea legs on, as the phrase goes, and though somewhat pale and forlorn in appearance—the majority having been excessively sick— were making tolerably successful endeavours to retain an erect position on the deck. This was a more difficult task than might at first appear, even with the wind on the quarter, and the deck at an angle of thirty degrees. Our good ship had an inveterate tendency to roll, as it is called, or tumble from side to side, a bad habit which it indulged without cessation throughout the voyage. In fact, we were literally

“Rocked in the cradle of the deep,”

and that with a perseverance and regularity, which I doubt if the united infantile experience 8 of the passengers and crew combined could equal.

Indeed, the C— was by no means a model craft in any respect; square at the stern, and round at the bows, the fine lines and delicate curves of the clipper might in vain be sought

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for in her hull; nor were her masts and spars by any means light and tapering; still, it was a fine and a glorious thing to sit or lie on her deck, and gaze abroad on the wide ocean, when the sunbeams lit up the dancing waves, or the moonlight threw a path of molten silver across the surface of the sea; and then to look upwards where the sails swelled and the masts bent before the breeze, and the stormy petrel (vulgo, Mother Carey's chickens for which, by the way, sailor Jack has a high respect and veneration, devoutly believing that its body contains the spirit of some departed brother of the sea) was seen careering in the vessel's wake. And a still more glorious thing was it to watch the coming of the dense black cloud, at first "no bigger than a man's hand," which held the approaching storm; and as it burst in streams of forked lightning over head, to note the rise and fall, the immensity and grandeur of the huge billows, as the vessel rose upon their crests, and sank into their cavernous depths! What if a saucy wave send the spectator reeling across the deck, or his hold of the rigging be insufficient to prevent his sliding, in posture undignified and grotesque, along its slippery surface? These are small matters; and a "ducking" but a trifling penalty to pay for one of the grandest exhibitions of the Creator's power.

So much for the poetry of the voyage: now for the prose Let us descend the companion-ladder and take a look below. The after part of the main deck is occupied by the first and second cabins; below the main deck is the steerage, where the great mass of the passengers are to be found, crowded together in a close atmosphere, eating and drinking, card-playing, talking, swearing, and love-making. Of this last there is plenty—of its kind, and at all times; the arrangements—or rather want of B 5 10 arrangement—being such as to permit of the most unrestricted intercourse between the sexes; to promote immorality, and place modesty and decency at a discount. If the vice and crime which exist among the emigrant population of New York, and other great cities of the American sea-board, could be traced to their source, the origin of a large and lamentable proportion would, I fear, be found in the demoralizing influences of steerage companionship. I must not omit

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to mention that some improvements have taken place in the steerage arrangements of emigrant vessels since the date of this voyage, but they still leave much to be desired.

These people have paid four and five pounds each as their passage money; the said sum entitling them to receive weekly a supply of provisions, including tea, sugar, rice, oatmeal, biscuit, flour, &c., and a certain allowance of salt meat, or *junk*, possessing the consistence of gutta-percha, and the flavour of brine itself, the less of which they eat—if they can eat it—the better. The other articles are wholesome enough, 11 and generally of fair quality; but the distribution, which takes place under the direction of the carpenter of the ship, is sometimes partial, and complaints of “short weight,” and false measure, are frequently heard. Many of the passengers are possessed of means—(the amount of capital brought into the United States during the last few years by emigrants, yields, as far as could be calculated, an average of over fourteen pounds to each person)—and few are not supplied with some extras in the way of provisions, such as they have been accustomed to on shore, to the amount probably of from two to four pounds. The largest of these sums, added to the cost of passage, makes a total of nine pounds; for ten pounds they could secure a passage in a steamer, and extra provisions for the voyage, with better ventilation, better accommodation, and the satisfaction of being two weeks on the ocean instead of, perhaps, the same number of months.

Motives of economy will continue, doubtless, to induce the majority of emigrants to use sailing 12 packets in preference to steamers; so long, at least, as the existing rates of passage remain unchanged; but that there are many who regret, and have cause to regret, not having availed themselves of the more expeditious, if more expensive mode of transit, before they have got half-way across the Atlantic, observation and inquiry have fully satisfied me.

We leave these lower regions—encountering by the way men and women with dishes and saucepans, the contents of which they have been cooking as they best could at the galley fire, for it is dinner time—and re-ascend to the main deck. I am a second-cabin passenger.

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I pay seven pounds for a berth in a room eight feet either way, in which are three other berths, occupied respectively by a sturdy north countryman, a cockney, suspected of having run away from something or somebody, in consequence of his having come on board at the last moment previous to sailing, and rendered himself invisible until the vessel left the river; and a passenger from the rural districts—somewhere in 13 Hampshire—very green, and very timid, who wishes, in defiance of the rules, to burn a lamp by night, and is continually engaged in a laborious calculation of the chances of escape, in the event of the ship going to the bottom. This room, with half a dozen others, is entered from the cabin, a roomy place enough, if it were not so crowded with baggage; furniture there is none, save a rough narrow table and a couple of long forms at one end of the cabin. In addition to my passage money of seven pounds, I have expended an equal amount in a supply of provisions, so numerous and so varied in character, that the contemplation of them is positively bewildering—at least, in the early part of the voyage—and selection, as meal time approaches, a matter of serious consideration. Attendance, such as it is, is not wanting; a youthful Israelite from the steerage agreeing, “for a consideration,” to superintend the culinary department for a party of us who have joined together on communistic principles. The voyager who caters for himself finds no small amount of management necessary in suiting the nature of his meal to the state of the weather, and consequent state of the vessel, and, sometimes, of his own physical system. Fried fat bacon is apt to prove objectionable in a heavy sea; and the oscillatory motion of our ship, before alluded to, was, under any circumstances, somewhat unfavourable to the preparation of soups and broths in inexperienced hands, such as those of our Jewish friend, who, on one occasion, was precipitated head foremost into the cabin, by a lurch of the ship, and laid prostrate in the midst of the contents of the vessel he carried. In some instances, indeed, cooking is out of the question, as when the galley stove was thrown down in a gale, and pots and kettles “went to leeward” with their contents. In such cases the discussion of a slice of bread and cheese, with a bottle of pickles—stuck between the knees for greater security—is about the best way of making a virtue of necessity.

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It will be seen that the cost of a second cabin passage varies according to the inclinations and 15 requirements of the passenger; to one who places a fair value on creature comforts, and provides effectually against the possibility of being reduced to oatmeal porridge and ship biscuits before the end of the voyage, little is gained in point of economy by taking a second cabin passage. For a trifle above the expense I had incurred, I might have secured a first cabin passage, with everything except liquors provided, or a second cabin passage on a steamer, with the same provisions, and a saving of five weeks in point of time. I had no cause to regret the arrangements I had myself made, having secured opportunities of experience and observation, otherwise unattainable, but I mention these facts for the benefit of "all whom they may concern."

It is not my intention to follow step by step, or rather knot by knot, our voyage across the Atlantic; that, indeed, would be a difficult, as well as a needless proceeding. The contrary winds which had driven us hither and thither in the Channel, performed the same amiable task 16 on the ocean; and I cannot better give an idea of our course than by means of the following diagram—not taken from the captain's log, though I will venture to assert it very well might have been:—

Six weeks had elapsed from the date of our departure, when we reached the grand Bank of Newfoundland, where we wandered about in a fog for several days; the ship's bells, aided by a small horn, keeping up an incessant noise, night and day, to warn off approaching vessels. In spite of this precaution, we narrowly escaped a collision with a clumsy fishing brig, whose heavy bows were suddenly seen looming towards us one afternoon at about two ship's lengths distance; and which was only prevented from running into us amidships by great exertions on 17 the part of the men at the wheel, a great deal of bawling "Hard a-port!" &c., &c., &c., on the part of the captain, and a great deal of hard swearing on the part of the mates. The consternation that prevailed was considerable. Our nervous friend became almost insane, while prosecuting an unsuccessful search after his life preserver in the recesses of his trunk—said article being stowed away under his pillow

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for greater convenience of access, a fact he had quite forgotten—and the women betook themselves to prayer and tears instanter. It was currently reported that a lady in the first cabin, having equipped herself in a life belt, but lacking the presence of mind requisite for the task of inflating it, rushed frantically from one to another of her companions, entreating them to “blow her up;” but as I have since heard the self-same story told of numerous other ladies under similar circumstances, I am induced to set it down as “a weak invention” of an “enemy” of the sex.

More favourable winds prevailed after the crossing the Grand Bank, and, in a few days 18 the appearance of numerous vessels in our neighbourhood intimated our approach to port. These were a welcome sight, and still more welcome was the sudden appearance, as if by magic, one moonlight night, of one of the daintiest of crafts, with the whitest of sails, and the slimest of masts, and a huge figure denoting her number, painted in black on the mainsail; which, as the vessel lay too, on her approach, dashed swiftly up alongside the ship, parted with one of her crew, and glided off again under the vessel's stern, and away in the moonlight in the same noiseless and fairy-like fashion. We know it to be a pilot-boat, and turn with curious eyes to the starboard gangway, where the new arrival is endeavouring to make his way through a crowd of eager passengers to the Captain's cabin. But what is this? with a recollection of the sturdy weather-beaten individual in the rough coat and sou'wester, who brought us through the Channel, fresh in our memory; it is no wonder we stare in surprise at the white coat and spotless linen, the close-fitting 19 unmentionables, the silk hat, and patent boots of his Yankee representative. A modicum of contempt may even mix with our surprise, at first. Without waiting to discuss the propriety of our prejudices, or consider the unsuitableness of a channel pilot's equipment, appropriate in all seasons to our humid English coast, to the atmosphere of a summer's night in the latitude of Spain, we begin to entertain serious doubts of our pilot's capability. Never were appearances more deceptive; never conclusions more premature; before long we come to know and feel that a more reliable, fearless, and effective body of men than the New York pilots does not exist. A newspaper or two, and a few pounds of tobacco,

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which our amphibious looking visitant had brought on board for distribution, supplied a pleasant mental and physical stimulus to our party in the cabin that evening. Items of English news were greedily devoured; and, disconnected as they were, with the events of seven weeks previous, afforded ample food for conjecture and argument; and a 20 vast amount of ingenuity was expended in endeavours to explain American phrases, and thread the bewildering mazes of American politics. As to the tobacco, whoever could get a pipe for love or money, and knew how to use it, was smoking. The aroma of Cavendish was universal while the provision lasted; and no wonder! the supply of what Cowper (poor fellow) calls the “noxious weed” had failed two days before; the most inveterate smokers resorting to tea leaves, and moving about in an atmosphere of Souchong more peculiar than agreeable.

The next day a calm ensued—as it generally does, I think, when you are almost within sight of port—but the wind rose at sundown, increasing almost to a gale, and affording a capital opportunity to the good ship C—of displaying her peculiar idiosyncrasy, of which she availed herself to the utmost, creating dire confusion among the moveables in the cabin, and summarily ejecting several of the passengers from their berths on to the floor; where I, for 21 one, lay, convulsed with laughter, at the apparition of the nervous gentleman, hanging suspended in mid-air by his under garments, which had caught in a nail, from the berth above me. As this would, in all probability, be the last night on board, these mishaps, however, were little cared for, and we were all on deck bright and early, on the look-out for land. The wind, which had lulled, was unfavourable to our making port; the knowledge of which, fact by others besides ourselves, soon brought us into communication with a new acquaintance—a steam tug, painted all sorts of gay colours, somewhat in the style of the Noah's ark of our childhood; with her engines on deck, and on the fore-deck an elevated pilot-house, in which stood the “man at the wheel,” who was thus enabled to attend to his business with a dry skin in the worst of weather, and, from his position, to secure an unobstructed view in front and on either side. This plan is adopted in all American steamboats; and the covered screen is in use 22 likewise, on railway

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engines, affording a very essential shelter and protection to the men who drive the train. Arrangements were made, after some delay, with the master of this boat to take us to New York; and, with the gaily painted tug in advance, we were soon passing Sandy Hook, at the extremity of the outer bay—the station whence new arrivals are telegraphed to the city—and approaching the lovely shores of Staten Island and Long Island, between which lies the passage—appropriately termed “the narrows”—to the inner bay. Two forts, one on either side, guard this approach to the city; after passing which, one of the most beautiful scenes the eye ever dwelt upon presented itself, glowing in the gorgeous radiance of a summer sun; hilly slopes of the richest green, dotted with villas, and topped with woods rising on the left; the low shores of Long Island, rich in rural beauty, on the right; small islands, each a fortification, scattered over the expanse in front, and, beyond all, the spires of New 23 York, and the hills of the noble Hudson blending in the far distance with the azure of the heavens above.

Leisure was afforded for the enjoyment of this exquisite scene by our detention at the quarantine ground, situated just within the “Narrows.” Our experience of ship's purgatory, quarantine, was short, however. There was no sickness on board, notwithstanding that the vessel was unprovided with a doctor, or perhaps, as some maliciously asserted—and with some show of reason when the wretched incapability of many ship's doctors (*i. e.*, emigrant ships), is taken into the account—because of this non-provision. We had been for seven weeks totally without medical attendance of any kind, and the one passenger who left the world, and the two who came into it during the voyage, went and came without professional assistance.

The passengers having passed in review before the medical official from the shore, and the gay little steam tug having been lashed alongside the vessel, we steamed merrily up the bay; and 24 in an hour a number of the passengers, myself among them, were put ashore in the tug, leaving the vessel at anchor in the river, and were eagerly gazing round on the novel scenes presented by the American capital.

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The first thing to be done on landing was to find the post office; and the next to adjourn with a pocket full of letters “from home,” some of which had arrived a month before, to the hotel which some friends and myself had selected for our first night's sojourn; and whence, after a substantial supper, as the six o'clock tea is termed—of which we partook in company with some hundred other “guests” at the public table—we again issued forth with all the impatience naturally caused by a two months' absence from *terra firma*, to lose ourselves for a couple of hours in the gay streets of the capital. The days are comparatively short in summer, and the twilight brief in these latitudes, and it was dark long before we returned to the hotel at nine o'clock; having, in the interim, done full justice to some of the mammoth oysters for 25 which New York is famous, and received besides, in return for an English sovereign, a number of dirty pieces of paper, denominated “dollar bills,” and some small change, of the value of which we had about as clear a comprehension as of the coinage of China or Timbuctoo. The decimal system of currency in use in the States is simple enough, but at that time a large portion of the silver in circulation was Mexican coin, which, having no relative decimal value to the American money, went by the names of shillings and sixpences, and as these were of half the value of English coins of the same name, the confusion of ideas into which we were led may be easily imagined.

I retired to my room early, but not, alas! to rest. The night was warm in the extreme. I sat down by the open window, and commenced reading, but an unaccountable itching sensation about the face annoyed me. It increased; the more I rubbed and scratched, the worse it grew; reading was out of the question, and I prepared for bed. An examination of the bedstead explained VOL. I. C 26 the mystery; a thin curtain hung around it on all sides to the floor, forming a screen of gauze, intended as a protection against my tormentors—the mosquitos. The light in my room had attracted swarms of these agreeable visitors, and I was glad to seek the protection of the “mosquito bar” against their further attacks; but, unfortunately, in “turning in” to my novel couch, I drew the curtains too much aside, and ere I had begun to doze, a renewal of hostilities warned me that a detachment of

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the enemy had entered my entrenchments along with me. They alighted on my face and hands; my restlessness disarranged the light bed covering, and they got at my feet. Driven to desperation, I kicked and struggled so violently as to bring down a large portion of the gauze, on which the whole troop rushed in. Resistance became useless; I fell asleep at last from sheer exhaustion, and they fed upon me unmolested till morning.

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CHAPTER II.

New York.—English prejudices.—Manhattan, as it was, and as it is.—Broadway.—American beauty.—Omnibuses, carts, and private carriages.—Target companies.—Firemen and fire companies.—The Bowery.—Railroad cars.—Politeness to ladies.—Extent of the city.

A sketch of New York, as I found it, six years ago, and as I left it, less than twelve months since, would present a difference, unappreciable, probably, by any but an American. A Londoner finds, and expects to find, but little alteration, of a marked and noticeable character at least, on a return after a five years' absence; but in "the States," five years accomplish the work of a quarter of a century with us, not merely in the matter of extension, but of rebuilding and improvement. A house sixty or seventy years old, would, in England, be looked upon as a respectable adult in bricks and mortar, and one twice that age as a still serviceable veteran; in New York, buildings of the—with us—juvenile age of thirty or forty, would be, and are in large numbers annually, voted old, inconvenient, and unsightly, and forthwith removed as impediments in the march of progress and go-a-headism—that is, if they have not previously tumbled down of their own accord, a consummation which, whether "devoutly to be wished" or not, bad foundations, hasty erections, and indifferent construction, conspire to render by no means uncommon. Building, however, like everything else in the States, is done with an eye to existing requirements, not future stability. At the time of my arrival in America, a demand was rising for marble house fronts and huge hotels, but the business thoroughfares boasted but

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two or three specimens of the first, and the favourite old “Astor House,” a massive, well-built, granite erection of prison-like extent and appearance, was still the leading hotel in the city. On my return to New York, after an absence of two years, I walked through streets lined in their entire length by marble-fronted shops and warehouses, and passed two vast hotels, each accommodating a thousand guests, and yielding a yearly profit of ten thousand pounds apiece. Trade had moved half-a-mile “up town;” the suburbs of the city had spread and extended to an extent almost incredible; and places formerly of fashionable resort were now beyond the limits of the world of *ton*. Other changes had taken place, some for the better, some for the worse; but enough has been hinted to give the reader some idea of Yankee progressiveness, and to suggest obvious reasons why, in aiming to render these pages practically useful to the best of my power, I should lay my note-book with its reminiscences of five years date aside, and describe New York as I left, and not as I found it.

I have, however, one use to make of that repository of neglected memoranda, my diary, before carrying out the resolution implied in the last sentence, being desirous, at least, to “point a moral” by its aid, if I cannot “adorn a tale.” A glance at its pages, open it where I may, is sufficient to indicate the existence in full vigour in the writer's mind, of that pet foible of an Englishman—prejudice; and an extended observation of others under circumstances similar to my own at that time, has produced the conviction that John Bull's boasted nationality—proud, in a modest and dignified manner, of his country, as he has a right to be, above all the world—too frequently assumes, among strangers, a form and proportion which render him pitiable and ridiculous to others, which distort his mental vision, bias his judgment, and make him, intellectually, a very bugbear to society and himself. Knowing the extent of these baneful prejudices, as every English traveller cannot fail to do, surely it were better for our own credit, and the encouragement of international good-will, if such weaknesses were combated and condemned, instead of fostered and flattered by disparaging comparisons, and overdrawn pictures of life and manners.

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In these days of emigration, of no country not under British rule, is a fair and just estimate more needed than of the States of the American Union; and in no instance, therefore, is it more to be desired that the discussion of insignificant points of difference should yield to a frank and honest acknowledgment of a rival's claims to our admiration and respect.

One morning in September, just two centuries and a half ago, that is in, the year 1609, a ship, "The Crescent" by name, commanded by Henry Hudson, a Dutch navigator, in search of the north-west passage, who, having found too much ice in his way to the pole, had wisely wandered into warmer latitudes, came to anchor not far from the spot where we left the good ship C—, at the close of the last chapter. On a point of land formed by the confluence of a noble river—since named in honor of the adventurous Dutchman, who, "the first of Europeans," explored it a hundred and fifty 32 miles from its mouth, the Hudson—and an arm of the sea, stretching down between an island and the mainland from the north, "groups of savages gazed, in wonder and curiosity from its wooded banks at the first vessel larger than a bark canoe that had crossed those waters. Sombre forests shed a melancholy grandeur over the useless magnificence of nature, and hid in their deep shades the rich soil which the sun had never warmed. No axe had levelled the giant progeny of the crowded groves, in which the fantastic forms of withered limbs that had been blasted and riven by lightning, contrasted strangely with the freshness of a younger growth of branches. And man, the occupant of the soil, was wild as the savage scene, in harmony with the rude nature by which he was surrounded; the bark of the birch for his canoe; strings of shells his ornaments, his record, and his coin; the roots of the forest among his resources for food; his religion, the adoration of nature; his morals, the promptings of undisciplined instinct; disputing with wolves and bears the lordship of 33 the soil; and dividing with the squirrel the wild fruits with which the woods abounded."* On this point of land now stands New York. The insignificant settlement of Dutch fur-traders who followed in Hudson's track, has become the commercial capital of the western world; paved thoroughfares cover the track of the Indian "trail," and the dense forest is displaced by noble streets, in some of which a scene of bustle, gaiety, and activity is daily presented,

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unequaled in their combined effect in any old world city of half-a-dozen centuries growth. I cannot better give an idea of the manner in which the city of New York is laid out, than by adopting the illustration used by Captain Marryat, in his work—for which, by the way, his memory is held in slight respect by all true Americans—on America; namely, that of the skeleton of a fish, the back-bone representing the main thoroughfare, which occupies the ridge between the two rivers, as they are both called, and the branch bones the side streets, decreasing 5

* Bancroft's History of the United States.

34 in length as they approach the point (or tail) at the southern extremity. To continue the simile, the numerous small bones on the sides of the fish may be said to represent quays, or piers, which extend far out into the water on either side of the city, in the “slips” between which vessels of every size and from every clime he moored, and where they discharge and receive their varied cargoes. Docks are unknown and unneeded; and the tedious and vexatious delays which attend the passage of baggage through the customs in an English port, are here pleasantly abridged to a five minutes' detention on the vessels' deck, as the packages are opened and hastily examined (in a manner, it must be confessed, not calculated in a very high degree to detect or suppress contraband tendencies), by the officers, as they are passed over the ship's side. There are no gates guarded by sharp-eyed janitors, to pass, and a plethoric pocket, or an unnatural protuberance of dress, need excite no fear in the wearer of the forcible abstraction of the contents 35 of the first, or a request to remove the latter. The lofty indifference to small gains thus exemplified by the guardians of the revenue, is a conspicuous trait in the American character. Whatever the stranger may object to in his trans-atlantic acquaintances, no “haggling” over trifles, no littleness, or meanness in conception or execution can be laid to their charge.

The ideas of the American are vast and expansive as the country he inhabits; unhindered by the prejudices of class and caste, and untrammelled by the fetters of a silly conventionalism, and a false hereditary veneration, now, fortunately, dying out

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elsewhere, for mere rank unbacked by merit; he knows no limit to his designs, and sees no obstruction in his path to the highest honors, or the greatest wealth.

I have already alluded to the handsome and uniform appearance of some of the thoroughfares of New York. These are chiefly the newly rebuilt streets of the lower part of the city, and the “avenues,” lined with the mansions of the wealthy, in the upper portion. The 36 leading thoroughfare, the main artery of the city, Broadway, is as irregular as Oxford Street; exhibiting still stronger contrasts in its fronts of brick, brown stone, and white marble. The process of pulling down and building up, however, is continually going on; piles of brick and rubbish obstruct the pedestrian at every hundred yards of his progress; and as the removal of one house frequently causes a compound fracture of the next from cellar to garret, there is nothing for it but to pull that down also. Two magnificent hotels have taken the place of some old buildings in the upper part of Broadway, and thither the leading retail dealers have likewise betaken themselves. Here, too, is the fashionable promenade; where crinoline expands, and silks and satins, as well as some of the charms they are intended to conceal, are displayed to an extent unmatched in Regent Street. Altogether, a more attractive scene than Broadway presents on a fine afternoon, can scarcely be imagined. No European city exhibits such a mixture of nationalities, or greater 37 varieties of the *genus homo*. The native, with his sallow cheeks and restless glance; the Italian—a count, of course—looking hungry and sentimental; the German, redolent of *Rhine wein* and *lager bier*; the English cockney, supercilious and *blasè*; the lively Frenchman, chattering and grimacing like any monkey; the swarthy West Indian, the Southern fire eater, and the down-east Puritan, jostle each other in the crowd; Chinamen sell cigar-lights at the street corners, and negro porters are unloading baggage at the hotels. The fair sex well vindicates its claim to the title. Plainness is decidedly the exception—good looks the rule. True, much of the beauty one meets with is of a fragile, evanescent order, attributable to some extent to climate, but more, doubtless, to precocious training and indolent habits; for, to the American lady a walk of a mile, except to promenade, is a serious undertaking. Forms are slight, skins are transparent, and colour

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not always natural; but the charm of expression is not wanting, joined with a vivacity and coquetry, 38 partaking less of the Anglo-Saxon than the French, through which, however, may be detected the sincerity and earnestness of character which mark the true descent. But these are not the characteristics of all. The full form, healthy colour, and vigorous step, denote the passing Englishwoman. The Parisian trips gaily by; and few varieties, Teutonic, Celtic, or Scandinavian, are unrepresented. Negro women, black as ebony, with bandanas wound around the head, pass with infants; and others, who have amassed wealth like their white neighbours, strut by as none but a female “darkey” or a peacock can strut, in all the pride of the most gorgeous colours.

For two hours in the morning the current of male humanity flows in one unbroken stream down Broadway, to fill the offices, shops, and warehouses of the business quarter; and in the afternoon and evening, returning, meets and swells the tide of fashion to overflowing. The roadway presents as busy and as gay a scene. The omnibuses are painted white, or some light 39 colour, and have no conductor; a communication being established with the driver by means of a strap, passing along the roof of the vehicle inside, and connected with the door, and by a hole in the roof behind the driver, through which the fare is paid beforehand; the passenger, if he neglect the printed instructions, being invited to pay up by a series of resolute thumps overhead, administered by the attentive Jehu. Though not so well made, these vehicles are broader and more comfortable than a London 'bus, even including the complicated and extraordinary specimens of vehicular skill lately introduced.

The hackney carriages—there are no “cabs,” and Hansoms are unknown—are drawn by two horses; and are as clean and neat as a private Brougham; but they are few in number and little used, the fares being high, and the Irish drivers impudent, independent, and extortionate. On “the stand” Paddy may generally be seen, lounging lazily on his box, with his feet hanging over the splash-board, asleep or smoking, 40 and perfectly indifferent as to whether a fare presents itself or no. An equally independent, though more active race, are the cartmen. The American cart is simply a cribbage board on an enlarged scale, on two wheels; some half dozen holes, fitted with iron sockets, being made at the sides and

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ends for the reception of stout poles, between which the goods are packed. The driver, who is frequently the owner, of this primitive vehicle, stands to drive, and by an amount of skill and practice worthy of a rope-dancer, succeeds in maintaining his erect position, while he dashes round corners, backs up against warehouse doors, and bounds over the broken roads. He is in constant demand, and makes it quite a personal favour to carry your luggage, or move your furniture; but he is always reliable—probably because it is not worth his while to be otherwise—and you may entrust him with money for a purchase, or an order for goods, without fear of loss or delay; but conscience puts no check upon his demand for the service; and new comers, ignorant of the locality, and 41 frequently of the currency, are invariably imposed upon.

To return to Broadway. Republican simplicity has little to complain of in the style of the private equipages of the wealthier classes. Some are adorned with heraldic devices; the discovery, or invention, of which constitutes the occupation of one enterprising individual, an Englishman; but these are few in number. Coachmen and footmen wear a livery of the plainest character, with a black velvet band around the hat, and, more frequently, wear no livery whatever. These “menials,” liveried or otherwise, are generally Irishmen or negroes; for the native has an aversion to the “badge of servitude” in any form, and looks with some contempt even on the uniform of the regular army (a large proportion of which consists of foreigners), viewing the service as a species of slavery, which restrains his erratic propensities, and cramps his freedom of action.

Not that he is averse to military displays; he loves them. The Americans are essentially a 42 military people by inclination, and though possessing but an insignificant army of regular troops, the militia force, which any emergency might call into the field, is immense; not to mention the numerous small bands of volunteers frequently composed of the members of some large establishment, or printing office, or even theatre, who select their own officers, have their own room for “drill,” and half a dozen times in the season assemble for a “target excursion” to the neighbouring fields. These “companies” form one of the most attractive features of Broadway. The strains of martial music are heard

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continually as the “Harper Guards,” or the “Herald Guards,” or the “Brougham Guards,” march by; their little troop of thirty or forty muskets, perhaps less, spread out into as imposing an array as possible, with the band, hired for the occasion, and almost as numerous as the troop, in advance, and a “big nigger” bearing the target, decorated with flowers, in the rear.

A sketch of New York street life would be incomplete, 43 without the introduction of a fire-engine, and its forty or fifty red-coated, or rather red-shirted attendants. Fires are frequent, rumour and the insurance offices say suspiciously so; however that may be, the occurrence of half a dozen fires within the twenty-four hours, is no very uncommon occurrence. To do battle with the raging element, an organization, or rather a number of distinct organizations, exist, formed of volunteers, who not only give their time to the service, but spend considerable sums in the purchase of magnificent engines—marvels in brass, and steel, and silver plating—and their other equipments. Thus there are engine companies, hose companies, and “hook and ladder” companies; each having a district for their especial supervision, but liable to be called to any distance if occasion requires. No horses are used; long ropes being attached to the “machine,” by which it is dragged at a running pace, amid whoops, and yells, and shouting, which render “night hideous,” and, till he gets used to it, make the rudely-awakened sleeper shudder between 44 his sheets, as he looks for the flames under his chamber door.

Elevated “look-outs” are established in the different districts, and loud-tongued bells summon the fire-men to their duty; these consist chiefly of young men, who are either mechanics, shopmen, or small tradesmen, and who, in return for their expenditure of time and means, find a gratification in the excitement the occupation affords, and the society of wild spirits like themselves. Deeds of the most daring and reckless bravery are committed by these firemen, and their exertions to subdue the flames are unremitting; but unfortunately they place in hourly peril in their reckless progress through the street, as many lives as they are the means of saving elsewhere; and it is even insinuated that they are not quite guiltless of sometimes getting up a fire for their own amusement. To a

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sober-sided Englishman such a mixture of play and work, just and earnest, does not very strongly recommend itself. The system, already losing somewhat in popular estimation, is undoubtedly 45 a faulty one; but the political strength of so large a party as is comprised in the eighty-two companies which New York possesses, is such as to render any alteration a delicate matter, if not altogether impracticable, at least for some time to come.

To aid the imagination in conceiving an idea of Broadway in the summer time, as we first beheld it, with a glowing sky overhead, and the thermometer at ninety-five degrees in the shade, the thin light coloured apparel worn by both sexes must not be forgotten. Entire suits of white linen are a frequent walking dress, and evening dress too for that matter, amongst the men, and sacks and blouses of linen, or other light material are universal; while the ladies wear any quantity of white muslin about the feet, and “next to nothing” of any material about the shoulders. The freedom from conventionality in dress is delightful; every man wears what pleases him; nobody stares at him, and impertinent boys express no desire to be favoured with the name of his hatter.

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But there are other thoroughfares, as interesting, if not as attractive to the stranger, as Broadway. The Bowery, which takes its name from the *Boweries*, or Gardens, of the Dutch burghers of former times, is a wide street, rivaling its more aristocratic neighbour in irregularity, and bearing much the same relation to it that Whitechapel does to Regent Street. Its beaux and belles, its drinking houses and oyster saloons, its theatres and concert halls, have a distinctive character of their own; and the term “Bowery Boy,” or, to give the customary pronunciation, “Bowery B'hoy,” is understood as implying the personification of vulgarity of manner, showiness of costume, facility in the use of slang, and mental imbecility generally, in their highest development.

The Bowery, in common with many other thoroughfares, is traversed by a railroad track, over which passengers are carried in carriages, drawn by two horses, and accommodating some twenty inside, and as many as like to stand on the platform at either end, outside.

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From the 47 full enjoyment of this really comfortable and pleasant mode of conveyance, however, the male sex are unfortunately excluded, and in this wise:—the vehicle is wide, and allows abundant standing room between the seats, consequently, the conductor never acknowledges to a full load until there is room neither to sit nor stand. To be seated himself, while a female is standing, is, under any circumstances, altogether contrary to an American's ideas of politeness; so, when a lady—and in this sense all are ladies in the States—enters one of these “cars,” as all railway carriages are called, she seldom despairs of obtaining a seat, for half a dozen males will rise on her entrance, and offer a selection, and so this process goes on, on each fresh arrival, until all the “lords of the creation” are left standing. This chivalrous devotion to the sex—one of the noblest traits in the national character—is universal. Special provision is made for the comfort of ladies when travelling; the best accommodation, and the most civil and polite attention from servants and officials, are at their command; 48 and rude behaviour to them in public, or ill-treatment in private, are alike almost unknown.

It is wise to do at Rome as the Romans do; and to fall in with American customs in such matters requires no painful effort, and entails no great sacrifice; but the sacrifice, whatever it may be, would undoubtedly be more cheerfully made, and the courtesy more willingly shewn, if it were not that the American lady has learned to exact as a right the voluntary homage she receives, and rarely deigns to bend her head in acknowledgment of a service rendered, or to utter a word of thanks as she takes the seat vacated in her favour. The natives are more or less accustomed to this; the foreigner is apt to regret attentions which meet so ungracious a reception, and to hesitate at standing for an hour in a railway car, or risking the loss of his hat in chasing a runaway parasol, when he is likely to get no thanks for his pains.

In one of these cars the stranger may traverse the city, from its business centre to its northern limit, a distance of eleven or twelve miles—its 49 limit, be it understood, on the map, not in reality. From a certain point the streets are numbered instead of named, the intersecting “avenues” being numbered likewise; the river which divides the island

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on which the Fort is situated—called by the Dutch “Manhattan,” a name it still retains—from the mainland flows in the neighbourhood of 150th Street—as you are informed by a direction post, though the necessity for the post, and the existence of the street are equally imaginary; but long before this point is reached, you have left the actual city miles behind, and, on returning, pass some hundred and twenty of the numeric finger posts before you enter its scattered suburbs. The town, however, is daily encroaching on the country, and houses and streets spring up in the fields, as if by the magic of Aladdin's lamp, almost in a night. VOL. I. D

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CHAPTER III.

Nassau Street.—Books and booksellers.—Post office.—Newspapers.—Wall Street.—The Custom House—Street obstructions.—Inefficient police.—Corrupt corporation.—How to make voters.—Ferry boats.—Brooklyn.—The navy yard.— Washington and the national flag.—Greenwood.—Life in New York.—Extravagance of the wealthy.—Fashionable amusements.—Enervating influences.—Signs of the times.

Nassau Street , one of the oldest in the city, is the Paternoster Row—the paradise of publishers and purgatory of authors—of New York. Among the publishing fraternity are some gentlemen, whom a feeling of national pride, and a desire to encourage native talent, prompt to the laudable task of aiding in the formation of a national literature; but the majority avail themselves of the discreditable sluggishness of the 51 federal government in the matter of international copyright to fatten on the unpaid labour of English brains, reprinting Dickens and Thackeray at two shillings a copy, and issuing choice selections from English periodicals in the form of monthly magazines.*

* It is scarcely necessary to say that some of our own publishers take the same freedom with the works of American writers; but there can be no hesitation in deciding which country suffers the greatest injustice, and has most cause for complaint.

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The largest publishing establishment in New York is that owned by Messrs. Harper Brothers, whose publications are to be met with in the remotest corner of the union. The building is of iron throughout, and is perfect in its arrangements for the varied occupations of hundreds of operatives, whose labours comprise the entire manufacture of the book in all its stages, from the setting-up of the type, to its delivery from the shelves.

Nassau Street is the scene of incessant bustle and activity. Near its southern extremity is the post office, crowded continually with applicants D 2 52 for letters “to be left till called for,” and with the clerks of the merchants and others, whose letters are sorted into pigeon holes, glazed on the outside, and numbered, instead of undergoing delivery by the postman.

With one or two exceptions, New York has not much to boast of in the style of its public buildings. The post office must be sought for in an old Dutch church, a relic of ante-revolutionary times, which served as a barracks, a hospital, and a riding school during the occupation of the British, in the War of Independence. Now letters are sorted in the aisles; mail bags are stored in the steeple; postal announcements and notices decorate the walls; and stamps are retailed from the windows. A new post office, however, is in course of erection in a more central location, and ere long the “old Dutch church” will be among the things that were.

In this thoroughfare are likewise the offices of the leading journals—those which exercise the greatest influence throughout the entire union; namely, the Herald, the Tribune, and 53 the Daily Times. These papers are published at two cents. or one penny each, and are retailed, principally, by newsboys—a sharp, shrewd, ragged set of urchins, who do a brisk business at the street corners, and in the hotels and railway stations. The newspaper circulation in the States is immense. The price brings them within the means of all, and the American eagerness for information on every topic, is such as to render the daily papers an absolute desideratum. Of the literary merits of these sheets, the less said the better. Party feeling runs high in the republic, and calm discussion and logical reasoning too

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often give place to party squabbles and personal abuse. The Herald is the most popular, and enjoys the best reputation for varied and well selected intelligence—the latter no unimportant qualification, when it is remembered that a large portion of the contents of trans-atlantic journals is culled from the European press—and as an advertising medium. The Tribune, under the directorship of the eccentric Horace Greely, 54 is the organ of the abolitionist party, and of the advocates of other and less practicable and less creditable reforms; assisting to give a sickly vitality to the doctrines of Bloomerism, Freeloivism, and woman's rights: furnishing the bill of fare of vegetarian banquets; hinting at socialism; and eulogising the memory of Thomas Paine. The “Times” may be said to steer a course between the two, and while less unscrupulous than the first, is less crotchety than the second. Each paper is at dagger's drawn with the rest, and epithets which would disgrace Billingsgate, are freely exchanged. The almighty dollar, too, rules supreme in the editorial closet, as in the merchant's counting-house. The favourable notice of a theatrical debutant is not always the result of impartial criticism; and even the withdrawal of an advertiser's patronage may bring down the editorial vengeance in an artfully written, but injurious article. Of the reputed venality of the press in matters of greater importance, national and municipal, proof may be wanting; but the mere existence 55 of such rumours is calculated to produce the conviction that the American press has to undergo a radical transformation to render it a true reflex of the popular mind, instead of the tool of party speculators, and to enable it to earn that reputation for honesty of purpose and inflexibility of principle, which should characterize the press of a great nation. Last, but not least, of the notable thoroughfares of New York, is Wall Street—the most truly American of them all. Recent events have rendered the name unpleasantly familiar to many on this side of the ocean, and few newspaper readers require to be informed, now-a-days, that Wall Street is the place where the merchants, and money dealers, the bulls, bears, and bankers of the empire city most do congregate. It is, indeed, the chief shrine of the worship of the almighty dollar. Coin is chinking in the exchange offices, and is scattered in careless profusion in their basement windows; clerks are running in and out of the numerous banks with eager haste, with thousands in their clutch; brokers are buying and selling 56 in the

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open street; anxious faces scan the bulletins at the telegraph stations, which announce the arrival of vessels in the outer bay, and from the telegraph wires themselves, carried on high unsightly poles above the pavement, birds sometimes drop stunned or dead, as the lightning current speeds home, to tell of the "loss of ventures in one bottom trusted," or of "vessels safely come to land." The custom house, a stately white marble building, of classical design, is the scene of incessant activity during the business hours, and in its opposite neighbour, the merchants' exchange, the commercial nabobs of the West strike their bargains, and calculate their gains. It is the concentration of so many of the elements of commercial life in this one thoroughfare, that renders Wall Street so peculiarly attractive; the streets immediately adjoining are comparatively deserted, while from each flows a tributary stream to swell the human torrent.

New York is less a dirty city than a disorderly one. The drainage is good; there is an abundant supply of water; and the streets are kept tolerably clean; but from the negligence of officials, the dishonesty of contractors, and the inefficiency of the police, pavements and roadways are continually out of repair; bricks and other building materials block up the streets, and bales of goods, trunks, barrels, and boxes, are allowed to accumulate on the "side-walk," in spite of the existence of stringent laws to the contrary. Parts of the city are badly lighted, or not lighted at all; the police don't seem to mind their business, and nobody seems to mind the police.

New York, in fact, is, or was, one of the worst governed cities in the world. There is a lack of pride in their city among the more respectable portion of the inhabitants, which leads them to leave the election for public officers in the hands of a set of unprincipled politicians, many of them the very scum of the Irish population, who sell their services to the highest bidder, and secure the return of their candidate, and a handsome profit for themselves, by buying up the votes of the lowest classes, at sums frequently as low as two shillings per man* Some improvement, it is to be hoped, has taken place within the past twelvemonths; matters having reached a crisis, at the time I left the States, under

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a corporation so notoriously corrupt, as to call for the interference of the State legislature, and the withdrawal of the police, and other departments, from municipal control.

* This is the amount of the fee required on an alien's declaring his intention to become a citizen of the States; on doing which, under certain conditions of residence, he is entitled to vote: plenty of the poorer class of Dutch and Irish emigrants are found willing to give their votes in return for the payment of this trifling fee.

New York is surrounded by towns and cities—outgrowths of the great city itself—which cover the opposite banks of its river boundaries, and with which communication is maintained by means of ferry-boats of large size, and most ingenious construction. The cabins (one for “ladies,” and one for “gentlemen,” to the former of which gentlemen are admitted only if in company with ladies, provided they don't smoke), each with accommodation for from 59 sixty to eighty persons, are placed one on each side of the boat; and a gangway extending from one end to the other, divided in the centre by the engine-house, affords space for twenty or thirty vehicles if required. These are driven on to the boat at one end from a platform which rises and falls with the tide, and is thus adjusted to a proper level at all times. There is an elevated pilot-house near each end of the boat, for the steersman, who changes his position with the direction of the boat, which is constructed with a rudder at either end. The advantages of this arrangement are obvious; no “backing” and turning of the boat is required, and vehicles can go off without confusion, in the same order in which they came on. The stopping place is approached between rows of piles, so arranged as to yield to the force of the boat when struck, and forming a slip or basin, contracting towards the floating platform, which is thus reached without difficulty in the roughest weather. These ferry-boats are going to and fro continually during the day, connecting the city at a dozen 60 different points with the opposite shores, and are kept running at intervals throughout the night, at fares varying from a half-penny to two-pence a-head. We take one of these ferry-boats at the foot of Wall Street, and cross the east river to Brooklyn. This place is the growth of the last twenty years, and is now the seventh city in the Union, with a population of one hundred thousand. It is a quiet place,

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with very little trade, but abounding in tree shaded streets, and “avenues” of handsome private residences; it has also a great many churches, and an exemplary population, who *taboo* theatres and such like places, and, until lately, prohibited the running of all public conveyances on Sunday. At one extremity of the city is situated the principal Navy Yard of the United States Government, about which there is little remarkable, except the newly-built dry dock, a fine structure with a fire-proof engine-house, and pumps which discharge forty thousand gallons per minute; and a small museum, containing some ship models, Indian spears, shells, a mummy or two, 61 a proclamation of George the Third, colonial paper money, and coins of a hundred years ago; and portraits of the Queen and Prince Albert, “the Duke,” Nelson, and last, but far from least, George Washington. And here I may remark that it would be difficult for any one to remain for twenty-four hours in an American city and not become familiar with all the features of the “Father of his country.” They have his “counterfeit presentment” everywhere; on omnibus doors, in the theatres, at the print shops, at the photographic galleries, where miniature copies are retailed at sixpence each, and at the Berlin wool stores. The national flag is similarly an object of popular idolatry. No “depôt” or “establishment” is complete without a flagstaff, and the stars and stripes, sometimes made to do duty likewise as advertisements of “French Millinery,” or “Twenty-five Cent. Photographs,” flutter and wave from half the house tops in the leading thoroughfares. Large flags are flying on the steamboats, and in the streets, and small flags decorate the horses 62 heads in omnibuses and sledges on gala days. Placards are printed, signs are painted on imitation flags; and not content with looking at flags, people wear them. I have seen shawls of the national colours as much like flags as possible, and have worn hats and coats myself lined by patriotic tradesmen with the stars and stripes!

On the high ground at the back of Brooklyn lies Greenwood, a populous city likewise, but a silent one—a city of the dead! Intramural interments ceased in New York in the year 1851, and there are now no less than half a dozen cemeteries, some of great extent, within ten miles of the city. Greenwood is the chief of these; and a lovelier spot for man's final

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resting place it would be hard to find. The paths extend, through thickly planted groves, over miles of hill and dale; miniature lakes lie embosomed among the trees in the valleys, and from the hill tops the eye ranges over the distant ocean, and the lovely scenery of the bay. There are a few handsome monuments, and a 63 great many not handsome at all, but what is better, interesting and touching in their unostentatious simplicity. Among these are the children—s graves of the humbler sort—mere mounds, on which were placed, enclosed in glazed cases, the books and toys of the departed little ones. In one I saw a doll-house, with dolly herself sitting painfully erect, taking tea therein; in another, certificates of good behaviour at school; and in a third, some lines on “the death of a son,” more remarkable for an extravagant use of capital letters than for rythmical beauty, or correct orthography.

Of the pleasant drives to Gravesend, Rockaway, and other favourite resorts

“On old Long Island's sea-girt shore;”

of the delightful rambles about Staten Island, and among the woods and rocks of Hoboken and Weehawken; of Harlem and its noble aqueduct, over which the water of the Croton river, forty miles distant, is conveyed to the 64 city, enough might be written to fill a chapter; but we have already lingered too long over our description of the Empire City—as the Americans delight to call their commercial capital—and its vicinity, and must hasten to give some account of its half a million inhabitants.

It has been objected to representations of life and manners in New York, that the empire city is less American than any in the Union. It is true that much of its peculiar attractiveness—and much, likewise, that is unattractive—is due to the mixed and varied character of its population, but, extending the observation beyond the mere superficial effects of this foreign admixture, it will be found that the points of difference between New York and other cities of the Union are more the consequence of local position, and of varieties of national character, than the result of foreign influence.

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The combination of foreign elements, of which the national character is itself composed, has been progressing through bygone generations, under the most favourable conditions for its development 65 which an unsurpassed geographical situation and free institutions could possibly supply; and the result is a marked and striking characterization, as powerful in its influence, if not so conspicuous, in New York as elsewhere.

It is to this influence that we may fairly attribute the rapid Americanization of foreigners who settle in the states. Placed in a country highly favourable in its vast extent and undeveloped resources, for the exertion of his energies, and the gratification of his desire for wealth, the emigrant speedily learns to emulate the determination and enthusiasm which distinguish the native in whatever he undertakes; even the versatility and adventurous spirit which enable the latter to adapt himself to new pursuits and changed conditions of life is infectious; besides being encouraged by the average mediocrity of skill and talent in most of the occupations of life. On returning to the old world, he finds everybody and everything moving in a beaten track—surely, perhaps, but slowly—and every field of action crowded with well 66 qualified competitors; of the gratification of the higher wants and sympathies of his nature, such as a refined and highly cultivated civilization afford, he will unquestionably find a larger share; but he has become a man of action, and though he may have pined before for certain elements of happiness now within his reach, and grumbled till he left his adopted home in search of them, he now feels a craving for the scenes he has left, and grumbles till he gets back again. Other influences have their share in this result, but that the picture is by no means overdrawn, I have been led to believe by numerous cases within my own experience.

The above remarks are simply prefatory to an attempt to give some idea of the most prominent features of the American mind, those which give a colouring and character to the occupations and pursuits, habits and customs of daily life; the object of the latter portion being to show that, great as the contrast may be in many respects between the old world and the new, and unfavourable to the latter as the comparison 67 which the reader

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naturally makes, may in some points appear, there is a fair prospect of his being very well satisfied in the end with the bargain he has made in the event of his exchanging the one for the other; and when a relief from a life of ill-remunerated and laborious toil, and comfort and competence in old age, are the chief objects of his desire, this reflection becomes of no slight importance.

It is, perhaps, needless to inform the reader that it is to the active, business, money-making classes of society that America offers the strongest inducements as a place of residence. Men of “elegant leisure” must seek within a very limited circle for tastes and sympathies kindred to their own; and the votaries of fashion find its gayest capitals yield but poor entertainment compared with London or Paris. Society, as it exists in its highest development in European capitals, is almost unknown. The only acknowledged supremacy is that of wealth, and this wealth, by the laws of inheritance, may be distributed into a dozen different channels on the demise of its possessor. The atmosphere of trade and speculation is all pervading; the son inherits the money-getting genius of the father, and thus from inclination as well as partly from necessity, each man becomes the architect of his own fortunes, an edifice too frequently raised, like the house in which he lives, with so little prudence, and of such indifferent materials, and on so doubtful a foundation, as to topple over on the removal of the first feeble prop that supports it. The most extravagant expenditure prevails amongst the wealthier classes, in the decoration of their houses and their persons, and in the indulgence of the grosser pleasures; but the taste for more elevating pursuits and refined enjoyments is shared only by a few. With millions lying idle in the government treasury, no encouragement is given to the formation of national museums and picture galleries; and the best libraries in the country—of which the Astor Library in New York, one of the most complete collections in the world, merits especial mention—are the bequests of individual benevolence. 69 The library book-case of private dwellings is too often kept for show; and the merchant retires home at sunset to pore over his accounts and calculations, or sleep over his newspaper, in his modest room, half underground in the basement story, while his wife and daughters hold high festival in the

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rooms up-stairs. A monarch in his counting house, he is a nonentity at home—except when madam wants a cheque for her “dry goods bill” at Stewart's, or the girls need funds for a summer campaign against the beaus, at Saratoga or “the falls.”

American fashionables are at least reasonable in one thing; they go out of town in the summer, and not in the winter. Not to their country seats, however, for very few have or care to have any. The town-reared American delights not in the unexciting pleasures of a pastoral life. Model farms are scarce, and the application of science to agriculture—except in the labour-saving operations of machinery—but little cared for. Sporting offers no inducements; 70 the first of September has no significance in the States, and the healthful exercises of the field are unknown. The Americans are eminently gregarious; they delight in crowds, and as the pleasures of town life are alone fully calculated to meet their wants in this respect, when they go into the country, they do their best to take the town along with them. Huge hotels at two or three favoured resorts receive them; eating, drinking, dressing, and flirting fill up the greater portion of the day, and the nightly ball speedily destroys the wholesome influence of the morning's drive.

The extreme heat which prevails in the summer, even in the higher latitudes, may offer some excuse for the national antipathy to wholesome exercise and invigorating sports. At this season, at least, out-of-door exercise is apt to prove neither wholesome nor agreeable, and a game of cricket, with the thermometer at ninety-eight degrees in the shade, and at about fever heat out of it, becomes unpleasantly suggestive of excessive perspiration, with the more 71 than possible contingency of a *coup de soleil*. These enervating influences, however, are confined to about four months in the year. The “fall” or autumn season—the “Indian summer,” as it is termed—is genial and delightful in the extreme, and the temperature in winter is as cold and bracing as the most enthusiastic pedestrian could desire, and sometimes a little more so. It is to the peculiar mental temperament of the people that the delicate fragility of the women, and the attenuated forms and limited muscular development of the men are due. The American lives a life of excitement; repose is his aversion. Mental, not physical activity, is his *forte*. His object is to

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crowd as much as possible into the shortest possible space of time. He objects to walking, less because he dislikes it than because riding is more expeditious. He is partial to good living, but begrudges the time requisite for its proper enjoyment. He mixes up business with pleasure, and enjoys the latter only in proportion as it is exciting and continuous. He takes the newspaper 72 to the theatre to read between the acts, and indulges in mental arithmetic in the pauses of a concert. He has no youth, mentally speaking; manhood succeeds to childhood, and the intellect is in precocious exercise ere the body is matured.

That a people indulging in the habits and modes of life most affected by Americans at the present day should degenerate, is not very surprising; and though the only proof of such degeneracy at present may be in the appearance presented by the thin-jawed, spindle-shanked gentlemen one meets in New York and elsewhere, it is easy to believe that, but for the constant infusion of a healthy and vigorous foreign element from abroad, this degeneracy would soon become more apparent. As it is, certain not very encouraging signs of the times may be found in the indications of unproductive marriages, afforded by the numerous advertisements headed, "Wanted to adopt," in the daily papers—a mode commonly resorted to by ladies and gentlemen unblessed with offspring, and 73 seeking an object on which to lavish their parental dollars and caresses—and in the statistics of mortality, where "children under five years of age" occupy a lamentably conspicuous position, the consequence of ill-training and hereditary infirmity. VOL. I. E

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CHAPTER IV.

Lack of domesticity.—Oyster saloons.—"Liquor stores" and ice cream saloons.—Migratory tendencies.—The first of May.—Boarding houses and hotels.—"Help" and wages.—Living for appearances.—Liberty and equality.—Theatres and theatricals.—Lectures.—Womens rights.—Spiritualism.

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Unquestionably the greatest want which an Englishman experiences in America, is that of the simple social pleasures and home enjoyments of domestic life. He seldom finds himself invited to join the family circle, and, indeed, the said circle is seldom to be found entire. Among the middle classes, the six or seven o'clock supper is the last meal of the day; there is no family gathering for an hour before bed time; the ladies, whatever they may affect in the privacy of their own apartments, do not countenance ⁷⁵ the indulgence in vinous or alcoholic beverages in the parlour, and the men prefer to meet in the crowded bar-room or oyster-cellar, to indulging in a quiet social glass at home. These places of resort deserve particular mention, as forming a feature, or what the natives are fond of terming "an institution," peculiar to American life and character.

Oysters are plentiful, of immense size, and excellent in quality. The annual supply for New York alone reaches an almost incredible amount, and the "cellars" and "saloons" specially devoted to their consumption in the different forms of raw, stewed, fried, &c., are innumerable. The drinking saloon of American cities is a vastly different thing to the English gin palace. Marble or mahogany takes the place of pewter on the bar; no large vats suggest ideas of unlimited double or treble X, but costly looking glasses reflect the features of the thirsty votaries of Bacchus from behind the bar, and decanters, mounted with silver, hold the sparkling liquors, of which each man helps himself to what he ^{E 2 76} requires and pays a uniform price for whatever he calls for—except when some elaborate compound such as a "mint julep," a "brandy smash," a "gin cocktail," or some other of the hundred and one varieties for which American saloons are famous, calls in requisition the skill of the barman, versed in the manufacture of these ingenious, and decidedly pleasant and agreeable compounds. It is customary in many of these saloons to provide a liberal lunch of soup and meats daily, at eleven o'clock, of which the frequenters partake *gratis*, the outlay being covered, and an immense additional profit secured, by the sale of the supplementary "drinks," which the highly spiced viands are well calculated to promote. The Americans never sit down to drink, and indeed no sitting accommodation is provided at these resorts; there are, however, English and German houses in plenty, where the

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foreigner can indulge as at home, and enjoy the perusal of "The Times," "Punch," and the illustrated London papers, or the journals of his "Faderland" into the bargain.

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The ladies are not less partial than the men to the public indulgence of their appetites. Rooms, decorated in the most gorgeous and extravagant style, are provided for their accommodation, and it is a common thing to see ladies taking their meal alone at these places, while their husbands and fathers are engaged in business, in preference to troubling themselves with the cares of housekeeping at home. "Taylor's," the chief of these resorts, generally termed "ice cream saloons," this being the staple article of consumption during the summer months, has accommodation for hundreds of visitors, and could scarcely be surpassed for excess of ornament, and expenditure of paint and gilding: a fountain rises in the centre; paintings and mirrors decorate the walls; and luxurious couches invite to indolent repose; but the *cuisine*, alas! is lamentably inferior, and the attendance none of the best.

The patronage of these resorts is by no means confined to the select and wealthy few; on the contrary they are frequented by all classes, who find cheap dishes and low charges here as elsewhere; 78 and in the evenings, the wealthy merchant and his lady, and the sturdy mechanic and his sweetheart, may be seen enjoying their ease on adjoining couches, with all the nonchalance of republican independence. On the summer evenings, especially, and after the performances at the theatres and elsewhere are over, these resorts are thronged with a mixed and varied, but uniformly well conducted assemblage: disturbances are unknown, and the decency and decorum which the presence of women invariably imposes in the States, are never outraged or forgotten.

Inhabitiveness is, or should be, a rare phrenological development in the American cranium. Attachment to place is a sentiment which finds little encouragement in a country where every thing is new and changing. Jonathan cares little for the charms of association;

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and gives up his house, and, it may be, his wife, to move to California,* or the next street, as interest or

* The term "California Widow," is frequently heard as applied to ladies whose worse halves have left them, for an indefinite period, for the Golden State.

79 inclination dictates, without a sigh. A prominent cause, and at the same time an effect, of these migratory tendencies, as well as of the anti-domestic habits before alluded to, lies in the fact that he very frequently has no house or home to leave. He prefers "boarding" at so much per week; a plan which saves him and his family the trouble of housekeeping, and by which he secures plenty of society, with the smallest possible amount of actual comfort. As to renting a house on lease for a term of years, it is not to be thought of. Houses and apartments are taken from year to year, all agreements being dated the first of May; as a natural consequence of which arrangement, everybody is "moving" on that particular day; carts are at a premium, and extra "help" in great demand; loads of furniture blockade the streets, and the footway is rendered perilous to the passenger by the haste of impetuous porters, and the possibly too rapid descent of a couch or bedstead from a third-storey window.

As to the boarding houses they are innumerable, 80 varying, of course, in style and characters, with the means and position of their patrons. The hotels are vast boarding houses; a large portion being let off, in suites of apartments to wealthy lodgers, who take their meals at the public table, or in their own rooms, as best suits them; in the latter case the charges are generally extravagant enough—as they are for every extra item of attendance or accommodation. The style and display which the first class hotels exhibit are costly and magnificent enough to suit the most extravagant taste, and arrangements of a most perfect and complete character are in use for the summoning of servants, and for the conduct of the establishment. For the details of the *cuisine* and a record of the number of servants employed, with the astonishingly brief time in which sundry domestic duties are performed, the reader is referred to Mr. Bunn's late work, entitled "Old England and New England," where he can have the satisfaction of studying several

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bills of fare, from the soup to the desert, entire. Of the 81 superior advantages to the traveller of hotel accommodation as it exists in the States, over our own cumbrous and extortionate system, we shall have occasion to allude in a succeeding chapter. To return to the boarding-houses—of these *par excellence*, it may be said, their name is legion. They are everywhere; in the quiet, tree-shaded streets, “above Bleecker,”* where the “most unexceptionable references” are popularly supposed to be given and required,—“but that’s a fable,” in the purlieus of the business thoroughfares, where clerks of moderate income, and other *employés*, most do congregate; in certain streets in all parts of the city where the German population have almost exclusive possession, and which might form a part of Bremen or Hamburg, for anything which the appearance of the houses or their frequenters suggest to the contrary—where the boarding-house assumes the form of a *gasthaus* or inn, having a bar room E 5

* Above Bleecker Street, supposed to form the boundary of “upper tendom,” or the fashionable quarter, peopled by the “upper ten thousand.”

82 attached for the consumption of the inevitable “Rhine wein,” and “lager bier,” and a twelve o’clock ordinary of mysterious and unsavoury dishes, at fifteen cents., or seven-pence half-penny a head; in certain other streets near the river, where newly-arrived emigrants are taken in and done for by benevolent and sympathising countrymen, nominally, at ten shillings per week, but where they are generally induced to remain, without occupation, by a series of artful manœuvres, until their money is spent and their luggage confiscated for arrears of board, and they themselves turned out upon the streets without means and without resources; and in the more obscure river streets, where the dens of infamy, in which the sailor finds a home until his pay is spent and his next advance forestalled, are to be found—houses, half tavern, half brothel, where Jack is well treated so long as he can treat, but where blows and curses are in store for him, if he hesitate to “take a ship” when the landlord—for his own interest—deems the step advisable.

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Very little experience and observation of boarding-house life in the States is required to prove that, however attractive on the surface, the system is destructive of all genuine comfort, and in no slight degree subversive of morality. Young men seek a release from the restraints of home in the unquestioned freedom they here enjoy. Young women, enabled by the extensive employment of female labour, to earn a living for themselves, form a large proportion of boarding-house society. People of more than questionable character of both sexes, are, from the very nature of the system which renders inquiry as to their antecedents next to impossible, frequently admitted. The requirements of propriety are satisfied by a limited regard to appearances, and a general free and easy kind of semi-morality prevails, as the result of freedom from restraint, and the presence of contaminating influences.

Apart from all this, the boarding-house strongly recommends itself on the score of convenience and economy, especially to transient residents. 84 The charge at respectable houses is from four to six dollars, or sixteen to twenty-four shillings—varying with the style and altitude of the apartments engaged—per week; a sum for which it would be difficult to secure the convenience of a separate establishment, with equal accommodation, and a table on the same scale of liberality, in a city where rents are exorbitantly high, provisions as dear, and sometimes dearer than in London,* and the demands for “help” in the matter of wages ludicrously extravagant. This last consideration, coupled with the difficulty which exists of “getting along” with this class of the community generally, effectually deters many from seeking a home of their own; a plan which, when a family is to be provided for, considerations of comfort and economy, alike, render advisable. Native servants are few in number, and, when they are to be met with, give themselves, what the ladies are apt to

* Among other indications of the changes which a few years effect in the States, it has been stated that provisions in New York have doubled in price within the last fifteen years.

85 call “such airs,” as to be wholly unmanageable. The ranks of American “help” are supplied from the Irish and German emigrants; these, however stupid in other respects,

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acquire a knowledge of the value of labor with wonderful quickness, and being continually on the look out for a chance to “better themselves,” seldom remain long in a place where they happen, by some extraordinary combination of circumstances, to give satisfaction. General servants are rarely to be procured for less than six dollars per month—over thirteen pounds per annum—and cooks to whom a cutlet is a mysstery, boldly claim twice this sum for their services. All are saucy and independent to a degree which would drive even that persevering personage of “The greatest plague of life,” known as “the lady in search of a good servant” to despair, and all indulge extravagant ideas with regard to “followers” and “Sundays out.”

There is, perhaps, more of what is called “living for appearances” in New York than in other American cities, but far less than any in 86 England. Indeed a large amount of the success which attends the exertions of emigrants in the States—those, at least, of the better class, socially speaking, may, without doubt, be fairly attributed to the relief they experience from those conventional social requirements, the observance of which proved such a formidable tax on their resources at home. People, of course, give parties, who cannot afford them in New York, as well as elsewhere, and the tasteless ostentation of vulgar wealth is by no means wanting; but the miserable ambition to be accounted “genteel,” and the ability and will to eke out a scanty income, and maintain an equivocal position, by the exercise of paltry contrivances, and mean and degrading arts, are not among the national characteristics. If the refining influences of a highly educated and wealthy aristocracy, as it exists in monarchical countries, are in a great degree wanting, so, likewise, are the absurd attempts at imitation to which the existence of this class gives rise. The motto of the republic might very well be, “Respect for 87 labor.” In the light of this broad principle, the insignificant distinctions of class and caste, which a respect for rank induces each man to draw between himself and his neighbour, elsewhere, have no existence. That no social distinctions exist it would be absurd to imagine, but that there is no boundary so obstructive, and no class so exclusive, that moderate qualifications, with a proportionate share of talent and energy, will not suffice to pass the one and secure

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admission to the other—not on sufferance, or as a serviceable appendage, but with all the free and equal rights of membership—may be asserted without exaggeration. To a consciousness of this—in other words, to this idea of equality, the nearest approach to it possible—is due the self-assertion, and independence of character and demeanour of the lower classes in America, which, though at first somewhat startling to a stranger, and not over flattering to his personal vanity, it may be, accustomed, as he has been, to the obsequious humility of people in a subordinate station at home, cannot fail to produce an impression favourable to the 88 institutions under which they live, and which, however ill-adapted in some cases, and unneeded in others, to promote the prosperity of the countries of the old world, certainly seem well calculated to favor the development of a vast and powerful empire in the new.

As might be expected from the gregarious and excitement seeking character of its population, New York is by no means deficient in places of public amusement; though to a Londoner, these do not offer any great variety. There are no less than eight or nine theatres, open two-thirds of the year, and doing, in professional parlance, “an excellent business.” With one or two exceptions, these houses are small, but extremely comfortable and elegant; displaying a simplicity of taste and completeness of design, seldom to be met with in an English theatre. The peculiar arrangement of the interior, likewise, not a little contributes to the attractive effect presented during a performance. There is no “dress circle” in the strict sense of the term, though the first tier of boxes is so called; 89 nobody goes *dressed*, save in the gayest of bonnets and the most spotless of white coats and unmentionables, which for the men in summer are the only wear. The term “box,” indeed, is a misnomer, for boxes there are none, but semi-circular tiers of open seats, extending far back from the front of the house. The pit becomes the *parquet*, and takes equal rank in respectability and price of admission, namely, fifty cents, or two shillings sterling—the maximum charge for admission in the States—with the so-called “boxes;” and the gallery becomes the upper tier, at an admission charge of one shilling. A portion of this part of the house is generally partitioned off for the exclusive use of the negro portion of

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the population; an arrangement which, however objectionable on the score of republican consistency, few who have known what it is to be in the near neighbourhood of those odorous sons and daughters of Africa on a warm summer night, will care to condemn.

People are uniformly well conducted in all places of public resort in America. There is no 90 squeezing and crowding to “get in,” and the greatest decorum prevails during the performance. The principal theatres are little frequented by the humblest classes, and, at the minor houses, the unwashed democracy of the pit are kept in a state of forced quiescence that no cockney would tolerate at home, by a superintendent, or constable, appointed for the purpose, who maintains as strict a discipline as a pedagogue over a crowd of unruly schoolboys.

The prevalence of the “star system” in the States, which leads managers to look for success to the talent, real or supposed—for theatrical luminaries of all magnitudes, and some very small indeed, are as numerous as their celestial namesakes—of a single actor, rather than to the general effect of a representation, has done much to retard the progress and appreciation of dramatic art. The “stock” companies are but indifferent, and the audiences not over critical. Extravagance and rant are frequently found to be better passports to popular favour than more 91 legitimate qualifications; and some of the best native actors have sought and found on this side of the Atlantic the appreciation they failed to meet at home. “Stock” talent is scarce; theatres are increasing rapidly throughout the Union, and, as a consequence, members of the profession who would earn but a scanty livelihood in England, secure a liberal remuneration for their services. The talent in this, as in most of the higher branches of art, is imported; and negotiations are constantly in progress, for the supply of fresh attractions from the London and provincial theatres.

New York unquestionably monopolizes the best theatrical talent in the States; but the remarks just made as to the dependence on individual attraction, and neglect of general efficiency apply here as elsewhere. Two theatres, however, those under the management of Mr. J. W. Wallack, well-known until within the last few years as an established London

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favourite, and of Miss Laura Keene, respectively, may be creditably mentioned, as in no 92 slight degree exceptions to the general rule. The former has done more for the genuine advancement of the drama, and the encouragement of a refined and correct taste in all that relates to theatrical representations, than all his brother managers put together; and the latter has brought no small taste, talent, and industry to bear on that class of representation in which the late Madame Vestris so much excelled. The theatres, however, owe their success more to foreign than to native patronage; and so long as a national drama and native professors of the art are wanting to create a feeling of pride in the cultivation of the drama, *as an art*, identified with native talent, and scenes and characters of national interest, it is to be expected that it will continue to be viewed as a source of mere amusement, and to exhibit the stunted growth and limited development of an exotic transplanted to an uncongenial soil.

To a certain class of semi-theatrical entertainments, extremely popular in the States, these remarks do not apply. Ethiopian “minstrels” 93 and “seranaders” flourish in full vigour. The songs, and jokes, and eccentricities of the negro race are the growth of the soil, and the hyperbole and extravagance which mark the performances of their stage representatives, are the distinguishing characteristics of native humour, as a glance at the “funny” column of any American journal will testify, and bear the impress of the national taste and temperament.

The favorite resort, however, of the Americans is unquestionably the lecture room. Churches and chapels are placed at the disposal of committees and individuals during the week, in the “lecture season,” and besides several minor halls, New York boasts one or two of large dimensions; the Mercantile Society, to whose enterprise the public were indebted for their enjoyment of Mr. Thackeray's exquisite lectures, having, within the last few years, taken possession of the building occupied by the Astor Place Theatre, the well-remembered scene of the Macready riots. Clergymen and men of note in 94 literature, art, and science, occupy their leisure and add to their means by making a tour of the western or southern states, with the subject matter of a two hours' address in their carpet

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bags; and advocates and exponents of every known dogma and doctrine, theological, social, and political, descant from the rostrum on their favourite themes. I have been present at a "Woman's Rights Convention," where some half-a-dozen women, in Bloomer costume, headed by Miss Lucy Stone, and the Rev. Antionette Brown—a regular female parson, by the way, who had a chapel somewhere, and discoursed from the pulpit every Sunday—and backed by some male advocates of their creed, settled to their own entire satisfaction, and the intense amusement of the audience, the claims of the sex to legislate, cure, preach, teach, and do everything but what nature and Providence made them for; their doctrines serving the double purpose of a specious veil to a greater moral deformity, and an induction to grosser mysteries, worthy only of the "age of reason." 95 And I have *assisted*, as the Frenchmen say, at a "circle" of spiritualists, formed under the direction of a celebrated medium—admission two shillings—where "acting mediums" performed in a manner to excite the envy of the most finished pantomimist, and "writing mediums" penned communications from Shakespeare, Washington, or Benjamin Franklin, to say nothing of the defunct relatives of some of the party present, with a facility that would have been remarkable, but for the striking want in the said communications of any evidence of the author's individuality, and the lamentable picture of mental decay and imbecility in the "upper sphere," suggested by the style of their composition.

That the freedom with which every fresh hobby is discussed, and a "fair field and no favour" offered to every candidate for popular honours, has in the main a good rather than an evil tendency, can, I think, scarcely be doubted. The publicity essential to the advancement of schemes of genuine utility, and the dissemination 96 of useful and entertaining knowledge, in a concise and popular form, is in no wise better secured than by the oral instruction of the lecture room; while the "baseless fabric" of illogical theories and rotten creeds will crumble and fall like an ill-built wall, from the effects of mere exposure, or be overturned by the blasts of opposing elements.

In some cases, too, agitation, failing of its ultimate evil aim, is yet productive of good. Though it would be difficult to find in a party of fifty ladies, one advocate of the costume or

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the creed of the sticklers for “women's rights,” and the stranger may reside six months in an American city, and not catch a glimpse of the trousers and short skirts of a “Bloomer;” the discussion of which the sex has become the subject, has, I believe, been the means of securing to them, within reasonable bounds, an extension of the rights and privileges they before enjoyed.

Spiritualism has undoubtedly been the means of supplying the lunatic asylums with maniacs by 97 the score, but it is in the private displays of the wonderful effects—and whatever may be their true character, wonderful they are—involuntarily exhibited by some persons, and initiated for purpose of imposture by others, that the most baneful influences are exercised; and here publicity can scarcely increase, while it may diminish the evil. The Mormons have, or have had until very lately, their places of worship, or rather temples of blasphemy, in every city in the Union, but their converts have ever been more numerous among the uneducated of our own land than among the wide-awake—I can find no more convenient term—people of the eastern states. Whatever may be the effects of this national freedom of discussion, whether good or evil, national it is, and as a national trait, and one, moreover, which explains much that to foreigners appears ridiculous and contemptible in the American character, I have thought it worthy of particular mention.

But it is time to bring these jottings, which, crude and imperfect as they are, have already VOL. I. F 98 extended beyond the space originally assigned to them, to a close, and, leaving further reflections to form an accompaniment to such scenes and incidents hereafter, as may serve for their illustration, to devote a few pages to the state of those special influences, educational, religious, and political, which, in some form or other, united, constitute the training school of every people.

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CHAPTER V.

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Education.—The school system.—Religious denominations.— Observance of the Sabbath.—Church edifices.—Trinity church.—Grace church and its sexton.—Pulpit eloquence.— A “coloured” methodist meeting.—Politics.—Parties and their titles.—The Constitution of the United States.—The President, Senate, and House of Representatives.—Payment of members.—Salaries.—State governments.—Naturalization of foreigners.—Whigs and democrats.—Capacity of the people for self-government.—Disturbing influences.—John Bull and Brother Jonathan.

The common schools of America are the pride and boast of her people, and the means, talent, and energy so liberally expended in securing the advantages of education to the remotest and most thinly settled, as well as the most densely populated districts, have long commanded the respect and admiration of other F 2 100 lands. Much as we may envy America in this respect, however, it must be remembered that the adoption of the system now in such successful operation was comparatively an easy task. The difficulties which attend *reform* with us were not to be encountered: no conflict of church and state was to be feared; and no hereditary prejudices were to be deferred to and indulged at the cost of a nation's honour and welfare.

The prominent features of the common school system of the United States may be briefly enumerated. The most important is the total exclusion of all sectarian influence in the mode of teaching adopted. This is the corner stone of the entire fabric; the key stone of the arch, the removal of which would be followed by its inevitable downfall and destruction. All creeds and denominations are agreed upon this point *save one*. The disciples and emissaries of the Pope of Rome are untiring in their endeavours to undermine the foundations of this noble edifice, on the preservation of which depend a 101 nation's strength and safety, and to overshadow with the black pall of their own baneful superstition, the fresh and vigorous advance of true intelligence. But it is the battle of the pigmy with the giant, and few Protestants in the States have any doubts of its ultimate issue. At the first glance it might seem that there could be little ground for opposition,

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even from such a source, to a course of education altogether secular in character; but though secular, it is necessarily anti-Romanish, as the works employed in the schools are from the pens of Protestants, and the facts of history are imparted, ungarbled by the misrepresentations and sophistry of designing men. The Bible—the Bible of the Protestants—too is read, though not commented on; and, while “boarding” next door to one of the New York schools, I have often heard the voices of little children in some simple chant or hymn, ascending through the open windows into the fresh morning air.

It is required by the Federal government that provision shall be made by each State for the maintenance of a sufficient supply of public schools within its limits. The nature of this provision varies, of course, with the laws of the several States. In the West, as we shall see hereafter, the proceeds of the sale of large grants of land contribute to form a perpetual fund, from the interest of which the schools derive their support. In the East a portion of the means is secured by direct taxation on the part of the State, the remaining provision being made—and this shews how much the heart of the people as well as of the rulers is engaged in the good work—by voluntary taxation on the part of cities, towns, and districts, for the supply of their own requirements.

The education given at these schools is entirely gratuitous. The teachers are well paid, and, in cities and more thickly populated districts at least, of good qualifications and attainments. In the “Primary schools” the teachers are female. Semi-annual examinations are undertaken by the appointed inspectors, and deserving pupils are duly promoted, through the several schools, until they reach the highest rank attainable.

I have a wholesome horror of statistics, and thinking it more than probable that the reader may share this sentiment with me, I shall inflict no long array of figures, nor indulge in extracts, however interesting in their way, from the numerous “reports” and “returns” which have come into my hands. It will be readily understood that the educational privileges enjoyed by different portions of the Union must vary with the legislation of the several States; with the degree of intelligence possessed by the people themselves, and with

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local circumstances. The institutions of the southern States (in some of which it is a crime to teach a negro to read), cannot be so favorable to their extension as the more liberal principles of the north; the West—we speak here, as elsewhere in this work, under this term, of the Free States of the West only, or of what is, more correctly, the north-west—is well provided for, but its population is thinly scattered, and, to a large extent, engaged in a struggle for the merest necessaries of life; in the eastern States, the system is seen in its unmatched beauty and full developement. In the State of Massachusetts, in particular, as we shall have occasion to note in a succeeding chapter, the statements contained in the published reports are positively startling to a stranger; and the returns of Vermont, New York, New Hampshire, and other eastern States, exhibit results remarkably gratifying and satisfactory.

As to the excellence of the mode of education adopted at these schools, we have the testimony of competent judges among our own writers,* and the results are to be seen in the wide spread intelligence of the people, and the almost incredible demand for works of the highest rank among the literary productions of the day.

* See the works of Sir Charles Lyell and Mr. Mackay.

To the numerous charitable institutions of New York,—the Reformatory Schools, Houses of Refuge, and Asylums for the Friendless and 105 Afflicted, it would be impossible for me to do common justice in these pages. I visited most of them, and was, as every visitor cannot fail to be, highly gratified with the evidence they presented of judicious management, and a large and noble philanthropy.

If the ordinary instruction of the people is well provided for in the States, the means of religious improvement are not wanting in a proportionate degree.* Churches and chapels abound, and the numerous and well-attended Sabbath schools of all denominations, leave little room for complaint on the part of those who profess to see an anti-religious tendency in the peculiar system of the common schools.

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* In the year 1850 there was one place of worship to every 644 of the population of the States; the proportion in England being one to every 545 of the population.

The Methodist chapels number about one third of all the places of public worship in the Union; the Baptists, about one fourth; the Presbyterian, one eighth; the Independent, F 5 106 Episcopal, and Roman Catholic—each about the same—make up another eighth; the balance comprising almost every known variety of minor sect, of which, in the year 1850, the Mormons owned one hundred churches, and thirty thousand worshippers.

In New York the general observance of the Sabbath is much the same as in English cities. One or two points of difference, however, exist, which it may be as well to note. Newspapers are published, and retailed by the noisy urchins previously alluded to, as in the week, and the drinking saloons and similar places of resort are not closed during public worship. Save in the streets where the Jew slopsellers most do congregate, however, the shops are all closed, and the streets, except at church time, are quiet enough until the evening, when—in the summer at least—Broadway is filled to overflowing, and the ice-cream saloons and “liquor stores” reap a rich harvest.

A favourite recreation among the “fast” men 107 of New York consists in driving one or more of the fastest “trotters” obtainable, in a vehicle of the lightest possible construction, with the largest possible wheels—always four in number, a gig or other two-wheeled vehicle being a *rara avis* on transatlantic roads—and the smallest possible seat; and on Sunday afternoons certain of the “avenues” which lead out of the city on the north are crowded with the turn-outs of these gentry, and become the scene of trials of speed and skill—varied by an occasional “row”—innumerable. Those in search of less exciting pleasures crowd the steamboats and railway cars which connect the city with the delightful resorts in its vicinity—and surely no city is so blessed in this respect as New York—and it is only fair to state that a more orderly crowd than these holiday seekers it would be hard to find. It does not appear to be indispensable to an American's enjoyment of a holiday that he should get drunk; and the fact of his being in company with females on

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such occasions would be alone sufficient to restrain any propensity he might 108 have in that direction.* Brawling, singing, shouting, and other Bacchanalian irregularities, are neither indulged in nor permitted, and “chaffing” the railway officials and misdirecting nervous old ladies, are forms of humour as little appreciated by our transatlantic friends. The mixture of classes consequent on the one-fare system of most public conveyances is doubtless at the bottom of this good behaviour. Rich and poor, well-dressed and ill-clad, are accustomed thus to meet. They share the same seat, occupy the same carriage or cabin, and take an equal chance together of incurring the unpleasant consequence of too close a proximity to the engine; each learns from, while he teaches the other; the higher classes form a truer estimate

* The existence of the “Maine Law” in several of the States of the Union, has led many people to believe that drunkenness is more prevalent than in England; I can only say that men are much less often seen in a state of intoxication in the streets, and women scarcely ever. The abstinence of the women may be reasonably supposed to have its share of influence in the moderation of the men. I am much mistaken if the habits and influence of the sex among the poorer classes, do not rather incline the other way here at home.

109 of those below them, and the humbler classes instinctively acquire some of the refinements of their superiors in social station. But this by the way.

New York possesses but few specimens of architectural beauty among her numerous places of worship. Here, as elsewhere in the States, the Roman Catholics rear the most costly and imposing edifices, but the chapels of the dissenters are many of them, unlike the bare, tasteless erections most in favour with the dissenting sects in England, built with considerable regard to ornament and architectural design. The finest church edifice in the city, however, and I believe in the States, is the episcopal church of the “Trinity,” a noble specimen of the Gothic style, built of a rich brown stone, and with a spire some two hundred and eighty feet high. From its position in the lower part of the city, however, it is now less frequented than formerly by the city aristocracy, for whose especial accommodation Grace Church, a costly white marble structure, has been erected “up

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110 town.” This church is open only during “the season,” and has a highly fashionable congregation, who pay fabulous prices for their pews and seats, a fashionable clergyman, and a fashionable—sexton; the last named, in addition to his proper office, filling that of a kind of master of the ceremonies and general referee in aristocratic society. Few parties are given, and few fashionable arrangements made without this functionary being duly consulted, and introductions from “Brown”—I think his name is Brown—“of Grace Church,” are eagerly sought for by the aspiring youth of “upper tendom.”

The mode of conducting public worship, both in Episcopal and Dissenting churches, is much the same as in England; the chief points of difference being that, in the former, the service is considerably abridged, and, in the latter, a low platform and reading desk usually take the place of a pulpit, and the audience delegate the singing almost entirely to the choir in the organ gallery, like their brethren of the church. In both the people have a free and easy sort of way 111 of entering and leaving when they please, proportioning, apparently, the length of their stay to the degree of interest or admiration excited by the minister. Both churches and chapels however, are well attended, and in not a few I found it altogether impossible on several occasions to obtain a seat. This may have been partly owing to my being alone—for, at church as elsewhere, the surest means of securing prompt attention and good accommodation is to go in company with a lady.

Several of the most prominent American divines, well-known through their works on this side of the Atlantic, grace the pulpits of New York; and in the neighbouring city of Brooklyn, crowded audiences attend the ministrations of the American Spurgeon—Henry Ward Beecher, whose sermons, if they usually resemble the only one to which I listened, though containing a great deal about Heaven, and a great deal more about Hell, are less sermons than anti-slavery orations; the former of the places above mentioned being represented as that to which all good abolitionists 112 have by far the best chance of attaining; and the latter, that to which all and sundry gentlemen in the South, who do not choose to ruin themselves in the good cause of abolition, may consider themselves consigned inevitably. Pulpit talent and eloquence—the latter of a style somewhat verbose and redundant as all

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American oratory is apt to be—are said to be advancing rapidly in the States; certainly most favourable specimens of both are not wanting in New York among all denominations, from that professing the comfortable creed of Universalism, to the most demonstrative class of Methodists aptly denominated “Ranters.”

The mention of this latter class brings to mind a visit I once paid to a methodist chapel in the negro quarter of the town—for there are certain quarters where the white man comes not, where huge, burly Africans may be seen lying, basking, or asleep, in the full glare of the summer sun, and the juvenile owners of woolly heads and swarthy faces are alone seen playing round the doorsteps. It was New Year's Eve, 113 at which time, in accordance with their custom of holding a midnight service, a crowded congregation of darkies of both sexes, and of every shade of colour, from the tawney mulatto to the coal-black, full-blooded African, had assembled to listen to the exhortations of such of the “bred'ren” as chose to hold forth on the occasion. They were tolerably quiet when I entered, but as the speakers grew warm, and, after their fashion, eloquent, the enthusiasm of the audience increased, until presently a scene of the wildest excitement prevailed, and the speaker's voice was almost drowned—almost, only, for these black orators are perfect Stentors—amidst the groans and lamentings of his fellow fanatics. I have seen all this done very effectively by white people, but I must do my black friends the justice to say they did it a great deal better. Their black heads rolled about as though they would come off altogether; their eye balls were turned upwards in a manner and to an extent that a duck during an elementary commotion could scarcely equal; and their vehement 114 gesticulations and distortions of feature were terrible to look upon. Some were profuse in their demonstrations of sisterly and brotherly regard for their neighbours; and as I took my departure my attention was particularly attracted to an elderly “darkey” of carnal aspect, who was hugging a plump little mulatto female in a pew near the door, with a gusto which savoured but little of the Platonic.

The study of American politics at the present day, owing to the numerous subdivisions of parties, and the extraordinary names they bear, offers to the foreigner an aspect about

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as uninviting and incomprehensible as that presented to the uninitiated in botany or geology by some highly scientific and abstruse treatise on those subjects. All Americans are politicians, and all know more or less about the signification of such formidable terms as Hardshells, Softshells, Freesoilers, Woollyheads, Barnburners, Hunkers, Native Americans, Locofocos, Nigger Worshipers, and a score of others of a like figurative character; but I have remarked that few 115 foreigners attain to more than a very foggy and indistinct comprehension of their meaning, and that the majority are by no means to be depended on for any reliable aid in acquiring an insight into political mysteries.

As my own stock of information on this subject is extremely small, it is fortunate that no minute account of “the state of parties,” or definitions of the said parties bearing the eccentric appellations above given, are required by the plan of this little work. All that need be attempted is a brief outline of the political constitution of the United States, with the addition, as opportunity offers, of such remarks as naturally suggest themselves on the actual working and practical results of transatlantic republicanism.

The President is, as is well known, the head of the general government of the United States. Presidential elections take place every four years, and the President is eligible for re-election indefinitely. Both President and Vice-President (the latter being President or Speaker of 116 the Senate, and, in the event of the death of the President, succeeding to the chief office for the remainder of the term), are chosen from the nominees of the chief political parties by a body of electors, themselves elected by popular vote in the several states. In the event of the votes being equal, the House of Representatives elects the President, and the Senate the Vice-President, from the three who have most votes. The power of the President extends to the “granting of reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States except in cases of impeachment,” the making of treaties, the nomination of ambassadors and consuls, judges of the supreme court, and other officers, but always “by and with the consent of the Senate,” by whom, in fact, these matters are actually decided, with closed doors, during what is called the “executive session.” The President has the power also to veto a bill which has passed both houses, “sending it

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back with his objections to that house in which it shall have originated." If, however, on reconsideration of the 117 bill, both houses agree to pass it by a majority of two thirds, it becomes a law in spite of the President's veto.

The members of the Upper House or Senate, are elected for six years (a re-election of one third of their number taking place every two years), by the legislatures of the several states—two members for each state, large and small. Those of the House of Representatives, two hundred and thirty-four in number, are elected by a direct vote of the people; the number of members returned by each state bearing the same proportion to the whole as its population bears to the entire population of the states. The members of both houses are paid for their services; formerly, by a fixed sum for each day's attendance, whatever the length of the session, with sundry additions for travelling expenses between the sessions, which in many instances were never incurred; but now by a definite sum per annum, equal to £630, with a liberal allowance for "mileage" to and from Washington once a year—deductions, 118 however, being made for each day's non-attendance.

That a consequence of this system of remunerating members for their services should be the introduction of a number of needy and untalented adventurers into the legislature, is not surprising. These are the blustering demagogues who "talk for Buncombe," as the phrase is; who are ever ready to risk the national welfare and the national honour on any question, from the discussion of which they may hope to make political capital for themselves, and who bring discredit on the national councils by their intemperate language and conduct, resort to fisticuffs during a debate, and carry cowhides into the legislative halls. It would be unreasonable to expect a very high degree of polish and refinement in an assembly composed in great part of men who, like their constituents, have received their training among the wild scenes and rude society of frontier life, or who represent but too faithfully the manners as well as the 119 opinions of the democratic rabble of the large cities of the east; moreover, it must be remembered that the congress of the United States, representing a mixed race extending over twenty degrees of latitude, has no counterpart on the globe in the variety of national character it present—the natural result of difference

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of race and climate. A member of parliament from Hampshire or Sussex has little to distinguish him from a member from Durham or Cumberland; and the French assembly exhibits no great contrast, probably, between a representative from Normandy and one from the Pyrenees; but the vast extent of the States of the Union presents varieties as numerous and distinct as the continent of Europe; the cool, calculating Yankee is of a different race to the hot-blooded denizen of the south, and no two beings are more unlike than the sturdy North-man who inhabits the forests of Maine, and the creole planter from the swamps of Louisiana or Florida. A mere lack of manners and refinement must necessarily yield to the spread of intelligence 120 and civilization; and in this respect a change for the better may be confidently anticipated in the legislative assemblies of the state; but the attainment of any closer assimilation to the order and decorum of European assemblies may be doubtful. Scenes of occasional discord and confusion can scarcely fail to occur where elements so various and opposite are continually in conflict.

Congress—the name borne by the two houses of the legislature—sits in the capitol at Washington, and the president lives, rent free, at the “White House,” with a salary of £5,100 per annum; the vice-president and members of the cabinet receiving only about one-third of that sum. The latter, strange to say, have no seat in either house, and so, it is to be presumed, do their business *in* the house by deputy.

The business transacted by Congress is only such as relates to the welfare of the union as a confederation of states; as the regulation of foreign commerce and internal communication, the management of foreign affairs, the maintenance 121 of the army and navy and the militia, and the coinage, post office, and custom house departments. The government of the several states, in all that concerns them individually, is vested in the executive, legislature, and judiciary of each separate state. Like the president, the governor of the state—elected for a term varying from one to four years, in some states by the legislature, in others by a direct vote of the people—possesses the veto and pardoning power; and each state has its Senate and House of Representatives, the members of which, like those of the general congress, are paid for their services, and like them, are not

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of necessity gentlemen, while many of them may be, and frequently are, quite the reverse. The relation of the Federal Government to the individual states is summed up in the fourth section of the fourth article of the constitution, which provides that “the United States shall guarantee to every state in this union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the VOL. I. G 122 executive (when the legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.”

The constitution and laws of the several states differ of course in many particulars, but on material points—setting aside the great question of slavery—they are sufficiently unanimous to render it a matter of little importance, politically speaking, to the American, in which State he makes his home. He retains, however, wherever he may go, a certain feeling of pride in his native state—a sentiment as strong in its way as that the Highlander entertains towards his clan of McPherson or McBeth; and while vaunting the power of the confederation generally to “whip all creation,” lets slip no opportunity of extolling the capacity of his particular state for the task of universal castigation. The elective franchise differs in the several states. In all, adults native-born males are, as a rule, entitled to a vote at special and general elections, if resident for a certain time previous in the state in which the vote is given. The naturalization laws by which the foreigner attains to the privileges of citizenship, are the work of the general congress. These laws render necessary a residence of five years in the states before the work of naturalization can be effected. There is, however, a preliminary process, consisting in depositing in the proper office a declaration of the writer's intention to become a citizen, which can be gone through immediately on arrival in the country, and which appears to prove as effectual a qualification as can be desired for most purposes. The power of the Federal government to make citizens in no way interferes with that of individual states to make voters, each in its own way. In almost all the states naturalization, or at least the preliminary step towards it above described, is a necessary qualification, and a previous residence for a certain term in the state is likewise required, as in the case of native born citizens; but the duration of this term varies considerably. The conservative element in the constitution of the older

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states, though considerably weakened by the democratic inroads of later years, preserves certain restrictions of which the ultra G 2 124 democratic spirit of the present age by no means approves; thus in the newly-settled states of the west, where it is an object to hold out inducements to settlers, and where for the most part democracy is paramount, the restrictions are of the mildest forth. In Illinois—though this, I believe, is a solitary instance—I found myself a voter by virtue of a six months' residence, though an alien;* an extension of the franchise sufficient to satisfy the most rabid advocate of “reform.”

* The constitution of the state of Illinois provides that “all free white male *inhabitants* who have resided in the States six months shall be entitled to vote.”

The two great political parties of the United States are the Whigs and the Democrats; and to one or the other of these, the people with the hard names before mentioned, belong. Under the banners of Whigism or Democracy, Presidents, Governors, Senators, and Representatives, severally range themselves; and not only these—the most insignificant official of the most insignificant municipality in the country, founds his claim to the suffrages of his countrymen, not on his capacity, mental or physical, for the duties of his office, but on his unswerving fidelity to the Whigs, or his untiring exertions in the cause of Democracy. Whigs and Democrats have been the opposing parties from the early days of the Republic; “The point originally contested between them,” says a late well-informed writer,* “was the rights and authority of individual States in relation to the Federal Government. The latter (the Democrats) were very jealous of the central power; the former (the Whigs) inclined to give greater consolidation to the united republic, by encroaching on the prerogatives of the separate commonwealths. This subject, however, now seldom occupies public attention, although the great parties are never at a loss to find questions on which to fight their battles and measure their strength. The Whigs may be styled the conservatives of the New World, their principal support being

* Mr. W. E. Baxter, “America and the Americans.”

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126 derived from the rich merchants, the old planters, the monied interest, and the manufacturers; whilst the Democrats rely on the tradesmen, the operatives, and the immense population employed in the cultivation of the soil." It has been remarked by the writer just quoted: "It is impossible for any one to study the institutions and past history of the United States without confessing the remarkable capacity of the people for self-government." It seems to me equally impossible for the most careless observer to avoid a conviction of this capacity, in view of the vast power exercised by the people, and the mixed, and in some respects, turbulent elements, of which the population is composed. The wonder is, not that disturbances do at times occur, but that they are not more frequent than they are. Month after month the tide of foreign emigration bears thousands and tens of thousands of the real or imaginary victims of European oppression to swell the population of the States. The distorted and extravagant ideas of republican 127 liberty which many of them take with them, are as little calculated to promote the cause of order as the jealousies and antipathies, national and social, inevitable in a community of mixed races, differing, in some cases, in language, and divided, more or less, in all, by difference of tastes and habits, or by hereditary national prejudices; and yet, in spite of these and other drawbacks, the Union prospers; its boundaries extend themselves with a rapidity truly wonderful; the arts of civilization are developed in a manner not less remarkable; and the energy and enterprise of its people have become the admiration of the world. Let Jonathan boast then, for he has fair cause for boasting, and if the manner of it be at times offensive, let us remember that the contemptuous self-complacency in which John Bull's nationality sometimes finds a vent, may not be less so to him and others.

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CHAPTER VI.

River travelling.—Steamboat described.—Long Island Sound.—A night on board "The Bay State."—Newport.—Fall River.—American railway "cars" and English railway carriages.—Boston.—Hotels and the hotel system.—Cost of travelling in England and America.—

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Massachusetts and New England.—The Pilgrim Fathers.—Puritan laws.— Kissing on Sunday prohibited.

Three months after my arrival at New York business engagements led me to Boston. The distance from New York is two hundred and forty miles. The rival cities—all the cities of the sea-board are rivals, and those which cannot claim existing supremacy believe, or seem to believe, devoutly in its future attainment—are connected by means of the New Haven railroad; but a favourite route in summer is by steamboat 129 to Fall River, and thence by railroad. This mode of travel, besides being vastly the most pleasant, possesses the recommendation—a most important one in American estimation—of combining economy of time with the greatest possible amount of personal comfort, and the least possible fatigue.

The steamboat of the American waters is a floating hotel; every convenience of one is to be found in the other; the gentlemen's saloon, the ladies' saloon, the dining saloon, the bar room, and the barber's shop—or rather “shaving saloon”—all are there; and the traveller may sup as luxuriously, sleep as soundly, and make his toilette as elaborately as at the Astor House or the St. Nicholas. The ordinary fare to Boston by this route—steamboat and railway—is five dollars, or one pound English, but the competition between the rival lines (which occurs almost annually) had reduced the fare at the time of my journey to a dollar and a half—six shillings English; little enough to pay for a journey of two hundred and forty miles. G 5

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The steamers in use on “The Sound”—as the channel between Long Island and the main-land is termed—are the finest of their class. The “Bay State” was a huge two-storey mass, three hundred and twenty feet long, and forty feet in height above the water. On the main deck was stowed the freight, and two or three railway vans containing passengers' luggage—an excellent arrangement, these vans being transferred to the railway on arrival, and the trouble and delay of a change avoided. The upper deck were best described

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as the “drawing-room storey,” comprising two magnificent saloons, connected by a narrow passage on either side of the shaft containing the machinery (which was made to serve for embellishment as well as use, being exposed to view in all the brilliancy of polished brass and steel behind immense windows of a single plate of glass each, at the end of each cabin or “saloon”). Lining the saloons on either side were the state rooms, models of neatness and comfort, with windows looking on to the water. Marble-topped tables, with jugs 131 of iced water thereon—there would be vases of flowers there too if flowers were in season— elegant and luxurious couches, equally luxurious easy chairs, massive chandeliers, pier glasses, and a pianoforte, form a portion of the furniture of the handsomest of these saloons, that used by ladies travelling alone or in company—though the former have another cabin below containing single berths, with a private staircase leading thereto. At the extremity of the saloon is a verandah, for the enjoyment of the fresh air and scenery: in pleasant weather, while in the fore part of the vessel, similar accommodation is provided for solitary male travellers, or those whose propensity to tobacco in the form of cigars, debars them from the society of the after deck.

I purchased my ticket on board the boat, receiving therewith the number of the berth allotted to me, and having taken checks for my luggage from the baggage master—the said checks being marked, each with a number corresponding to the one affixed to each package— 132 descended to the lower deck to take possession of my berth, by depositing therein my overcoat and carpet bag. Here was another vast cabin extending from end to end of the vessel, and containing I am afraid to say how many berths—certainly over two hundred—three deep from floor to ceiling. In this saloon the tables were already laid for supper, and at seven o'clock I sat down, in company with a hundred other passengers, to a capital meal, the charge for which, collected at the table, was fifty cents, or two shillings English. The occupants of the ladies' cabin were admitted previous to the bell being rung, and placed together at the head of the principal table, were vases of artificial flowers, and candelabra were most plentiful, and the attendance of waiters the most numerous. Other

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ladies and their male escorts occupied the same table, while a second was set apart for the companionless lords of the creation.

American voracity at meals is an undeniable fact—notwithstanding the assertions of some over good natured recent English travellers to 133 the contrary—but I saw less of it on this and similar occasions than elsewhere, on land, doubtless, because the people concerned felt they had more time to spare for the business in hand.

It is very pleasant, sitting in one's arm chair on the deck, or idly gazing from the cabin windows of one of these mammoth steamers on the exquisite scenery of the bay and rivers of New York. The motion of the boat, from its great length, is scarcely perceptible, even in rough weather, and the office of steward or stewardess, as far as attending to the wants of sea sick passengers is concerned, is almost a sinecure. The whole scene is wonderfully, bright, fresh, and beautiful. The atmosphere above the great city is as clear as that far away over the hills of the noble Hudson; houses of red brick and white marble, half hidden here and there by the trees that line the streets, glow and sparkle in the sunlight; while ferry boats dart out from their "slips" incessantly, with their freight of men, women, horses, light buggies, carts, and carriers' waggons, and cross and recross 134 in all directions; houses that look as if they were built of white card-board, as Charles Dickens says, and would certainly tumble down at a touch, peep out from among the trees on the distant slopes of Staten Island, and the pleasant shores of Hoboken. There is a surprising air of newness about everything, as if it were finished but yesterday; an air, pleasant, cheerful, and very novel, withal, to the European traveller; who, moreover, can't escape from it if he would; who finds it everywhere from the Atlantic to the Mississippi; and who, if he have taste and leisure for the indulgence of such unprofitable fancies, feels everywhere, now and then, a want of something old, a craving for something that tells of the times that were, something of which memory may call up from the pages of history some story of the past, or which imagination may people with the beings of a bygone age.

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There is little suggestive of the past; there is inexhaustible food for wonder in the present, and speculation for the future.

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To return to the "Bay State." Past the emigrant depot at Castle Garden, past Governor's Island (where, when New York was a colony, its Governors used to live), with its pleasant sweep of greensward, its formidable looking fort, and row of tall poplars; past the heights of Brooklyn, from which English and American by turns attacked the city in the old times; past the fast spreading suburbs on either side of the East river; past Blackwell's Island with its penitentiary, large enough for a thousand prisoners, its almshouses, workshops, lunatic asylum, and small-pox hospital, all built of stone quarried from the island by convict labor; and so into the Sound, with the shores of Connecticut on one hand, and of Long Island on the other. It was dark before we reached Newport, the gayest of watering places, but dull enough just then, and it was still dark when I was awoken by a movement in the cabin, and somewhat startled at the same moment by the appearance of a coal black physiognomy between the curtains of my berth, belonging to the 136 Ethiopian "boots" of the vessel, who saluted me with, "Now, sar, boat stops in half-an-hour," and moved on to perform the same agreeable office to the occupants of the adjoining berths. A general rush now took place to the barber's shop at the stern end of the vessel. The arrangements here were on a scale of neatness and luxury to suit the most fastidious; water was laid on to half-a-dozen basins, every convenience was at hand, and two or three barbers, and as many big arm chairs stood ready for customers. A cup of coffee, a walk on deck, and, in a few minutes more, in the cars on the way to Boston.

All railway carriages are called "cars" in America, nor can I make up my mind to call them anything else here, because the name is pleasantly associated with something far more agreeable, comfortable, and inexpensive than an English railway carriage. We are content to sit in one of the half dozen compartments, more or less, into which a carriage is divided, either padded and bolstered up individually in the exclusive 137 fashion in which we delight, as a first class passenger; or to sit for hours bolt upright on a hard seat, with the

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prospect of devoting our energies throughout the journey to the task of extricating our legs from those of an opposite neighbour, as a second or a third; in each case securing a view of the country, limited or extensive in proportion to our distance from the windows, and in each case, too, incurring the risk of being half frozen in winter, or half stifled in summer, at the whim of any particularly robust or particularly delicate individual, who from his position, happens to have the control of the means of ventilation.

The American railway carriage (there is but one class on most of the lines, accommodation of an inferior class is provided for the slow-going emigrant trains on the great lines leading to the west, but for these exclusively) is open throughout, being entered from a platform at either end. It is but a step from the platform of one carriage to that of the next, and thus a communication is established throughout the 138 entire length of the train, of which the conductor avails himself for the purpose of collecting tickets and receiving fares—which under a lax system of management he is allowed to do— while the train is in motion; news-boys and fruit-vendors for the disposal of their wares; and passengers to wander hither and thither pretty much as they please. There is a passage down the centre of each car, and the seats, holding two persons each, are ranged on either side. Comfortably cushioned seats they are, with plenty of room in front, and a rest for the feet, all facing one way, but with an ingenious arrangement for shifting the backs, so as to bring the occupants of adjoining seats *vis-à-vis* if desired. An excellent view of the country is obtained through the numerous windows on either side of the car, and extra provision is made for the comfort of the passengers, by means of a stove in the winter and filters of iced water in summer. The cost of travelling on American railways is three half-pence per mile, and the average rate of speed by the ordinary 139 trains something less than on English lines.

Not the least of the many pleasant features of the American travelling system is the delightful sense of relief experienced by the traveller from all trouble or anxiety respecting his baggage. On alighting from the train at Boston, I bestowed not a thought on my *impedimenta* , but entered a coach belonging to one of the hotels to which I had been

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recommended, and gave the metal checks I had received on board the boat to an attendant porter of the establishment; from that moment the landlord of the hotel became answerable for the delivery of my baggage, and accordingly, ten minutes after my arrival at the hotel it was safely deposited in my bedroom.

Allusion has already been made to the completeness of the hotel system in the United States, and the immense size and costly magnificence of the leading establishments. Boston aims to rival New York in this as in other respects, 140 and its principal hotels, though inferior to some in magnificence, are surpassed by none in the Union in the perfection of their interior arrangements for the traveller's comfort. As the system of management is the same in all hotels, large and small, and in every state in the Union, from Maine to Florida, the present opportunity will serve as well as any other to give the reader an idea of the principle on which these establishments are conducted. And in the first place the English traveller in the States must be content to give up all idea, or, at least, all assertion of individual importance; and, if he would enter into the spirit of American life under such circumstances, resign his fondly cherished exclusiveness and reserve in favour of more social sentiments. The hotel system is the most levelling of all American "institutions." The obsequious attentions which greet a new arrival at an English hotel; the double doses of flunkeyism administered by shrewd continental Bonifaces to flatter the pride, and ease the purses of travelling *excellenzas* and *milors* may be sought for in vain; particular attention to individuals is unneeded where all pay a uniform fixed price for the accommodation they receive, and is, moreover, out of the question where guests are booked by the score and dined by the hundred.

Hotel charges range from one to two-and-a-half dollars, or four to ten shillings per day; the charge at first-rate houses being sometimes as high as three dollars. Unless otherwise agreed upon, it is understood that a guest uses the public sitting rooms, and takes his meals at the public table. Privacy is an expensive indulgence, and living in the *European* style (the word is generally thus pronounced), costs an European price. The table at hotels of the better class is liberally supplied, but the attendance is inferior in all. Free-

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born natives won't wait, and raw Irishmen don't know how to wait, and can't be taught. All hotels are supplied with a public lavatory, and the better class with a barber's shop, in one or other of 142 which those who are too indolent to go to their own rooms can dress, as much at least as is usually found necessary, for dinner. These barber's shops are wonderful places in their way, and there are few more enjoyable luxuries in warm weather than "a shave" and a "shampooing," as performed by some expert sable operator, the *subject* reclining the while on an elevated arm chair of luxurious softness, his feet resting on a cushioned pedestal in front, and his head thrown back at a convenient angle on a moveable rest behind. Few Americans shave themselves, and with such appliances for rendering the operation positively pleasant instead of a bore, the fact is not surprising. The American hotel is invariably provided with a large entrance hall, at one end of which is the office of the establishment, where, on arrival, the traveller registers his name in a volume kept for the purpose, and open to public inspection. The ingenious contrivances in use in these offices for simplifying the business of the establishment are a study for the stranger. 143 Convenient to the hand and eye of the clerk is the Annunciator, a clever invention, by which the bell-summons from a particular room is made know by the dropping of a small disk which conceals the corresponding number on the Annunciator; the exhibition of one or more numbers in this manner intimates to the clerk at what rooms attendance is required, and he issues his orders accordingly, replacing the covering disk when the bell is answered. In many hotels a series of pigeon holes are provided, glazed on the outside, and numbered, one for each room in the building. In these are deposited cards and letters left for guests while absent, and the keys of their rooms. The clerk is thus enabled to tell at a glance, by the presence or absence of the key, if a guest is in his room when asked for; and the occupant himself, by looking through the glazed exterior, can ascertain without enquiry if letters have arrived in his absence. In the reading rooms the traveller finds newspapers from every city 144 in the Union, and in the bar-rooms drinks of every variety, and patrons of every degree; for in these places, as well as in the entrance hall and reading room, are to be found a mixed throng of "outsiders," whom the love of a

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crowd, the desire for news, and a taste for elegant surroundings, bring together at all hours of the day and evening.

There are no extras in American hotels; everything being included in the regular charge but washing and drinkables. The traveller therefore may calculate to a nicety beforehand the cost of a journey, selecting his hotels according to his means—a very easy matter, as all advertise extensively, giving the charge per day. In travelling over nearly five hundred miles in the west—a journey which occupied a week, my necessary expenses did not exceed by a dollar the estimated outlay. The following extract from my memoranda will show what those expenses were, and may as well be inserted here, as serving to convey an idea of the cost of 145 travelling to a man of moderate means in the States generally:—

Dols. cents. Railroad, Chicago to Dixon 98 miles 3 00 Hotel, Dixon, 1½ days, at 1 dol. 50 cents per day 2 25 Railroad, Dixon to Freeport 36 miles 1 15 Hotel, Freeport, 1 day, at 1 dol. 50 cents per day 1 50 Railroad, Freeport to Galena 50 miles 1 55 Hotel, Galena, 1½ days, at 2 dols. per day 3 00 Steamboat, Galena to Rock Island 81 miles 4 00 Hotel, Rock Island, 1½ days, at 1 dol. 50 cents. per day 2 25 Railroad, Rock Island to Chicago 182 miles 5 00 447 23 70

A trifling addition for incidental expense will bring the total of the above to twenty-five dollars, or five pounds four shillings. If five dollars, or one pound, be added for superior hotel accommodation, it will give six pounds sterling, or one pound per day for seventy-four miles of travel, and hotel accommodation of the first class. The same sum might serve for a commercial traveller or other vagrant bachelor in England, content with a second class carriage, VOL. I. H 146 and his chop in the coffee-room of a second-rate inn; but it would scarcely meet the requirements of each member of a comfort loving family party, or of a lady travelling alone, who must needs have a room to themselves (whether they care for it or no), and indulge in—and pay for—the numerous extras which combine to render a trip to “the lakes” or elsewhere a more costly affair than a continental tour.

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to inform the reader that Boston is the principal city of the chief of the New England States.* At Plymouth, less than forty miles distant, the

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“Pilgrim Fathers” first touched American soil two hundred and thirty-eight years ago; and in what is now the State of Massachusetts, the earliest colonies were planted by those resolute and daring Puritans, who, “through scenes of gloom and misery showed way to an

* These are six in number—Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Maine. The title of “New England” was first adopted by the “United Colonies,” who formed a confederacy for mutual protection against their French, Dutch, and Indian neighbours in the year 1630.

147 asylum for those who would go to the wilderness for the purity of religion or the liberty of conscience.” The nucleus of Boston itself was formed by a body of emigrants from Boston, England, as early as the year 1630—ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims. How, this city, in the year 1774, was the first to raise the standard of freedom, and boldly stood forth, strong only in the consciousness of a righteous cause, to resist the oppressions of the mother land; and how, on the soil of this old colony of Massachusetts, the first battles of the revolution were fought, and patriot blood first flowed in the cause of liberty and right, is a matter of history.

The laws and institutions of the several States of New England, as well as the habits and manners of the people differ in so slight a degree that one State may fairly be taken as a specimen of the rest. Massachusetts claims a well merited pre-eminence, social, commercial, and political, but the prosperity, order, and intelligence which distinguish the several portions H 2 148 of Yankeedom have the same foundation in all. The Bostonians, like other dwellers in New England cities, are a steady, sobersided people compared with the gay, dashing, excitement-loving population of New York; and the title of “Land of steady habits,” which has been bestowed upon Connecticut, might, with propriety, be applied to any or all of her sister States of the north. The spirit of the stern, rigid old Puritans still survives, and the people retain many of the characteristics of their Pilgrim ancestors. The nasal twang which distinguishes the speech of the true born Yankee is said to have had its origin in the drawling monotone so much affected by the stricter sects

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of dissenters in times past as in times present; and though the partiality for Scripture names may not be quite so conspicuous in the Smiths and Browns of Massachusetts or Connecticut, at the present day as in their ancestors of a century since, there is still no lack of Jesses, Joshuas, Jedediahs, Zedekiahs, and Obadiahs, among the male portion of the population, while some of 149 the prettiest women to be met with in New England, or out of it, if asked the first question in the church catechism, would certainly answer with one of the ugliest names to be found in the Old Testament. Without doubt a man may now indulge in the luxury of a conjugal kiss on a Sunday, anywhere in the Union, without fear of the consequences the act might have entailed in the olden times,* but, to judge by a placard I saw pasted up in the streets of Boston the authorities seemed to be by no means deficient in a proper Puritanic zeal for moral reform; having, in their wisdom, declared profane swearing in the streets to be an offence against the law, and punishable accordingly.

* The prohibition here alluded to is contained in the “Blue Laws” of Connecticut, a code, the executive enactments of which, though, as may be supposed, not enforced, are still, I believe, unrepealed.

But, whatever the eccentricities and peculiarities of the people of New England, their claims to respect and admiration as the most energetic and persevering, the best taught and most generally intelligent people on the globe, cannot be denied. Guarding well the liberty they so nobly helped to win, they set an example the rest of the Union of moderation, order, and good government; and while no laggards in the race for commercial distinction, and occupying the highest rank in manufacturing industry, and skill, have attained to a position of acknowledged literary and intellectual pre-eminence in the great republic.

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CHAPTER VII.

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Boston: its general character.—Education.—Harvard University.—Literary societies.—Theatres.—Charitable institutions.—The Asylum for the Blind.—Hospital for the Insane.—Faneuil Hall and Bunker's Hill.—The State House.—Pleasant reminiscences.—Strong-minded women.—The law courts.—A city in mourning.—Presidential election.—Vote by ballot.—Political excitement.—Thanksgiving day.—The factories at Lowell.—Labour in New England.

Boston is built on a hill-shaped peninsula at the western extremity of Massachusetts Bay, divided from the mainland by the river Charles, and by a portion of the harbour; the city and its extensive suburbs on the north, west, and south, being connected by numerous bridges built on piles, some of which are over half a mile in length. Viewed from a distance, the city proper has a very imposing appearance, 152 and by ascending to the top of the State House, which occupies the highest ground in the city, and the cupola of which is two hundred and thirty feet above the level of the sea, a magnificent view is obtained of the large harbour, in which five hundred vessels may ride at anchor; of the islands that crowd its entrance so closely that in the main channel two ships can scarcely pass abreast; of the bay beyond, dotted with some thirty or forty islands more; and of the thickly settled and well cultivated country on either hand. Boston is in many respects the antipodes of New York. Though the second commercial city in the Union, it is a surprisingly quiet place. Business appears to be conducted with a steady, sober earnestness not to be found among the volatile go-a-head people of the empire city; and its general character is decidedly more English and less French than that of its great rival. Not that, in some respects, this is saying much in its favour; the rows of massive grey granite stores and warehouses at the water side, the sombre aspect of the principal thoroughfare, 153 State Street, where the same material, the product of the Quincey quarries, is extensively employed, and the dingy brown brick mansions of the fashionable quarter, are far less pleasing to the eye than the light, tasteful buildings of New York; while the broad thoroughfares and picturesque "avenues" common in the latter city may be sought for in vain. Boston, however, possesses one feature which I believe no

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other city in the Union can boast—a park, about the size and shape of the Green Park in London, prettily laid out and well wooded; it was formerly a cow pasture, and is still modestly called “the Common.” This common is the pride of the Bostonians, who are constantly throwing it in the teeth of their New York rivals, with whom an amusing contest for supremacy is continually being carried on; but it is far from being the only thing the people of Boston have to be proud of. Security for life and property, excellent laws, a respectable and enlightened magistracy, and an intelligent, well-conducted population, are among the prominent characteristics H 5 154 of the “city of notions.” The streets are kept in good repair, and obstructions are not allowed to accumulate on the “sidewalks;” the Irish population, numerous enough here as elsewhere, give little trouble to the police, and “rowdyism” is unknown.

I have already alluded in a previous chapter to the pre-eminent position occupied by the State of Massachusetts in the matter of popular education. In Boston the tax, state and local—for beyond the provision made by the state, each city and district is bound by law to provide sufficient accommodation for the children within its limits—for the support of the common schools, actually amounts to eight shillings per annum for each inhabitant; the yearly appropriation being nearly 350,000 dollars, and the population 175,000.

What the common schools have done for the masses of the people, the near neighbourhood of the principal seat of learning in the country has done much to accomplish for the wealthier classes. Harvard University is situated at 155 Cambridge, a small town only a few miles distant from Boston, and was founded as early as the year 1638—less than twenty years after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers. There is nothing attractive in the appearance of the place; the college itself is a plain stone edifice of very moderate dimensions; the other buildings are of brick of the most unpretending character, and the grounds are bare, tasteless, and ill-arranged.

The different societies, literary, scientific, religious, and charitable, established in Boston number over a hundred. The Boston Athenæum has a select library of 60,000 volumes,

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a gallery for paintings, and a hall for public lectures. The price of a life membership of this excellent institution—to which, through the kindness of a friend, a member, I enjoyed access during my stay in the city—is three hundred dollars, or sixty pounds. The payment of two pounds per annum secures to subscribers the use of the rooms, without the privilege of taking books from the building. I found no free library in 156 Boston, but one was in contemplation, a handsome bequest having been made for the purpose—by a Mr. Bates, an Englishman, if I remember rightly—and may be ere this in existence. Circulating libraries, of which there are none in New York, are numerous in Boston; periodical literature is cheap, plentiful, and good; and the lecture room is a still more favourite resort than in the rival city. Indeed, it is *the* favourite resort of all classes, from the lowest to the highest. With the exception of a couple of theatres, which enjoyed but a spasmodic vitality, and were continually “busting up”—to use the national phrase for a financial dissolution—for want of patronage, and a band of Ethiopian serenaders, I found nowhere else to go to. Nowhere else? The triple row of gas lamps that illumine, or did illumine, the balconies of the “Museum” shine on me reproachfully as I walk in imagination down Tremont Street after dark. Yes, there was “the Museum.” New York has its Museum—as all the world knows, for who has not heard of Barnum?—and so has Boston; 157 for as one has its cant and humbug, so has the other, only perhaps they differ somewhat in degree. The “Museum,” good reader, of American cities is no museum at all; to save appearances there may be a room or rooms where a few stuffed specimens, antique remains, and foreign curiosities are crowded together without taste or arrangement, but nobody looks at them, or goes to look at them; “the play, the play's the thing”—only it is not called a play; the theatre, which occupies the greater portion of the building, is the attraction—but, unlike the rose, it smells sweeter, to Puritanic nostrils at least, by another name. People who abjure the theatre will go to the “lecture room,” and those who would shudder at the bare idea of witnessing *a play*, be it even “Hamlet” or “The Rivals” at “Wallack's” or “the National,” will yield to the fascinations of some third rate “moral drama” on the boards of the “Museum.” Why have we no museums of the transatlantic type in England? Surely

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they would not lack patronage 158 any more than in the Yankee capital, or the empire city of the States.

Of the many excellent institutions for benevolent and reformatory purposes, endowed or assisted by the State, for which Boston is famous, a mere mention must suffice. They have, moreover, been well described by better pens than mine. I cannot, however, but add my humble tribute of sincere and earnest admiration to the encomiums of others, and express my hearty concurrence in the eulogium bestowed on them by Mr. Dickens, whose high appreciation and unbounded praise of all that is good and noble in the Republic, might well have covered a far greater multitude of minor sins against the national vanity than the most inveterate American can find him guilty of. "I sincerely believe," he says, "that the public institutions and charities of this capital of Massachusetts are as nearly perfect as the most considerate wisdom, benevolence, and humanity can make them. I never in my life was 159 more affected by the contemplation of happiness under circumstances of privation and bereavement than in my visits to these establishments."*

* American notes. Chapter 3.

All readers of "American Notes" are familiar with the account given of the Asylum for the Blind, and the interesting description of Laura Bridgman, the model pupil of that truly model establishment. This young person, then twenty-three years of age, was still an inmate of the asylum at the time of my visit; but the vacation having but just terminated, a few only of the pupils had returned, and she with others was still absent. I found some five-and-twenty however in the room I first visited; females of all ages, from the child of six or seven years, spelling out by means of her fingers the embossed letters and syllables of her reading book, to the full-grown woman busy at her needle. In another room were as many boys, some engaged in cyphering—a process in their case very similar to type setting, the elevations on 160 the leaden pieces used answering to figures—and others variously occupied. The rooms are large and conveniently arranged; but the national partiality for what Mr. Dickens calls the "accursed, suffocating, red hot demon of a stove"

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was as conspicuous here as elsewhere. The apartments were heated to a degree which could not fail to prove highly injurious to those who habitually sat for hours under its influence; to say nothing of the undeniably poisonous character of the atmosphere they were compelled to inhale. The course of instruction I found to include the various English branches, and music, vocal and instrumental. Paupers are admitted to this institution free, if belonging to the State, but no pupil is retained beyond the third year unless able to earn the cost of his board in the manufacture of mattresses, bedding, &c., which is carried on in the building, and the product of which is sold at a depôt established for the purpose in Boston.

On South Boston Point, at a short distance only from Dorchester Heights (once the scene of 161 Washington's operations against the city during its occupation by the British) on which the Asylum for the Blind is situated, are grouped together the State Hospital for the Insane, the House of Correction, conducted on the silent but not solitary system, the House of Industry, the House of Reformation, and the Boylston School. The design of the two last named is much the same, save that one is curative, the other preventive; the former dealing with juveniles who have offended against the laws, and leading them back by instruction and kindness to the path of honesty and honour; and the latter affording a home and education to those who would otherwise have no home but the streets, and be subject only to the debasing influences of idleness and crime; both are for boys only. The Hospital for the Insane is in every respect an admirable institution. By judicious and kindly treatment a complete control has been acquired by the medical superintendent, Dr. Parker, over his numerous patients—a control so decided and apparent that some 162 unpleasant apprehensions which crept over me on entering the first room, full of lunatics, all of whom were at liberty, rapidly subsided, and I presently found myself, somewhat to my own astonishment, walking about with a mad woman on each arm as composedly as possible. One of these sociable maniacs had a fancy for contracting matrimonial engagements with male visitors, and I found it necessary, in accordance with the consenting principle advisable under such circumstances, to make a very solemn promise of marriage, to be

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kept within a year from the date of my visit—which the Doctor was requested to “make a note of”—an engagement which I trust my fair readers will not think me much to blame that I neglected to fulfil. This asylum, which is for paupers only, contained two hundred inmates, of which two-thirds were Irish.

Among the “lions” of Boston are the “Faneuil Halls,” a quaint old building where the patriot eloquence of the fathers of the revolution was first displayed, and to which posterity has given the name of the “Cradle of 163 Liberty;” the Custom House, one of the handsomest edifices in the Union; and the Bunker's Hill monument—now rising from the centre of the town of Charlestown, a simple obelisk of hewn granite, some twenty feet higher than the monument on Fish Street Hill. Here may be seen in the top chamber—the ascent to which must be a sore trial to short-winded patriots—two of four small cannon, which formed the whole of the artillery of the rebels at the commencement of the revolution, and which now, in honor of their two most conspicuous and talented leaders, bear, severally, the names of John Hancock and Samuel Adams. First in size, however, and general importance among the buildings of Boston is the State House, an imposing structure, though built only of brick and wood, and painted. It is situated on the highest ground in the city, to which, viewed from a distance, it forms a striking addition. Unlike the principal cities of most of the States, Boston is the seat of government as well as the commercial capital of Massachusetts; 164 and in the State House the Senate and Representatives of the State hold their annual sessions. Facing the entrance stands Chantrey's noble statue of Washington; rooms for the use of the State Treasurer, Secretary, &c., are on either hand, and a short passage leads to the members' library, a comfortable apartment of which I have a particularly pleasant recollection as containing no stove, but a blazing fire in an open grate, and to which, though not customarily open to the public, I was admitted by the ready courtesy, always to be found in public places in America, of the official in attendance. More than this, I made myself quite at home here for an hour and more, on the invitation of an elderly gentleman, who was seated near the blazing fire, before mentioned, and who rose on my entrance and politely told me that if I wished to inspect any of the books in the library I was

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quite at liberty to do so. I mention these matters simply to show how smooth and pleasant everything is made to the curious traveller in the States, and what a blessed relief there is 165 from those attendant harpies who hover around the sight-seer, dogging his footsteps for shillings and sixpences elsewhere.

Boston abounds in churches. None are remarkably handsome, though many are very large, and all are characterised by extreme plainness and simplicity. On one I remarked a gilded cock surmounting the spire, and which tradition states to have been placed there in derision of a Mr. Lattross, whose name was Peter! Not less than one-fifth of the places of worship in Boston are Unitarian.

I found the advocates of extreme opinions and extravagant projects of social reform not more scarce, apparently, in Boston than in New York. Spiritualism had its share of votaries. A newspaper—the editor of which had been imprisoned for blasphemy—entitled “The Investigator,” and boldly professing infidel principles, was in circulation; and “Women's rights” agitators were by no means wanting. The movement indeed, had its origin in New England, and one result of the resolutions adopted by the strong-minded 166 women of these States, is to be found in the Female Medical College, situated at Boston, an institution assisted by the State; and in the score or so of practitioners in petticoats, who do a fair business—it is to be presumed among their own sex exclusively—in that city of notions.

I visited several of the law courts in Boston, which here, as elsewhere, are held in fine large commodious apartments with abundant accommodation for the public, and a roomy enclosure for the clerks and counsel. In fact everybody has so much room, and is so little distinguished by position or appearance from anybody else, that the effect on entering, while a case is in progress, is at first rather bewildering. The seats for the jury are but slightly elevated from the floor, and both judges and counsel wear neither wig nor gown. For the rest there is but little difference between Boston and Westminster, except that in the former place counsel, perhaps, brow-beat the witnesses and banter each other a little

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less than at the latter, and 167 expectorate a great deal more—which latter tendency in the judge, jury, counsel, prisoner, and audience, accounts for the spittoons—generally about the size and pattern of a church font— with which the court room, and the passages leading thereto, and the staircases, and the lobbies, and every portion of the building are literally supplied, but which, unfortunately, not a few disdain to use.

Daniel Webster, one of America's greatest statesmen, died during my stay at Boston, at his residence, Marshfield, a few miles distant. The loss was a national one, and the public grief was universal; but the city and State with the political history of which his career had been so long identified were extravagant in their demonstrations of sorrow and respect. Boston went into mourning—not figuratively, but literally. The people, it is true, many of them, put on black, but so did the houses; hotels and public buildings were draped with black cloth from top to bottom, and their columns encircled by twisted folds of black and white calico. The 168 immense flags, as large as moderate-sized carpets, which hung across the street at the head quarters of the several candidates for the approaching Presidential election, were bordered with black, while those of the party to which he belonged were further distinguished by devices and mottoes suitable to the occasion. On the day of the funeral every shop was closed, even to the little tobacco store opposite my boardinghouse; the proprietor of which, as an additional mark of respect, put the very red Indian—the red Indian always takes the place of the Highlander in America—who stood at the door gravely smoking his tomahawk pipe, into deep mourning. Amusements were suspended, public offices closed, and every possible honor paid to the memory of the deceased.

The election of the President of the United States took place on the second of November, Whatever disturbances may at times occur at this and other elections in some of the States, in New England it is always a quiet affair. Boston, however, was not without its clubs and 169 committees, its open air meetings and torchlight processions, all of which gave a pleasant air of life and gaiety to this otherwise somewhat dull metropolis, and left it of course seemingly duller than ever afterwards. Everything was done with due

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decorum, however, and when election day arrived there was no breaking open ballot boxes, or knocking down of voters, as among the free and independent citizens of some less orderly communities. In the evening only was there some excitement, when the result of the day's polling—the poll is open for one day only, from sunrise to sunset—began to be known. Then people assembled in crowds about the head-quarters of the opposing parties. In the balconies of the rooms occupied severally by the “Democratic Granite Club” and “The United Whigs,” bands were playing and fireworks being let off, and overwhelming majorities in favour of Pierce or Scott, as the case might be, were announced—by individuals who, before the business was over, became so excessively hoarse as scarcely VOL. I. I 170 to be audible at all—as just telegraphed from some neighbouring city or distant State, and received with loud cheers by the crowd; the unfavorable minorities being announced, of course, amidst groans and hisses. Perhaps under no circumstances does the vast extent as well as the extensive resources of the United States become more strikingly apparent than under those attending a Presidential election. The telegraph is at work incessantly from one end of the Union to the other. Returns are received simultaneously from places a thousand miles apart. The poll has scarcely closed in Boston or New York, when its result, or as near an approach to it as can be attained by hasty calculation, is known among the woods of Wisconsin, or the prairies of Illinois; and the planters of Louisiana or Carolina, before the day is over, exult in the triumph, or lament the defeat of Democracy in the States of Michigan or Maine, two thousand miles away. From beyond the Mississippi, however, the returns come in but slowly, and weeks transpire ere the Californian 171 news arrives, and the result of the election in every State can be fully known.

At Boston I observed that lists of persons entitled to vote were exhibited in the city-hall for some days previous to the election. Having satisfied himself of his eligibility by a reference to these lists, the voter has only to present himself at the polling place of the ward in which he resides; where, however, he may be challenged by any of the opposite party to that to which he is supposed to belong, and be made to give evidence of his qualification.* I have

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no intention of entering on the discussion of the merits or demerits of the American system of voting by ballot, respecting which so much has been said and written, with a view to its adoption | 2

* "The right of suffrage is granted to every male citizen twenty-one years of age and upwards (excepting paupers and persons under guardianship), who has resided within the commonwealth one year, and within the town or district in which he may claim a right to vote, six calendar months preceding any election; and who has paid a state or county tax, assessed upon him within two years next preceding such election; and also every citizen who may be exempted by law from taxation, and who may be, in all other respects, qualified as above mentioned."— Constitution of the State of Massachusetts.

172 in England. I shall only remark that, in my humble opinion, we are very well off as we are, and that some, at least, of the supposed advantages of the ballot system are more imaginary than real. Though secrecy is rendered compulsory by law in one or two of the States, with a view to the prevention of bribery, the enactment is continually evaded; and in New York, one of the States alluded to, has proved notoriously ineffective; while in the other States the vote is, or may be if the voter wills it, as publicly given as at an English election.

One very natural consequence of the frequent recurrence of Presidential elections is, that the popular mind is in a continual state of excitement on the subject. Nothing can equal the readiness and good humour with which the beaten party yields to the triumph of the opposition when once the struggle is past; but nothing, likewise, can equal the sanguine and resolute manner in which they immediately set to work to prepare for a renewal of hostilities four years hence. So much, in that interval, 173 necessarily depends on accidents, the events of the day, and the conduct and policy of those in office, that the provisions and calculations of the first year may be overturned in the second; and the lately defeated idol of his party, whose success at the next election they look upon as all but certain, and whose return their whole endeavours are exerted to secure, in all

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probability, as the result of some political combination or party feud, or from mere popular caprice, finds himself before the term is half expired almost without a friend.

There are three annual holidays, universally kept throughout the United States; New Year's day, the fourth of July—the anniversary of American Independence, and Thanksgiving Day. Of the two first I shall have further mention to make hereafter; the last, having occurred during my stay at Boston, may as well be mentioned here. “Thanksgiving,” as it is usually termed—on the same principle, I suppose, that the word “street” is usually dropped, and you are sometimes told that *William* leads 174 to *James* or *John* turns out of *Henry*—is a day appointed by the governor of each State, sometime in the month of November, for a general thanksgiving to Providence for the mercies of the past year. As the day named is generally the same in a majority of the States by a previous arrangement of the several governments, the holiday becomes a national one, and is devoted very generally to the interchange of kindly feelings among families and friends, who make engagements and extend invitations for “next Thanksgiving,” much as we do for Christmas Day. Places of public worship are open for service suited to the occasion, and business is entirely suspended.

I much regret that I was prevented by lack of leisure from visiting the famous manufactories of Lowell and Lawrence, distant some twenty-five miles from Boston, on the borders of the state of New Hampshire. I cannot, however, better compensate my readers for my own shortcomings on a matter of so much interest, than by transcribing the following extract from the 175 excellent little work of Mr. W. E. Baxter, M.P., entitled “America and the Americans,” which I have once before quoted, and than which no late work on the United States contains so much and such varied information in so small a compass, or expresses views more moderate or more consistent with the progressive spirit of the age. “The city of Lowell,” he writes, “contained in 1846, 30,000 inhabitants, one-third of whom were operatives employed at the various works; of these, 7,000 were females, and 1,000 males. There were thirty-three mills, besides the print works, with an invested capital of 12,000,000 dollars. They were then making annually 75,868,000

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yards of cloth, 1,500,000 dollars being expended in wages. They are not the property of individuals, but of joint-stock companies, each company being managed by a gentleman resident at the works. The partners for the most part live at Boston. The machinery is all driven by water power, and the buildings are of brick, substantial, and well finished. In Lowell there is a very small population permanently 176 engaged in manufactures. The girls seldom remain at the works longer than five years, but at the end of that period return to their rural homes, with a little purse, and send their younger sisters to supply their places. To encourage this system, the different corporations require their workers to board in one of the houses which are attached to each mill. There are five hundred and fifty of these boarding houses, in all of which every attention is paid to the health and comfort of the inmates. Those who behave improperly are summarily dismissed; but out of 6,800,000 girls, mentioned in a late statistical report, only forty-nine had been turned off for this reason. Total abstinence from intoxicating liquors is regarded as a pre-requisite towards obtaining employment; and the moral police system among the operatives themselves is said to be perfect. I was informed, however, last year, that owing chiefly to the great influx of Irish and Germans, of a low grade, the Lowell operatives have recently rather degenerated in point of character. 177 The average wage of the females is about 8s. 6d. per week, besides board, although many earn nearly double that sum. The numerous 'Improvement Circles,' or literary societies, at which so many of the workers spend their leisure time; the clever articles in the 'Lowell Offspring,' written by the girls themselves; the well-frequented libraries and crowded lecture rooms, bear ample testimony to the existence of 'mind among the spindles.' Three-eighths of the girls in 1846 were church members, and three-sevenths either teachers or pupils at the Sabbath schools."

The principal manufactures of Massachusetts are boots and shoes, candles, soap, cutlery, and hardware, paper, powder, and fire-arms. In all of these it surpasses the rest of the Union, ranking after New York in the manufacture of machinery. Skilled labour is generally in demand in the New England states, and good hands make high wages. The mechanic from the old country, however, finds it necessary to adapt himself to methods of working

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frequently I 5 178 very different to those to which he has been accustomed, resulting chiefly from the more extensive employment of machinery as a substitute for manual labour; and an inability or aversion readily to do this sometimes leads to disappointment. Of the prices paid for labour, and other matters of interest to the intending emigrant, I shall have occasion to give some particulars in the succeeding chapter.

And now we will, with the reader's permission, bid farewell to Boston, and return for a brief space to New York.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Return to New York.—Christmas Day.—The Indian summer.—New Year's Day, and festivities thereon.—Sleigh driving. Poverty.—Marriages and deaths.—Bridal chambers and funeral ceremonials.—Up the Hudson.—Geoffrey Crayon and Sleepy Hollow.—Singing.—West Point.—Cold spring.—Independence Day, and how it is kept.

I Returned to New York at the end of December, having agreed to keep Christmas there by putting my digestive powers on trial, in accordance with the good old-country custom, at the house of an English friend. Christmas Day is pretty generally observed as a holiday throughout the United States, particularly in the east, but its festivities have less of a social and domestic character than with us. Poultry and groceries, however, are in some demand; but the shops 180 make no such display as in England, and “the pudding” is by no means an indispensable adjunct to the Christmas dinner. I have some pleasant recollections of this particular Christmas Day, 1852, my first in a strange land; and among them one of a gigantic pudding, holly-crowned, the memory of which and of the cheerful faces and kindly hearts that met around it, glows brightly through the gloom of four plum-puddingless Christmas dinners since.

The close of the year is a delightful season in America. Autumn, in the English sense, there is none. In the months of October and November—the season called the “Indian

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Summer”—the average temperature is little cooler than that of the summer season in England; little rain falls, except at or about the equinox, and November fogs are unknown. Slight frosts occur at night, but the evenings are no colder than nine out of ten of the summer nights in England. The weather in December has little of a wintry character, and the sleigh-loving population—which includes 181 everybody—deem themselves fortunate if sufficient snow falls to enable them to indulge in their favourite recreation by New Year's Day.

New Year's Day is marked by the almost universal observance of a very pretty custom throughout the United States. All business is suspended, and the entire day is devoted to the payment of friendly and congratulatory visits on the part of the male population, while the ladies remain at home to receive and entertain their masculine visitors. The most profuse hospitality prevails, and people of fashion vie with each other in providing the most delicate and costly entertainments. Tables remain covered with good things—on which the guests are expected to regale themselves while exchanging the compliments of the season, and then pass out to make room for fresh arrivals— from morning till midnight. A very limited acquaintance is allowed to constitute a claim on family hospitality on these occasions; and people who are known to give “a good spread,” and 182 who count their New Year's guests by the hundred, entertain not a few of whose previous existence they were almost, if not entirely ignorant. Ambitious young gentlemen endeavour to rival each other in the calls they make, but calculation not unfrequently becomes a somewhat difficult matter by the close of the day, after drinking a score of healths at as many different tables; and the individuals who modestly present themselves, singly or in pairs, at the houses of their friends in the morning, become inspired by a feeling of universal benevolence, and go in crowds of a dozen to visit other people's friends in the evening. As few of those ladies who are not in a position to receive company will consent to be seen in the streets on New Year's Day—being deterred therefrom by sundry considerations as to “the look of the thing”—the appearance of the city thoroughfares would be suggestive to a stranger of the sudden demise of the entire female population, if he could reconcile so severe a calamity

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with the unusually gay and animated appearance 183 of those of the opposite sex who crowd the side walk or dash along the roadway.

New Year's Day is over, and if the snow have not already fallen, it will not be long in coming, and with it a condition of atmosphere several degrees colder than we have any experience of in England, save at intervals of half a century. And now the winter life of the American capital has fairly commenced. We may almost fancy ourselves carried across the Atlantic and the European continent, and dropped in the chief city of the Czar. Broadway is crowded with sleighs of every size and style, from the large four horse vehicle, holding twenty passengers, and generally crowded with half as many more, and the dashing turn out of some wealthy merchant, to the humble “cutter,” and the impromptu sleigh—manufactured by setting a packing case on a pair of runners—in which the small dealer transports his wares. How they glide along over the snow, and at what a pace! bells jingling merrily round the horses' necks, drivers cheering, people shouting, and everybody enjoying it all, and making 184 the most of it all amazingly. At night the fun grows fast and furious; the public sleighs are, if possible, more crowded than ever, and snow-balling is carried on with great vigor. Sleighting parties are made up for places at a distance from the city, and many a jovial crowd may be heard returning long after the noises of the city are hushed; the tinkling of the bells mingling pleasantly with the sound of songs and laughter. On the rivers, navigation is now at an end; the monster steamboats are “laid up” for the season, and the ferry-boats to Brooklyn, Hoboken, and elsewhere, have to make their way through huge masses of ice, to the no small injury of their bottoms, and to the dismay of nervous passengers. There may not be much snow in New York—there very seldom is, which accounts for the rabid eagerness with which sleigh riding is resorted to with the first fall that occurs, and continued long after the roads have exchanged their snowy hue for the whitey-brown tint of snow and dirt combined, and been so cut up by traffic as to render the pleasures of sleighting 185 somewhat imaginary, and its penalties, in the shape of joltings and upsets, lamentably real; but we hear of plenty in the north and west, and the papers are full of accounts of mails delayed, and trains “snowed up,” and coach roads

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rendered impassable, and of communication throughout the country being in a state of dire confusion generally. Meanwhile the city is lively enough, though people in business complain more or less of hard times. There comes to be a good deal of distress too among the poorer classes; wages are lower, provisions and coals are dearer, and you may see more beggars in a day than you will see in any other city of the Union—in the north at least—at this or any other season, in a year, though less than may be met in the course of a two hours walk in London. New York, however, is becoming so closely assimilated to European cities in the density of its population and in the proportion at certain seasons which the supply of labour bears to the demand, as to cease to offer any striking contrast to the capitals of the old world in these and some other 186 respects, such as is exhibited by the newly risen cities of the west. With this condition of things, a condition of which the political economists of the United States have hitherto had little or no experience, new responsibilities naturally arise, and difficulties in the way of good government present themselves unknown before; the distress, the crime, and the disorder which are the result of poverty and an overcrowded population have hitherto been almost total strangers to American soil, and, proud as every American has a right to be of the institutions of his country, he should remember, what too many are apt to forget, that it is its vast extent and undeveloped resources that secure those institutions from the action of many disturbing influences, such as are, from the different nature of accidental circumstances, continually at work in lands with which he, too frequently, institutes unfair comparisons.

During my residence in New York at this time I “assisted” at the marriage of one of my friends, and at the funeral of another. As the manner in which both these ceremonies are conducted 187 differs materially from our customs on similar occasions, some account of how people are married and buried among our American cousins may not be uninteresting. Weddings generally take place in the evening, and at the house of the bride's friends, where a room is prepared, frequently at no trifling cost, for the performance of the ceremony. The bride, likewise, as with us, is usually got up to use a commercial phrase—“at a considerable expense,” and relatives and friends are invited

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to the ceremony and to the ball or other entertainment which usually follows. Marriages, however, occasionally take place as early as six in the morning, and the happy couple are fifty miles away before the rest of the world have had their breakfast. Some, economically inclined, get married at the minister's house; others at church as with us, in which case two cards are sent to each of the friends of the parties some days beforehand; one inscribed with the name of the church and the hour at which the ceremony is to take place, and the other an "at home" card, 188 stating the hours at which the newly-married couple will receive their friends: as this period is frequently limited to a couple of hours on a single evening, the "jam" which occasionally takes place may be better imagined than described.

Under any and all of the circumstances above named, the phenomena usually presented are much the same as at an English wedding. The bride is under the same necessity of indulging in "a good cry," and of driving the roses, if she have any, from her cheeks to her nose; the bridegroom has equally the appearance of an individual about to be hanged; bridesmaids are sympathetic and coquettish, and young gentlemen say pretty things, and old gentlemen naughty ones.

As marriage is a purely civil contract, the ceremony may be performed at very little trouble or expense. Perhaps the facility with which the nuptial knot may be tied has something to do with the numerous instances that occur of its disruption. Divorces are easily obtained. Once 189 while travelling in the distant State of Iowa, I encountered a gentleman from New York who gave me to understand that his sole business in the town in which we met was to rent a portion of a house for a term, and, by sleeping in the apartments for a few nights, constitute himself a resident of the State, thus enabling him to take out a divorce against his wife, whom he had left in New York, and effect a legal separation from his better half, without her being made at all acquainted with the proceeding.

I had almost omitted to mention one very novel feature in connection with matrimonial arrangements in the United States. This is the fitting up, in hotels and steamboats, of what are called "bridal chambers;" apartments furnished and decorated in a style of the

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most profuse and extravagant luxury, such as no modest, right-minded woman would ever consent to use, rendering herself, as the result of their occupation, the object of the impertinent curiosity and vulgar comments of a hundred strangers. Whether the limited patronage of these apartments 190 for the purposes for which they are designed, is due to the enormous sum demanded for the use of them, or to other causes, I cannot say. While it is difficult to believe that the women of the New World could lend their countenance to anything so gross and indelicate, it is startling to find that such things are done; that, while on the opening of a new hotel, crowds flock to inspect and admire the bridal chamber, and full descriptions are given of it in the papers from one end of the Union to the other, there is little or no public expression of disapproval and disgust.

I have read a humorous anecdote somewhere of a clergyman who had a shrew for a wife, who commenced, by mistake, to read the burial service at a marriage ceremony, and on being expostulated with by the bridegroom on its inappropriateness to the occasion, expressed his conviction that the intended Benedict would ere long discover, like himself, that it was better after all to be buried than married. If the prospect of a numerous “following” at his decease may be 191 supposed to aid in reconciling a man to the contemplation of the former event, an American should look forward to it with something like positive complacency. In New York more particularly, people could scarcely display more eagerness in accepting a friend's invitation to a ball or a dinner party, than they exhibit in following his dead body to its final resting place. To the newspaper announcement of a death, is invariably annexed an invitation to the “relatives and friends of the deceased” to attend the body to the place of interment. The consequent attendance on these melancholy occasions is such as considerably to raise one's opinion of human nature at a first view. Subsequent observation, however, reveals the fact that, though genuine mourners are by no means wanting, and are, indeed, more numerous than at an English funeral, from the general character of the invitation, and the non-requirement by custom of a “suit of sables” for the occasion, a large proportion of the company may generally be classed as “funeral goers”—people who attend more 192 because they like

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it than out of respect to the deceased. The most important item in the funeral expenses is cab hire, hackney carriages being provided for all who choose to attend, and the “funeral goers” above alluded to enjoy the gratification of a drive to the suburban cemetery at Greenwood or Cypress Hills, more lovely spots than which it would be hard to find, with, in addition, the pleasurable reflection that it costs them nothing.

I passed the spring and summer of the year 1853 in New York, absenting myself from it only for a brief interval at the time of the national holiday, Independence Day, on the fourth of July. On that anniversary most quiet, well-disposed people quit the city, and the country people flock into it. However desirous myself of seeing whatever was worthy of remark in the American capital on an occasion so thoroughly national, the opportunity offered by the occurrence of “the Fourth,” as it is laconically termed, on a Monday, for the enjoyment of a two days' release from business, and 193 the heat, dust, confusion, and excitement of city life, was a temptation too great to be resisted; and, accordingly, the afternoon of the previous Saturday found myself and a friend among a crowd of holiday seekers on board the “Francis Skiddy,” gaily steaming up the magnificent Hudson.

Independent of the exquisite beauty and solemn grandeur of the scenery of this noble river—grandeur and beauty which defy description, but which, once seen and enjoyed, ever remain fixed upon the mind, a memory of surpassing loveliness which no subsequent impressions can efface—the Hudson is by no means deficient in interesting associations. Ten miles above New York, beyond the pretty villages of Weehawken and Bulls Ferry, on the New Jersey shore, rises the rock on which stood Fort Lee, taken, with Fort Washington on the opposite bank, by the British when the Americans commenced their famous retreat towards the Delaware in the year 1776; and fifteen miles beyond, at the other extremity of the Palisades—a perpendicular VOL. I. K 194 wall of rock rising from the water's edge to from fifty to two hundred feet in height—and within a mile or two of the present town of Piermont and the extensive buildings of the Erie Railroad Company, the British spy, the gallant André, was tried and executed. At Tarrytown, on the opposite shore, on the spot on which he was captured, stands a monument commemorative of the event, and inscribed

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with the names of his three captors. But a more pleasing interest has been thrown around this little village and its surroundings, unsurpassed on the river for rural beauty, by the genius of Washington Irving; for here are the identical Sleepy Hollow and the old Dutch church of his delightful legend, and not far from them stands Sunnyside, the author's own retreat.

Further up the river, and close upon the water's edge, its white marble walls glistening in the sunshine, is one of the three Penitentiaries of the state of New York, the prison of Sing-Sing. There are one thousand cells in this prison, and the convicts are chiefly employed 195 in the marble quarries in the neighbourhood. I may mention here that a statement of the number of convicts to be found in the prisons of the United States would be of little assistance in estimating the amount of crime in the community. There is a feeling of morbid sympathy abroad, which leads numbers of the people to interest themselves in the fate of nearly every great criminal; and petitions for pardon or release—which in many cases the Governor has not the moral courage to refuse to grant, or entertains in the hope of adding to his own popularity—are the consequence. It is well known, likewise, that there are men who undertake to obtain pardons “for a consideration;” whether any portion of the sums thus received by them goes into the pockets of the Governor of the State it may be difficult to tell, but certainly the pardons issued on the retirement of a Governor from office are frequently suspiciously numerous.

Amidst the grandest scenery of the Hudson, K 2 196 upon a lofty rock among the Highlands, fifty-three miles from New York, stands the Military Academy of West Point, comprising an extensive range of buildings and grounds, extending over three thousand acres. The course of training adopted here is about as severe as could well be devised; too much so, it would seem, for many of the cadets, as numbers leave before the term of four years required by the State has expired.

I left the steamboat at this point; my ultimate destination being Cold Spring on the opposite side of the river, a quiet little village nestling in a small bay between two spurs of the

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mountains; a spot which has been well christened the "Gem of the Hudson." I never spent two days of such delicious dream-life as at this place, lounging in the verandah of the little hotel, and looking across the river the tree-covered sides of the Douderbarrak (Thunder Chamber) mountain; climbing over the cliffs of Brecknock, and sailing in some dainty craft in the shadow 197 of Sugar-loaf rock or Anthony's nose. It was as close a realization as well could be of Longfellow's beautiful verse,—

"And the nights shall be made of music, And the tcares hat infest the day, Shall fold their tents like the Arabs, And as silently steal away."

Perfect repose was not to be had, however, even here; as I fully believe it is not to be had anywhere in the Union, except in the centre of some untrodden forest or pathless prairie far from the haunts of civilization, on the "glorious Fourth." I had scarcely fallen asleep on the night previous, when I was rudely awakened by a violent shock which almost turned me out of bed—a proceeding I quickly completed of my own accord, amid vague apprehensions of an earthquake—and by a report as of the loudest thunder. These effects were the very natural result of the "letting off" of a cannon of tolerable dimensions, within half-a dozen yards of the hotel, by the Cold Spring patriots, by way of heralding the advent of the said "glorious Fourth." As "the fun" was 198 continued at brief intervals throughout the night, as well as the next day, sleep was out of the question, and so I sat at the window and listened to the report of the cannon as it reverberated with all the effect of actual thunder among the recesses of the well-named Douderbarrak. Independence day is everywhere characterized—or at least in every place in which a speaker can be obtained, and an audience, however small, collected for the occasion—by the delivery of an oration suited to the event it is intended to commemorate; that is to say, historical, patriotic, defiant, eulogistic, and, generally, extravagantly hyperbolic. Military displays, too, usually form part of the day's programme; but the prime agent in the celebration of this national anniversary is unquestionably—gunpowder; gunpowder in the form of squibs, crackers, rockets, and Roman candles; gunpowder rammed into cannons, pistols, rifles, and old muskets; gunpowder in every possible form and combination of which pyrotechnic skill is

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capable. The sale of fireworks in the principal cities is enormous. People's very natures become 199 changed and their individuality lost, for the time being, in the universal desire to "let off" something. Timid men boldly fire off pistols— and sometimes two or three of their fingers at the same time—from their door-steps, and placid, elderly gentlemen may be seen luxuriating in the noisy pastime of firing several pounds weight of Chinese crackers, the same being contained in a barrel on the side walk; while women, who are on all ordinary occasions nervous in the extreme, walk undismayed among the proprietors of pocket pistols, and even submit with comparative equanimity to the explosion of crackers among their petti—I beg pardon, among their *skirts*. If the Chinese had such an anniversary they would certainly call it "the feast of gunpowder."

Returning from Cold Spring by the Hudson river railroad, which for the last mile or so passes down the centre of a main suburban thoroughfare, I arrived in New York in time to witness the grand display of fireworks in the evening. This, as seen from some lofty building, is a very pretty sight. Rockets rise and drop in starry 200 showers in every direction as far as the sight extends, on the heights of Brooklyn and the shores of New Jersey. The public parks, in which exhibitions are provided at the expense of the city, are a blaze of light, and the church spires and other lofty edifices start into view in colors of blue, red, or green, and sink as suddenly into darkness. For two or three hours the display is continuous and incessant; meanwhile, guns and pistols are in great demand, and barrels of Chinese crackers are making a noise truly deafening in every street. Altogether it is not very difficult to suppose the city in a state of siege, and to imagine an invading army, on the opposite shores; allowing a possibility, which Heaven forbid! that it could ever get there.

I have now brought the record of my reminiscences of those portions of the Eastern states which I visited, to a close. Before leaving New York for a journey of a thousand miles to the westward, it may not be unacceptable to many of my readers, if I devote a brief

chapter to some remarks on matters of practical interest and importance to the intending emigrant.

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CHAPTER IX.

Emigration.—Prospects of the emigrant.—Moral requisites.— Causes of failure.— Professional pursuits.—Clerks and assistants.—Men of small capital.—Manual labour.— Manufacturing districts.—Benevolent societies.—Emigration commissioners and Castle Garden.—Female labor.—Land Investments.— Climate of the United States.

What sort of people should emigrate to the United States, and where such emigrants should go to on their arrival;—in other words, what kinds of labor are in most demand, and where that labor may be turned to the best advantage without loss of time and means, should form subjects of earnest enquiry with every one who leaves the old world to settle in the new. Ignorance on these points not unfrequently leads to bitter disappointment. The more uninformed the emigrant is, the more readily, he is, of course, imposed upon by those whose interest it may be to deceive and mislead him; time is lost and money wasted in fruitless and mistaken efforts, and people come to think themselves the ill-used victims of the misrepresentations of others, when their failures are rather the necessary consequence of their own extravagant expectations and neglect of proper enquiry.

Although physical rather than intellectual labor is wanted in the United States, I cannot bring myself to think that all those who work with the head and not with the hands, had better be told to stay at home. On the contrary, I believe that a fair prospect of success may be held out to *all* who carry with them an ordinary supply of perseverance and resolution; as small a stock as is consistent with self respect of that pride of station which is for ever inducing its owner to draw lines of distinction, real or imaginary, between himself and every one else, and to scorn, as degrading, the very pursuits which perhaps he is the best adapted to engage in; and 203 a love of temperance—by no means the

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least important requisite whether viewed with regard to the demoralizing effect of excess, or as a protection, on the ground of mere prudence and economy, from a habit, the indulgence in which, after the American fashion, is very expensive.* It follows of necessity, however, that the difficulties to be encountered are greater in the case of some than of others; that they are, in fact, greater or less exactly in proportion to the demand which exists for the kind of labor the emigrant brings to market. As this demand varies in different localities, extensive observation and enquiry are plainly requisite. The best advice that can be given to *all classes* is:—give the East a trial proportionate in length to your means.

* This remark may be briefly illustrated thus:—Tom meets Harry, who invites him to “go and take a drink.” They adjourn to a “saloon,” where Harry encounters an acquaintance, and thereupon asks him to drink too; this acquaintance has two or three, perhaps half-a-dozen, friends present, who are included in the invitation, and sometimes take it for granted if they are not, being quite ready to return the compliment. They do return it— all of them. Tom, of course, must do the same, and he eventually gets back to the street, oppressed with the burden of several more “slings” or “smashes” than he can conveniently carry, and minus three or four shilling.”

204 No one should land in the States with less than a hundred dollars (twenty pounds), in his pocket; and *no should remain in any eastern city unemployed until his means are exhausted*. A neglect of this precaution is the rock half the unsuccessful ones split upon. The attractions of city life, the associations they may have formed, and the unwillingness to place an extra thousand miles between themselves and “home,” induce thousands to linger in New York, in hopes that something will “turn up,” until their last dollar is spent, who, if they had left the city while but ten remained to pay their passage to the west, might have procured speedy employment, and would at least have ensured a better prospect of success than among the comparatively crowded population of the east.

Perhaps my purpose of rendering these remarks on emigration as practically useful to people of all ranks and classes as possible, cannot be better served than by arranging

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such information and advice as I am able to give under the heads of the several branches of 205 labour, mental and physical, to which they apply.

To begin with the pursuits termed professional:—I do not hesitate to say that many a country surgeon, in England, struggling to get or to keep a practice that scarcely suffices to keep *him*, and many a young man who has passed “the College” and “the Hall,” but yet lingers, perhaps too fondly, among the associations of Clare Market, “the Cellars,” or the “Garrick's Head,” the poorly-paid assistant of some London practitioner, might “better themselves” by a voyage to the States, even if undertaken only with a view to a few years' residence. Doctors are easily manufactured in the States, and talent and skill are at a direful discount. If resident in the country, however, it is needless to say that “the doctor” has no easy time of it. Patients lie far apart, and fees are low; but then the practitioner not unfrequently enjoys a monopoly in his profession, and some portions of the West are delightfully unhealthy. I knew a medical man in Michigan, a Yankee, who made 206 a handsome competence—for America—in the course of a ten years' practice.

There are few more profitable occupations in the States than that of the dentist. Nearly everybody has bad teeth, and the periodical visits which these gentlemen pay to the country towns prove highly remunerative.

The prospects of dramatic professionals I have already alluded to in some remarks on New York theatricals. Without entering into details as to the market value of “walking gentlemen,” “first and second old women,” “utility” people, and high and low comedians, I may state that salaries range from six to fifty dollars, or £1 4s. to £10 weekly; that the “seasons” last nine or ten months in the principal cities, and that bad actors are so much in the majority, that one of average merit stands a fair chance of becoming a transatlantic star of the first magnitude.

In drawing and engraving, most of the talent employed is imported. All artist work is well paid. The field is, of course, limited but there is generally a fair demand for engravers

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in New York and other eastern cities, and here and there in the west. Good portrait painters are very scarce. I have seen the most wretched daubs hung up in well furnished rooms, for which high prices were paid.

Architects are not much wanted anywhere. Land surveyors and civil engineers should make a very brief trial of the Eastern States, and will at all times do better in the West, where there is constant employment, either on the lands newly settled, or on the railroads. Good draughtsmen are well paid.

Ladies and gentlemen who contemplate turning their talents to advantage in the way of tuition find but poor encouragement. Occasionally governesses get good engagements, chiefly in Boston or some southern city; but I have known Oxford men who found their stock of Latin, Greek, and Mathematics but useless lumber among the practical Americans, and from their ignorance and helplessness in other pursuits, were glad to take to book hawking for a subsistence.

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Perhaps no class of unemployed emigrants is more numerous than those in search of situations as clerks and shopkeeper's assistants. The principal cities of the East are overrun with them. A respectable, poor, dejected, seedy crowd they are; who, if they would only resolve to leave the city at any risk, and take the first chance of employment that offered in some western town or village, going from store to store—a proceeding by no means derogatory in American estimation—to seek it, might speedily attain to an honourable position. Those who are fortunate enough to get places in the city, receive salaries thirty or forty per cent. higher than in England, with a prospect of more speedy promotion; but in this, as in most other occupations, first-class capacity is not better paid than at home, though a man's savings may be turned to much greater advantage, owing to the greater value of money, and the numerous opportunities for making small investments.

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Respecting the improvement in the position and circumstances of “men of small business 209 and small capital to be attained by emigration,” Mr. Prentice says:—“A shopkeeper taking with him £1,000, might lay out £200 in buying twenty acres of land, with a decent house upon it; lend the other £800, in Michigan at ten per cent., or in Indiana at eight per cent., and enjoy from his land and the interest on the £800, as much comfort and independence as £200 per annum would afford in this country.”* It may be added that such a sum might be invested to advantage in trade by those who prefer to reside in cities; only some caution is required at starting.

* Lectures on Emigration, annexed to “A Tour in the United States,” lately republished by Milner and Sowerby, Halifax, price one shilling.

With regard to the value of manual labour, it may be sufficient to state that it is, on the average, fifty per cent higher than in England, and still higher in the western states, where, however, owing to the fluctuations of capital, the regular employment of the skilled mechanic is less sure.

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Extensive manufactories exist in the state of New York, and the neighbouring states of Connecticut and New Jersey, for the production of woollen and cotton goods, machinery, carriages, drugs, dyes, household furniture, hats and caps, and leather goods. The manufacturers of Massachusetts have been already enumerated. If employment be hard to obtain after a brief trial in the manufacturing districts of the East, the emigrant should start for the West without delay; there, if unemployed at his trade, he can always command from three to four shillings per day as a farm or other labourer. Mention should not be omitted, this connection, of the benevolent societies, English, Irish, and German, existing at New York and other American ports, for the assistance of the emigrant, and whose agents are always ready to afford protection and counsel. At New York, to the credit of the authorities, the necessity for the good offices of these gentlemen has of late years been considerably reduced. When the vessel in which I arrived in America, reached New

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York Bay, her 211 decks were speedily crowded with the emissaries of rival steamboat and railway companies, and boarding-houses, who carried off their prey by the score to become the victims of the grossest imposition. Now, these men are forbidden to board emigrant vessels, which disgorge their human freight at Castle Garden—in former times a fort, afterwards a theatre and the scene of Jenny Lind's *debût* in America, and now a vast emigrant depôt under the direction of an American commission, where passengers are received on landing, housed and cared for for a couple of days if they desire it, supplied with “through tickets” to their destination, at legitimate prices, and otherwise protected, as far as can be, from the human ghouls who await them outside the Garden gates; the cost of the establishment being defrayed by a tax of two dollars per passenger on all emigrant vessels arriving at the port.

It remains for me to say a few words on the subject of female labour, the extensive employment of which affords considerable assistance in 212 the support of a numerous family. There is nothing degrading in “going out to work,” and the daughters of many well-to-do people prefer this course to being limited in pocket-money at home. Dress-making is very profitable; shirt-making, however, and other work for the shopkeepers is often badly paid enough. The “song of the shirt” might be sung in many a New York, as in many a London garret. Bookfolding and envelope making are favorite occupations with numbers of young girls, who make from twelve shillings to a pound per week.

As I have already hinted, the advantages attending emigration are by no means confined to the additional price paid for actual labor. Great facilities are enjoyed for the investment of small sums on easy terms. Considerable caution, however, is required in dealing with the numerous “land societies,” by his connection with which, by the payment of a certain sum monthly, the member becomes entitled to one or more building lots in some newly surveyed Brownsburgh or Jonesville. It is no uncommon thing 213 for a man to lose both money and property in these speculations, and discover, when too late, that the land in question is the subject of a disputed title, by his fences being broken and his property destroyed by some individual claimant of the soil, whose great grandfather “squatted”

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there a century ago. I have known several people in this predicament, all of whom seemed to consider any attempt to obtain satisfaction at law from the promoters of these swindling “societies” as hopeless.

I conclude this chapter with some notes on the climate of the United States, taken from a corpulent volume of American statistics compiled by Mr. John Macgregor, of the Board of Trade, and “presented to both Houses of Parliament” in the year 1845. The importance of health—which can only be maintained by a due regard to the peculiarities of climate—to every emigrant, renders any apology for their introduction unnecessary.

“The temperature of the climate of British America, as well as that of the United States, 214 is extremely variable, not only in regard to sudden transitions from hot to cold, and *vice versâ* , but in respect to the difference between the climate of one colony or state and that of another. In remarking generally on the climate of America, we consider the countries lying between 40 and 47 degrees north as those to which the mean character of the different seasons in America more immediately applies; a great part of Pennsylvania may also be included in it. The climate of America is colder in winter and hotter in summer than under the same parallels of latitude in Europe, and the daily variations of temperature which depend on the winds are also greater; but the transitions from dry to wet weather are by no means so sudden as in England. Rain falls in America in heavier storms, and in greater quantities than in Europe, but not so frequently.

“The summer season may be said to commence about the middle of April, or as soon as the ice disappears in the bays and rivers; further south, somewhat earlier; north of 47 215 degrees, later. In May the weather is generally dry and pleasant, but it rarely happens that summer becomes firmly established, without a few cold days occurring after the first warm weather. In latitudes south of 50 degrees north, the southerly winds at this period combat and overcome, as it were, those of the north, and, restoring warmth to the air, fine weather becomes permanent, All the birds common in summer make their appearance early in May, and enliven the woods with their melody, while the frogs, those bog choristers, as

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they are often called, strain their evening concerts. Vegetation proceeds with surprising quickness; wheat and oats are sown; the meadows, pastures, and deciduous trees assume their verdure; various indigenous and exotic flowers blow; and the face of nature and the temperature are delightful.

“In June, July, and August, the weather is excessively hot, even as far north as Quebec, sometimes as hot as in the West Indies; the mercury being 90 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. 216 Showers from the south-west, sometimes accompanied with thunder and lightning, occur during these months, about once a week or every ten days, which generally shifts the wind to the north-west, and produces for a time an agreeable coolness. In September the weather is extremely pleasant, the days are very warm till the middle of the month, but the evenings are agreeably cool, followed by dews at night. The season from this time to the middle or latter part of October is generally a succession of pleasant days, moderately warm at noon, and the mornings and evenings cool, attended sometimes with slight frosts at night. About the end of this month the northerly winds begin to acquire some ascendancy over the power of the south. The leaves of the forest change their verdure into the most brilliant and rich colors, exhibiting the finest tints and shades of red, yellow, and sap green, blended with violet, purple and brown. November, and often the whole of December pass away before severe frosts or snows become permanent. In the beginning 217 of January the winter season becomes firmly established; the bays and rivers are frozen over and the ground covered to the depth of a foot or more with snow. The frost is extremely keen until the early part of March, the mercury frequently standing several degrees below zero. The vernal equinox commonly brings on strong gales from the south, accompanied by a mighty thaw. Clear weather succeeds, and continues to the end of March or the first week in April, when a snow storm frequently comes on. This is the final effort of expiring winter.

“The heat of the sun which now becomes powerful dries up the ground in a few days; after which ploughing begins, and the summer season commences.

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“It cannot be said, with all these variations of climate, that the duration of winter is more than four months. Many prefer the winter to the same season in Europe, north of Paris; and taking the year throughout give the preference to the climate. Though the cold is intense for nine or ten weeks, the air is dry and elastic, and VOL. I. L 218 free from the chilling moisture of a British winter, or the dry bitterness of the north-east winds of France. On the Atlantic coast, where the frost is less intense, there is more humidity. In regard to the salubrity of the climate, Volney says:—‘Autumnal intermittent fevers, or quotidian agues, tertian, quartan, &c., constitute a class of diseases that prevail in the United States to a degree of which no idea can be conceived. They are particularly endemic in places recently cleared, in valleys on the borders of water, either running or stagnant, near ponds, lakes, mills, dams, marshes, &c. These autumnal fevers are not directly fatal, but they gradually undermine the constitution and very sensibly shorten life. Lower Canada and the cold countries adjacent are scarcely at all subject to them.’ Typhus fever is by no means so alarming as it is in Europe Rheumatism is a prevalent but not a fatal complaint, and like pulmonary consumption, it is more prevalent in the drier and colder atmosphere of the interior than near the sea coast, or in the neighbourhood of the great lakes.”

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CHAPTER X.

Westward ho!—The emigrant train.—Dunkirk.—On Lake Erie.—Sharp practice.—Cleveland.—The State of Ohio.—Western railroads.—Sandusky. A party of “shakers.”—Through the woods.—Ottawa.—Leaving friends.—Across the lake.—The Detroit River.

It was in the autumn of the year 1853 that, dissatisfied with the nature of my prospects in New York, I resolved on turning my steps in the direction in which my wishes had long tended—the West. My arrangements were soon made; farewells and good wishes were exchanged with the few cherished friends I possessed; and an October evening found me one of a couple of hundred passengers on board the steamboat running between New York and Piermont, a station L 2 220 of the Erie railroad on the Hudson river, the

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possessor of a “through ticket” by the “emigrant train” and steamboat for Sandusky, a town on the southern shore of Lake Erie. This is a mode of travelling not to be recommended on the score either of comfort or dispatch; but to numbers of the newly-arrived European emigrants it is a positive boon, as affording the means of reaching their ultimate destination at very low rates (about one half-penny per mile, exclusive of extra charge for luggage), while the delay and inconvenience which attend it are scarcely felt, or if felt, patiently endured by people who have already “roughed it” for a month or six weeks at sea.

My fellow passengers on this journey were chiefly of this class—German and Irish emigrants who had left their ship a few hours before. Poor creatures! they were fairly tired out with the fatigue and excitement consequent on the events of the day—the women especially, and were glad to snatch such repose as they could, grouped around the stove, or reclined on the piles of luggage which lined the lower-deck cabin of the steamboat. Arriving at Piermont late in the evening, passengers and luggage were quickly transferred to the railway train, and we started on a thirty-hours' journey to Dunkirk, a distance of four hundred and sixty miles. The night—a very stormy one—was passed in attempts to sleep; attempts entirely futile on my part, owing to the repeated encroachments of a plethoric German, my next neighbour; and in the occasional resort on the part of nearly all the males present to meerschaums and “short clays,” while the women got as near as they could to the stove in the centre of the carriage, and maintained a languid conversation when awake, murmuring and sobbing in their fitful slumber as their thoughts turned, doubtless, to the homes they were leaving farther and still farther behind, on their way to the forest and the prairie.

As morning dawned we entered the valley of the Delaware, the most picturesque and least settled portion of the State of New York. Dense woods crowned the hill tops, and on the river, a small stream here, navigable only for the shallowest craft, rafts formed of freshly-cut logs, the product of the neighbouring woods, were preparing to descend the stream. Leaving the Delaware at Binghamton, the railway passes over a more level

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country to Dunkirk; and here the towns and small settlements were more plentiful. In plan and appearance, these were all vastly alike, as they are, indeed, throughout the entire West. There was the same rectangular arrangement of the streets; there were the same broad thoroughfares; the same cardboard-looking houses, all of one pattern, looking very cold and repelling under the grey skies of winter, and throwing back the sun's rays with painful intensity on the retina in the gorgeous atmosphere of summer; the same tracts of mud land lying between the station and the proximate row of "grocery stores" and "liquor saloons," and the same display of pigs wallowing therein.

A second night, during which the tired occupants of the train slept more and smoked less than on the night previous, was passed in "the cars," and early on the morning of the second day a considerable addition was temporarily made to the population of Dunkirk by our arrival at that dreary little town, from which, after a few hours' delay, myself and my fellow passengers were sent on by steamboat or railway to our several destinations. My ticket entitled me to a deck passage on a steamboat to Sandusky, on board of which I accordingly started about noon. The boat being properly a freight boat, and the contract for the conveyance of emigrants not being of a very profitable nature I suppose, the captain, having but a small cargo of goods, displayed a strong desire to wait another day for more cargo; but as this proposition was met by a most resolute protest on the part of some of us on behalf of the forty or fifty passengers who would incur further expense and inconvenience by the delay, he submitted with the best grace he could, contenting himself with making the occupants of the lower deck as uncomfortable as possible throughout the passage.

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Actuated by a very natural desire to sleep "between the sheets," and to partake of a regular meal, comforts to which I had been for two days a stranger, I engaged board and lodging in the cabin on the upper deck, where there was accommodation for half-a-dozen passengers. Here our little party, over which the captain presided, with his clerk for a *vice*, dined and supped in tolerable comfort; the officers just mentioned contributing, in

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addition, to our amusement by going through certain bodily contortions of a—to the new arrivals, at least—novel and startling character; elevating their heels on the top of the stove above the level of their heads, giving each other their legs to nurse, and indulging in other demonstrations of mutual regard peculiar to the true-born American.

Our route, as the reader will see by a reference to the map, lay along the south shore of lake Erie. We stopped at one of the small towns in the State of Ohio late in the evening, and here the arrival of some female passengers on board—just as we were about to “turn in” 225 for the night, and the other men and myself had settled to our satisfaction by a resort to the “head or tail” process who should occupy the upper, who the middle, and who the lower berth of the state-room allotted to us—put to flight all my fondly cherished anticipations of comfort during the dark hours. The state-room had to be given up of course, and so we “tossed up” for the sofa. The fates decreed that I should lie upon the floor, with my travelling shawl for couch and coverlet; they also, further, proved adverse in inspiring a child of one of the new comers, who had been stowed away under the cabin-table, with the spirit of restlessness, impelling him, likewise, to stumble over my lower extremities at brief intervals, and, finally, to burn himself at the stove, to the alarm of his mother and her friends,—who, entering *en déshabille* from their retreat, and forming a ghastly group under the dim night-lamp, effectually prevented further repose by their voluble expressions of sympathy with the “poor dear child,” alternating with snappish reproof L 5 226 of the “naughty boy” who had thus come to grief.

Breakfast time found us at the mouth of the Cayuga (or crooked) River, on the banks of which Cleveland, one of the most flourishing cities of the State of Ohio, is built; and here the passengers were put ashore by the captain, with the intimation that as he had no freight for the port to which many, like myself, were bound, namely, Sandusky, he had no intention of going there at all. The remonstrants against this proceeding were met with the information that another steamer would “be along” in a day or two, by which they could travel, free of expense, to their destination.

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Learning that there was a railway communication between the two ports, I succeeded in compelling this unscrupulous captain and his coadjutor the clerk to disburse the amount of my fare by railway; others of the passengers, I have reason to believe, were not so fortunate. I mention these matters to show the kind of people with whom the traveller has to do very 227 frequently in “the States,” and how necessary it is that he should—to use a western phrase— “keep his eyes skinned,” to prevent their “doing” him.

Cleveland is the most important of the lake ports, and has a population of about 25,000. Several lines of railway, some of which were newly constructed at the time of my visit, meet here, and the erection of extensive depôts by several companies gave employment at that time to hundreds of well-paid workmen. The town is pleasantly situated, and from the uneven character of the ground on which it stands, and the occasional departure from the rectangular in its plan, is somewhat picturesque.

The State of Ohio, of which the southern portion of Lake Erie forms the northern boundary, is the oldest of the western states, having been added to the Union in the year 1803. At that time, the valley of the Mianie River and the shores of Lake Erie, bore, as they merited, the name of the “far west.” A scanty population of a few thousands was scattered over the 228 forty thousand square miles comprised in the present State of Ohio, and the hardy frontiersman disputed the possession of the soil with the marauding Indian. The population of Ohio is now over two millions. Its highly fertile soil produces one-tenth of the corn and one-seventh of the wheat grown in the Union, and twelve universities, and twelve thousand common schools, are the boast of its inhabitants.* The “far west” has retreated before the advance of the white man, and must now be sought beyond the Mississippi, and in the deserts of Utah; while the State of Ohio, in the development of its resources and the number and character of its inhabitants, bears a closer affinity to the eastern states than to those of the newly settled west.

* Ferris's States and Territories of the Great West. New York, 1856.

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Bidding adieu to Cleveland I travelled by railroad to Sandusky, a distance of sixty miles. The line was newly opened, and, passing 229 through a country but scantily settled, gave me my first glimpse of log huts and forest clearings. Not the most pleasant travelling is this by a newly-constructed railway in the States. To be constructed at all, railroads in the west must be constructed cheaply; deviations from the level line of a startling and formidable nature are a natural consequence as the ground “settles,” while the effect upon the traveller is very similar to that produced by being jolted over a ploughed field in a farm-cart innocent of springs. Our progress was consequently not very rapid, being about seven or eight miles per hour. This, however, was partly due to the freedom from control as to punctuality under which the conductor of the train apparently exercised his functions; as an instance of which I may mention that we stopped midway between two of the stations, at a dilapidated shanty, to leave a demijohn of whiskey for its owner.

Sandusky, a small dreary looking town, built partly of limestone, which abounds in the vicinity, 230 was reached late in the evening; and after partaking of the national dish of tough ill-cooked steak for supper, and indulging in a long night's repose, I took passage on board a steamer of insignificant proportions and very low pressure, for my destination—Ottawa, sometimes facetiously but very properly called Out-of-the-way in those parts—some twenty miles distant on the lake shore. There were on board a few German emigrants and some residents in the small settlements thereabouts, a majority of whom gnashed their teeth at you in a ghastly manner on any attempt at conversation, and sat in a group warming their ague stricken limbs round the cabin stove. We stopped at a rough jetty on the uncleared shore of the lake to land a party of Germans, three in number, who, without, as I understood, having any distinct idea as to where they were going to, or how they were to go, appeared to be little affected by the novelty of their situation, though it was rapidly growing dark; and were to be seen as long as they remained in 231 view, seated on a log, the men smoking their large pipes with the most stolid gravity, and the old *frau* placed between them.

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A night ride through the woods over the worst possible road, and unenlivened by scarce a sign of human habitation, with the charred stumps of the fire-stricken trees by the way side taking all sorts of fantastic shapes in the pale moonlight, brought me to Ottawa, and to the house of a gentleman, the superintendent of some cement works—the employés on which formed the population—the place of where I was to meet a relative The hospitable entertainment I met with here from people to whom I was a stranger, during the week I idled away in the glorious woods and among the rocks on the lake shore, firing harmless shots at the wild ducks and the squirrels— which latter, by the way, are excellent in a pie—or studying the domestic economy of the inhabitants of the half dozen huts which formed “the town,” dwells pleasantly in my memory yet. I left these worthy people to pursue my way still further westward with much regret. 232 Such unlooked for meeting with kind friends is like the oasis in the desert to the eastern traveller, and one leaves them to take his way over the scorching sands of life's journey, and under the withering heats of life's experience, with much the same regret, mingled with gratitude, that the Arab quits the grateful shelter and the cooling spring.

My departure from Sandusky, to which place I returned to take the steamboat to Detroit, was delayed a day or two by the occurrence of one of those severe storms, which at intervals sweep over the inland seas of the North American continent. Crossing the lake in its southern portion, in one of those floating palaces similar to those already described as in use on the eastern waters, we met with traces of numerous wrecks among the smaller craft, with here and there the mast head of a foundered vessel rising above the surface of the lake, which in no part is more than sixty or seventy feet in depth.

Passing over the scene of Commodore Perry's victory over the English fleet in the war of 233 1812, and catching a glimpse of the island on which stands a monument to the Americans who fell in that encounter, our steamboat entered the Detroit river—or, more consistently with the etymology of its name *d'Etroit*, the *straits* of Detroit, through which flow the waters of the three great lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron, on their way

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to the Saint Lawrence. Here the British flag came in sight, and was duly saluted with a cheer by the few Britons on board. The appearance of the Canadian territory, however, on the right, as compared with that of America in the fertile fields of Michigan on the left, was not much to the credit of the former. Long since, the enterprising Yankee and the plodding emigrant have driven out the indolent race of half breeds, the descendants of the native Indians and the amalgamating French colonists of two centuries previous, from the American side of the straits, but on the Canada shore they still lingered, their land unimproved and the resources of their country undeveloped. Catholicism is the religion of these Canadian French. Huge crosses 234 may be seen by the roadside, as in Normandy; and the occurrence of a *fête de Dieu* or other opportunity for ecclesiastical display at Sandwich or Windsor, is the signal for the holiday seekers of Detroit to flock over the water in crowds to "see the fun."

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CHAPTER XI.

Detroit.—The State of Michigan.—Lake St. Clair.—An Indian settlement.—Centuries ago.—Squatters, and forest life.—St. Clair.—Winter amusements.—A western ball.—Division of land in the West.—Return of spring.—Leave St. Clair.

The City of Detroit stands upon the site of one of the earliest settlements of the white man in the region of the great lakes, having been occupied as a trading post by the French colonists before the middle of the seventeenth century. It was afterwards one of the strongest English military posts in the west; in connection with which period of its history there is a romantic story of the salvation of the little English garrison from Indian treachery, and 236 Indian tomahawks, by the timely revelations of a Pottawatamie maiden, whose love for one of the British officers proved too much for her loyalty to her tribe.

There is not the slightest trace of antiquity to be found in the modern city, however, which has about 50,000 inhabitants, and is a clean, well built place enough, with a three mile

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frontage on the river, and extensive and substantial buildings in connection with the Michigan central railroad, over which vast quantities of grain are brought on their way to the European markets. The State of Michigan, of which Detroit is the commercial, though not the legislative capital, was formed some twenty years since; the navigation of the lakes by steam having, some few years previous, facilitated emigration to this, then distant country. Of late years, however, emigration has fallen off in Michigan as compared with the other states of the west, owing partly, doubtless, to its offering less inducements to the farming settler, and partly to the insalubrity of large portions of the 237 country, where the ague prevails to a fearful extent. A belt of heavily timbered land, twenty miles deep, skirts the State on its lake boundaries, and the interior is gently rolling with a fertile soil, in which the apple, pear, peach, and other fruits thrive luxuriantly. Wheat, oats, and Indian corn are likewise "raised," but not in very large quantities. There are few manufacturers.

The trade of Detroit has received considerable impetus from the opening of the Great Western Railroad of Canada, an event which took place during my residence in the vicinity. The terminus of the Canada line being at Windsor, opposite Detroit, passengers and luggage are conveyed across the strait in a steam-boat; provided with dinner or supper on board during the brief passage, according to the hour at which the transit is made, and landed at the station of the Michigan Central Railroad, by which line they can pursue their journey to the westward.

Business engagements led me to fix my residence 238 at St. Clair, fifty miles to the north of Detroit, during the winter, and thither accordingly I proceeded by steamboat a few weeks after my arrival in the latter city. Our route lay across Lake St. Clair, on the mud flats in the northern portion of which we were detained some hours, having got aground among the low swampy islands, covered with wild rice, between which the St. Clair river enters the lake. Here we had to wait for the "down steamer" to drag us off, and were further delayed by having to perform the same good offices for her, she having run aground in extricating us. There is an island to the right of the main channel, at the entrance to the St. Clair River, Walpole Island by name, possessing some interest for

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the traveller. On this island, the property of the Canadian government, the remains of the Indian tribes in these parts—Ojibbeways and Pottawatamies—have found a retreat from the encroachments of the white man. There are a few hundreds of them only, as I found on a subsequent visit, and over them a Mr. Jamieson, 239 a church missionary, whose exertions for the amelioration of the social and moral condition of the poor semi-savages are the subject of the highest-encomiums in the country round, exercises spiritual supervision. A neat wooden church has been erected, in which services in Indian and English were held alternately, and the labours of the missionary had not been without success. The chief, who rejoiced in the name of Buckwheat, had, however, resisted all endeavours to induce him to embrace Christianity, and refused, with many of his followers, to be informed of the true nature of the God whom as the Manitou—the Great Spirit—he and his forefathers had “ignorantly worshipped.” I went with the minister to the hut of this chief, but Buckwheat was absent, and I saw only his mother, an aged squaw, who had attained the age of a hundred years and more, and was, as I was told, a “pleasant, gossipy old body” yet.

An annual allowance is made to these Indians by the Canadian government—formerly in money, but of late years in the form of agricultural 240 implements, and other inducements to industry; the system of money payments having been found to work badly, from the inveterate tendency of the red men to dispose of their annuity immediately on its acquisition, at the town of Algouac—consisting of about thirty houses and a “provision store”—on the American side of the river, in getting excessively drunk, and remaining in that condition until their funds were exhausted.

It was to this island that the young English lady, who, as many of my readers may remember, fell in love with and married a half—breed one of a party of Indians, exhibited in London by Catlin some fifteen years since, was taken by her swarthy mate. The fellow treated her as bad, or worse than any wife-beating Englishman could have done; but, though many attempts were made to induce her to return to England, they all proved unsuccessful, and she died some years since, as she had lived, the faithful loving wife of

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the degraded savage. Is it so seldom thus with woman's love? given in all its overflowing richness, depth and purity where least valued and least deserved; to be, by others, sought, and craved and prayed for—in vain.

We saw several of the Indians at Algoauc, where the steamer stopped to take in wood for fuel—a tedious process, trying to the patience of the traveller on lake and river in the West—and others crossing the river in their canoes—made from a single log, Very long and very narrow, and called “dug-outs.” These canoes, though managed very expertly by the Indian women who sit with a single paddle, which serves as oar and rudder, at the stern end, are ticklish craft in inexperienced hands, being very likely to tip over, as I found on a first attempt at the expense of a ducking. Of the men among the Indians some were fine-looking fellows enough, but the women were, without exception, intolerably ugly. The latter were dressed, chiefly, in large shawls and mocassins, with mummy-like swathings about the legs, and the men wore trousers with a broad seam turned outwards, and a variety of indescribable upper garments. One VOL. I. M 242 having obtained possession of a shirt, wore it as an outer garment, to his own great satisfaction apparently, and the envy of his fellows.

The St. Clair river is a noble stream, varying from a mile to a mile and a half across. A few farms are to be seen on the American shore, but on the Canadian side the woods have scarcely echoed as yet to the sound of the woodman's axe, and a solitary hut here and there—the station perhaps of an officer of excise—is for miles the only sign of human habitation. As I stood on the deck of the little steamboat, bearing the daily mail, and rife, in its varied freight, and the occupants of its cabins and decks with evidences of the white man's enterprise and dominion, my mind wandered back to the time of centuries ago, when, amid these scenes, so little changed, Indians lit their watch fires beneath those giant pines, and guided their canoes freighted with painted warriors, bent on deeds of blood, across the silent river.

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The comparatively slow progress of settlement in these parts is due to the dense growth of forest 243 trees, which, as already mentioned, borders the entire water boundaries of the state of Michigan. North of a line drawn to the westward from the point where Lake Huron enters the St. Clair river, the entire country may be described as a vast forest of yellow pine, the abode of the black bear, and in the intricate depths of which the incautious sportsman, without a compass for his guide, often finds a grave. To the farming settler, therefore, unless he be inured to the hardest toil, such a country offers no inducements; for although land may in many places be had for the trouble of taking possession,* the want of roads and his distance from a market more than counter-balance any advantages on the side of the easy acquisition of the land. Many emigrants, however, fall into this error, and committing themselves to a life for which none but the hardiest of the native “pioneers” and frontiers M 2

* In other words “squatting.” By the “pre-emption laws a “squatter” on wild land has the privilege of purchasing the land occupied by him at a minimum price of five shillings per acre, at such time as the lands of the state, having been surveyed by government, shall be open to public purchase.

244 men are fitted, simply because they get more land—such as it is—for less money than in more settled districts, find in loss of health and a life of solitary and ill-requited toil, abundant cause for mortification and regret.

St. Clair is one of three or four small towns on the American bank of the river from which it takes its name. I took up my quarters in an overgrown hotel, built, as all such places are in the west, with a view to future rather than existing requirements, in which, according to American custom everywhere, a number of the townspeople “boarded,” and on the morning after my arrival proceeded to cultivate an acquaintance with my new home. The prevailing idea, which for an hour obtruded itself on my mind to the exclusion of every other, was—wood. I emerged from a wooden hotel on to a wooden “side walk.” I passed down a wooden street, and crossed a wooden bridge, from which I looked down

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on wooden logs crowded together on the surface of a narrow stream, down which they had floated from the adjacent forests. Wooden saw mills 245 stood at the water's edge, and piles of wood in planks lay ready for shipment at the wharves. Finally I passed in succession two wooden churches and a wooden court-house, in which, by the way, a few weeks later, on the occasion of a trial for assault, I witnessed the entertaining spectacle of the judge, counsel, prisoner, and a majority of the jury "whittling" away with wonderful energy at fragments of the same super-abundant material.

Besides being so prominent an object to the eye, wood is the universal topic of conversation and interest. The preparation of timber for the market, in fact, or, as it is called, the lumber trade, affords occupation for a large portion of the population, and the erection of a saw mill, or the purchase of a few acres of pine land, is a highly profitable investment.*

* I have heard of fortunes being made in five or seven years by a mill owner, the capital invested being £600 or £800.

For some weeks after my arrival at St. Clair the weather was mild and genial in the extreme. 246 It was, indeed, the season of the "Indian summer;" the change to winter was, as it were, instantaneous. By the beginning of December snow began to fall, and in a week or two navigation on the river was stopped, the boats were "laid up" for the season, and the conveyance of the mails was committed to a rickety stage-coach, which made the journey tri-weekly to and from Detroit. The river, a mile and a half wide at this point, and with a current flowing at the rate of three miles an hour, was frozen over, and the townfolks crossed in sledges, and on foot to the opposite shore. Men ceased to present a human aspect when out of doors, and, arrayed in caps, gloves, coats, and shoes of fur, looked vastly like bears on their hind legs. And now the mills were closed, and the men sent off into the woods to cut timber for the following season, making their homes where rose the lofty pines,

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“Their bare arms stretched in prayer for the snows.”

There was “nothing doing” in the way of business, so the good people of St. Clair set to work 247 in the best way they could to enjoy themselves. There were balls at the hotel, and there were meetings of the Debating Club, where, of course, the execution of Charles the First and of Mary Queen of Scots were duly considered, and, with other more national topics, yielded abundant opportunities for the display of western eloquence, and the fulmination of democratic anathemas against the despots of our own and other unhappy lands. There were sleighing parties and donation parties,* to say nothing of Dorcas society meetings amongst the ladies, who worked laboriously at the construction of under-garments to cover the bodily nakedness of their poor pensioners, and, as is their custom too often elsewhere, did their best to uncover the moral nakedness, and lay bare the spots in the reputation of their most intimate friends.

* These are held in the ministers house by self-invited members of his congregation, who bring the eatables and drinkables with them, and make up a purse for his acceptance.

The manner in which the arrangements for a ball are conducted in the West merits a passing 248 notice. Some days before the affair comes off lists of ladies eligible for invitation, are taken round to the gentlemen, in which term are included, probably, the constable and several domestic servants. The “gentleman” selects therefrom the lady he proposes to escort to the ball, and is supplied, in return for one or more dollar bills, with a ticket for two. On the occasion of the St. Clair festivities the large dining room was appropriated to the dancers; two impromptu chandeliers of primitive construction, and emitting a somewhat “ancient and fish like smell” being suspended from the ceiling. The two most remarkable characteristics of these entertainments are the strong resemblance they bear to an “assembly” at a dancing acadamy, and the strange and unaccountable feelings of aversion with which individuals of both sexes appear to be inspired towards their partners as soon as the dance is over; remaining as it were under a spell, which nothing but the magic notes of the band, striking up for the next dance, seems to have

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the power to break. The first 249 of these peculiarities is due to the fact that the American cotillon, unlike the English quadrille, is not composed of a succession of well known figures, but may be varied *ad libitum*, and extended or condensed at the pleasure of the leader of the band, who is consequently under the necessity of telling you throughout the dance what to do next. As this individual is frequently lacking in refinement of manners, and gives his directions in a voice twice as loud as there is any occasion for, except, it may be, towards the close of the evening, when occasional "refreshment" may have rendered his utterance somewhat thick and husky, the effect may be readily imagined. Its effect on an eye witness, however, is nothing compared with that produced by the sight of thirty or forty young men dropping their partners into their seats, after a dance, like hot coals, rushing over to the other side of the room, and remaining there, apparently in a state of chronic apprehension of some impending evil, consequent on their late proceedings, until the next dance is announced; when partners are again resumed, waists are clasped, hands are pressed, eyes glisten, pulses beat, and bosoms heave, and the blood leaps—as, spite of prosing and moralizing, young blood will leap—through the veins, until the music stops, when the retreat is again sounded, and the men relapse into a state of chronic apprehension as before.

There were two weekly newspapers in St. Clair, the editors of which abused each other in a manner worthy of the Billingsgate sisterhood; and a great many lawyers. Somebody was always libelling somebody, or somebody was knocking somebody down in this quiet little town, and so the lawyers flourished.

I was shown the sight, at a few miles distance from St. Clair, of one of those imaginary cities, built—on paper—by eastern speculators, so well described by Boz in "Martin Chuzzlewit," and satirized by the American poet, John G. Saxe, as,

"Lithographic towns In western wilds, where yet unbroken ranks
Of thrifty beavers build unchartered 'banks;' And prowling panthers occupy the lots,
Adorned with churches on the paper plots!"

Emigrants, however, are not so easily taken in now-a-days, as were Martin and his “jolly” companion, and such schemes of wholesale plunder have long since ceased to prove remunerative.

The transaction of all business relating to land in the Western States is much facilitated by the plan adopted for its division and subdivision. This plan may be briefly explained as follows:—At certain points meridian lines are established and surveyed due north, having at right angles to them a base line. Lines at a distance of six miles are then run parallel to the meridian and base lines, thus forming tracts containing an area of thirty-six miles square each. These are called townships, and each township is again sub-divided into sections, each of 36 sections, each of 360 acres. Sections are again sub-divided into quarter sections, and yet again into eighths and sixteenths, or 40 acre lots. As the sections are numbered on a uniform plan, and the townships and the ranges on which they are situated are likewise numbered, according to their positions relatively north and south of the base line and east and west of the meridian, a few figures are sufficient to indicate the position of any portion of land upon the map. Thus, a purchase may be described as—the north west quarter of the south-east quarter of section nine, township twenty-five north, range sixteen east; a description, perhaps, rather bewildering at first, but which a slight study of the map renders perfectly easy and intelligible. Most maps of the western country are divided in the manner described, looking very much as though the engraver, instead of attending to his work, had, like an idle school boy, made preparations for a gigantic game of “noughts and crosses.”

For weeks and weeks the ice-covered river afforded free communication with the Canadian shore; the steamboats remained “laid up,” and the rickety coach made its tri-weekly journey to Detroit. Indeed, the winter may be best described as one long frost of nearly two months duration. In March the river ice commenced to break up, and the huge masses, carried along by the strong currents, tore up the wharves and piled

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themselves in a crystal ridge, sparkling in the sunbeams, along the river bank. Another week or two and the ice had sufficiently disappeared to allow of the boats resuming their daily trips to Detroit, and out came the “Pearl” and “Ruby,” newly painted, from their hiding places, and the rickety stage-coach—in which I had, during the winter, made one journey to Detroit—was put away till next December, and the little town of St. Clair awoke out of its winter sleep; half its population turning out in the afternoons, when the “Pearl” or the “Ruby” came steaming in, for many days, in very joy at the renewal of more easy and pleasant communication with the outer world than the rickety stage-coach afforded. From the deck of one of these boats I took my final leave of St. Clair one pleasant afternoon in May; by which time I had come to know every plank in the houses and “sidewalks” of the wooden little town, and every bay and brooklet on the river bank, pretty well by 254 heart, and to get not a little tired of them too, and still more so of the people and the insignificant interests and small scandal, such as it is in the nature of small and isolated communities to cultivate and display.

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CHAPTER XII.

The Michigan Central Railroad—Chicago—Its rapid progress—Value of land—How public lands are sold—Railroads—Mixed population—Cost of living—Hotel life—The Maine liquor law—Its operation in the States generally—Experimental legislation and its results.

I resided in Detroit during the summer of 1854, and in “the fall” of that year, when the varied and gorgeous tints of the Indian summer once more decked the landscape, left that city by the Michigan Central Railroad for Chicago. The journey of 280 miles was performed in fifteen hours, the route presenting few points of interest. The country is unattractive, and the towns or cities of Dexter, Jackson, Marshall, and Kalamagoo, &c., though, if the guide-book 256 be credited, places of much importance, possessing “great commercial advantages,” and abounding in “splendid public buildings,” and “handsome

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private residences," are, as seen by the unimaginative eye, insignificant in size and size and population, and of unpretentious aspect.

The city of Chicago is the wonder of the West. Owing its origin to the formation of a canal connecting the waters of the lakes with those of the Mississippi, in the year 1830, when the surrounding country was an almost unbroken wilderness, it has advanced with a rapidity unparalleled even in the history of American cities, by the aid of an advantageous position and the enterprise of its citizens, to the position of a commercial capital of some seventy-thousand inhabitants.

The population in 1845 was 12,000 only, and in 1850, 28,000.

The city lies spread over the borders of a low-lying level prairie, extending for thirty miles to the westward on the shore of lake Michigan; and, though, like all newly-built towns in America, abounding in wide straggling thoroughfares of wooden houses, has some well-built, handsome streets, in the central portion, with a court-house and other public buildings of elegant design. There is, or was, however, vast room for improvement in the construction of the roadways, which, even in the principal streets, were formed of planks, from between which, as they were pressed by passing vehicles, the mud beneath oozed and spurted over the unwary pedestrian.

Some idea of the value of land in Chicago may be formed from the fact that a "corner lot" in one of the principal thoroughfares, on which stood a chemist's shop, was sold during my residence in the city for 64,000 dollars, or £12,800; the same lot was bought twenty years previous for a sum about equal to the cost of one of the shop windows, namely, twenty pounds. The total value of real and personal property in 1853 was assessed at twenty-three millions of dollars or £4,600,000.

Land is the grand topic of conversation in the streets, hotels, and liquor saloons of Chicago, and the acquisition of wealth by its sale and purchase is the ruling passion among the citizens of the prairie city. The columns of the newspapers are crowded with

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advertisements of “eligible lots,” and the land agents suspend huge maps in their windows to attract the speculator. Auction-rooms are crowded with bidders, and the cry of every one is that of the distressed mariner, though in a different sense, land! land! land!

I have, in the preceding chapter, described the manner in which the area comprised in the Western States is divided into townships and sections. To some of my readers a brief account of the way in which lands are transferred from the Federal Government to individual purchasers, may not be unwelcome. On the completion of the surveys in the newly-settled states by the general government, to which all the land with the exception of certain “reservations,” primarily belongs, public auctions are held, at which the land is offered at a minimum price of five shillings per acre, and such as remains unsold—by far the larger portion—may be purchased at private sales at the same rate. As before stated, settlers, who have “squatted” on the land previous to its being surveyed, have the right to purchase the land they occupy at the price named, to the exclusion of all others. The principal land-office is at Washington, but local offices are established at certain points in the West, to each of which a surveyor and receiver are attached. It will be readily understood how, as the land is bought up, either by speculators or private purchasers, the occasion for these offices ceases, so that in fact the quantity of land open to the emigrant at the original price of five shillings per acre can be judged of by the number of land-offices to be found in any particular state or district. In all the states to the east of the Mississippi the land-offices are rapidly disappearing before the enterprise of capitalists and speculators, and the emigrant to Illinois, or the southern portions of Michigan, or Wisconsin must expect to find the price of farm land almost as much dependent on its quality, position, and other advantages, as in the long-settled states of the East.

I must not omit to state that on the land being surveyed, one section of each township—generally the sixteenth or most central section—is set apart for the support of the public schools. Thus one thirty-sixth of the land of each state is devoted to this most laudable purpose; securing the blessings of education to the most sparsely-populated districts. There is nothing more suggestive—pleasantly and hopefully suggestive of influences

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which may in the future serve to counteract the growing evils of democracy in the great republic—to the traveller in the west than the sight of little children trudging through the forest to their daily tasks, or of the school-house, standing, it may be, alone, the only object in the sea-like prairie.

Railroads radiate from Chicago in every direction. By the Michigan Central, the Michigan Southern, and the Pittsburgh lines, 261 the ever-flowing stream of emigration is brought from the east; the Illinois Central and the St. Louis railways enter from the southward.*

* The length of these lines, the first of which, connecting Cairo—at the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and situated at the southern extremity of the State of Illinois—with Chicago, is 350 miles, and the latter 280, will serve to give, some idea of the vast area of the Western States. The State of Illinois alone is larger than England, and the four states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, combined, comprise an area twice that of the United Kingdom, with a population only about equal to that of the British Metropolis.

The traveller has his choice of four routes to the Mississippi River; and the lately formed settlements of Wisconsin are approached by two lines to the north-west. From the commencement of spring to the time when the snow begins to fall, Chicago is all alive with the bustle and excitement consequent on the arrival and departure of thousands of emigrants. Its population is constantly changing. Fortunate speculators are returning to their homes in the eastern states with their quickly-acquired wealth; European emigrants are pausing on their way westward to decide where—whether in forest or 262 on prairie, among the pine woods or in the rich river bottoms they shall make their home—tallow-faced, hot-blooded Southerners are coming and going on their way to the lakes, out of the way of yellow-fever, and the broiling heats of a Louisiana summer; and the numerous specimens of the *genus homo* who throng the streets are occasionally varied by an English lord or a half-wild Indian, the first on his way to hunt the buffalo on the prairies at the base of the Rocky Mountains, and the latter, with his wampum and his tomahawk, begging his way from store to store for means to enable him to prosecute some real or

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feigned journey to the Great Father at Washington, on business of his tribe in the distant west.

Living is not cheap in Chicago. "Boarding" must be paid for at higher prices than in New York, and at an hotel of the second class, my bed-room, and meals at the public table, were charged—by agreement beforehand, a plan always to be recommended in American hotels if a lengthened stay is anticipated—at the rate of 263 eight dollars or thirty-three shillings weekly. In Detroit similar accommodation—and very bad accommodation it was—cost me little more than half this sum.

Wet days were never dull days in the city hotel at Chicago during the summer months; there was so much to study in the varied phases presented of western life and character. At every glance at one's neighbour, a fresh leaf was turned in the great book of humanity. The traveller's *vis-à-vis* at the dinner-table may be a bullying southerner, the handle of whose bowie-knife—which he is ever ready to grasp on the slightest provocation—is seen projecting from its receptacle at his breast; or he may be a shrewd observant Yankee, whom no passing remark escapes, and whose curiosity is excessive and frequently intolerable, and his neighbour on either hand may be a member of congress with a ferocious appetite and very bad manners; or an acrobat from a travelling circus, whose conversation is entertaining and whose manners are agreeable; or a judge, or a miner from Lake 264 Superior, abounding in jewellery and resplendent in gorgeous cravat and waistcoat, in which these people, when they visit the western cities to spend their earnings, particularly delight; or he may be the enterprising, loquacious, and humourous fellow—from somewhere "down east," whom the travellers encountered at the street corner in the morning, disposing of "patent knife-sharpers," or other ingenious contrivances, and making ten or fifteen dollars per day thereby. All these people I have met and many more; finding in the motley groups, as they sipped their liquors at the bar, or lined the dinner tables, an inexhaustible source of interest and diversion.*

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* Among my acquaintance at the city hotel was an Irishman, who lived well, appeared to have plenty of time on his hands, and spent his money freely; but about whose pursuits, and the object of his residence in Chicago, there was a certain air of mystery. In a moment of communicativeness, under the influence probably of a third or fourth glass of whiskey, he communicated to me, unasked, the not over welcome intelligence that he was employed by a southern planter to recover some runaway slaves who were then living in Chicago. His account of himself received confirmation not many nights after by his being brought home with a bullet through his leg, received in an unsuccessful attempt to effect his purpose.

265 Notwithstanding the varied elements of which the population of Chicago is composed, Irish and German emigrants, more particularly the latter, being very numerous, it is an orderly and well. governed city. Disturbances, even at election time, were far from common, and the Sabbath was, to all outward seeming, as well observed as at New York or Boston.

For a few days, indeed, during my stay, the city was in some commotion, owing to the enforcement by the police of some restrictions on the sale of liquor, at a time when a prohibitory liquor law was about to be put to the popular vote. Two or three men were killed, and several wounded by the knives and pistols of the combatants; but some prompt measures on the part of the authorities, of which the placing of some huge cannon to command the principal thoroughfares was the most significant, prevented further mischief.

A few words about the prohibitory liquor law just alluded to, better known as “the Maine law.” I believe that not a little misconception VOL. I. N 266 respecting its operation in the several states of America in which it had been adopted, exists in England. Enthusiasts in the cause of intemperance, (among whom I am afraid are a great many of those much-to-be-pitied individuals, who, not being able to take a glass without wanting to empty the bottle, seem to look upon every consumer of intoxicating beverages as suffering from a similar lack of self-control, and as much in need of compulsory measures to induce

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him to abstain from excess, as themselves), take for granted, without examination, as is the manner of enthusiasts generally, all statements that favor their particular views; and philanthropists, in their overflowing benevolence, are apt almost as readily to believe in the good resulting from any efforts, the success of which places humanity in a fairer light.

The fact of a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors being in existence in any particular State, does not of necessity imply that “drinks” are not to be bought, and that liquor saloons have no existence within its limits. The 267 state of Maine, indeed, where the law first originated, and from which it takes its most popular designation, is vaguely asserted by some to afford an instance of the effectual operation of the law; but in most places, especially in the west, I found the law to be almost a dead letter, its enactments either cleverly evaded or boldly defied, and the magistracy and police unable or unwilling to enforce them.

A partiality for what may be called experimental legislation, and the weakness of the executive, appear to me to have the largest share in bringing about this state of things. The people appear to advocate the passing of a law, that they may have the pleasure of breaking it, and the State Congress legislates without heeding the constitutional limits of its action. As a consequence, when the law comes into force it is deliberately broken, and, as in the case of the Maine law in the States of New York and Michigan, repealed after months of litigation, the expenses of which are paid out of a fund subscribed by the principal dealers, during which time there is no cessation of the liquor traffic—as unconstitutional. If this condition of things does not ensue, in most cases the authorities, if not altogether powerless to throw difficulties in the way of the traffic, are unable to suppress it, driving the dealer to some cunning subterfuge to evade the law, and, at the most, while depriving the thirsty wayfarer or sober citizen of his opportunity for moderate indulgence, lets the sot get drunk at his ease in the “cellar” or “saloon,” secure from observation, to which the policeman does not care to penetrate.

The more the impartial observer sees of the working of the Maine law in America, the more convinced he must become of the inefficiency of any measures but those which are directed to the educational improvement of the people, to remove the curse of drunkenness—the fruitful parent of a thousand crimes—from any nation; while he is continually led to reflect on the many evil effects which a random and inefficient legislation is calculated to produce among a democratic people.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Lake Michigan.—Unfinished railways.—Milwankee bricks and lager-bier.—The State of Wisconsin.—Railway to Janesville.—Lynch law; seeing a man hanged.—Illinois.—Hotel accommodation in the west.—The prairie.—A fire on the prairie.—Dixon.—Prairie farming.—Value of land.—Climate of Illinois.—Winter at Dixon.—Sleighting on the prairie.—Railway travelling under difficulties.—The winter of 1854–5.

While resident in Chicago during a space of twelve months, I had occasion to make several journeys in the state of Illinois and the adjoining state of Wisconsin. So frequently, indeed, had I occasion to pass over the lines of railway to the north and west, that the stations of one or two English railroads are scarcely more familiar to me than would be those of the “Chicago and 270 Galena” or the “Illinois Central,” were I once more *en route* to the Mississippi, or crossing the western prairies. To avoid repetition I propose to include the results of these several journeys in an account of two excursions, the first of which was made at the close of the year 1854, and the latter in the following summer. One of the most pleasant routes to the west by way of the lakes is that by steamboat from Collingwood, at the southern extremity of Georgian bay, whence there is railway communication with Toronto, and thence with the eastern states. Passing between the islands grouped in the northern portion of Lake Huron, the traveller steams through the strait of Mackinaw; stopping at the little town of Mackinaw, now, as it has been these two centuries, a military post, and getting a glimpse of the rocky inhospitable region of

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the copper mines of Lake Superior; thence along the picturesque shores of Wisconsin to Chicago. By one of the fine steamers on this route, the "Lady Elgin," I took my passage to Milwaukee. A railroad to this place from Chicago was then 271 in course of construction, and was completed in the following spring. The term must be understood in its most limited signification, however; the *road* was completed, but stations, for many months after, at the stopping places between the termini, there were none. At Racine, one of the towns on the line, and which merits further mention as one of the prettiest places in the west, passengers were put down or taken up in a field far out of the town, and if it rained while passengers were waiting for the train, the omnibus was turned into a waiting room for the nonce, and such as could find room scrambled into it for shelter.

The western shore of Lake Michigan is high and fertile, rising abruptly from the lake, save at the mouths of the rivers, where are situated the towns, now rapidly rising to the dignity of cities, of Kenosha, Waukegan, and Racine. A pleasant rivalry is carried on between these places, each of which is throwing out its iron arms to grasp the trade and traffic of the country to the westward, and each of which 272 lays claim to some superiority as a fort or place of residence.

Milwaukee is a hundred miles from Chicago, and divides with it, though not equally, the trade of Lake Michigan. It is a clean, well built city, and is celebrated as producing the finest bricks and the best "lager bier" in the west. The consumption of the latter article must be considerable in the city itself, for a very large proportion of the population are Germans, who have things pretty much their own way, and, in the quarter in which they principally reside, play at billiards and bagatelle, and indulge in theatrical performances on Sunday, much to the scandal of the more piously disposed portion of the population.

North of a line drawn westward from Milwaukee, the state of Wisconsin, like that of Michigan in its northern portion, is one vast pine forest; the principal port for the timber trade being at Green Bay. After a trip to Sheboygan the only settlement to the north of Milwaukee on the lake, and which has nothing noticeable 273 about it, but its name,* I took

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“the cars” westward to Madison, the capital of the state, passing through a country more like the prettiest parts of England than any I had seen elsewhere. Indeed, few states in the west offer greater inducements to the European emigrant. The soil is abundantly fertile, and the climate though sufficiently severe in winter, is very healthy. This is attributed to the fact of the wet meadows, marshes, and swamps being constantly supplied with fresh water from the springs, by the action of which, combined with the exhalation of miasmatic vapours, is prevented. The large number of foreigners—who form one third of the population of the State—to be found in Wisconsin, proves that its advantages are not unappreciated by them. In 1855 the only rail- N 5

* The name originated—so the story goes—in the following manner:—An Indian chief, living hereabouts, was presented his wife for the third or fourth time, much to his disgust, with a female child; the possession of a son and heir being his heart's desire. He could find no better way of expressing his dissatisfaction than by the exclamation, “Ugh! a she boy again!” Hence the names, Sheboygan.

274 way in the State was the one by which I travelled to Madison; the united length of the railroads now in operation exceeds six hundred miles. Thus at the time of my residence in the west, Wisconsin was only just beginning to reap the benefits of railway communication, and in the absence of the enterprising Yankee element, which does so much for the development of the resources of the western states, was decidedly less go-a-head than its neighbours. But the construction of a line of railway in the west produces, as may be imagined, a change not to be judged of by its effects in the old world. Land rises rapidly in value. A new population, speculative, enterprising, and intelligent, enters on its possession. Towns and villages rise in forest and on prairie with wonderful rapidity. The slow-going, plodding emigrant, either imbibes to some extent the prevailing spirit, or yields to others; and the sturdy frontier-man, whose enjoyment of life is in proportion to the number of miles he can traverse about his dwelling without a sight of human face or footstep, retires in disgust to 275 wilder scenes as the scream of the locomotive sounds upon his ears, and its smoke rises among the forest trees.

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Returning southward from Madison, the legislative capital of Wisconsin, and pleasantly situated amid a cluster of the lakes with which the country abounds, I passed by easy stages into Illinois, arriving at the little town of Janesville, in time to witness a phase of life in America, to which I had been hitherto, and would gladly have remained, a stranger.

Some short time previous an old man had been murdered under circumstances of great atrocity on his way through the woods, and robbed of the proceeds of the sale of a raft of timber, which he had disposed of at a neighbouring town. The murderer, a Mormon by the way, was taken, tried, and sentenced to undergo the severest punishment the laws of the state allowed,—imprisonment for life. The people of Janesville, however, where he was confined after the sentence awaiting his removal, were of opinion that the sentence of imprisonment was much too good for him, and so resolved to take the law into their own hands, and execute summary justice on the murderer. Accordingly they assembled in force before the prison on the day on which the removal of the prisoner was to take place, and on the sheriff emerging from its gates with his charge, and a guard of a few constables, they knocked that functionary down, overpowered his assistants, and took possession of their prey; not, however, until some of their number had gone the way of the sheriff, for the fellow laid about him lustily. It was at this moment that the omnibus put me down at the door of the hotel, the balcony of which was crowded with spectators, and in front of which the closing scene of the tragedy was to be enacted. Placing a rope round the neck of the murderer, they kicked and dragged him with fiendish yells through the streets of the town to the foot of a tree. Here he was called upon to confess the crime, and having confessed, was allowed five minutes for prayer. But the principal actors in the business, whose faces showed more of brutal passion and bloodthirstiness, than of the calm deliberate resolution of the administrators of what they might consider an act of justice, were impatient; and the five minutes were short ones. The rope was adjusted, its end flung over a bough of the tree to be hauled upon by the now half-maddened crowd, and the murderer passed into eternity.

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The sight I had witnessed was two-fold in its effects upon me personally. Its first effect was to deprive me most completely of the excellent appetite with which I had come off my journey and induce me to pay several visits to the bar of the hotel, where I indulged in “smashes” and other “drinks” of an alcoholic nature as a cure for the nausea, the sight of that struggling, blood-streaming body caused, and of which it sickens me to think even now. And its second and more permanent effect, after listening to all the particulars I could glean in relation to the affair, was—apart from the conviction that not a few of the *civilized* inhabitants of Wisconsin bore a “pretty considerable” resemblance 278 to Red Indians—to involve me in sundry speculations as to the future of a country in which the people seem to have so much higher an opinion of their own ability to govern than of that of the men they have themselves—in the widest sense—appointed to the office; and in which the executive is simply pitiably, and contemptibly powerless.*

* The event above narrated will not bear excuse as having occurred in a country where the wild frontier spirit might be supposed still to have held some sway. More recent events in the neighbourhood of New York—I refer to the destruction of the Quarantine Buildings on Staten Island—prove that the same tendency on the part of the people, and the same weakness on the part of the executive exists in one of the oldest states of the union.

Making a short stay at the towns of Rockford and Freeport, places of rising importance on the Chicago and Galena railroad, I took a southerly course from the last mentioned town by the Illinois Central line. The hotel accommodation at these and other places was none of the best. There is no “taking one's ease in one's inn” out of the large cities. Ill-cooked food, cheerless rooms, and comfortless beds are the 279 distinguishing characteristics of even the best hotels in the small western towns. I have a recollection, too, of having, one rainy night, had to make my bed on the floor, at two in the morning, in consequence of the dilapidated state of the roof; and can vividly recall a certain winter's morning, when a friend who occupied the same room with me, presented the appearance of having grown grey in the night, and my carpet bag was completely covered by a snow drift in the corner.

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The centre of the state of Illinois is, for the most part, prairie land, varied here and there by “openings,” as they are called, of oak and other trees, and by wooded tracts on the river banks; and over this prairie the Illinois central railroad passes from north to south. A prairie is about as capable of description as a lofty mountain, or the broad ocean, or anything else which must be *felt* to be enjoyed. It is easier to say what it is not, than what it is. There are no trees for miles together, no shrubs, no foliage of any kind. There is nothing but long grass, begemmed in 280 the spring time with gorgeous wild flowers of every hue, and drying up under the scorching influence of the summer sun, to become burned and blackened ashes as the wind carries the destroying element, which a spark from a locomotive may have kindled, in sheets and tongues of flame over miles of surface. There is level prairie, such as extends for thirty or forty miles westward of Chicago, and there is the “rolling” prairie, best described by the poet's simile—

“As though the ocean in its gentlest mood, Stood still, with all its bounded billows fixed,
And motionless for ever.”

A fire on the prairie by night is a fine sight. As the train approached Dixon, on the occasion of the journey I am now describing, I saw it for the first time, and for a moment as the line of fire came in view on the horizon, casting a lurid glare over the firmament, I thought a city was in flames. Presently the scene became more distinct; the long grass seemed to be swept from the soil with a flaming besom in the hands of a 281 smoky giant; and as we dashed by the spot over which the fire had lately passed, patches of still burning grass were seen at intervals, fiery oases in the smoking desert of ashes.

The town of Dixon takes its name from its oldest inhabitant—Na Chusa, or white head, as the Indians called him, who was ferryman at this part of Rock river at a time, now thirty years since, when the country was still the home of the Indians, and the mails to the far-apart settlements on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers were borne by the weekly postman across the prairie. Na Chusa was still living in 1854, a hale old man, and ever ready for a gossip over the stirring times of 1831, when the Indian chief Black Hawk and

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his tribe were finally driven across the Great River, and the white man feared no longer for his scalp. Dixon is in the centre of a district, now in course of rapid settlement by an emigrant population. The inducements the prairie offers to settlers are so great, and the disadvantages to be encountered so few, that I am led to give a somewhat more detailed account of the country and its resources for the information of farming emigrants, than I have thought it necessary to give respecting other portions of the West.

The soil of the prairie is a rich black loam, very deep, with a substratum of clay. The sward, composed of the fibrous grass roots, is so tough, that in turning it over five or six yoke of oxen are used to draw the plough. Of the fertility of the soil, the following figures, taken from a western agricultural journal, will give some idea:—

An acre of winter wheat yields from 15 to 20 bushels.

” spring wheat ” 10 to 20 ”

” Indian corn ” 40 to 70 ”

” oats ” 40 to 80 ”

” potatoes ” 100 to 200 ”

” grass ” 1 ½ to 3 tons.

Indian corn is the staple product, and many farmers raise no other grain. With good culture, which means “rotation, deep ploughing, and manure applied at intervals of three and four years,” the product of an acre of Indian corn not unfrequently reaches 100 bushels.

The mode of forming settlements on prairie lands has been thus described. “The first improvements are usually made on that part of the prairie which adjoins the timber, and thus we may see a range of farms circumscribing the entire prairie. The burning of the

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prairie is then stopped, through the whole distance of the circuit in the neighbourhood of these farms, to prevent injury to the fences and other improvements. This is done by ploughing furrows all round the settlement. In a short time the timber springs up spontaneously on all the parts not burned, and the groves commence a gradual encroachment on the prairie. By and bye, another tier of farms spring up on the outside of the first, and further out on the prairie; and thus farm succeeds farm, as the timber grows up, until the entire prairie is occupied.

Machinery is extensively used by the Illinois farmers as a substitute for high-priced manual labor. There is the harvester or reaper, which, 284 when the grain is ripe, lays it low at the rate of fifteen acres per day; there is an ingenious contrivance to rake and deliver it in bundles to the binder, and there is the threshing machine, capable of threshing and cleansing two hundred to three hundred bushels per day. In a week's time a crop of 1500 bushels may be harvested and in sacks ready for the market. The chief want on the prairie is that of timber, for buildings and fences. The extension of railway communication to the lumber region of Wisconsin and Michigan, however, is rapidly cheapening this essential to the farmer, and the osage orange, a tough hardy shrub, has been of late successfully used for hedges.

The most productive, though least healthy portions of the western states, are the rich "bottoms" or alluvial borders of the rivers, which have been formed from the deposits of the waters during floods. The fertility of some of these bottoms, the surface mould of which exceeds thirty feet in depth, is astonishing. On the "American bottom," a tract extending for ninety 285 miles along the Mississippi, the farms of the French settlers have produced great crops of corn every year, without manuring, for a century and a half.

The price of land varies, of course, with its position and other advantages. Unimproved farms range from three to eight dollars, or twelve to thirty shillings per acre; and improved farms in the vicinity of the towns from one to five pounds per acre. Great pecuniary advantages are offered to the settler in certain parts of Illinois by the Illinois central railroad

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company, which owns notless than two millions of acres of land, extending on either side of the railroad. This land—a grant from the Federal Government to the state of Illinois to aid in the construction of the railroad, and by the state transferred to the company—is offered for sale at various prices, on seven years time with two per cent. interest. The interest for two years is required in advance, the land to be paid for in five annual instalments.

The state of Illinois extends over five and a half degrees of latitude, and presents some variety 286 of climate. In the south, where cotton and tobacco are grown, the summers are intolerably hot; and throughout the state the unsheltered prairies are exposed alike to sun and storm; but the central and northern portions are decidedly healthy. The air is dry and bracing, and the number of fine days in the year delightfully numerous, as contrasted with the unfrequency of their occurrence in dear, dull, damp, dreary, foggy old England.

Winter set in early in December, and with unusual intensity. The last two weeks of my stay in Dixon were spent there very much against my will—the fact was, there was no getting out of it. The snow fell so thick, and the frost was so intense, that the railways were rendered impassable. Trains stuck in the frozen snow and could not be got out again; all communication with Chicago was stopped; there were no letters, no newspapers, and the telegraph poles were prostrated by the storms. Adventurous men tried to cross the bleak prairie to the city in sledges to fetch the mails, but were driven back 287 benumbed and frost bitten; and more than one of the townsfolk who went to his labour in the morning defiant of the cold, was brought back at eventide stark and rigid, his life's labor closed.

For a fortnight, then, there was nothing for it but to don the bear-like costume before described once more, and make the best of my compulsory detention. What with sleigh-driving and skating in the day time, and the society of some fellow craftsmen, engaged on the railroad survey—of whose gentle manners and light-hearted joviality I preserve a pleasant recollection—in the long evenings, this was not so difficult But an opportunity which offered of returning to Chicago, though by a roundabout route and in comfortless

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fashion, was too tempting to be resisted, and I started one bitter morning in January, in company with a friend, in a sledge drawn by mules, on a fifty mile ride across the prairie to Rockford, from which point we had heard the railway was open to Chicago. Plenty of buffalo skins for warmth, some substantial eatables, and a bottle 288 of whiskey comprised our equipment; but in spite of the provision for internal and external comfort we were sorely tried by the cold, and the “pluck” with which we began the journey oozed out, like Bob Acre's courage, at our fingers' ends. As for the driver, who occupied a more unsheltered seat, and who entertained us for several hours after starting with the “Camp-town races,”—expressing in a deep bass, his intention to “run all night,” and an equally resolute determination to “run all day,” repeatedly offering to “bet his money on the bob-tailed nag,” and frantically requesting in treble tones “some one to bet on the bay,”—the poor fellow grew musically powerless about noon, and fairly gave in as the sun tended toward the horizon and the cold increased, and so we put him inside among the buffalo skins, and took it in turns to drive, giving the frozen Jehu the benefit of the greater portion of the contents of the whiskey bottle, the result of which proceeding was an assertion on the part of the landlord of the hotel at Rockford, 289 on our arrival some time after dark, that it was a nice question to decide whether that individual was most frozen or drunk.

From Rockford I took the train to Chicago; a train which, according to the time tables and Appletons' guide—the Bradshaw of The States, and a very superior Bradshaw in every respect—leaving Rockford at noon, should reach Chicago by supper time. No supper, however, did the unlucky passengers get that evening. Before we had gone twenty miles the snow, drifting over the prairie, was found to have frozen on the track and stopped our progress. By the united exertions of conductors, engine driver, and passengers, who all went to work with a will with pick and shovel, a way for the train was made, and we were again in motion, but only to encounter fresh impediments wherever the snow could find a cutting to fill, or a rising ground against which to drift across the track. All hopes of “getting in” by bed time vanished as we found ourselves hard and fast in the snow at VOL. I. O 290 one in the morning, and not half the journey over; and the prospect of arrival at

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Chicago lengthened indefinitely as more snow began to fall, making the people working on the track look like industrious spectres. As the certainty of a night on the road became apparent, the occupants of the two carriages which formed the train were gathered into one, for it was found the fuel for the stoves was getting short; and with the snow creeping in at the windows, and the wind howling over the prairie, the half starved crowd passed the time, sleeping, smoking, and tobacco chewing till daylight, when workmen were obtained from the nearest station, and, with an additional engine, we again moved on. By way of breakfast the famished passengers appropriated the entire stock of bread and cheese and lager-bier of a German dealer, whose "store" stood near the line, and upon whose phlegmatic temperament the effect of seeing himself thus rapidly "cleared out" was amusingly apparent; and though it was noon before we reached Chicago—the process of cutting 291 through the snow having to be gone through half-a-dozen times or more during the remainder of the journey—all appeared to enjoy "the fun" amazingly. The final stoppage occurred a few miles from the city, and at this point—their driver calculating on the desire of the passengers to leave the train—were collected omnibuses, carts, and carriages, of which a number of the passengers availed themselves, though it was snowing heavily. The delay proved to be but short, however, and they had scarcely taken their seats when the train moved on, the remaining occupants of the cars bidding them good speed over the prairie with cheers and laughter. Their chargin however could scarcely have been equal to that of the unfortunate individuals, who, having got half way to the vehicles, and seeing the train about to move on, floundered about in the knee deep snow in a state of ludicrous indecision, looking, in their ursine costume, like weak minded polar bears, and were to be seen, still floundering, pensively, towards the omnibuses as the train moved on. O 2

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Lest my readers should imagine from the foregoing account of my experience of an Illinois winter, that the west is a second Siberia, I must state that the winter of 1854-5 was almost as exceptional in the United States in its severity as in England. The stoppage of

railway traffic by the snow is, indeed, much more common in the eastern states than in the west; and it was principally to the fact of the engines being unprovided with apparatus for clearing the track in its progress, such as is in common use on the eastern lines in winter, that so complete a stoppage of railway traffic, such as detained me for two weeks at Dixon, was to be attributed.

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CHAPTER XIV.

To Galena.—The lead mines.—Indians.—Emigration to Minesota—Down the Mississippi.—Rafts and flat boats.—Rock Island. Indian reminiscences.—Nauvoo and the Mormons.—Keokuk and summer life there.—Land in Iowa.—Return to Chicago.

The flowers were in full bloom on the prairie when I again passed over the scene of the winter's journey described in the last chapter, my ultimate destination being the southern most point of the state of Iowa, on the Mississippi river, and my first stage the town of Galena in the west of Illinois, at the extremity of the Chicago and Galena railroad. To incur delay from some cause or other, on this line, appeared to be my destiny. When about half way to Galena, the train came to a stand still midway between two 294 of the stations, and a detention of two hours followed. At the first sight of the appearance presented by the track, progression seemed entirely hopeless. The remains of a freight train encumbered the line for fifty yards or more. Half smashed baggage cars were thrown on either side, trucks were piled one upon another, and the rails were torn up and the "sleepers" on which they were laid were dragged from their places. All this was, as it afterwards proved, the work of one man, a small farmer of a vindictive turn, one of whose cows had been killed on the track some time previous. The company having refused to recompense him for its loss, he resolved to take his revenge upon the freight train, and by removing one of the rails very effectually accomplished his purpose. I have alluded to the extent of this devastation. How it was that, by the exertions of employés and passengers, the track was cleared and we were again in motion in a couple of hours, I never clearly comprehended, but so it was;

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and, instead of growling and grumbling à la John Bull at the delay, the 295 passengers almost unanimously voted the whole affair what a cockney would call a “jolly spree.”

Gradually rising towards the west, the country, as the traveller approaches the Mississippi, presents more striking features to the eye, the elevations rising to the dignity of hills, which for the most part have a gentle slope on one side, and a precipitous *bluff* on the other, from the surface of which the stone crops out in fantastic shapes, resembling the battlements and bastions, terraces and watch-towers of some old Norman castle. This is the lead region, in the heart of which the appropriately named town of Galena is situated, a picturesque place, built on a strip of land between the river and the rocks, and possessing a good trade and a steady-going industrious population. Mining is carried on only to a limited extent. There are one or two large mines at a distance from the town; and on the hills in the immediate vicinity, individuals—Cornish men for the most part—occupy small tracts, for the privilege of working which they pay a certain per-centage of the ore extricated.

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I met several Indians here, wandering about the town; the women driving a thriving trade in mocassins and bags showily worked with beads, among strangers, and the men doing nothing. I took three of the most picturesque of these idlers, chiefs, as I understood, from Minesota, to a photographer, and brought away their “counterfeit presentment” as a souvenir; making them a present of a duplicate, with which they were highly amused, and which there is every reason to believe they exchanged for fire-water—alias whiskey—at the earliest opportunity. The unpronounceable names of these gentlemen have long since slipped my memory, but the reader can christen them for himself from “Hiawatha,” for came they not

“From the land of the Ojibways, Of Minuehaha, laughing water?”

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Steamboats leave Galena daily during the season for St. Paul, the capital of the new territory of Minnesota, a distance of over three hundred miles. Emigration to this distant 297 portion of the west commenced less than ten years since, and though it proceeded with much vigour for some years, settlers arriving at St. Paul at the rate—as was stated in the public prints, probably with some exaggeration—of a thousand a day in 1855, the settlements are still very few in proportion to the vast extent of the territory. Civilization has as yet scarcely extended beyond the banks of the Mississippi and its tributaries; half naked savages walk about the streets of St. Paul, and the settler not unfrequently finds on his return from market his farm a smoking ruin, and a group of Sioux dancing round it; or encounters in some secluded spot a blood-thirsty Chippewa, waiting to take possession of his scalp.

People who do not object to these little obstacles to settlement, such as are incidental to a frontier country in which the “Indian title” is yet unextinct, will find a productive soil and an abundance of land at the government price of five shillings per acre. The territory is partly prairie and partly swamp; protracted draughts may be looked for in the summer, and freshets in the spring. The winters are very severe, and I have heard of a rumour that in one of the towns where the land lies low, the church bell is rung at stated hours daily, to intimate to the ague-smitten inhabitants that it is time to take their prescribed doses of quinine.

Galena is situated on Fever river, a tributary of the Mississippi, which it enters some twelve miles below the town. I took my passage for Rock Island in a steamboat constructed in a manner peculiar to the western waters. It was what is called a stern-wheeler, a huge paddle wheel being placed at the stern to avoid injury from the snags or fallen trees, which abound on the Mississippi. The interior was comfortable but plain, the state rooms being ranged round the saloon on the upper deck, with outer doors opening on to a covered gallery, which formed a delightful promenade in pleasant weather. There was little inducement, however, to linger there after sundown on the 16th of June, 1855. The

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day had been intensely hot, and the Father o 299 waters was shrouded in the moist unwholesome exhalations which rose from the level lowland, covered with thick shrubs and trees, which form a prominent characteristic of the upper Mississippi; and I paid for my temerity in spending an hour on the gallery after supper, dreaming idly of the adventurous and devoted Jesuit missionaries, who pioneered the white man down the great highway two centuries ago, and speculating on the burial place of De Soto—lowered from a boat's side into its turbid waters in the silence of the night—by a bad cold and a slight attack of ague.

Rock Island was reached the following morning; the only objects of interest of which the return of daylight afforded a view, being the rafts and flat-boats. The former consist of innumerable logs of timber fastened together, on which are erected small wooden houses for the men whose business it is to keep the logs together and steer clear of snags and other obstructions; and the latter are a species of barge, roughly constructed, on which the products 300 of the north are carried to the southern states. Both float unaided down the rapid current to their destination, the logs to become the property of their several purchasers, and the flat-boats, having by their single voyage served their purpose, to be broken up as useless.

Rock Island is the terminus of a line of railway direct from Chicago, and has, since the date of my visit, risen to importance as the point at which the states beyond the Mississippi are connected, by a railway crossing the great river, with the east. From Davenport on the opposite shore of Iowa, emigrants at that time took their departure for the farthest west by railway to Iowa city, and from thence by stage or wagon. Now, railways are rapidly extending to the Missouri; and the westward-bound traveller may take a “through ticket” from New York to the borders of Kansas, passing over eighteen degrees of longitude, and traversing some sixteen hundred miles.

It was very pleasant to find an actual ruin at Rock Island,—a veritable decayed delapidated 301 ruin, in the shape of an old fort, memorable in Indian warfare, built on a rock in the

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middle of the river. Tradition states that the great chief Black Hawk, before alluded to, concealed himself in a cave in the rock on which the fort stands, when fleeing from the United States' troops and the raw levies of Illinois; and I found a cicerone in a youthful Rock-islander who was looking for arrow heads and soldiers buttons about the ruins, who stoutly maintained, in the face of all historical evidence to the contrary, that the grand old savage was there discovered and ignobly dragged out, heels first, from his hiding place.

Another boat—an ordinary paddle-wheel steamer—conveyed me from Rock Island in my progress still further down the river. The scenery improves from this point; the “bluffs” are more numerous, advancing in some places boldly to the river, in others retreating, leaving rich tracts of bottom land along the margin of the stream. Shrubbery gives place to trees, and the turns in the river's course are more frequent. 302 This part of the river abounds in memories of Black Hawk, whose history the writers of Indian romance might study to advantage. Near Oquawka, a small town on the Illinois bank of the river, the chief buried a favorite daughter, coming yearly, whether in time of war or peace, to spend a day at her grave; and on a bluff at Burlington, just below on the Iowa bank, whence could be seen the prairies of Illinois, the ancient home of his race, he assembled and harangued his warriors previous to the final struggle, to which allusion has already been made*

“The chieftain spoke, his flashing eye, Around in triumph gazed, As the painted band, with axe in hand, The yell of battle raised. The painted band, with axe in hand, Prepared for deadly strife; And each warrior felt, in his beaded belt, For his keen edged knife.”*

* Hosmer's Poems.

One more reminiscence of the brave old chief before we bid him farewell in his grave by the Great River.

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One of the Illinois volunteers in the Black Hawk war was a colonel of militia, who, on the occasion of an encounter with the Indians, finding himself hard pressed, left his horse

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and “broke for tall timber and quit.” The colonel was a lawyer just returning from circuit, “with a slight wardrobe, and Chitty's Pleadings packed in his saddle bags, all of which were captured by the Indians.” “He afterwards related with much vexation,” proceeds the historian, “that Black Hawk had decked himself out in his finery, appearing in the wild woods amongst his savage companions, dressed in one of the colonel's ruffled shirts drawn over his deerskin leggings, and carrying a volume of ‘Chitty's Pleadings’ under each arm.”

An interest of a far different kind to that excited by scenes associated with Indian suffering or Indian ferocity, dwells about a certain spot on the Mississippi, just above the little town of Montrose. On a lovely slope of prairie land projecting from the Illinois shore, stands the town of Nauvoo, some fifteen years since the 304 head-quarters of Mormonism. At that time containing 20,000 inhabitants, it has now scarce as many hundreds; the present residents being members of a French colony, holding peculiar religious views, and calling themselves “Icarians.” The Mormon temple on the hill top, an incongruous piece of architecture, in the construction of which the builders are said to have acted on daily instructions from Heaven! and which cost a million of dollars, is a smoke blackened ruin; and the houses in which the voluptuous citizens kept their numerous wives, are deserted and unroofed. It was in the depth of winter that the exiled Mormons were driven across the Mississippi to seek another site for the New Jerusalem; displaying a moral heroism in the endurance of hunger, cold, and sickness, the record of which serves in some degree to mitigate the horror and disgust excited by their blasphemous creed and gross sensuality.

The Des Moines rapids, over which steamboats seldom attempt to pass, extend for twelve miles below the town of Montrose, terminating 305 just above Keokuk at the mouth of the Des Moines river. Past these rapids passengers are conveyed by stage or wagon to Keokuk, whence other steamboats take them down the river. Keokuk was my destination, and here, within a few miles of the borders of the Missouri, and at the southern-most extremity of the most westerly of the “Free States” I made my home for some weeks.

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There is a taste of the “sunny south” about life in these parts, though it is but a nasty taste after all. The people you see on the steamboats and about the hotels have a dash of the defiant bullying air which characterises the southrons, and which keeps a quiet person in a constant state of apprehension when in their company, lest he should by a chance look or word, unwittingly puff into a blaze the smouldering passions, which, once on fire, rage with uncontrolled fury. The summer heats on the upper Mississippi are as unpleasant in their nature and effects, from local causes, if not so intense as in Carolina or Florida, and to “keep cool” is about as much ³⁰⁶ the principal object to which the energies of each individual are directed. Mosquito bars are indispensable at night, and the punkah (a fan formed of paper stretched upon light frames suspended from the ceiling, and kept in motion by an attendant), is as necessary a portion of the dining-room furniture. White-trousered individuals might occasionally be seen in the evenings, lounging in hammocks slung from trees in their gardens, and the fields were bright with fire-flies. A good deal of this would have been very enjoyable, but for the peculiarly enervating and depressing effects of the heat, which in my case were such as altogether to prevent the enjoyment of anything whatever—except iced drinks and water-melons, on which I subsisted, to the almost total exclusion of everything requiring the labor of mastication, for days together.

Altogether more objectionable places than these Mississippi towns for a summer residence it would be hard to find. Passing over the hills to the open country beyond, where the winds have a free range, and no miasmatic vapours infect ³⁰⁷ the air, the traveller finds a state of things vastly different. What has been stated respecting the State of Illinois as a farming country, may be applied with little qualification to that of Iowa. Land, however, is cheaper. The western portion of the state is still unsettled, and abundance of land is to be had at the government price of five shillings per acre.

At the end of five weary weeks, during which I cannot recollect that I did anything else, or that anybody did much else, but—(putting aside a certain languid attention to necessary business), fan myself, consume iced beverages in endless variety and unlimited quantity,

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and bathe in the muddy Mississippi during the day; and wander about the corridors and verandas of the Leclède hotel like a “perturbed spirit,” in search of a cool sleeping place during the night; I returned to Burlington. There is a steam ferry here, conveying passengers to the terminus of the Chicago railroad, on the opposite side of the river. As soon as my recovery from a severe attack of cholera, the result perhaps of my vegetarian tendencies, 308 would allow, I took the train for the latter place, enjoying such delicious repose through the summer night in my seat in the cars, as the train dashed over the prairie; and the fresh breeze blew upon my cheek as, what with troublesome thoughts, heart weariness, and indigestion, seldom falls to the lot of civilized man.

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CHAPTER XV.

Railway to Cincinnati.—The State of Indiana.—Steamboats on shallow Rivers.—Indianapolis.—The State House.—Anti-negro legislation.—The Ohio river.—Cincinnati.—Its origin.—Hotels, factories, &c.—Steam fire engines.—The State of Ohio.—Return to New York.—Homeward bound.—Arrival in England.—Conclusion.

Toward the close of the year 1855 I bade a final adieu to Chicago, and, moved rather by the love of roaming, which “grows by what it feeds on,” and by a desire to see something of the “Queen City of the West,” than by such motives as usually influence the “emigrant,” I started for Cincinnati, crossing the State of Indiana diagonally, and stopping at Indianapolis, its capital, by the way. Cincinnati is situated almost at the south-western extremity 310 of the State of Ohio, and its distance from Chicago by the direct route, which I took—namely, 310 miles—will help the reader to form an idea of the size of the adjoining State of Indiana, by no means one of the largest in the Union.

As in Ohio, the country having been for a much longer time open to settlement than the more western states, there are not the same inducements to the farming emigrant in the way of cheap land and the prospect of a speedy rise in its value, as in districts the

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resources of which are in the early stage of development. To the merchant and man of business, however, who clings to civilization; who, like Samuel Johnson, takes more delight in Fleet Street than in scenes where nature is most prolific of her beauties; for whom the prairie has no charms, and whose social instincts revolt from the secluded life of the settler in the woods, the larger towns of the central states afford an inviting field for profitable exertion and investment; while the climate, which, in the south of Indiana and Ohio, is of Italian softness and 311 beauty, is more temperate, and less trying to the town-bred settler.

Indiana has not much to boast of in natural beauty. Except in the south, near the Ohio river, the country is flat and uninteresting; but the soil is productive, and the climate very healthy. The rivers are numerous, but, for the most part, very shallow; flat-bottomed steamboats of the lightest possible draft being used to navigate them. Such slow-going craft are these steamboats, that it is jocularly said of them that in going down stream they manage to *keep up with the current*. Moreover, I was told—and the story may serve as a fair sample of its kind—of a certain passenger, who, being ordered ashore from the middle of the river for refusing to pay his fare till he saw some prospect of landing somewhere, jumped into the water, and, being a sturdy fellow, pushed the boat by the bows half-a-mile down the stream, and when it came up again to where he was standing, held it fast and stopped its progress. “The engineer put on the steam, and the captain 312 ‘cussed;’ but it was of no use,” said my informant. “A compromise had to be effected, and the passenger was hired for the rest of the trip to *help the engine*.”

The city of Indianapolis, which, on the map, looks like the centre of a cobweb of railways, is scarcely so busy or so large a place as its position would lead one to expect. There is one long street about as wide as the Thames at Richmond, and there are branch thoroughfares, each one of which appears to lead to a railway station. In one station no less than five lines of railway exchange their passengers; the arrangements under which the transfer is effected, without confusion or delay, being of the most admirable kind.

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The State of Indiana liberally maintains several excellent charitable institutions, located at Indianapolis. The asylum for the deaf and dumb, the blind, and the insane, are large stuccoed buildings, of slight architectural pretensions. The State House—a creditable imitation of the Athenian Temple of Minerva—in which 313 the Legislature of the State holds its sessions, is unfortunately, also faced with stucco, a material seldom seen elsewhere in the United States; and at the time of my visit was, under the influence of time and the weather, beginning to look very much like a second Parthenon in ruins. The mention of the legislature suggests allusion to an enactment peculiar to the State of Indiana with regard to negroes, which accounts for the fact that no “coloured people” are seen in those parts. The act prohibits them from settling, or even coming into the State; all contracts with them are declared void, and persons employing them incur the risk of a heavy fine.

The railway from Indianapolis to Cincinnati, by way of Laurenceburg, lies for the last twenty miles along the north bank of the Ohio. That famous river presents, during a considerable portion of the year, the appearance of a somewhat insignificant stream, meandering through a waste of mud; and is altogether as unpleasant a river to look upon as old Father VOL. I. P 314 Thames himself. The scenery, however, is bold and striking. Cincinnati itself lies between two bluffs, and is backed by a third, to the base of which the land slopes gradually from the river edge; ascending in a similar gentle slope on the south bank of the river, where stands the town of Covington, in the State of Kentucky. Here the negro is a slave. At Cincinnati, as at Keokuk, in Iowa, I was on the verge of slave-land, and had reached the boundary line of the “Free States.”

Cincinnati has something of an old-world look about it. Many of its streets are narrow, and brown brick and grey stone are mainly used for building. The population—some 100,000—has always exhibited a large proportion of the Yankee, or “down east” element, and to this, doubtless, must be attributed the fact that, for a city of its size and importance, it is about the dullest place for a stranger to have to pass a winter in, in the Union. There was

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one theatre, generally exhibiting “a beggarly account of empty boxes;” a concert room, in 315 which no concerts were ever held that I could learn; and a museum—which was really a museum, but, being only that and nothing else in disguise, was not in favour with the public, and seemed to be kept open principally for the satisfaction of the performers on a fiddle and a cracked clarionet, who contributed very effectually towards producing that condition of hopeless melancholy in the visitor which the other “attractions” of the museum were well calculated to inspire. I do not remember that there were any other sources of recreation; though a mention of the really excellent library and reading rooms, occupying a handsome building in one of the principal streets, should not be omitted.

How it was that the settlement which has grown to be a large city was formed on the site of the present Cincinnati, at the close of the last century, is told by the author of a work before quoted, as follows:—“For several years there was a continual strife between Cincinnati P 5 316 and North Bend for superiority in the infant territory. At first, North Bend had a decided advantage over its rival. Judge Lymmes, the principal proprietor, had prevailed with General Harmer to have the troops of the territory stationed at that place, and emigrants came flocking thither, because they believed it was more secure from Indian attacks than any other settlement in the wilderness. But, shortly afterwards, the officer in command became smitten with the charms of a beautiful woman, the wife of one of the settlers. The husband, aware of his danger, broke up his establishment, and removed with his family to Cincinnati. Immediately North Bend became totally unfit for military occupation, and Cincinnati was represented to be the only point from which the whole territory could be reached with the protecting arm of government. The troops in a little while were removed from North Bend, and the advantages of military occupation conferred upon the rival settlement, from which time has grown and 317 thriven until it has become the Queen City of the West.”*

* Ferris's States and Territories of the Great West.

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Cincinnati has many handsome churches and public buildings, and is not inferior to any city in the Union in the number and magnificence of its hotels; one of which, the Burnet House, is more like a royal palace than anything else. The number of steamboats, bound to all parts of the Ohio and the upper and lower Mississippi, to be seen lying at the water's edge, and the vast quantities of merchandise scattered over the broad levee, testify to the extent of its trade; and the suburban streets are lined with brass and iron founderies, cotton and woollen mills, tobacco factories and tanneries, yielding occupation to a large number of well paid operatives, who, with somewhat higher wages than are paid in England, and at less expense for the necessaries of life, may be considered to enjoy a better position than those of Manchester or Birmingham. Cincinnati, moreover, is famous for its immense pork-curing establishments,—places in which piggy is killed, cut up, cured, and packed with wonderful despatch; and for certain vineyards from the produce of which the Catawba Champagne is made, which, if not to be compared with Mumme or Heidsick, is decidedly to be preferred to the product of the apple or the gooseberry, too frequently imposed upon the traveller as champagne in American hotels.

Among other notable features of the Queen City, the steam fire engines deserve mention. These are huge locomotives, which steam along the streets, leaving a long train of fiery cinders in their track; the machinery being applied on their arrival at the scene of a fire to the working of the pumps. Though scarcely capable of very general adoption, they appear to be used to great advantage in Cincinnati; and by substituting them for the ordinary engine, such as is used elsewhere in the States, the necessity for the rough, noisy crowd of red-shirted firemen, who drag the latter through the streets, is avoided.

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The State of Ohio, of which Cincinnati is the commercial capital, and which extends northward from the Ohio to the shores of Lake Erie, is one of the most prosperous States in the Union. A large proportion of its two millions of inhabitants are engaged in agriculture,

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and its fertile soil produces one-tenth of the whole crop of the United States; while one-fifth of all the wool in the Union is clipped within its limits.

After a residence of a winter—which, though occasionally severe, was short—on the banks of the Ohio, I turned my steps again Eastward, and passing through Columbus and Cleveland, took the same route by which I had travelled Westward three years previous, and in the month of May was once more on the banks of the glorious Hudson, and among the busy scenes of New York life.

The results of my residence in New York, in which city I remained for twelvemonths after my return from the West, have been given to the reader in the early portion of this little 320 work. In the year 1857 family affairs called me to England, and on just such a gorgeous summer's morning as that on which I approached it five years before, I left New York, bidding adieu to the lovely scenery of the bay, its forts and islands, and its busy water life—though not, thank Heaven! to the many pleasant memories that belong to them—with something very like an aching heart, though “homeward bound;” and in ten days—each of which grew longer as the last approached, and home drew near, and nearer—set foot on English ground.

I have nothing more to tell, save of a railway journey through a garden land, where, as it seemed, the hedges were surely clipped but yesterday, and the roads had been newly swept with a broom—hedges and roads were so neat, and trim, and clean; past old cathedrals, and quiet village greens, where the ancestors of those who played there then had played long centuries ago; over the streets of crowded cities, and by peaceful hamlets and trim country seats;—all speaking to me softly and pleasantly of the time 321 when the prairie and the pine forest were things to be read and dreamed of only; past churchyards, too, speaking more mournfully to memory's ear of a last parting that was indeed the last, and of the *one* I should *not* meet; a cab ride through some silent streets at midnight; a few moments made up of fear, hope, joy, and the blessed sound of old familiar voices murmuring—“Welcome Home!”

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THE END.

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